

Caribbean-Canada Emerging Leaders' Forum 2011

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Abstract: Based on a study conference model used by the Commonwealth and the Governor General, a public-private partnership organized a Caribbean-Canada Emerging Leaders Dialogue. The dialogue involved Caribbean and Canadian leaders drawn from business, labour, government and civil society to examine sustainable economic growth. Participants were divided into ten teams, each group spending four days in a different part of Canada followed by four days in a different Caribbean country. Site visits examined how each country is pursuing sustainable economic growth through real life example of finance, mining, agriculture, forestry, tourism, and governance.

Keywords: leadership, capacity building, Caribbean

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Background

In our rapidly changing world, the only possible assurance of organizational, community, national and regional viability and success are our human resources. It is well demonstrated in both the public and private sectors that leadership effectiveness impacts results. Investments in people, and in particular leadership learning and development, are critical investments in the future. Executive learning accelerates the development of leadership capacity, productivity and innovation. It is for this reason that Canada has invested in leadership development for its senior public service. It is presumably for this reason that the Canadian International Development Agency on its website in describing the Caribbean Regional Program states as a primary objective to “help the region develop a new generation of leaders in the public and private sectors, equipped with the skills to resolve complex governance, economic and social issues and advance the values of gender equality, human rights, equity and democracy”. The CCELD is uniquely positioned to help with this as it is premised on a multi-sectoral, multi-national and gender balanced participation.

Origins and Rationale

Prime Minister Harper expressed the Government of Canada’s vision for re-engagement with the Americas in 2007; to which promoting prosperity, security and democratic governance is an integral component. In particular, it was seen that enhancing relationships between Canadian and Caribbean organizations could enhance the prosperity of both Canada and the Caribbean region.

The 15-member Caribbean Community (CARICOM) consists of 12 island states and 3 continental countries. The Community’s population, excluding Haiti, is 6.8 million, with a combined GNI of \$36 billion. While there are significant differences in the size of economies and levels of development, they are all considered upper-middle income countries except for Guyana, which is part of the lower-middle income group. Poverty is significant and the rate varies amongst countries, exceeding 30% in some. All countries are considered members of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) grouping – small island and low-lying coastal countries that share similar sustainable development challenges including small populations, limited economic diversification, high debt levels, heightened exposure to globalization, human resource deficits, and susceptibility to natural disasters.

Among the key challenges facing the Caribbean regime are the management of public resources and the ability to compete in global markets and regional integration. These states are characterized by small populations, limited economic diversification, heightened exposure to globalization, and human resource deficits. The region faces particular development challenges rooted in its economic vulnerability, risk of social decline, and differences among political leaders that hamper regional integration efforts. Integration is vital for the region’s sustainable development. While CARICOM agree a coherent regional development strategy is a work in progress, there are opportunities to support enhanced cooperation.

The Project put forth by CCELD Canada Inc. (CCELD 2011) was supportive of two of CIDA's Caribbean regional strategy's four intermediate outcomes. Specifically, it was supportive of more effective leadership and management of gender-sensitive and accountable public institutions, and of an improved enabling environment for business development and increased trade and economic activities. Further, it represented a methodology through which collaboration would facilitate the breakdown of barriers across sectors, cultures and nations, thereby, enhancing social capital formation supportive of regional integration.

Goals and Objectives

To support achieving its outcomes, CCELD 2011 had three primary objectives:

1. To make participants more effective leaders in achieving results for their organizations through expanding their understanding of key issues facing organizations, sectors, societies and nations in our region and exposing them to the strategies and approaches being taken by other senior leaders in dealing with these challenges.
2. To establish a strong peer network from business, government and civil society and across the Caribbean and Canada with a shared experience and commitment to shaping the future of their sectors, nations and the region.
3. To strengthen ties across the Caribbean and between it and Canada amongst people who will be important actors in business, labour, government and civil society for decades to come. It will help break down barriers across sectors, cultures and nations.

Expected Results

Strategic Outcome: CCELD alumni men and women in increasingly responsible positions leading to improved economic and social performance in individual Caribbean-Canadian public and private sponsoring organizations. Continued alumni sharing and cooperation

Intermediate Outcomes: Conference alumni are using enhanced leadership skills and strategic abilities with an increased capacity to integrate a broad range of perspectives in their own organizations and beyond to impact sustainable development in their own country and the region. Strengthened relations and continued contact and sharing among the alumni peer network of leaders across the Caribbean and between the Caribbean and Canada

Immediate Outcomes: Conference alumni return to their own organizations and communities with new knowledge and leadership skills to apply in their professional and community roles. Alumni committed to access their peer network to further expand the relationship and collective knowledge and experience available and undertaking to working with peer colleagues to meet local and regional challenges.

Reach

The CCELD was intended to provide a regional approach to leadership development by bringing together 120 high-calibre, mid-career men and women selected from business, government, labour, and civil society from across the Caribbean (80 participants) and Canada (40 participants).

A two-stage application process was used to select candidates. Applications were received by the Application Review Committee (ARC) and sorted by country and then provided to the Country Planning Committees. The Country Planning Committees reviewed the initial applications and selected candidates that were to proceed to Stage two. The ARC provided the final recommendation of acceptance for candidates.

The role of the ARC was to provide an initial weeding out process for all Stage one applications. This included making recommendations to participating countries to suggest further action if required. It was also the responsibility of the ARC to ensure all planning committees in each of the jurisdictions received Stage one applications for their countries in a timely manner.

Those who were selected to participate were intended to be energetic leaders identified as having vision, a future focus, and who have demonstrated strong personal values. They are seen by their sponsoring organizations as having potential for senior leadership positions and be expected to make a continuing contribution over a number of years.

Management and Organization

The CCELD is governed by a Board of Directors and supported by a Coordinating Committee made-up of experienced leaders who are also alumni of the Duke of Edinburgh's Commonwealth Study Conference (CSC) and the Governor General's Canadian Study Conference. A professional conference-organizing firm with experience in Canada and the Caribbean was engaged to provide secretariat and logistics services.

CSC alumni from Canada and the Caribbean took the lead on a volunteer basis to plan and organize the CCELD. Alumni were active in many Caribbean countries including Barbados, Jamaica, Bahamas, Grenada, Belize, Bermuda, Trinidad & Tobago, Dominica, and the Dominican Republic. In Canada alumni groups worked in most cities and provinces that hosted study tours. As part of this volunteer activity, a number of noted leaders from the Caribbean and Canada served as members of an Advisory Council or Co-chairs of the CCELD.

HRH The Princess Royal, Princess Anne with her personal history of engagement with Canada and the Caribbean as well as experience with the Commonwealth Study Conference graciously served as President of the Dialogue. She participated in the closing and also visited some groups during their study tours.

Description of Activities and Outputs

Activities

There were two main groups of activities associated with the 2011 CCELD: program planning, and program delivery.

Program Planning: Program planning for the 2011 CCELD involved the preparation of the learning events, engaging in consultations with stakeholders for content development, participant selection, selecting speakers, presenters and site visit locations, and maintaining and revising programming as needed.

Program Delivery: The CCELD was delivered by means of conference sessions and study tours. The Opening conference session in Gatineau Quebec was used to orient participants to the program and expose them to global leaders. The Closing conference session in Barbados was intended to continue the dialogue with global leaders, as well as to provide an opportunity for participants to share, discuss and debate what they learned during their study tours.

During study tours throughout both Canada and the Caribbean, participants dialogued with leaders in multiple sectors to gain a better understanding around national, regional and global issues from the perspective of their hosts. These visits were intended to fuel the most important interactions, those between the participants themselves as they reflected on and discussed what they had learned, challenging their own assumptions as well as those of their colleagues.

Outputs

Opening Conference: The Dialogue opened in Ottawa, Canada where all participants were engaged in three days of presentations, discussion and networking. Global leaders addressed participants and began exploring the Dialogue theme with them in its different dimensions.

Study Tours: The cohort of participants were divided into ten study groups to travel to ten different locations in Canada and to ten Caribbean countries to visit communities and workplaces from the public and private sectors as well as civil society. These were onsite visits to discuss with leaders in their environment the challenges they face, and the strategies used in meeting them. Organizations visited include those engaged in environmental management, tourism, education, health care, construction and infrastructure, culture, community work, finance and law enforcement/security amongst others. Such a diverse mix of visits exposed participants to a range of issues from multiple perspectives, allowing them to look beyond the scope of their regular context in their own organization and locale.

The President of the Dialogue, HRH The Princess Royal, Princess Anne also visited four of the study groups during their tours, in Bermuda, Grenada, Jamaica and the Barbados. This provided enhanced profile for the Dialogue in these countries along with increased media coverage.

Closing Conference: The full Dialogue reconvened for four days in Barbados where each study group prepared a presentation for the plenary on what they had observed and learned.

Final Presentation: Each study group prepared a presentation on what it observed and learned during the study tours for the Closing Conference plenary sessions. The Closing Conference was attended by the president, HRH The Princess Royal, Princess Anne, participants and invited guests. Each study group also had the opportunity to spend a half hour with the Princess Anne to discuss their experiences and share their observations with her.

Key Stakeholders – Roles and Responsibilities

The CCELD is governed by a Board of Directors and supported by an Advisory Committee of distinguished leaders from Canada and the Caribbean. Five Co-chairs included both Caribbean and Canadian senior representatives including a senior vice president of Scotia Bank and the Governor of Bermuda, while some of the members of the Advisory Council include: Galen Weston, CEO of Loblaw's, and Kevin Lynch P.C., former Clerk of the Privy Council.

A 12 member Coordination Team oversaw day-to-day planning and was responsible for securing the necessary funding and providing overall leadership. A 165 member Steering Committee shared the tasks of organizing and implementing the Dialogue. Committee members organized study tour programs in locations in the Caribbean countries and Canada and planned the opening and closing programs. More than half of the team members were Caribbean residents. These members, supplemented by the

new participants, will provide a strong force to sustaining learning and continuing the conferences over the years ahead.

These volunteers, selected to ensure multi-sector representation, were from the highest echelons of the public and private sectors. This approach aimed to secure local ownership through the responsibility of local committees to establish study tours drawing on local businesses, labour organizations, government and community resources to allow exploration of important leadership issues. The same was true for the identification and sponsorship of participants, who are the “currency” of the dialogue and the primary means for achieving the economic and social progress for the Caribbean and Canada.

These volunteers and team members received no compensation and funded their own expenses for attending meetings

Summary of Overall Results

The 2011 CCELD was a success both in terms of providing its participants with an exceptional learning experience as well as in meeting its stated program objectives.

- Of the 13 indicators established for phase one of the program evaluation, 12 of them surpassed and one met expectations.
- 100% of participants indicated that they were satisfied with their overall CCELD experience.
- 94% indicated that their experience was relevant to achieving the program's objectives, and 98% indicated that the CCELD experience has helped to develop their leadership skills.
- 97% responded that the CCELD improved their understanding of key issues in Canada while 91% responded similarly with regard to an improved understanding of key issues in the Caribbean.
- 98% of participants indicated that their CCELD experience – in particular their study tours – exposed them to new strategies and approaches demonstrated by other senior leaders when dealing with challenges.
- All study tour group presentations made reference to key strategic issues observed during study tours; and all 10 presentations underlined their understanding of how leaders applied their leadership to resolving or advancing those issues.
- 98% of participants indicated that the CCELD provided an opportunity to develop a strong peer network across national and regional boundaries. These results will be further evaluated in phase 2 of the evaluation process.
- 100% of participants indicated that they saw value in consulting/working with their CCELD colleagues in the future to help them in addressing local and regional challenges. 100% also indicated that they planned to stay in contact with their CCELD colleagues and to add their contact information to the online directory for networking purposes. These results will also be further evaluated in phase 2 of the evaluation process.
- Participants were strong in their support of the planning and execution of the CCELD. 97% indicated that the Opening was well planned and supported the program's objectives; an average of 97% indicated the same of their study tour experience; and 89% for the Closing.
- Consistently, themes of volunteering, helping to prepare for a 2015 Dialogue, and fundraising were commented on with respect to the participant's role as alumni.
- 100% of participants indicated that they would recommend the CCELD to others.

Summary Table of Program Evaluation Results

Measure and Indicators	Evaluation Result	Level of Achievement
The CCELD's effectiveness in increasing participants' strategic and leadership knowledge and skills		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90% + of study tour group presentations identify issues facing organizations, sectors, societies and nations in Canada and the Caribbean regions. 	100 % of study tour group presentations identified issues. 98% of participants indicated an improved understanding of Canadian issues.	Surpassed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 85% + of participants indicate an improved level of understanding of key issues. 	91 % of participants indicated an improved understanding of Caribbean issues. 98% indicated an increase in leadership knowledge and skills.	Surpassed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90% + of study tour group presentations link strategies being taken by other senior leaders to specific challenges. 	100 % of study tour group presentations identified leadership strategies to address issues.	Surpassed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 85% + of participants indicate an increased awareness of strategies. 	98% indicated increased awareness of strategies being taken by leaders.	Surpassed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75% + of program alumni report using the knowledge and skills acquired through their program experience. 	Not able to assess at this time – 3-month.	Not able to assess at this time – 3-month
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% + of CCELD alumni men and women who report being in increasingly responsible positions. 	Not able to assess at this time – 2-year.	Not able to assess at this time – 2-year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% + of CCELD alumni men and women who report making decisions that positively impact economic and social performance in sponsoring organizations. 	Not able to assess at this time – 2-year.	Not able to assess at this time – 2-year

Measure and Indicators	Evaluation Result	Level of Achievement
The CCELD's impact and success in creating a sustainable network		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 95% + of participants rate the opportunity afforded to them by the program to develop a network across national and regional boundaries as agree/strongly agree. 	98% of participants responded agreed or strongly agreed that the opportunity afforded to them by the program to develop a network across national and regional boundaries.	Surpassed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 95%+ of participants commit to adding their contact information to an online directory. 	100% of participants committed to adding their contact information.	Surpassed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 95%+ of participants commit to follow-up contact with their network of CCELD colleagues. 	100% committed to following-up with their network.	Surpassed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 65% of participants commit to working with peer colleagues to meet local and regional challenges. 	100% of participants indicated that they saw value in consulting/working with their CCELD colleagues.	Surpassed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75% + of alumni report accessing their CCELD peer network once they have returned to work and communities. 	Not able to assess at this time – 3-month.	Not able to assess at this time – 3-month
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% + of alumni report accessing their CCELD peer network with the intent of strengthening ties and collaboration. 	Not able to assess at this time – 3-month.	Not able to assess at this time – 3-month
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 65% + of CCELD alumni report having contacted and/or being contacted by their CCELD colleagues within the past six-months. 	Not able to assess at this time – 2 year.	Not able to assess at this time – 2 year
The effectiveness of the CCELD's planning and delivery		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 95% + of participants rate their experience of the program as agree/strongly agree. 	100% satisfaction	Surpassed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 95% + of participants indicate that they will recommend the program to others. 	100% of participants indicate they will recommend the program to others.	Surpassed

Measure and Indicators	Evaluation Result	Level of Achievement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90% + of participants respond agree/strongly agree that content they experienced contributed to achieving program objectives. 	94% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that content they experienced contributed to achieving program objectives.	Surpassed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of men and women participants overall and by region who complete the program. 	100% men, 100% women participants who started the program completed it.	Met
Opportunities for improvement		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> < 10 identified areas for improvement by participants. 	6 areas were identified as having opportunities for improvement.	Surpassed

Gender Equity

The gender balance of CCELD participants met the goals for gender equity set-out at the program's conception. In addition, women were integrated into all aspects of the Dialogue's planning and delivery. The following represent the percentage of women involved in the key CCELD activities. In each case, the roles and influence of men and women were equal.

- Program Participants: 52%
- Advisory Council: 25%
- Steering Committee: 42%
- Program Co-Chairs: 60%
- Planning Committee: 46%
- Program Coordinating and Logistics Team: 100%
- Speakers, presenters and Site Visit Hosts: 64%

Participants' Overall CCELD Experience

100% of participants indicated that they were satisfied with their overall CCELD experience, with 86% of participants reporting strong agreement and the remaining 14% reporting agreement. 100% of participants also indicated that they would recommend the CCELD to others.

94% of participants indicated that they either agreed or strongly agreed that the content they experienced through presentations and study tours was relevant to achieving the program's objectives. Results continued their positive trend as participants rated their experience in relation to each element of the CCELD.

Participant comments were overwhelmingly positive throughout the program evaluation, citing strong program organization and execution, an excellent opportunity for networking and the diversity of exposure to leaders and organizations. The following represents a small sample of participant comments on CCELD's strengths:

"In the CCELD model, participants were challenged to view a multitude of perspectives in the successes and failures leaders in different industries in different countries have experienced. That experience was profound! In addition, the use of dedicated and seasoned liaisons that had valuable background in places to be visited was extremely useful in adding value to the public information."

"The whole experience was excellent, especially the inclusion of Alumni. Replicate this and it will be a success."

"The great networking and collaboration between the Canadian and Caribbean counterparts."

"The diversity of organizing committees, volunteers and presenters. Organizational structure and use of social media to begin connecting people prior to the experience."

Achievement of Objectives and Immediate Outcomes

Increasing Strategic & Leadership Knowledge and Skills

98% of participants were in agreement or strong agreement that the CCELD experience has helped to develop their leadership skills. This level of response is particularly relevant given the complexities and challenges involved in leadership development.

97% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that their experience improved their understanding of key issues in Canada. 91% responded similarly with regard to an improved understanding of key issues in the Caribbean.

As well, 98% of participants indicated that their CCELD experience – in particular their study tours – exposed them to new strategies and approaches demonstrated by other senior leaders when dealing with challenges.

Below are sample participant comments that relate specifically to their CCELD learning experience of strategic and leadership issues and strategies:

"I enjoyed interaction with the different sectors from within my group and the organization I visited."

"The Dialogue between/within the group provided an excellent framework for learning. I cannot recall another time in my life where I have had such an experience."

“The diversity of our group was a major contributor to my CCELD experience.”

“Dialogue with diverse companies and institutions. Experienced some institutions that were exceeding and others that were failing.”

“It was a great learning experience for me, particularly the Caribbean leg. My eyes were open to the fact that I was not as aware of issues in the Caribbean as I thought. I know I have made lifelong friends among my group members.”

“The companies and organizations visited were great in discussing their challenge and the leadership style and value system in the work place. Excellent exposure and learnings for me.”

The data from the Participant Questionnaires are further supported through the study tour group presentations in Barbados. All presentations made reference to key strategic issues that participants observed during their study tours. Overall, issues were recorded 162 times, representing an average of 10.6 per presentation. The minimum number of issues recorded during a presentation was five, and the most was 13. While two presentations did not have a large number of issues recorded relative to others, participants explicitly stated that they chose to limit the number of issues to present for the purpose of creating a coherent narrative.

Some of the strategic issues identified in presentations included: natural resources, environment and geography, innovation, population and demographics, education, economic and financial challenges, evolution in industry, culture and diversity, social responsibility, productivity, labour relations, evolutions in technology, sustainability, sectoral partnerships, tourism, as well as political environment and context.

In all 10 presentations, participants underlined their understanding of how leaders applied their leadership to issues, through the use of specific examples drawn from their study tour experiences. Groups were able to relate issues to specific leaders and the leadership strategies that they were using to address those issues. In most cases, group presentations were explicit in linking one or more leadership strategies to specific issues, resulting in over 180 recorded strategies over the 10 presentations.

Some of the leadership strategies that groups identified as being applied by leaders to address issues included: promotion of honesty and accountability, communication, organizational strategies, adaptability, courageous and clear decision-making, fostering creativity, being flexible, employee and stakeholder engagement, collaboration, vision, strategic thinking, managing complexity, consultation and community engagement, change management, building trust, and developing consensus.

In addition to being able to present their prepared observations and experiences through presentations, all groups – and participants within each group – were able to respond clearly to questions asked of them at the conclusion of their presentation. They were able to provide further examples and deeper analysis and explanation with regard to issues and leadership strategies. Their ability to answer questions in an ad hoc way was further evidence of that they had learned from – and integrated – their CCELD experience.

Creating a Sustainable Network

The program's objective of establishing a strong peer network with a shared experience and commitment to shaping the future of their sectors, nations and the region would appear to at least initially be successfully met with 98% of participants indicating that the CCELD has provided an opportunity to develop a strong peer network across national and regional boundaries.

At the conclusion of the program in Barbados, 100% of participants indicated that they saw value in consulting/working with their CCELD colleagues in the future to help them in addressing local and regional challenges. 100% also indicated that they planned to stay in contact with their CCELD colleagues and to add their contact information to the online directory for networking purposes. Only one participant indicated that they would not use the online directory to stay connected with their CCELD colleagues.

Consistently, themes of volunteering, helping to prepare for a 2015 Dialogue, and fundraising were commented on with respect to the participant's role as an alumnus. The very high response rate captures their enthusiasm for the CCELD and how the new alumni hope to contribute in the future. Several participants mentioned acting as an ambassador for the CCELD to help promote interest in future sessions.

Below are some of the many comments by participants when asked how they may contribute to future Dialogues.

"Participate in any future regional or smaller dialogues."

"Become part of the planning committee in my voluntary for the 2015 CCELD."

"Look at the possibility of replicating this (on a small scale) @ the community level."

"Spread information to others; continue supporting local committee in my country."

"Talk about it in my country and encourage other young people to take part."

"Active part of planning committee. Be an advocate for CCELD. Keep the dialogues going."

Key Activities

All of the key activities and deliverables were delivered as outlined in the program description.

Participant Recruitment

The CCELD demographics reflect the initial intent of participant recruitment. There were 117 participants which was three fewer than intended. This gap represents last-minute cancellations of three participants prior to the Opening in Ottawa.

34% of the participants were from Canada and 66% from the Caribbean. This division across regions reflects the intent of participant selection, which set out to recruit 40 Canadian and 80 Caribbean participants.

Business and government represented the largest sectors (42% and 30% respectively) with labour (16%), non-government organizations (7%), and other (5%) sectors, representing the remainder. Under “other” three participants identified themselves as educators.

Study tours groups ranged from 9 to 12 participants each (I didn’t think there were any with nine -check with Karen) and attempted to reflect the Canada to Caribbean participation rate as well as a consistent gender split within the groups. The Calgary/Jamaica study tour group was the least reflective of the regional split with 25% of participants coming from Canada and the remaining 75% from the Caribbean. Gender dispersion within each group was fairly balanced with the exception of the Toronto/Bahamas study tour group where only 33% of participants were male.

Opening Session in Ottawa

Comments about the Opening were generally positive with common themes emerging, including excellent organization and a strong platform from which to experience the remainder of the conference. The planning of the Opening session received strong positive responses, with 97% either demonstrating agreement or strong agreement. Certainly these numbers are supported with many comments about how well organized the sessions were.

“Excellent cross section of people from the various sections of business, labour, civil society etc.”

“Provided an excellent base before we embarked on the actual study tours.”

“The Opening session was brilliant in setting the platform for the entire Dialogue.”

“Very powerful speakers that got our minds flowing.”

“A waterfall of information that will stay with me for the rest of my life.”

While 94% of participants selected either strongly agree or agree in relation to the effectiveness and relevance of the Opening presentations, there were some remarks that provide feedback on areas for improvement including requests for more

opportunities to dialogue and team build prior to the study tours. Below is a sample of the suggestions for future improvement in the design of the Opening session:

“Not enough dialogue between presenters and audience. Some presentations too technical.”

“The opening could be improved with greater variety in delivery and less reliance on lecture followed by Q and A. Consider small group discussions to break up the broader plenary.”

“More balance between expositors. Include team building exercises (guided).”

“Many of the workshops were informative and showed examples of the type of leader I'd like to be. It opened my eyes to what I should be looking out for on the tour. However, perhaps an afternoon of team building would help cement groups as "teams" before heading out on the road.”

There is significant evidence that the Opening fulfilled its purpose of providing a strong and relevant foundation for the study tours. Only 13% of participants (7 from each region) selected neutral as their response to this question. Comments from those participants include:

“Providing a more clear understanding and expectation of the teams with respect to the purpose of the dialogues - to focus on leadership and not solve problems.”

“Some of the opening sessions were difficult to place into context, but it all came together in the end.”

“Orientation on regional governance and issues would have been beneficial as well as cultural leadership issues. Women in leadership in Caribbean, regional diversity of Caribbean countries.”

Canada/Caribbean Study Tours

The data trended very positively for the study tours with results for all questions rating between 96% to 98% strongly agree or agree. Study tours also generated the greatest amount of comments and feedback. Participants overwhelmingly indicated that they felt the tours were generally very well managed and organized and that they were pleased with the diversity and number of visits.

“Canada Tour exposed me and enlightened me on seeing that everywhere has its own issues and that I can do and play my part in my society in the Caribbean.”

“The tour lived up beyond my expectations and helped me appreciate my country, culture and that of others even more. The volunteers and sponsors I cannot stop to thank.”

“The study tours were excellent! They really opened my eyes to all sorts of different perspectives.”

“The study tour was great. It is difficult to believe I was able to meet so many people and learn so many things, all within a relatively short period of two weeks.”

“The tour was very intense but taught me as leaders we have to function under all kinds of situations but how we deal with them is what matters.”

“The study tour gave significant insight into the challenges and opportunities facing Canada and the Caribbean.”

From the 69 comments received about the study tours, the following two areas were identified by a significant number of participants as considerations for improvement:

Visits felt “rushed” or “hectic” and participants felt “unable to absorb” what they were experiencing. They would have appreciated more scheduled time to dialogue about each site visit.

In addition, a smaller number of participants (two to three) identified respect for the Sabbath as an area for future consideration, as well as being felt let down by the level of dialogue in which some members of their tour group were able to engage. Both of these issues, while only reported upon by a small number of participants, are worthy of consideration both in the program design as well as the participant selection process.

Closing Session in Barbados

The overall response for the Closing session was quite positive, ranging from 89% to 97% agreement and strong agreement. Participants were clearly energized, inspired, and excited to put their new knowledge to work. As with the Opening and study tours, participants felt the Closing was extremely well organized (99%).

“Enjoyed listening to what the other groups learned on their study tours.”

“Excellent! Excellent! Excellent! Benefitted immensely from the other tours as well as my groups this session.”

“Excellent planning and execution which lead to a successful conference. The importance of collaboration was evident.”

“The group presentations were creative and well informed. The speakers were dynamic and provided good insight.”

“The variety and quality of group presentations were exceptionally good and exemplified the varied possible solutions to the challenge we will face in the future.”

“Bringing the groups back together at the end really give me a chance to share in the experiences in 20 minutes.”

“Closing was fabulous! Bringing us back together with the entire group to share our experiences was incredible.”

While the overall data trend was very positive, the Closing also received the greatest number of “neutral” or “disagree” responses. 12 participants (11% of participants) responded neutrally or in disagreement to the statement relating to the Closing enabling them to synthesize and present their knowledge in a way that was meaningful to them, and eight participants (7% of participants) responded neutral or disagree as to the effectiveness of the Closing presentations.

Comments provided by participants provide some insight into these results, and focus primarily on providing a greater opportunity for dialogue. Participants expressed that they would like to:

Feel more engaged in processing their new knowledge by having fewer panels and more dialogue sessions with members of other tour groups;
Have more opportunity to share learning across groups; and
Create stronger peer networks outside their own study tour group.

These comments are addressable through different learning design approaches, and should likely be considered as future CCELD Closing sessions are designed.

Printed Resources

Participants suggested creating a binder or booklet rather than having an abundance of loose sheets. There was also a suggestion to have a digital version sent out. Additionally, comments were made requesting more details be provided prior to the CCELD.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

While the initial reaction to the 2011 CCEDL by participants was overwhelmingly positive, seven recommendations for the future were identified:

1. Provide more opportunity to dialogue, debrief and/or synthesize knowledge throughout;
2. Provide more free time, opportunity to rest and/or greater access to social activities during study tours;
3. Refine the focus of presenters and presentations during the Opening and Closing – including greater opportunities for interaction and dialogue;
4. Provide more of the materials prior to the CCELD, in a user-friendlier format (i.e. binder vs. loose papers) and/or digital format;
5. Provide stronger Study Tour Group Co-Chair educational sessions / cultural sensitivity sessions; and
6. Provide more time in site-visits, longer site-visits.

Most, if not all of these suggested areas for improvement are manageable through consideration of minor adjustments in program scheduling, design, and planning.

POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The strong success of this project offers excellent opportunities to communicate Canada's commitment to the Caribbean Region and the Commonwealth.

In particular, the October Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Perth, Australia would represent an opportunity to internationally demonstrate Canada's commitment to the reaffirmation of the 2002 CHOGM in support for strengthening leadership for public sector reform, since the CCELD aims to develop leaders across all sectors, including the public sector.

In addition, it represents a successful project in support of the Government of Canada's vision for re-engagement with the Americas as expressed by Prime Minister Harper in 2007: that promoting prosperity, security and democratic governance is integral to the Project. In particular, enhancing relationships between Canadian and Caribbean organizational leadership framework can enhance the prosperity of both Canada and the Caribbean region.

While there are a number of other donors and supporters to the CCELD, the Government of Canada was its largest single donor through contributions from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). At both the Opening and Closing events in Ottawa and Barbados respectively, as well as in any printed materials or releases, the Government of Canada was figured prominently over other donors. This gave the Government of Canada significant exposure to a large number of individuals and organizations within Canada and across the Caribbean.

Strong support was provided by the governments of many of the Caribbean countries visited during a number of the study tours with participants being hosted at social functions by senior government leaders including in some cases the Prime Minister. As well, senior government officials including cabinet ministers participated in some of the learning sessions with the participants, both in the Caribbean and in Canadian provinces where study tours took place. At the Closing in Barbados the Prime Minister of Barbados hosted a reception/dinner for all participants including HRH Princess Anne, and the Minister of Education participated in the closing session.

As indicated earlier, the Governor of Bermuda served as one of the Co-Chairs of the Dialogue and played an active role in both the opening and closing as well as with the study tour which visited Bermuda.

Although the Minister for CIDA was unable to attend the Opening, the President of CIDA who spoke at the Opening ceremonies conveyed her remarks of support.

PUBLIC RELATIONS ISSUES

There were no identified public relations issues that emerged through this project or any that are anticipated beyond its completion.

There was considerable positive media coverage of the Dialogue in many of the Caribbean countries visited by Study Tours and in some cases the Group Co-chairs participated in local TV or radio shows to share the experience with a broader audience.

How does CCELD know that the participants it selected are truly top-flight individuals?

In order to ensure that applicants were “top-flight” individuals from their organizations, a two-stage application process was used to select candidates that included criteria to ensure that applicants were considered by their organizations as up and coming leaders who were positioned to eventually head up or provide a significant contribution.

In order to capture details that would allow for the CCELD to identify excellent candidates, the application process was broken into two stages, stage one where the applicant is asked to respond to a series of questions about education, job responsibilities and community involvement.

In stage two, the sponsor is asked to respond to a series of questions in regards to the candidate who is applying. The sponsor must give a rationale as to why they feel that their candidate should be included in the dialogue. Questions include,

1. Why do you support this application?
2. How do you know the applicant?
3. In what way does the applicant demonstrate capacity for leadership?
4. Is there a potential to advance to a senior leadership role? If yes, please indicate:

Question 4 is of particular importance as it clarifies the intent of the organization to advance the candidate and therefore establishes them as a “leader” within the organization.

Each stage of the application process is reviewed by an Application Review Committee (ARC) who approved or rejected candidates based on a criteria of excellence that included the following attributes:

- Intellect
- Initiative
- Leadership experience
- Strong organizational capability
- Skills in facilitation and management of teams
- Record of motivation of people
- Public speaking capabilities
- Self confidence
- An ability to inspire and encourage others
- Are physically and mentally able to handle the rigors of the tour program

What was the number of individuals that applied in the selection process?

The number of applicants consider for the selections process was 190. Of the 190 applications, 120 were chosen, 40 from Canada and 80 from the Caribbean.

Due to last minute changes the final numbers were 116 participants with 40 coming from Canada and 76 from the Caribbean.

Media reports covering the CCELD 2011

The following is list of the media reports covering the CCELD 2011. Many of the tour teams instigated their own local media for further engagement that may not be included in this final list.

There was one publication in Canada with *Share* Newspaper, a weekly community newspaper which serves the Black and Caribbean community in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) of Ontario.

Date	Publication
12-Aug-10	BVI News
22-Aug-10	Jamaica Observer
10-Sep-10	Caribbean News Now
13-Sep-10	Barbados Advocate
23-Sep-10	The Tribune
13-Apr-11	The Nation
5-May-11	Royal Gazette
7-May-11	Nassau Guardian
8-May-11	Bahamas Weekly
9-May-11	Bahamas Islands Info
10-May-11	Royal Gazette
10-May-11	Bernews
20-May-11	Barbados Today
20-May-11	The Tribune
22-May-11	Jamaica Observer
27-May-11	Scotiabank Press Release
1-Jun-11	Ambergris Today
1-Jun-11	Caribbean Camera
5-Jun-11	Royal Gazette
5-Jun-11	Antigua Speaks
6-Jun-11	Royal Gazette
6-Jun-11	Grenadian Voice
8-Jun-11	Share

8-Jun-11	Memorial University Gazette
8-Jun-11	Jamaica Observer
10-Jun-11	Jamaica Observer
20-Jun-11	Dominica Vibes
20-Jun-11	Trinidad & Tobago Guardian
26-Jun-11	The Nation
13-Jul-11	Nassau Guardian