Mobilizing people and ideas for an innovative, inclusive and prosperous world

Universities Canada.

Universities Canada's response to Canada's international assistance review consultations

July 2016

Cover photo:
Trilby Buck, University of Victoria, Canada-Commonwealth Co-op: Developing world ready graduates through international STEM based work integrated learning: Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Scholarships (QES) program recipient who conducted an internship with the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences (AIMS) in Biriwa, Ghana.

Photo below:
Alexander Suvajac, Emily Carr University of Art and Design: Students For Development intern who conducted an internship at the Winaca Foundation in Baguio, Philippines.

Canada's universities are critical to Canada's international assistance and to mobilizing people and ideas for an innovative, inclusive and prosperous world. Through leveraging research expertise and networks, engaging researchers and students, working with communities, and supporting the provision of quality higher education in partner countries, universities play an active role in reducing poverty, creating new opportunities for the world's poorest and most marginalized, and building more inclusive societies. Canada's universities are a key, and often underleveraged, asset in shaping an effective and innovative approach for the delivery of Canadian development assistance for the benefit of all citizens in partner countries.

As the voice of Canada's universities at home and abroad, representing the interests of 97 Canadian public and private not-for-profit universities, Universities Canada is grateful for the opportunity to provide input into this important process of re-examining and re-thinking Canada's international assistance policy.

We have 8 recommendations detailed below:

1. Universities Canada recommends that the Government of Canada's international assistance be built on evidence-based research.

To make international assistance delivery more efficient, effective and innovative and to measure results, approaches to international assistance must be built on evidence-based research. University research across all aspects of international development (social, economic, political, environmental) can shape Canada's international assistance efforts to ensure the greatest impact for improving the quality of life of the world's poorest and most vulnerable populations. Researchers at Canadian universities can undertake comprehensive and rigorous studies to inform Canada's approach to international assistance. Long-term, sustained research funding and support for international research collaboration will enable Canada to build on a strong platform of expertise and broaden the impacts of research for development. Canadian university researchers are globally connected. Forty-three percent of scientific papers published in Canada from 2005-10 were authored with an international collaborator, the seventh-highest in the world.[1] These collaborations involve thousands of institutions in over 180 countries or territories around the world. Canadian university researchers are collaborating not only with other academic researchers, but are working with governments, non-governmental organizations, Indigenous groups and industry at home and abroad to make a difference in the lives of the poorest and most vulnerable, and in support of fragile states.

There is a wealth of Canadian research expertise in all of the policy areas identified in the *International Assistance Review Discussion Paper* including but not limited to:

- **the health and rights of women;**
  The Healthy Child Uganda project, established in 2004 and led by researchers at the University of Calgary in collaboration with Mbarara University of Science and Technology and the Canadian Paediatric Society, aims to improve the health and survival rates of pregnant women, newborns, and young children living in the Bushenyi and Rubirizi districts in southwest Uganda. So far, Healthy Child Uganda has trained 500 health professionals, over 5,500 Community Health Workers and distributed over a 1,000 birth kits at health centres.[2]

- **clean economic growth and climate change;**
  With funding from the International Research Initiative on Adaptation, five Canadian universities (Institut national de la recherche scientifique, the University of Western Ontario, the University of Regina, McGill University and the University of Waterloo) are currently carrying out

The Canada-Latin American and the Caribbean Research Exchange Grants (LACREG)
Since it was established in 1995, the Canada-Latin American and the Caribbean Research Exchange Grants (LACREG) program has supported international partnerships among academic researchers in Canada and their counterparts in Latin America and the Caribbean, as they attempted to solve some of the most pressing challenges facing the region. The opportunity to share knowledge, expertise and different scientific cultures often results in remarkable innovations that benefit the most vulnerable. For example, supported by LACREG, researchers from Memorial University of Newfoundland and Justinien University Hospital in Haiti fabricated a laparoscopy simulator for only 5$, and it is currently used to teach medical examinations performed inside the abdomen. LACREG supported 28 international research projects like this in a wide range of disciplines and countries.

[1] Council of Canadian Academies, *The State of Science and Technology in Canada, 2012* (Ottawa: Council of Canadian Academies, 2012).
[2] http://www.ccghr.ca/resources/harmonization/uganda/uganda-projects/
http://www.can-mnch.ca/healthy-child-uganda-10-years-of-partnership/

research that will help vulnerable populations in Canada and developing countries to determine adaptation strategies that will best protect people, communities, and economic sectors such as tourism and agriculture from the impacts of climate change.[3]

- **inclusive and accountable governance, peaceful pluralism, respect for diversity, and human rights, including the rights of women and refugees;**
  Research led by Dr. Bessma Momani, Associate professor at the Balsillie School of International Affairs, will inform public policy about promoting responsible citizenship among Arab-Canadian youth and engaging them as citizens within a healthy multicultural society.[4] The project will look at the involvement of Arab Canadian youth of the diaspora in transnationalism, political debates, and conflicts concerning their countries of origin, as well as their sense of belonging to and their social integration in Canada. The project will also examine feelings of cohesion and division in Arab Canadian communities, with a special emphasis on their transnational ties with their Arab countries of origin and their potential direct and indirect involvement in intraregional conflicts and civil war.[5]

- **peace and security; and**
  Dr. Myriam Denov, Canada Research Chair in Youth, Gender and Armed conflict at McGill University, is investigating the lasting effects of war on three poorly understood groups of children and their families: children born of wartime rape; former child soldiers and their reintegration into society following war; and children and families who face migration and resettlement as a result of war. Denov's goal is not only to uncover the long-term impacts of war on children and their families, but to provide a solid, pragmatic knowledge base for meeting their complex needs both during and after war. This research will help local communities, governments, non-governmental organizations and the United Nations to take concrete action when it comes to war-affected children and families, and will influence future policy and programming at the local, national and international levels.[6]

- **responding to humanitarian crises and the challenges faced by refugees and displaced populations;**
  "Forced Migration of Colombians : Fear, Historical Memory and Public Representation", an IDRC-funded project led by researchers at the School of Social Work at the University of British Columbia in collaboration with Corporación Región para el Desarrollo y la Democracia (COREGION) in Colombia researched policies and practices for re-integrating internationally displaced persons (IDPs) in Colombia; for protecting and providing humanitarian assistance to Colombia IDPs in Ecuador; and for protecting and resettling refugees in Canada.[7]

The Students for Development (SFD)
The Students for Development (SFD) program ran from 2005 to 2014 and supported 1,608 internships in low- and middle-income countries. It was financially supported by Global Affairs Canada. SFD enabled university students in Canada and low- and middle-income countries to enrich their learning experience and contribute to international development, while strengthening links between institutions in Canada and overseas. SFD interns grew personally and professionally, and also contributed to international development challenges such as improving the lives of children and youth, ensuring food security and strengthening sustainable economies.

[3] https://www.idrc.ca/sites/default/files/sp/Documents%20EN/IRIACC-Frequently-Asked-Questions.pdf
[4] http://www.univcan.ca/innovators/bessma-momani/
[5] http://www.fondationtrudeau.ca/sites/default/files/projet-momani-eng-webv2.pdf
[6] http://www.chairs-chaires.gc.ca/chairholders-titulaires/profile-eng.aspx?profileId=3248
[7] https://idl-bnc.idrc.ca/dspace/handle/10625/44345

The examples presented above represent a small but indicative sample of Canadian university research excellence in international development work. There is significant opportunity to further tap into this vast resource of knowledge and expertise to ensure that the best minds are brought to bear on the world's biggest problems and the best insights are mobilized for maximum impact. Canadian research findings are also contributing to informing best practices in international assistance delivery to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and innovation in Canadian and international approaches.

2. Universities Canada recommends that the Government of Canada mobilize Canadian youth in Canadian international assistance to build a globally fluent generation that is supportive of international engagement.

Canadian students play a pivotal role in development assistance through active participation in international assistance projects, and international study and research experiences. The involvement of Canadian youth in these experiences serves to foster the development of globally-minded Canadian citizens who will carry forward Canada's commitment to international assistance for decades to come. Engaging students in international assistance is an important element in ensuring the ongoing delivery of effective and innovative international assistance in partner countries.

As stated by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau during a June 28, 2016 town hall with Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto and university students to discuss international experiences: "Young people understand that we're in a globalized world right now, and the more we can challenge ourselves to understand different realities, different perspectives, different cultures, the more we discover about ourselves and our place in an increasingly complex world. The more we can engage in the kinds of dynamic learning that solid exchanges between countries [foster], the better it'll be for young people and for our countries as well."

Canadian universities have developed significant expertise in the provision of work-integrated learning opportunities. More than half of today's undergraduates benefit from experiential learning such as co-ops, internships and service learning, as part of their university education. Enrolment in co-op programs at universities has jumped by 25 percent in recent years, from 53,000 students in 2006 to 65,000 students in 2013. There is significant opportunity to scale up the participation of Canadian students in work-integrated learning experiences in service to Canada's international assistance efforts. Furthermore, Canadian universities can share best practices in work-integrated learning for the advancement of education and labour market preparation in partner countries supported by Canadian development assistance.

Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Scholarships (QES) Program

The Queen Elizabeth Scholars program (QES) is a collaborative initiative led by the Rideau Hall Foundation, Community Foundations of Canada and Universities Canada, with contributions from Global Affairs Canada, the International Development Research Centre, Canadian universities, and a wide range of partners from all sectors. Launched in 2014, the QES program has engaged 37 universities in every Canadian province and 85% of the Commonwealth. The program is a flexible platform for global talent exchange, and seeks to build a dynamic community of young global leaders across the Commonwealth to create lasting impacts both at home and abroad through cross-cultural exchanges encompassing international education, discovery and inquiry, and professional experiences. The first phase of the program will offer approximately 2,000 scholarships over four years.

In 2015-16, the first full year of the program, 170 scholars participated in the program. Scholarships covered a diversity of themes, including Indigenous issues, children and youth, education, environment, food security, gender, governance and health. Ninety-two Canadian scholars undertook scholarship activities in developing countries and 51 incoming scholars from developing countries were awarded scholarships to study at the graduate level in Canada.

A new $10 million contribution from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) is helping to expand the scope and reach of QES. The funding from IDRC will offer new learning opportunities for doctoral, post-doctoral and early career researchers from low- and middle-income countries, as well as in Canada, seeking to enrich their academic, professional and cross-cultural experiences. Researchers in low- and middle-income countries will have greater access to the advanced education, training and mentorship that are vital to cutting-edge innovation; and doctoral students and early career researchers in Canada will gain more exposure to the international experience they need to become leaders in globally competitive work environments.

3. Universities Canada recommends that the Government of Canada work with university campus-based incubators and accelerators to develop new and innovative ways to address the world's challenges and involve and engage more Canadians in international assistance efforts.

Campus-based business and social innovation expertise in incubators and accelerators could be better leveraged to address complex social, economic and environmental problems in the world's poorest nations. There is a significant opportunity to differentiate the Canadian brand of international assistance as an approach that solves development challenges through innovation.

4. Universities Canada recommends that the Government of Canada leverage and build on the networks built through Canadian universities' research, mobility and development activities to sustain Canada's longer term impact in international assistance.

Universities are often the first to build relationships in countries facing significant challenges where more formal bilateral relations are not active and remain connected throughout the continuum of relationship development. Canadian universities play a key role in maintaining relationships as countries transition from being recipients of official development assistance to becoming emerging economies. Universities are engaged with partners around the world and can play a role in long-term bilateral partnerships as countries make this important transition to developing a deeper relationship with Canada through research, academic collaboration and 'people-to-people' ties.

As part of their internationalization efforts, Canadian universities have a long history of international collaboration in the developing world. Canada's universities have entered into a multitude of institutional partnerships with actors in low- and middle-income countries and have been a trusted partner in the direct delivery of international assistance for decades. Canadian francophone universities have been very active in development work within La Francophonie – in particular working with francophone institutions in West Africa and the Caribbean. Partnerships are focused on development projects, collaborative research, student mobility, curriculum development or faculty exchanges. Some have been active for decades and have yielded benefits for the world's most vulnerable populations. For example, since 1980, a collaboration between the University of Manitoba and the University of Nairobi has generated ground-breaking HIV research and created clinics in Nairobi that provide care to thousands of patients, including vulnerable groups such as female sex workers. As the pace of internationalization of Canadian institutions accelerates, universities are increasingly active in – and targeting collaboration with developing countries through institutional partnerships; student mobility; teaching, learning and faculty engagement; and international research collaboration.

The BIL-Ryerson DMZ India

In February 2014, His Excellency the Right Honourable David Johnston, Governor General of Canada, officially opened the first Canadian-led accelerator in India, a joint venture between the Bombay Stock Exchange Institute Ltd., (BIL), Ryerson University, Ryerson Futures Inc. (RFI), and Simon Fraser University. The new India-based incubator, the BIL-Ryerson DMZ India, will assist entrepreneurs to fast-track their startups and connect with mentors, customers and investors. It is located at the Bombay Stock Exchange Institute and is built upon Ryerson's model for its successful Digital Media Zone incubator in Toronto. This collaboration lays the groundwork to help young entrepreneurs expand into both the Indian and Canadian markets and also touches on a broad spectrum of areas in the domain of entrepreneurship development and professional development education.

The BIL-Ryerson DMZ India is built on a unique model developed at Ryerson University that has attracted international attention. The Digital Media Zone at Ryerson University (DMZ) is one of Canada's largest incubators and multidisciplinary co-working spaces for young entrepreneurs. Infused with the energy and resources of downtown Toronto, this hub of digital media innovation, collaboration and commercialization is home to both startups and industry solution-providers. The DMZ leads the way in experiential learning and business success by creating a unique ecosystem of education and entrepreneurship. Since opening in April 2010, the DMZ has stimulated Canada's digital economy by incubating and accelerating 126 startups and fostering nearly 1,000 jobs.

5. Universities Canada strongly recommends that the Government of Canada leverage the experiences of Canadian universities in working with Canada's Indigenous population in particular through current reconciliation efforts to support Indigenous populations around the world.

A central tenant of the role of universities is engagement with communities – both locally and globally. Universities are leading reconciliation efforts with Indigenous communities and peoples across the country and bringing together communities of researchers around the world on Indigenous issues. Engagement with Indigenous communities and perspectives will be an important aspect of Canada's international assistance work in partner countries where formal/informal reconciliation processes with Indigenous populations are under way or needed.

Education plays a vital role in the reconciliation process and Canadian universities are working in partnership with Indigenous communities and organizations to develop unique responses to the unique challenges Indigenous students face. Countries around the world are looking to Canadian approaches in bridging the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations.

The expertise of universities in engaging Indigenous communities can be leveraged and integrated into Canada's international assistance efforts involving engagement with Indigenous communities in partner countries to ensure that the needs of these vulnerable populations around the world are addressed by Canada's efforts.

6. Universities Canada recommends that the Government of Canada position higher education as a policy area of priority within Canada's international assistance efforts as a critical component for the long-term success of focus countries.

Education has not been identified as one of the policy issues of priority in the International Assistance Review Discussion Paper. Yet, education is absolutely fundamental in driving change in all of the identified policy areas – and in particular for the empowerment of women and children. To date much international assistance has focused on providing basic education and vocational and technical training. However, for truly transformative societal change and to cultivate the development of tomorrow's leaders – a "systems approach" to quality public education which spans from early childhood education to include university education will be paramount. Canada's universities and university system has significant expertise in educational pathways, bilingual learning, experiential learning and the building/strengthening of higher education systems and institutions. Through collaboration with ministries, governments, institutions, non-governmental organizations, as well as research expertise in pedagogy,

The University Partnerships in Cooperation and Development program (UPCD)

From 1994 to 2013, the University Partnerships in Cooperation and Development program (UPCD) enabled partnerships between Canadian universities and higher education and training organizations in low- and middle-income countries, in order to help these countries to effectively address their sustainable development priorities by increasing the capacity of their postsecondary institutions. UPCD was financially supported by Global Affairs Canada but operated on a cost-shared basis, with Canadian institutions demonstrating their engagement by contributing significant funds to each partnership. In total, UPCD supported 118 university partnership projects in 61 countries in Latin America, Africa, Asia and the Middle East and provided direct training to an average of 930 learners per project.

The Canada-Mexico Roundtable on Aboriginal/Indigenous Higher Education

The Canada-Mexico Roundtable on Aboriginal/Indigenous Higher Education is a group of Canadian universities that are collaborating with Mexico's Intercultural Universities to address common issues in Indigenous higher education and identify collaborative approaches. The consortium formalized their relationship with Mexican universities to better support Indigenous youth and women during the June 2016 State Visit of Mexican President Enrique Peña Nieto to Canada. Canadian postsecondary institution members include Lakehead University, Cape Breton University, First Nations University of Canada, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, Nipissing University, Trent University, University of Lethbridge, University of Manitoba, University of Northern British Columbia, University of Regina, University of Winnipeg and Vancouver Island University.

distance education, and educational administration; Canadian universities have much to contribute as partners in creating education systems to affect societal change in the world's poorest nations.

7. Universities Canada recommends that the Government of Canada work with universities in the integration of refugees into Canadian campuses and communities and in sharing this expertise for the benefit of global resettlement efforts.

Universities are an integral player in facilitating the entry and settlement of refugees from around the world into Canadian society. This work provides an example of the impact of Canada's international assistance at home. Through scholarships in particular, universities are providing the foundation for successful integration into Canadian society and work. For example, the World University Service of Canada (WUSC) now has 85 post-secondary institutions sponsoring refugees next year, and the total numbers of students sponsored has doubled in the last year. Universities will continue to be a key player in ensuring the successful integration of refugees who have arrived in Canada and ensuring that engagement efforts with refugees are sustained for the long-term. Universities also play an important role by collaborating with non-governmental organizations that are responsible for receiving refugees. Universities can share this expertise in integrating newcomers as part of the Government of Canada's efforts to expand resettlement and migration capacity globally.

Universities are also making significant contributions to humanitarian crises and the needs of displaced populations through research on migration, refugees and refugee camps, settlement and integration, peace and conflict, resilience, and the increased complexity of conflicts and climate change as drivers of global displacement. Research findings in these areas can be further mobilized to support Canada's international assistance efforts.

8. Universities Canada recommends that the Government of Canada develop a holistic international assistance policy framework

Universities Canada acknowledges the efforts of the Government of Canada to consult Canadians across a variety of issues and themes including the fundamental science review, the innovation agenda, immigration consultations, trade and investment consultations, and this international assistance review. These reviews/consultations must not be carried out in isolation; rather they present an opportunity for the Government of Canada to build a 'whole-of-government' approach across these areas and to leverage policy decisions and investments. A holistic approach, which links Canada's research excellence, innovation investments and international policy, will be key to ensuring Canada's leadership in solving development challenges.

The Borderless Higher Education for Refugees (BHER)

The Borderless Higher Education for Refugees (BHER) project aims to make educational programs available where refugees need them. In the Global South there are currently some 15.2 million people caught in refugee situations, often for ten years or more as an outcome of war, human rights violations, and/or persecution in their home countries. Attending university or accessing other tertiary degree programs has been almost impossible. Young women face additional barriers to pursuing an education. To redress this situation BHER's aim is to provide gender equitable teacher training programs to working, untrained teachers who can then contribute back to the community, increasing and improving education in the camps which are located in Kenya.

York University is the Canadian Partner Institution responsible for the management of project activities, financial control and reporting to Global Affairs Canada, as well as delivery of the Certificate in Educational Studies (Elementary) and degrees as needed. UBC is the Canadian Partner Institution responsible for the delivery of BHER Diploma in Teacher Education-Secondary in collaboration with Moi University, Kenya.

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