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UniWorld is dedicated to enhancing the visibility of the University Partnerships in Cooperation and Development program.

UniMonde vise à accroître la visibilité du programme de Partenariats universitaires en coopération et développement.

Sustaining progress

Maintenir les progrès

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Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada
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Editorial

by Elizabeth Smith

Communications Manager, Partnership Programs

It's a new year, and in some parts of the world, spring is not far off. New beginnings excite us, but in this issue of *UniWorld* we look instead at the aspect of "what happens when projects end?"

The flagship international development program for universities, the University Partnerships in Cooperation and Development (UPCD), has produced over 150 projects since 1994. Administered by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada and funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), it supports knowledge partnerships between Canadian universities and higher education organizations in developing countries, mainly in Africa, Asia and Latin America. While the term "project" signifies a temporary endeavour, we'll see that many UPCD projects are far from being over, and instead are generating results beyond expectations while sustained and enhanced by our Southern partners.

Perhaps the good outcomes are due to the natural partnerships formed by higher education institutions. They share goals of education, training, research and outreach, while raising educational standards and stimulating innovation to create jobs, deliver basic services, and contribute to social growth and effective governance. When the project ends, the learning continues. Governance models aren't dropped just because the project is over; nor do trainers put aside their new teaching and evaluation methods. In other words, higher education intervention has the potential to support sustainability. Not to mention outcomes that defy measurement – self-pride, autonomy, confidence.

We and our partners wish to thank CIDA for its support to UPCD. The Agency's priority themes are germane to our many successful projects. For example, Laurentian University's partnership with Kinshasha University has tripled food security in some Congolese communities with high-protein maize production (page 3). Vietnam's professional social workers address issues related to children and youth. University courses in social work were initiated through Memorial University in partnership with Vietnam's University of Labour and Social Affairs. Now social work programs are offered in 44 Vietnamese universities; see page 24.

In Ghana, access to university was a problem for many rural dwellers. Then Simon Fraser University adapted its distance education model in 2002 for the University of Cape Coast, and to date this has led to 18,000 graduates in Ghana who now earn better salaries (page 26).

Just like spring – these projects signify a beginning, not an end.

Cover photo: Corn and legumes are staple foods in central Africa.

Photo: © ACDI-CIDA/Roger LeMoyne

Éditorial

par Elizabeth Smith

Gestionnaire de communications, Programmes de partenariats

C'est une nouvelle année qui commence et, dans certaines parties du monde, le printemps frappe déjà à la porte. Le renouveau est toujours enivrant, mais le présent numéro d'*UniMonde* pose plutôt la question suivante : que se passe-t-il lorsque les projets prennent fin?

Le programme de Partenariats universitaires en coopération et développement (PUCD), le programme phare de développement international des universités, a permis la réalisation de plus de 150 projets depuis 1994. Administré par l'Association des universités et collèges du Canada (AUCC) et financé par l'Agence canadienne de développement international (ACDI), ce programme finance des partenariats du savoir entre les universités canadiennes et les établissements d'enseignement supérieur de pays en développement situés principalement en Afrique, en Asie et en Amérique latine. Bien qu'un projet soit temporaire par définition, vous constaterez que de nombreux projets de PUCD arrivés à terme sont en réalité loin d'être finis et produisent des résultats qui dépassent les attentes grâce au soutien et au renforcement des partenaires du Sud.

Ces résultats s'expliquent peut-être par les partenariats naturels qui se forment entre les établissements d'enseignement supérieur. Les établissements partenaires poursuivent des objectifs communs d'éducation, de formation, de recherche et de liaison tout en cherchant à améliorer les normes en matière d'éducation et à stimuler l'innovation en vue de créer des emplois, d'offrir des services de base et de contribuer à la croissance sociale et à l'efficacité de la gouvernance. Lorsque les projets prennent fin, l'apprentissage se poursuit. En effet, les modèles de gouvernance ne sont pas abandonnés à la fin d'un projet, et les formateurs ne mettent pas de côté leurs nouvelles méthodes d'enseignement et d'évaluation. Autrement dit, l'intervention en enseignement supérieur a le potentiel de favoriser la durabilité, sans oublier qu'elle génère des résultats intangibles, comme l'augmentation de la fierté, de l'autonomie et de la confiance chez les participants.

L'AUCC et ses partenaires souhaitent remercier l'ACDI pour son soutien au programme de PUCD. Les thèmes prioritaires de l'Agence se trouvent au centre de bon nombre de projets couronnés de succès. Par exemple, le partenariat entre l'Université Laurentienne et l'Université de Kinshasa, présenté en page 5, a permis de tripler la sécurité alimentaire de collectivités congolaises grâce à la production d'une variété de maïs très protéinée. Pour aider les travailleurs sociaux du Vietnam qui doivent résoudre des problèmes vécus par les enfants et les jeunes, l'Université Memorial a élaboré des cours en travail social en partenariat avec l'Université des affaires du travail et des affaires sociales du Vietnam. Des programmes d'études en travail social sont désormais offerts dans 44 universités vietnamiennes (lire l'article en page 24).

Au Ghana, bon nombre d'habitants des régions rurales avaient difficilement accès à l'université. L'Université Simon Fraser a donc adapté en 2002 son modèle d'enseignement à distance afin qu'il puisse être utilisé par l'Université de Cape Coast. À ce jour, 18 000 Ghanéens ont obtenu un diplôme et gagnent un meilleur salaire (lire l'article en page 26).

Tout comme le printemps, ces projets marquent un début, et non une fin!

Photo en page couverture : Le maïs et les légumineuses sont des aliments de bases en Afrique centrale.



Increased protein content in corn crops helps children grow and boosts their immune systems.

Photo: © ACDI-CIDA / Roger LeMoine

A recipe for success

by Mark Foss

Laurentian University is helping to increase food security in the Democratic Republic of Congo

Over the past five years, a project supported by Laurentian University and Caritas Development Congo has revived the once-proud tradition of agricultural excellence at the University of Kinshasa (UNIKIN) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). At the same time, a new crop of graduate and postgraduate students are working with farmers to introduce a more nutritious variety of corn that is boosting the resilience of nursing mothers, malnourished babies and people living with HIV/AIDS. And by helping farmers adapt to a changing

climate, researchers have helped them triple yields, which has generated extra cash for school fees and medicine.

This project, administered by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada with funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), will wrap up in March 2011. The partners, however, are committed for the long term, and their tremendous results in food security have already attracted new donors to the fold.

"Thirty years ago, DRC was the reference point in Africa for agriculture,"

recalls Kabwe Nkongolo, a plant geneticist at Sudbury's Laurentian University who grew up in the central African country. During decades of political and economic instability, agricultural research languished in DRC. Food production also fell, making DRC one of the world's most poorly nourished countries today.

"[UNIKIN] is an institution with 25,000 students, and they had 2,000 books in the library, mostly from the 1950s," says Dr. Nkongolo. "Students had to wait for grants to do research in Belgium. It took 25 years to finish a PhD!"



Laurentian's databases and software from the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization, which give students access to a virtual library of one million up-to-date publications, have helped to jumpstart a new doctoral program in agronomy. Access fees will help maintain and replace computers, reinforcing sustainability.

To date, 10 students have completed, or are completing, their PhD degree. In addition, 20 students have graduated from a new master's program in plant sciences that emphasizes food security. Both degrees are unique at UNIKIN since they integrate academic and community-based components.

"There is such a huge shortage that students are hired before they're even finished," says Dr. Nkongolo. "The first one to get a PhD is now teaching at five universities in four different cities."

Decades of unsustainable agricultural projects had made farmers skeptical about international assistance. Before they launched the project, the universities organized workshops with Caritas Development Congo, a non-governmental organization, to get the 20 targeted communities on board. This approach

yielded a response that surpassed expectations, including the offer of hundreds of hectares for research.

The results have been spectacular, both for the quality and quantity of corn produced.

Corn is a staple food in DRC, but traditional varieties lack sufficient protein to keep people well-nourished. The project developed a new variety of corn seed specifically adapted to local ecosystems that has more amino acids that are essential to produce protein. "HIV/AIDS patients respond better to their medicine when they eat the new varieties of corn," says Dr. Nkongolo.

Researchers also helped farmers adapt to a changing climate. Simply by seeding and harvesting at the right time, and using better seeds, farmers have tripled their yield. All told, more than 1,200 farming families have produced 240 tons of improved corn and legumes.

Women prepared regular meals with both local and improved varieties to ensure there was no difference in taste. "As high yielding and nutritious as the seed might be, if farmers decided not to eat the corn, all the effort is for nothing," explains Dr. Nkongolo.

The project's excellent results have enabled the partners to leverage funding to

address two challenges: storing and selling the excess corn.

"Caritas has secured \$10 million from the African Development Bank and the European Union to build storage facilities, improve rural roads and construct a food market," says Bruno Miteyo, National Director of Caritas Congo and Deputy President of Caritas Africa. "Farmers are excited to know they'll be able to protect their surplus crop from insects, and then get it to market efficiently. Not only will improved infrastructure generate additional income for farmers, it will also get food to people who desperately need it."

The project generated another spin-off: Cordaid Netherlands, a Dutch NGO, has promised 100,000 euros to link the project's food security component to its HIV/AIDS-related work. All these additional investments mean the project will continue long after CIDA's funding ends this spring.

"Our work together has really been about growing hope," says Dr. Miteyo. "A new generation of agronomists, better trained farmers, a higher quantity and better quality of food, healthier families – this is just the beginning of our harvest."



La clé du succès

par Mark Foss

Université Laurentienne : Aider à renforcer la sécurité alimentaire en République démocratique du Congo

Depuis cinq ans, un projet parrainé par l'Université Laurentienne et Caritas-Développement Congo a fait renaître l'excellence agricole de jadis à l'Université de Kinshasa (UNIKIN) en République démocratique du Congo (RDC).

Parallèlement, une nouvelle cohorte d'étudiants aux cycles supérieurs collabore avec des agriculteurs à l'introduction d'une variété de maïs plus nutritive qui stimule la résilience des mères allaitantes, des bébés qui souffrent de malnutrition et des personnes vivant avec le VIH/sida.

Par ailleurs, en aidant les agriculteurs à s'adapter aux changements climatiques, les chercheurs leur ont permis de tripler leurs récoltes, et ainsi, de toucher des revenus

supplémentaires servant à payer des frais de scolarité et des médicaments.

Administré par l'Association des universités et collèges du Canada grâce au financement de l'Agence canadienne de développement international (ACDI), ce projet prendra fin en mars 2011. Les partenaires ont toutefois pris un engagement à long terme, et leurs résultats exceptionnels en matière de sécurité alimentaire ont déjà attiré de nouveaux donateurs.

« Il y a 30 ans, la RDC était un point de référence en Afrique en ce qui concerne l'agriculture », se rappelle Kabwe Nkongolo, phytogénéticien à l'Université Laurentienne de Sudbury, qui a grandi dans ce pays centrafricain. Les décennies d'instabilité

politique et économique qui ont suivi ont nui à la recherche agricole et à la production alimentaire, faisant de la RDC un des pays où la malnutrition est la plus criante aujourd'hui.

« [L'UNIKIN] est un établissement qui compte 25 000 étudiants et dont la bibliothèque était pauvrement garnie de 2 000 livres, datant surtout des années 1950, explique M. Nkongolo. Les étudiants devaient attendre des subventions pour effectuer de la recherche en Belgique. Il fallait 25 ans pour obtenir un doctorat ! »

Les bases de données de l'Université Laurentienne et les logiciels de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture, qui donnent aux étudiants l'accès à une bibliothèque

virtuelle d'un million de publications récentes, ont contribué à donner son envol à un nouveau programme de doctorat en agronomie. Les droits d'accès permettront d'entretenir et de remplacer les ordinateurs, et d'appuyer ainsi la pérennité du programme.

À ce jour, 10 étudiants ont obtenu leur doctorat ou sont en voie de l'obtenir. En outre, 20 étudiants ont terminé un nouveau programme de maîtrise en phytologie axé sur la sécurité alimentaire. Les deux programmes sont uniques à l'UNIKIN puisqu'ils comprennent des composantes universitaires et communautaires.

« Il existe une telle pénurie que les étudiants sont embauchés avant même d'avoir terminé, affirme M. Nkongolo. Le premier titulaire du doctorat enseigne maintenant dans cinq universités, dans quatre villes différentes. »

Des décennies de projets agricoles non viables avaient rendu les agriculteurs sceptiques à l'égard de l'aide internationale. Avant de lancer le projet, les universités ont tenu des ateliers avec Caritas-Développement Congo, une organisation non gouvernementale, afin d'obtenir la participation des 20 collectivités cibles. Les réactions à cette démarche, entre autres l'offre de centaines d'hectares aux fins de la recherche, ont surpassé les attentes.

Les résultats ont été impressionnantes, tant en matière de qualité que de quantité du maïs produit.

Le maïs est un aliment de base en RDC, mais les variétés traditionnelles sont dépourvues des protéines suffisantes pour bien nourrir la population. Le projet a mis au point une nouvelle variété de graines de maïs adaptée spécialement aux écosystèmes locaux et qui contient une quantité accrue d'aminoacides essentiels à la formation de protéines. « Les personnes vivant avec le VIH/sida réagissent mieux aux médicaments si elles consomment les nouvelles variétés de maïs », déclare M. Nkongolo.

Les chercheurs ont également aidé les agriculteurs à s'adapter aux changements climatiques. Rien qu'en semant et en



Le maïs sert à nourrir la famille et le bétail. Les surplus peuvent être vendus pour arrondir les revenus.

Photo: Université Laurentienne

cueillant au moment opportun et en utilisant de meilleures semences, les agriculteurs ont triplé leurs récoltes. Tout compte fait, plus de 1 200 familles agricoles ont produit 240 tonnes de maïs et de légumineuses améliorées.

Les femmes ont préparé les repas courants à base des variétés locales et des variétés améliorées afin de vérifier qu'il n'y ait pas de différence de goût. « Aussi productives et nutritives que puissent être les nouvelles semences, si les agriculteurs avaient décidé de ne pas manger le maïs, tous les efforts auraient été vains », explique M. Nkongolo.

Les excellents résultats du projet ont permis aux partenaires de recueillir le financement nécessaire pour régler deux problèmes : l'entreposage et la vente du maïs excédentaire.

« Caritas a obtenu 10 millions de dollars de la Banque africaine de développement et de l'Union européenne afin de bâtir des installations de stockage, d'améliorer les routes rurales et de construire un marché d'alimentation, déclare Bruno Miteyo, directeur national de

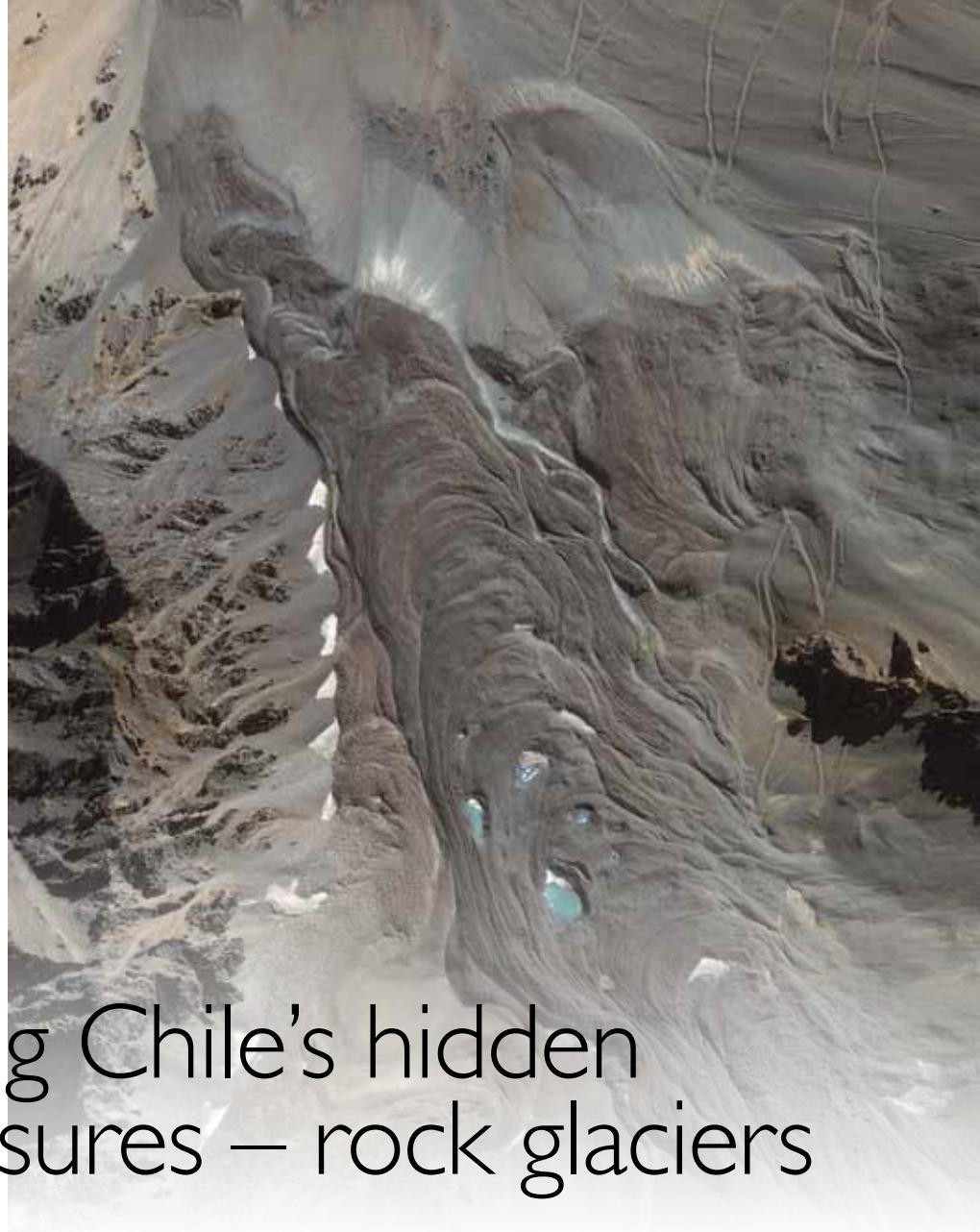
Caritas Congo et vice-président de Caritas Africa. Les agriculteurs sont enthousiastes à l'idée de pouvoir protéger leurs récoltes excédentaires contre les insectes et de les amener jusqu'au marché efficacement. L'infrastructure améliorée ne fera pas que procurer des revenus supplémentaires aux agriculteurs : elle produira également de la nourriture pour les personnes qui en ont désespérément besoin. »

Le projet a eu une autre retombée : Cordaid (Pays-Bas), une organisation non gouvernementale néerlandaise, a promis 100 000 euros pour relier le volet sécurité alimentaire du projet avec ses travaux portant sur le VIH/sida. Grâce aux investissements supplémentaires, le projet se poursuivra longtemps après que le financement de l'ACDI aura pris fin ce printemps.

« Notre travail consiste vraiment à faire naître l'espoir, affirme M. Miteyo. Une nouvelle génération d'agronomes, des agriculteurs mieux formés, des aliments en quantité accrue et de plus haute qualité, des familles en meilleure santé, tout cela ne représente que le début de ce que nous récolterons. »

Using satellite images, such as this one, researchers try to locate glaciers under thick layers of rock.

*Photo: IKONOS satellite image, © 2010 GeoEye.
Image Processing by Pacific Geomatics Ltd.*



Discovering Chile's hidden water treasures – rock glaciers

by Gerry Toomey

The world's fresh water is stored and transported by a range of natural reservoirs and formations – streams, rivers, lakes, bogs, aquifers, glaciers, icebergs, clouds and highland mists, and of course, plants and animals. Another important yet poorly understood source of fresh water is rock glaciers. Geographers and hydrologists distinguish these frozen, debris-covered formations from ice-only glaciers.

A joint research project of the University of Waterloo in Canada and the Universidad Mayor in Chile has been investigating ways to accurately identify rock glaciers. The research collaboration, feeding into a broader effort in Chile and elsewhere, draws on Canadian expertise in physical geography and computer modelling

and Chilean expertise in remote sensing.

Accurate identification of rock glaciers will provide better technical information to Chilean government scientists responsible for natural resource management and environmental assessments in the dry Andes, as well as to environmental NGOs. This step is particularly important in view of a 2008 Chilean law that requires environmental assessments of development projects in mountain areas – projects such as mining, disposal of mining tailings and road construction. Some such activities have caused friction in the past between mining firms and environmentalists.

But the potential long-term spillover benefits to other countries with rock glaciers, such as Argentina, and other

regions, such as Central Asia, are significant too, says University of Waterloo geographer Alex Brenning. Argentina has a larger total area of rock glaciers, and it too has new glacier-related legislation; enforcing the new law will require accurate data on the extent of rock glaciers and their ice content.

Dr. Brenning describes the elusive aspect of rock glaciers: "You see absolutely nothing of all the ice that is on the ground. This means the research methods for investigating rock glaciers are very different from what's used in glaciological research... so rock glaciers are not usually included in glacier inventories. Even now there's very little knowledge about their distribution in many mountain areas of the world, except maybe the Alps and the Rocky Mountains."



Further collaboration beyond the current project will see University of Waterloo professor Alex Brenning (left) spend part of 2011 in Chile with Marco Peña (right) from the Universidad Mayor in Santiago.

Photo: Universidad Mayor

What masks the ice of a rock glacier is the so-called "active layer" of rock, usually three- to-five metres thick. Visually, the formation resembles regular non-glacial terrain or permafrost. Since rock glaciers are a major source of water in the dry Andes, especially through seasonal melting, they need to be protected like other water resources. But to do so, their number, sizes and locations need to be spelled out.

This is where the work of Marco Peña comes in. Mr. Peña is a specialist in applied remote sensing with the Centre for Studies in Natural Resources (OTERRA) at the Universidad Mayor in Santiago. He's investigating techniques that can distinguish between rock glaciers and other land formations. Two promising approaches, he notes, are thermal inertia analysis and hyperspectral analysis, drawing on certain kinds of satellite images.

The thermal inertia method uses images of a mountain area taken at those times of the day when maximum and

minimum temperatures are reached. "Thermal inertia depicts the response of a material to temperature changes," explains Mr. Peña. "By calculating thermal inertia we are able to find differences between rock glaciers and their surrounding areas."

Even though rock glacier materials may look like the surrounding material, the temperature of both landforms may be different because the rock glacier contains ice as well as rock, he says. Thus they have distinctive thermal and radiative properties that can be used to identify them.

Hyperspectral analysis relies on images taken by Hyperion, an instrument aboard NASA's EO-1 satellite that has been collecting data about the earth since 1999. Mr. Peña hypothesizes that rock glaciers are spectrally different from surrounding materials. Again, the key is to find tell-tale signs of rock glaciers, in this case various combinations of elements in the surface of the target area that has been imaged.

Hyperspectral analysis reveals more about a surface than other remote sensing techniques, due to the detailed spectral information available in each pixel of an image.

"We want to demonstrate to the remote sensing community that there is a close relationship between remote sensing and rock glaciers if proper, remotely sensed products are combined with field data," says Mr. Peña. To this end, researchers staged a one-day seminar on the topic at Universidad Mayor a year ago, bringing together 27 students, university researchers, mining industry representatives, consultants, and staff from Chile's national water authority.

Dr. Brenning stresses that global warming could have a significant impact on rock glaciers in many regions and thus on the world supply of fresh water in the form of ice. Hence, the importance of building rock glacier inventories now – not only to support environmental impact assessment for specific projects, but also for the long-term knowledge base needed to help protect vital water resources.

Glacier science was in the news recently, as Dr. Brenning was interviewed by Chilean and international media on the importance of rock glaciers. Because of his expertise, he was also asked to join a scientific group advising Chile's national environmental protection agency on implementing its National Glacier Policy. He plans to spend part of 2011 working in Chile.

The collaboration between Dr. Brenning, Mr. Peña and participating researchers and graduate students was funded by Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC) under the Canada-Latin America and the Caribbean Research Exchange Grants (LACREG) program. Managed by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, the grants program stimulates research networking in the areas of IDRC focus: agriculture and environment; information and communication technologies for development; innovation, policy and science; and social and economic policy. Program funding for the LACREG rock glacier collaboration was nearly \$8,500. 



Le double défi d'une pionnière de la nutrition

par Isabelle Marquis

La D^re Victoire Agueh est une pionnière d'un genre que l'on croise rarement en Afrique francophone. Cette médecin de 57 ans veut convaincre ses compatriotes de l'importance de bien s'alimenter: « Faites attention à ne pas prendre trop de poids, cela pourrait vous rendre malade », leur dit-elle. Un message accueilli avec scepticisme dans une région du monde habituée aux carences alimentaires graves.

En fait, l'Afrique doit maintenant composer avec une réalité inusitée et complexe : le double fardeau nutritionnel. Les problèmes causés par l'embonpoint côtoient maintenant ceux de la sous-alimentation. Une situation récente occasionnée, entre autres, par la mondialisation, l'urbanisation croissante

et l'influence de l'occident dans le régime alimentaire de la population – des facteurs qui perturbent les habitudes alimentaires traditionnelles.

Peu de statistiques fiables sont disponibles à ce jour, mais la réalité demeure : l'embonpoint est de plus en

des habitudes de vie : diabète, hypertension et maladies cardiovasculaires. « Lorsque j'étais médecin en cabinet, je remarquais que de nombreux problèmes de santé étaient reliés à l'alimentation. J'ai donc décidé de m'intéresser à la nutrition », explique la D^re Agueh, qui détient une maîtrise en nutrition et un Ph.D en épidémiologie.

C'est pendant ses études de maîtrise à l'Université de Montréal que la D^re Agueh rencontre Hélène Delisle, professeure et alors sa directrice de mémoire. Inquiètes par

« Prévenir les problèmes nutritionnels permet de réduire une source d'appauvrissement. »

plus répandu et les effets du surpoids sont surtout visibles dans les zones urbaines où on observe une augmentation du diabète de type 2. À l'instar des pays occidentaux, l'Afrique doit composer avec les problèmes de santé chroniques qui découlent souvent

rapport à l'avalanche possible de problèmes pouvant découler d'une alimentation déséquilibrée, elles mettent sur pied dans la région ouest-africaine le projet sur le double fardeau nutritionnel. Une propagation de maladies chroniques serait une catastrophe

pour des systèmes de santé déjà en manque de ressources, d'où l'importance de prévenir maintenant.

Le projet, élaboré dans le cadre du programme de Partenariats universitaires en coopération et développement de l'ACDI, comporte trois volets : la formation, la recherche et le développement d'un plaidoyer et d'outils de communication. Mis sur pied en 2008, le projet se poursuivra jusqu'en 2014.

« Ce projet nous permettra de développer une compétence en nutrition dans la région francophone ouest-africaine », mentionne Dr Agueh, directrice de l'Institut régional de santé publique au Bénin, où elle dirige le projet. La prévention et la formation sont indispensables.

« Il faut prévenir et renforcer les capacités des institutions à faire face au double fardeau nutritionnel. Pour cela nous devons former des gens en nutrition », précise Mme Delisle, qui est aussi directrice de TRANSNUT (Centre collaborateur de l'Organisation mondiale de la santé sur la transition nutritionnelle et le développement), l'organisme qui pilote le projet au Canada.

Ainsi, deux nouveaux programmes universitaires en nutrition ont été créés au Bénin : une licence professionnelle (équivalent au baccalauréat) et une maîtrise.

En janvier 2011, l'Université d'Abomey-Calavi a accueilli ses premiers étudiants à la licence en nutrition, la seule offerte en Afrique francophone. Le programme de maîtrise en nutrition et santé des populations, créé à l'Institut régional de santé publique en 2009, compte actuellement 10 étudiants qui devraient obtenir leur diplôme au cours de l'année 2011.

« Nos diplômés seront les premiers professionnels en nutrition de la région », ajoute avec fierté Dr Agueh.

À ces programmes universitaires, s'ajoutent des cours portant sur le double fardeau nutritionnel offerts sur place – au Bénin – pour les cadres et professionnels de la santé. Donnés par des formateurs canadiens et béninois, les cours offrent aux experts les outils nécessaires pour sensibiliser la population. Depuis peu, des recherches-



En Afrique, la croissance des enfants est suivie de près à l'aide de balances.

Photo: © ACDI-CIDA / Stephanie Colvey

actions sont aussi entreprises dans les milieux scolaire et communautaire pour transmettre des connaissances en nutrition.

Ces réalisations pourraient avoir un impact concret et durable sur la qualité de vie des gens, croit Mme Delisle.

« Une mauvaise santé nutritionnelle nuit à la productivité d'un individu. En concourant à une meilleure santé de la population, on contribue à une meilleure productivité tout en diminuant les coûts liés à la santé. Prévenir les problèmes nutritionnels, permet donc de réduire une source d'appauvrissement », souligne-t-elle.

Il n'est pas facile de parler d'obésité dans des pays traditionnellement confrontés aux carences alimentaires et où l'obésité est perçue comme un signe de beauté et de santé.

« Vous savez, ici, quand une femme se marie et qu'elle prend du poids, cela signifie que son mari s'occupe bien d'elle », explique Dr Agueh.

Une campagne de sensibilisation auprès de la population et des décideurs politiques est donc essentielle. « Pendant longtemps, les plaidoyers dans le domaine de la nutrition

concernaient les maladies liées aux carences alimentaires. Il faut maintenant traiter du double fardeau nutritionnel, nous devons nous réveiller », résume la médecin béninoise.

L'obésité étant culturellement bien perçue, Dr Agueh et ses collègues ont décidé de cibler le diabète de type 2 pour amorcer la campagne de sensibilisation. Des outils de communication – site Internet, brochures, affiches – ont été créés et un plaidoyer de lutte contre le diabète de type 2 est en élaboration. La création d'un guide alimentaire béninois, inspiré du célèbre guide canadien, est aussi envisagée.

Si l'on se fit à l'expérience nord-américaine, la sensibilisation aux saines habitudes de vie exige temps et persévérance. Toutefois, informer et prévenir demeure les meilleurs outils disponibles pour les professionnels de la santé publique.

« Si je peux, un jour, m'assurer que le travail accompli portera des fruits, je serai en paix et contente d'avoir contribué à quelque chose dans ma vie », conclut avec espoir la Dr Agueh.

Nutrition pioneer faces dual challenge

by Isabelle Marquis

Victoire Agueh is a rare type of pioneer in French-speaking Africa. The 57-year-old physician wants to convince her compatriots in Bénin about the importance of eating well. "Don't put on too much weight," she tells them. "It could affect your health." It's a message that is greeted with skepticism in a part of the world where people are more accustomed to dealing with severe dietary deficiencies.

Africa must now cope with a new and complex reality: the double nutritional burden, or, in other words, the health complications of obesity now co-existing with those of malnutrition. This relatively new phenomenon is caused, among other reasons, by globalization, growing urbanization and Western influences on the diets of local populations—all factors that disrupt traditional eating habits.

Few reliable statistics are currently available, but the fact remains that obesity is increasingly widespread and its effects are especially visible in urban centres, where Type 2 diabetes is on the rise. Following in the footsteps of the West, Africa must now grapple with chronic health problems that are largely tied to lifestyle choices: diabetes, high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease. "When I was a doctor in practice, I noticed that a lot of problems were diet-related. I therefore decided to focus on nutrition," says Dr. Agueh, who holds a master's degree in nutrition and a PhD in epidemiology.

During her master's studies at the Université de Montréal, Dr. Agueh met Hélène Delisle, a professor who would later become her thesis director. Worried about the slew of health problems that could be unleashed by unbalanced diets, the two initiated a project in West Africa to tackle the double nutritional burden. Their reasoning was that an increase in chronic diseases would be devastating for healthcare systems that are already short on resources, and thus it was imperative that prevention begin immediately.

Set up in 2008 as part of CIDA's University Partnerships in Cooperation and Development program, the project focuses on three aspects: training, research and the development of advocacy and communications tools. The project will continue until 2014.

"This initiative will enable us to develop nutritional expertise in the French-speaking region of West Africa," says Dr. Agueh, director of Bénin's Institut régional de santé publique, the public health institute where she is leading the project. Prevention and education are key. "We need to stress prevention and build institutions' capacity to deal with the double nutritional burden. To do this, we have to train people in nutrition," adds Dr. Delisle, who is also director of TRANSNUT (the WHO Collaborating Centre on Nutrition Changes and Development), the organization spearheading the project in Canada.

Two new university programs in nutrition were created in Bénin: one at the undergraduate level (leading to a professional licence) and one at the master's level. In January 2011, the Université d'Abomey-Calavi welcomed its first students to the undergraduate program, the only one of its kind in Africa's French-speaking nations. For its part, the master's program in nutrition and population health created at the Institut régional de santé publique in 2009 now has 10 students who are expected to obtain their degrees in 2011. "Our graduates will be the first nutrition professionals in the region," proudly notes Dr. Agueh.

Complementing these university programs are courses on the double nutritional burden which are available on site (in Bénin) for healthcare managers and professionals. Taught by instructors from Canada and Bénin, the courses provide these experts with the communication tools needed to raise public awareness. Recently, action research initiatives have also been

launched to impart nutritional information in schools and in the community.

Dr. Delisle believes that these efforts could have a real and lasting impact on the quality of life of these people: "Poor nutritional health compromises an individual's productivity," she explains. "By helping improve people's health, we are contributing to increased productivity and lowering healthcare spending. Preventing nutritional problems therefore helps eliminate one source of poverty."

It isn't easy talking about obesity in countries that have traditionally been confronted with malnutrition issues and where obesity is perceived as a sign of beauty and health. "Around here," explains Dr. Agueh, "when a woman gets married and puts on weight, it means her husband is taking good care of her."

An awareness campaign aimed at the public and policy-makers is therefore essential. "For a long time, advocacy in the field of nutrition was limited to diseases related to malnutrition," says Dr. Agueh. "Now we have to wake up and deal with the double nutritional burden."

Dr. Agueh and her colleagues decided to make Type 2 diabetes the focus of their awareness campaign. Various communication tools, including a website, brochures and posters, were created; a message promoting the fight against type 2 diabetes is in development. A food guide for Bénin, modelled after Canada's famous Food Guide, is also being considered.

If the experience in North America is any indication, educating the public about healthy living will take time and perseverance. Nevertheless, information and prevention remain the most effective tools available to healthcare professionals. Dr. Agueh concludes on a hopeful note: "If one day I can look back and see that the work we did has paid off, then I will be at peace and happy to have made a contribution in my life." ☺



James Anglin, director of the Office of International Affairs at the University of Victoria, makes a point.

Photo: © Mélanie Provencher

Many ways to support North-South partnerships

A good-practices guide for internationalization at Canadian universities will soon be released by AUCC

by Mélanie Béchard

Whether its internationalization strategy is led by senior administrators or by faculty members, a university in Canada very likely took its first steps towards internationalization through international development.

A forthcoming report from the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) examines the contributions of North-South partnerships in supporting the internationalization of Canadian universities.

"Looking back at the history of Canadian universities' internationalization, international development was the gateway for many universities," said Nina Di Stefano, senior policy analyst with AUCC and author of the report. "We wanted to showcase this

longstanding engagement and assess its current state."

The report is essentially a good-practices guide, synthesizing discussions during an AUCC-hosted symposium entitled "Cardinal points: How North-South partnerships support internationalization strategies." The event, held in Ottawa in February 2010, and the report were funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). Symposium participants, including senior representatives from Canadian universities and their international partners, had an opportunity to learn from each other and find new ways of engaging internationally.

The connection between Canadian universities' development work and internationalization are also noted in an IDRC study from 1999. It said faculty

with first-hand development experience "brought their experience (whether in the [Global] South or elsewhere abroad) back to their classrooms, labs and departments, thus fomenting much of the internationalization now evident in universities across Canada."

In 2009, AUCC looked into how North-South partnerships can support internationalization. AUCC made an inventory of all publicly available internationalization strategies and analyzed how they build on the contributions that North-South partnerships can make to internationalization. One surprising research finding was that some of the most internationally engaged universities did not have an internationalization strategy.

Further analysis showed two main

“Being engaged internationally is about the transformation of our own universities.

It's a two-way relationship.”

James Anglin



James Jowi, President of the African Network for Internationalization of Education, also attended the symposium.

Photo: © Mélanie Provencher

approaches to internationalization. The first is a top-down approach that includes establishing a formal strategy to be implemented throughout the institution. The second is a bottom-up approach, whereby international engagement is driven by faculty members. A bottom-up approach is much harder to capture in a formal policy. Many universities experiment with the organizational structure to most effectively support their international activities, and review their approach regularly to ensure it is reaching desired objectives.

For example, the administration of the University of Alberta has streamlined its international partnerships to focus on six priority countries. The goal is to have fewer, deeper partnerships, to increase student and faculty mobility and foster greater research collaboration.

On the other hand, the administration of the Université du Québec à Montréal decided to focus its international engagement on Brazil, where UQAM has a 25-year history of collaboration and joint research. It also houses a centre for studies on Brazil, the Centre d'études et de recherches sur le Brésil, that features weekly seminars, and Portuguese language programs.

Another model was adopted by the University of Victoria. It offers workshops

to help faculty members redesign their curriculum to bring an international dimension to their courses. Faculty members are the leaders in bringing internationalization to life.

“Being engaged internationally is about the transformation of our own universities. It's a two-way relationship,” said James Anglin, director of the Office of International Affairs and adviser to the provost at the University of Victoria. “Capacity goes both ways. Social betterment goes both ways. Recruitment goes both ways.”

Increasingly, he said, “the Southern institutions are choosing us. It's not quite what it used to be, and I think that's very healthy.”

In the report, African partners point out that successful partnerships between African and Canadian universities must include research projects based on their needs and priorities. Southern researchers must be involved in setting the agenda for collaboration if capacity-building is to meet the needs of the local community. African partners also called for greater reciprocity in faculty and student mobility.

The symposium sparked new partnerships as well. Representatives from Kwantlen Polytechnic University and Nipissing University traveled to Kenya

after meeting James Jowi, president of the African Network for Internationalization of Education at the symposium.

“Where we will be 10 years from now depends very much on what steps we take from here,” Professor Jowi noted at the event. “If we adhere to the good practices of listening to the priorities of Africa, and Africa is part of the agenda-setting, I think in 10 years there will be a significant difference.”

The symposium examined existing partnerships between Canadian universities and civil society organizations to advance international development. Representatives from Canadian civil society organizations (such as the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, World University Service of Canada, Engineers Without Borders Canada and the Association of Canadian Community Colleges) spoke about the numerous opportunities for their work to complement the work of Canadian universities in the Global South.

The topic proved to be of such interest to the Canadian university community that AUCC tailored its next grant with IDRC to focus on the concept of new models of partnerships, including a further examination of effective civil society organization partnerships with Canadian universities. ☈



Tales from the road

What works and what doesn't when it comes to sustainable development

by Debbie Lawes

Illustration by Christiane Beauregard

It can often take years or even decades before the impacts of a particular development project are realized. In some cases those results never come, or if they do, they are too often short-lived.

UniWorld asked several university researchers to share their secrets for what works and what doesn't when

it comes to planning and delivering a project that will have a lasting impact on a community, region or country. While money, expertise and good intentions are a good first start, real sustainability often depends more on finding the right partners, a strong commitment to training and a realistic vision.

Choose your partners carefully

Jack Littlepage at the University of Victoria's Centre for Global Studies spent 15 years helping communities in Brazil improve coastal zone management and build a sustainable aquaculture industry.

"If you want a sustainable project, you need good people to work with in



the country, from the fishermen and truck drivers right up to university presidents and government officials," says the seasoned biologist.

"And don't think that you, as a project leader, can pick the best people. Rely on your university partners to do this."

In Brazil, for example, Dr. Littlepage needed someone locally who could learn the intricacies of growing, harvesting and marketing brine shrimp, also known as artemia or "sea monkeys" – a major food source in commercial aquaculture. The father of three who earned pennies a day

"Within two years this man had a very successful business. Within four years it was international and he was able to send all of his daughters to university. That's what I call sustainability."

Jack Littlepage

shoveling salt for a local company may not have been an obvious choice, but he was the first person recommended by the Brazilian partner.

"Within two years this man had a very successful business," says Dr. Littlepage. "Within four years it was international and

he was able to send all of his daughters to university. That's what I call sustainability. The impact is generational!"

The greatest impact was in the coastal community of Santa Catarina, where the shellfish industry was virtually non-existent 15 years ago. A strong commitment to education and training has led to

1,000 people directly employed in the industry today, with another 100,000 or so indirectly working in the sector.

"The development of the shellfish industry not only changed the state of Catarina but also the federal government of

Brazil. By seeing what had been accomplished elsewhere in their country, it prompted federal departments to develop aquaculture in other parts of Brazil," said Dr. Littlepage.

The right partnership mix

Education and training are essential to most development projects. In Uruguay, Dalhousie University oceanographer Robert Fournier worked with the Universidad de la República to establish the country's first master's program in integrated coastal zone management, modeled on a similar program at Dalhousie. Some 56 students have taken the course since 2007, about half of them government employees.

"When they go back to their job they begin proselytizing within government to change how it does things, and they teach their colleagues new approaches to coastal management," says Dr. Fournier.

The right mix of partners can also increase the chances of a research project having a longer and broader impact. Dr. Fournier's EcoPlata project, now funded by the University Partnerships in

Cooperation and Development (UPCD) program, began in the early 1990s with funding from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). But Dr. Fournier worried that once that funding ended, so would the project. He identified three needs: strong local partners who could carry on the project once IDRC funding ended; training; and neighbouring countries to come on board as funding partners.

"You can't drive a project with just a university. When we applied to AUCC [the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada], we broadened our partner base to include several government players, including the Coast Guard, the Port Authority and the Ministries of Fisheries," he explains.

Partnerships soon grew to include

the Chileans, Argentines, Brazilians and Mexicans. These regional collaborations enabled the project to expand to one that would have an impact regionally and even globally.

But, "these types of impacts take time which is why long-term funding is so important," he adds. "After my first five years in Uruguay my project was barely known... if this project had ended after just five years, the money would have dried up, we would have left and everything would have gone back to being as it was."

Strength in networks

One way to engage the key players in development is to establish research, training and communication networks or to work within existing ones. With a mutual focus,

profile of food security issues for urban areas. The partners plan and implement collaborative research to address the lack of information on urban malnutrition in southern Africa. The network's survey of 11 cities in Africa found 77 percent of poor urban households reported chronic food insecurity.

Because so many organizations are involved, the network has been able to facilitate cross-national cooperation among universities, NGOs and municipal governance networks to produce the evidence required for intervention and training programs.

Don't assume you know the answers

Engaging – and listening to – local partners is critical, according to Ellie Perkins, an economist at York University's Faculty of Environmental Studies. She partnered with the ECOAR Institute for Citizenship and the University of São Paulo in Brazil through the UPCD-funded Sisters Watersheds project. It linked academics and NGOs

the mix of partners can have greater impact.

Jonathan Crush, who directs two networks of Canadian and African researchers, says this impact is most effective when a project is aligned with, and responsive to, changing national development goals. He says creating a regional network was the particular strength of a UPCD project he helped establish in southern Africa. Today's international policy agenda, he says, "is dominated by rural issues in a context where, by 2025, Africa will be over 50 percent urbanized."

Led by the University of Cape Town and Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, 20 more partner organizations came together as the African Food Security Urban Network (AFSUN) to raise the

to facilitate greater community involvement in environmental management.

"You don't go in and tell the NGOs how it's going to be done. You ask how you can help with what they're already doing," she says.

The NGOs provide a critical link to the people most likely to be affected by climate change and poor environmental management, particularly women from poor families. "These are people who have the least political voice yet whose participation is the most crucial. They know how important sustainability is because their lives and livelihoods are often at stake."

Another benefit of listening is that government officials become more aware of the role citizens can play in implementing policy. "When those who are marginalized



become more articulate and more policy-savvy, they can better explain to bureaucrats and politicians why their needs should be addressed and how that can be done," says Dr. Perkins, who is applying the participatory model to new water management projects in three African countries.

The Sisters Watershed project ended in May 2008, but its impacts continue today. The NGO partners, and others throughout the country, benefit from the data and educational material produced by graduate students. Many of those students now work with government, NGOs and the private sector, having developed the skills needed to put theoretical knowledge into practice with local communities.

Get buy-in from local partners

While choosing the right partners is important, sustainability won't be achieved unless each participant takes an "ownership stake" in the project, stresses Emdad Haque. The director of the University of Manitoba's Natural Resources Institute is four years into a six-year project to build environmental governance capacity at the community level in Bangladesh.

"Without buy-in from the local partners, you won't have the synergy, the resources, the people, the institutions and the networks needed to make the project viable over the long term," he says.

Creating a sense of ownership starts at the onset, he says. For example, despite the perceived simplicity of having one person within one agency in Canada responsible for dispersing all funds, Dr. Haque pushed to have bilateral agreements set up between the U of Manitoba and each partner in Bangladesh. Having direct access to the money empowered the partners and made them more accountable.

"Otherwise, it's like being a contractor working on somebody else's project, and that is a huge obstacle against sustainability," says Dr. Haque.

Teach entrepreneurship

Train locally, collaborate directly with people on the ground and have local groups

participate – Oumarou Savadogo concurs with much of the advice given by others working in sustainable development.

Dr. Savadogo sees another key ingredient of sustainable impact of training projects: include entrepreneurship in university curricula.

"Even if universities successfully train people, they should be careful to ensure that students can make a living from their profession after graduation. It is all too easy for graduates, especially in Africa, to find themselves unemployed despite having a diploma in hand," says Dr. Savadogo, a professor in the laboratory of new materials for energy and electrochemistry at École Polytechnique de Montréal.

The UPCD project he's involved with in Burkina Faso trains students in applied solar technology. The collaborating institutions in Burkina Faso are the Institut de Recherches en Sciences Appliquées et Technologies (IRSAT) and Université de Ouagadougou.

Dr. Savadogo says that entrepreneurship training should include such topics as enterprise creation, management methods and business ethics. "Graduates shouldn't be

telling themselves, 'I'm expecting to land a job soon with such and such a company or with the government'. Rather, they should say, 'I'm going to create my own job.'"

To date, he adds, many graduates of the solar technology training project have found jobs in the solar energy sector and others have begun setting up their own sales and services enterprises.

As part of their training, the students are sent to villages to work directly with solar technology users, both to pass on what they have learned and to help the community establish their energy need plans, says Dr. Savadogo. For the communications component, trainers from IRSAT also worked with rural user groups and those user groups, in turn, are now training other people. When it comes to innovative technology, the collaboration with local communities helps create a solid base for acceptance and adoption of those technologies. ☀

Taline Bedrossian and Gerry Toomey contributed to this article.

Méthodes fructueuses en développement durable

Résumé de l'article « Tales from the road » débutant en page 14

par Debbie Lawes, Taline Bedrossian et Gerry Toomey

Il peut s'écouler des années, voire des décennies, avant de constater les retombées d'un projet de développement. *UniMonde* a demandé à plusieurs chercheurs universitaires collaborant à des projets qui ont des retombées durables dans une collectivité, une région ou un pays de nous livrer leurs secrets et les pièges à éviter. Bien que l'argent, l'expertise et les bonnes intentions contribuent à partir du bon pied, le véritable développement durable dépend souvent avant tout d'un choix judicieux des partenaires, de l'importance accordée à la formation et de l'établissement d'objectifs réalistes.

Selon Jack Littlepage, un projet durable doit s'appuyer sur des partenaires fiables au sein du pays, et ce, dans toutes les sphères sociales, des simples pêcheurs et chauffeurs de camion aux recteurs et fonctionnaires. Biologiste chevronné du Centre d'études internationales de l'Université de Victoria, M. Littlepage a consacré 15 années de sa vie à aider les collectivités brésiliennes à améliorer leurs méthodes de gestion des zones côtières et à établir une industrie d'aquaculture durable. Il précise que le chef de projet n'est pas en mesure de choisir les meilleures personnes : « Sur ce plan, il faut s'en remettre à nos partenaires de l'université locale. »

Il y a 15 ans, l'industrie de la pêche aux crustacés et aux mollusques était quasi inexistante dans la collectivité côtière de Santa Catarina. L'engagement ferme pris envers l'éducation et la formation a abouti à la création d'un millier d'emplois directs et de quelque 100 000 emplois indirects dans le secteur. De plus, les progrès accomplis ailleurs au pays ont incité les ministères

fédéraux à développer l'aquaculture dans d'autres régions du Brésil.

L'éducation et la formation sont des éléments essentiels pour la plupart des projets de développement. En Uruguay, l'océanographe Robert Fournier de l'Université Dalhousie a collaboré avec l'Universidad de la República pour établir le premier programme de maîtrise du pays en gestion intégrée des zones côtières. Depuis 2007, plus de 50 étudiants y ont pris part, et environ la moitié d'entre eux étaient des fonctionnaires. Comme l'explique M. Fournier, lorsque les étudiants retournent à leur travail, ils enseignent à leurs collègues de nouvelles méthodes de gestion côtière.

M. Fournier pense aussi que le fait de recourir aux bons types de partenaires contribue à améliorer les retombées à long terme. Il a été en mesure d'aller chercher davantage de fonds pour un projet en y intégrant quelques ministères uruguayens et ensuite les partenariats se sont étendus au Chili, en Argentine, au Brésil et au Mexique. Ces collaborations ont permis au projet de prendre de l'ampleur et d'avoir des retombées régionales, voire mondiales.

L'un des moyens d'assurer la participation d'intervenants clés au développement est d'établir des réseaux de recherche, de formation et de communication ou de participer à ceux qui sont déjà établis afin d'en multiplier les retombées. Jonathan Crush, qui dirige deux réseaux de chercheurs canadiens et africains, affirme que les réseaux sont particulièrement efficaces lorsqu'il faut adapter un projet à des objectifs de développement nationaux changeants. Par exemple, les priorités stratégiques

internationales actuelles en sécurité alimentaire « sont dominées par les questions rurales, malgré le fait que, d'ici 2025, l'Afrique sera urbanisée à plus de 50 pour cent ». La portée de son projet dans plus d'une vingtaine d'organisations partenaires a facilité la coopération entre universités, ONG et réseaux de gouvernance municipale pour générer les données probantes dont les programmes d'intervention et de formation ont besoin.

Selon Ellie Perkins, économiste à la Faculté des études de l'environnement de l'Université York, il importe aussi d'être à l'écoute des partenaires locaux. Au Brésil, le projet Sisters Watersheds, auquel prend part Mme Perkins, a noué des liens entre universitaires et ONG pour stimuler la participation de la collectivité à la gestion environnementale. Les ONG entretiennent des liens avec les populations (souvent les femmes des régions rurales et défavorisées) les plus susceptibles d'être touchées par les changements climatiques et le piètre rendement des mesures de gestion environnementale. « Elles sont les moins bien représentées sur l'échiquier politique, mais ce sont elles qui saisissent le mieux l'importance du développement durable, car leur vie et leurs moyens de subsistance souvent en dépendent. »

Mme Perkins est d'avis qu'en donnant la chance à cette population de se faire entendre, les fonctionnaires seront en mesure de prendre davantage conscience de l'importance du rôle des citoyens dans la mise en œuvre des politiques. Le projet a pris fin en 2008, mais ses retombées se font encore sentir. En effet, de nombreux étudiants qui participaient autrefois au



projet travaillent désormais pour le gouvernement, les ONG et le secteur privé et auprès des collectivités locales.

Bien que le choix des partenaires soit important pour atteindre une réelle durabilité, chaque participant doit s'approprier le projet, comme le souligne Emdad Haque, directeur de l'Institut des ressources naturelles de l'Université du Manitoba, qui participe depuis quatre ans à un projet de six ans visant à consolider les capacités de gouvernance environnementale à l'échelle communautaire au Bangladesh.

Selon M. Haque, il faut dès l'amorce d'un projet insuffler un sentiment d'engagement aux participants. Malgré l'apparente simplicité de laisser une seule personne d'un seul organisme canadien s'occuper de la répartition des fonds, M. Haque a insisté pour qu'on établisse des accords bilatéraux entre l'Université du Manitoba et chacun des partenaires bangladais. Le fait d'avoir accès direct aux fonds a conféré aux partenaires une autonomie et une responsabilité accrues.

Pour Oumarou Savadogo, professeur au Laboratoire de nouveaux matériaux pour l'énergie et l'électrochimie à l'École polytechnique de Montréal, l'inclusion d'un volet entrepreneurial aux programmes de formation constitue un autre élément indispensable à la durabilité des retombées. Les universités doivent veiller à ce que les étudiants puissent vivre de leur profession une fois diplômés. « Il arrive trop souvent que les diplômés se retrouvent au chômage, particulièrement en Afrique, et ce, malgré leur formation universitaire, » précise M. Savadogo.

Les formations devraient comprendre des volets entrepreneuriaux qui abordent la création d'entreprise, les méthodes de gestion et l'éthique commerciale. Il ajoute que, jusqu'à maintenant, de nombreux diplômés du projet de formation en technologie solaire auquel il participe au Burkina Faso ont trouvé des emplois dans le secteur, tandis que d'autres ont démarré leur propre entreprise de vente et de services.

« Se familiariser à la différence »

Nicole St-Martin démontre que la pérennité d'un projet de partenariat est axée sur une collaboration antérieure et mutuelle qui prend conscience des différences de chacun.

par Taline Bedrossian

Aceux qui cherchent un partenariat au moment où s'ouvre un concours, Nicole St-Martin, professeure à l'Université de Sherbrooke, fait appel à la prudence. « Ça peut marcher mais c'est très risqué en termes d'impact à long terme », observe-t-elle.

Avec plus de 30 ans d'engagement international, Mme St-Martin a un long parcours en matière de partenariats internationaux. Aujourd'hui, elle dirige le Programme d'apprentissage expérientiel par l'intervention communautaire (PAEIC) à l'Université de Sherbrooke, où elle analyse les mouvements sociaux et l'engagement des citoyens.

La tâche de Mme St-Martin consiste avant tout à cibler une proposition spécifique, comme un projet du programme PUCD, qui doit émerger d'une relation antérieure. Dans le cas d'un projet qui a mis en place un réseau d'universités en Amérique, Mme St-Martin souligne qu'elle était en relation avec les partenaires du Brésil, du Chili, de Colombie, de Cuba, du Mexique et de l'Uruguay plusieurs années avant le début du projet. Au bout de cinq ans, un projet du volet I a été élaboré dans le but d'officialiser et d'approfondir la collaboration existante.

Il était essentiel que la dynamique ne soit pas à sens unique, du Nord au Sud; il fallait donner l'occasion aux partenaires du Sud de se connaître « pour qu'il y ait des transferts entre les partenaires du Sud ». Motivés par leurs intérêts communs, les établissements ont mis en place leur propre collaboration en fonction d'objectifs

régionaux. « La dynamique est la leur et les activités se poursuivent même une fois que le financement aura pris fin, indique Mme St-Martin. « Les partenaires du Sud n'ont plus besoin d'une maître-d'œuvre à l'étranger; ils sont tous des maîtres d'œuvres et se prennent en charge. »

C'est ce que la directrice du PAEIC appelle l'engagement institutionnel. Dès le départ, on entrevoit les moyens concrets qui mènent non seulement aux résultats du projet mais aussi à la prise en charge locale au delà du financement.

Mme St-Martin ne croit pas que ce soit les pays donataires qui viennent en aide aux pays qui reçoivent du financement. Elle précise que tous les partenaires ont leurs propres compétences. On doit cultiver une conception d'égalité et de compatibilité qui s'établit sur des gains mutuels et complémentaires. Égalité ne signifie pas nécessairement similarité.

Au fil des ans, elle a observé des partenaires canadiens qui tentaient d'adapter leurs attentes en fonction de la culture étrangère. Mme St-Martin exige pour sa part une adaptation mutuelle, alimentée par l'échange d'information sur la culture, les règles et les manières de faire des affaires au Canada et dans les pays partenaires.

Ainsi, chacun prend conscience des différences relativement aux attentes et aux intérêts de chacun, et peut établir ses responsabilités selon ses champs de compétence. « C'est tout ça le partenariat : se percevoir comme étant différent, se familiariser à la différence et prendre ses responsabilités », conclut la professeure.



Homeless children in front of the barracks where they live in Eldoret.

Photo: Duncan Ateka

Students for Development: a new point of reference

Canadian university students travel to a developing country for at least three months to work as interns on a development project under the Students for Development program, or SFD. The program, in existence since 2005, is funded by the Canadian International Development Agency and administered by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada. The participants are undergraduates in third and fourth year; master's and doctoral students. Often they benefit from a fascinating overseas experience. Sometimes, the brief internship influences the next steps in a student's career. Here are two experiences that illustrate this path, as told to writer **Jeanne Armstrong**.

Getting the picture

Lonnie Embleton in Eldoret, Kenya

Along the streets of Eldoret in western

Kenya, empty glue bottles are strewn everywhere. They're a daily reminder of drug abuse among street children, a problem that plagues small towns like this one. In fact, 77 percent of street children sniff glue, according to a study by an Eldoret rehabilitation centre.

"Glue is cheap, readily available, and it suppresses hunger when they can't always find food," explains Lonnie Embleton, a master's student in public health at the University of Toronto.

Through the SFD program, Ms. Embleton decided to base her research on substance-abuse problems among the estimated 3,000 street children living in Eldoret.

She coordinated her research with AMPATH (a partnership of Moi University School of Medicine, a Moi teaching hospital and a consortium of U.S. medical schools)

and the Tumaini Children's Drop-in Centre, a rehabilitation and education centre for street children.

Ms. Embleton designed a curriculum for children at the Tumaini Centre that combined education, self-awareness activities and community involvement. But it turned out the biggest hurdle she faced wasn't what to teach the kids but how to keep them coming back to class. "Because they're so transient, you don't expect they will come every day," she says.

Starting with a class of 15 students, she announced that if they attended at least 80 percent of the classes they'd get a reward. The reward was a chance to try their hand at photography with their own disposable camera. Together they took photos in and around Eldoret.

The project was more than just a fun activity for the children, says Ms. Embleton.

It gave them a sense of pride and showed the community that these weren't just "street urchins who beg and steal ... they do it because they have to survive."

At the end of the project, Ms. Embleton organized a photography exhibit at the Tumaini drop-in centre and invited the Eldoret community, whom she felt were engaged with the exhibit. Last fall she took the exhibit to campuses in the U.S. and Canada. Ms. Embleton plans to return to Eldoret early this year, with some assistance from her supervisor there. She intends to conduct quantitative surveys on what drives drug abuse in the area and hopes to present her research findings to local services and programs, in a bid to effectively target the causes of substance abuse in Eldoret.

Plan for a patchwork city

Jed Kilbourn in Iloilo City, the Philippines

It's difficult to imagine any large North American suburb without sidewalks. Indeed, developers are required by law to make them when they're building new homes.

But in Iloilo City in the Philippines, sidewalk construction can easily be bypassed – a Canadian student who worked there almost two years ago says it's as simple as paying off a home inspector:

"A big challenge in Iloilo is that it may have great legislation, but they don't have good resources to police it so it doesn't get implemented," says Jed Kilbourn, a graduate of York University's master's in environmental studies and planning program. In the summer of 2009, he helped

develop urban planning strategies for Iloilo, a central city of about half a million people.

The Philippines presents a unique challenge in urban planning and development, says Mr. Kilbourn, whose SFD experience was supported by the Canadian Urban Institute and York University.

"In the 1990s, the national government in the Philippines became extremely decentralized," he explains. "While it may have made the structure of government more accountable, cities like Iloilo found themselves in completely new territory when it came to city planning."

Iloilo's development has been jagged, due in part to the various waves of colonizing influences. Established as a city in 1890, Iloilo reverted to town status in 1900, but regained official cityhood again in 1937.

The city is an amalgam of political



A makeshift planter in Iloilo City helps create the illusion of a sidewalk.

Photo: Jed Kilbourn

sub-divisions, or wards, which in turn are grouped into seven geographical districts. The Philippines' Local Government Code of 1991 took a large degree of power from the national government and granted it to local governments.

Mr. Kilbourn collaborated with Iloilo officials to develop seven training modules on issues that affect the city's planning. One module that fascinated him was disaster risk-management. He calls the Philippines the "holy grail of natural disasters." Because the country lacks proper preventive strategies when it comes to infrastructure, the tsunamis or typhoons that are common in the region often destroy homes and buildings, he says. It doesn't always have to be a disaster; he adds: "A disaster happens when things aren't planned well."

Mr. Kilbourn now works as an urban planning designer for Urban Strategies, a Toronto-based firm. And while Toronto isn't plagued by typhoons, the SFD internship gave him planning skills that he can use in the job, he says.

"It's so fundamentally important for anyone in the industry to have a sense of doing things differently." The internship gave him a new point of reference, he adds. "We work on precedent – City A did this, City B did that – and we can learn from that."

Both Lonnie Embleton and Jed Kilbourn had a chance to revisit their experiences, when they took part in a presentation about SFD to the Canadian Association of Graduate Studies at their annual meeting last November. 



Deux enfants pratiquent la photographie à Eldoret, au Kenya.

Photo: Alex Ayonga

Programme Étudiants pour le développement: Un nouveau point de référence

Dans le cadre du programme Étudiants pour le développement (EPD), des étudiants universitaires canadiens effectuent un stage d'au moins trois mois dans un pays en développement pour participer à un projet de développement. Ce programme, qui existe depuis 2005, est financé par l'Agence canadienne de développement international (ACDI) et administré par l'Association des universités et collèges du Canada (AUCC). Les participants sont en troisième ou quatrième année au premier cycle, à la maîtrise ou au doctorat. L'expérience à l'étranger leur est souvent bénéfique et a parfois même une incidence sur leur cheminement de carrière. Voici deux témoignages illustrant un tel parcours, que nous livre **Jeanne Armstrong**.

Un portrait d'ensemble

Lonnie Embleton à Eldoret, au Kenya

Les rues d'Eldoret, au Kenya occidental, sont jonchées de bouteilles de colle vides qui rappellent la toxicomanie chez les enfants de la rue, un fléau dans les petites villes comme celle-ci. Une étude menée par un centre de désintoxication d'Eldoret indique en effet que 77 pour cent des enfants de la rue respirent de la colle. « La colle ne coûte presque rien, elle s'obtient facilement et calme la faim lorsqu'ils n'arrivent pas à trouver à manger », explique Lonnie Embleton, étudiante à la maîtrise en santé publique à l'Université de Toronto.

Dans le cadre du programme EPD, Mme Embleton a décidé d'axer sa recherche sur les problèmes de toxicomanie chez les quelque 3 000 enfants qui vivent dans les rues d'Eldoret.

Elle a coordonné ses recherches avec l'AMPATH (un partenariat entre l'École de médecine de l'Université Moi, un hôpital d'enseignement Moi et un consortium d'écoles de médecine des États-Unis) et le centre d'accueil Tumaini, un centre de désintoxication et d'éducation pour les enfants de la rue.

Mme Embleton a conçu, à l'intention des enfants qui fréquentent le centre d'accueil Tumaini, un programme qui allie éducation, activités de conscience de soi et engagement communautaire. Toutefois, le plus gros obstacle auquel elle s'est butée n'était pas de savoir quoi enseigner aux enfants, mais comment les faire revenir en classe. « Ce sont des clients de passage, alors on ne peut s'attendre à ce qu'ils viennent chaque jour », dit-elle.

À ses 15 élèves initiaux, elle a annoncé que s'ils assistaient à au moins 80 pour cent des cours, ils seraient récompensés : ils auraient la chance de faire des photos à l'aide de leur propre appareil jetable. Ensemble, ils ont pris des photos d'Eldoret et des environs. Ce projet était plus qu'une simple activité amusante pour les enfants, raconte Mme Embleton. Il leur a donné une fierté et a montré à la collectivité qu'ils ne sont pas que des « gamins des rues qui mendient et volent... ils le font pour survivre ».

Au terme du projet, Mme Embleton a organisé une exposition de photos au centre d'accueil Tumaini et y a invité les membres de la collectivité d'Eldoret qui, selon elle, s'étaient engagés dans ce projet. L'automne dernier, elle a présenté l'exposition sur des campus aux États-Unis et au Canada. Mme Embleton prévoit retourner à Eldoret au début de cette année. Elle compte effectuer des enquêtes quantitatives sur ce qui pousse à la toxicomanie dans la région et espère présenter les résultats de ses recherches aux responsables des services locaux d'Eldoret, en vue de cibler efficacement les causes de la toxicomanie dans cette ville.

L'urbanisme dans une ville bigarrée

Jed Kilbourn à la ville d'Iloilo, aux Philippines
Il est difficile d'imaginer la banlieue d'une grande ville nord-américaine sans trottoir. En effet, les promoteurs sont tenus par la loi d'en construire lorsqu'ils bâtissent de nouvelles maisons.

Mais à la ville d'Iloilo, aux Philippines, il est facile de contourner la construction de trottoirs : un étudiant canadien qui y a travaillé pendant près de deux ans affirme que c'est aussi simple que de soudoyer un inspecteur d'habitations.

« Comme il manque de ressources



Les urbanistes de la ville d'Iloilo doivent composer avec peu de ressources.

Photo: Jed Kilborn

appropriées pour contrôler l'application des mesures législatives en place, elles ne sont pas appliquées du tout », affirme Jed Kilbourn, diplômé du programme de maîtrise en études et planification environnementales de l'Université York. À l'été 2009, il a pris part à l'élaboration de stratégies d'urbanisme pour Iloilo, une ville centrale d'environ un demi-million d'habitants.

Les Philippines posent un défi unique en matière d'aménagement et de développement urbains, selon M. Kilbourn, dont la participation au programme EPD a été recensée grâce à l'Institut urbain du Canada et à l'Université York.

« Dans les années 1990, le gouvernement national des Philippines s'est énormément décentralisé, explique-t-il. Bien que cette nouvelle structure ait accru la responsabilisation du gouvernement, les villes comme Iloilo se sont retrouvées en territoire inconnu en matière d'urbanisme. »

Iloilo s'est développée en dents de scie, partiellement en raison des diverses vagues d'influences colonisatrices. Érigée en grande ville en 1890, elle a été ramenée au statut de petite ville en 1900, mais est redevenue officiellement une grande ville en 1937.

La ville est constituée d'un amalgame de sous-divisions politiques, eux-mêmes regroupés en sept districts géographiques. Le code des administrations municipales de 1991 des Philippines a retiré une grande partie du pouvoir au gouvernement national pour le conférer aux administrations municipales.

M. Kilbourn a collaboré avec les fonctionnaires d'Iloilo à l'élaboration de sept modules de formation portant sur des enjeux liés à l'aménagement de la ville. Il a été fasciné par l'un des modules, celui de la gestion des risques en cas de catastrophe. Selon lui,

comme le pays manque de stratégies de prévention adéquates en ce qui a trait aux infrastructures, les tsunamis ou les typhons, fréquents dans la région, détruisent souvent les habitations et les bâtiments.

M. Kilbourn est maintenant concepteur en urbanisme chez Urban Strategies, une entreprise de Toronto. Son stage dans le cadre du programme EPD lui a permis d'acquérir des compétences utiles dans son travail, bien que Toronto ne soit pas la cible des typhons, affirme-t-il. « Il est primordial pour quiconque travaille dans le domaine de savoir faire les choses différemment. » Le stage lui a donné un nouveau point de référence, ajoute-t-il.

Lonnie Embleton et Jed Kilbourn ont tous deux eu la chance de se remémorer leur expérience en participant à un exposé sur le programme EPD donné à l'occasion de l'assemblée annuelle de l'Association canadienne pour les études supérieures, en novembre dernier. ☺

Scaling up to meet the need for social work in Vietnam

by Harriet Eisenkraft

What started as a request for collaboration in 2002 with the schools of nursing and social work at Memorial University of Newfoundland from a college in Vietnam has had a major impact on the country's social welfare and public health well beyond the original aspirations.

The request from the College of Labour and Social Affairs in Hanoi became a project to develop the social work

profession, administered by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada with funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

According to Lan Gien, the Vietnamese-born Canadian director of the project

and a professor of nursing at MUN, "there was no training in social work at all in the country then. We created it." However, she adds that despite a lack of formal training among providers, there was still a need for

countryside, government departments and universities and colleges. While at the project's inception the College of Labour and Social Affairs was the only government-sanctioned facility to educate social workers

and upgrade the skills of rural providers, today a total of 44 universities in Vietnam offer a bachelor of social work degree, (BSW). The college has been upgraded to a university and is now called the University of Labour and Social

"Social work is a new profession in our country."

social work services. "In former times, the centralized government would try to identify and respond to the demand," she says.

Now the ripple effect from the six-year capacity-building and poverty-reducing initiative has extended into the

Affairs, or ULSA.

The plan of the \$1.25-million project was ambitious and was implemented on many fronts. It started with a 10-course program on background knowledge in social work, taught by Memorial professors

University of Regina graduates, Ms. Huong (left) and Ms. Thai Lan (right), sit outside the university in Hanoi, Vietnam.

Photo: University of Labour and Social Affairs



to 16 students. They in turn shared the knowledge with almost 100 rural social providers, sometimes known as "barefoot workers," as well as with community leaders, union members and former military officers "who carry out social work functions without degrees," explains Dr. Gien. Workshops for thousands more then followed in the remote countryside.

After that, 12 students with various undergraduate degrees from Vietnam attended the master of social work (MSW) program at the University of Regina and at a university in the Philippines. "Social work is a new profession in our country. Those who trained abroad came back with lots of development and practice," notes Nguyen Thi Thanh Huong, who studied at the University of Regina (U of R) and is now a faculty member of ULSA's social work department.

As Vietnam shifted from a centrally planned economy to a more market-oriented one, social and health services requirements have changed, too. There is less overall poverty, but more gaps between the rich and poor, and there are ongoing needs in rural regions and among ethnic minorities. Domestic violence victims,

women who are prey to cross-border trafficking and enforced marriages, drug addicts, HIV/AIDS patients and homeless and abused children all require social work services. Nguyen Thi Thai Lan, a former trainer and a graduate of the U of R's MSW program, points to a recent Vietnamese government report stating that 28 percent of the 86-million population currently use services from the country's 4,000 social workers and tens of thousands of untrained para-professionals.

The success of the various aspects of the project impressed Vietnam's Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, which sanctioned social work as a bona fide profession. The Ministry of Education and Training developed the first BSW program at ULSA. "The government recognized the importance of social work, especially to help rural people. Now, many people want to be working in this profession," notes Dr. Gien.

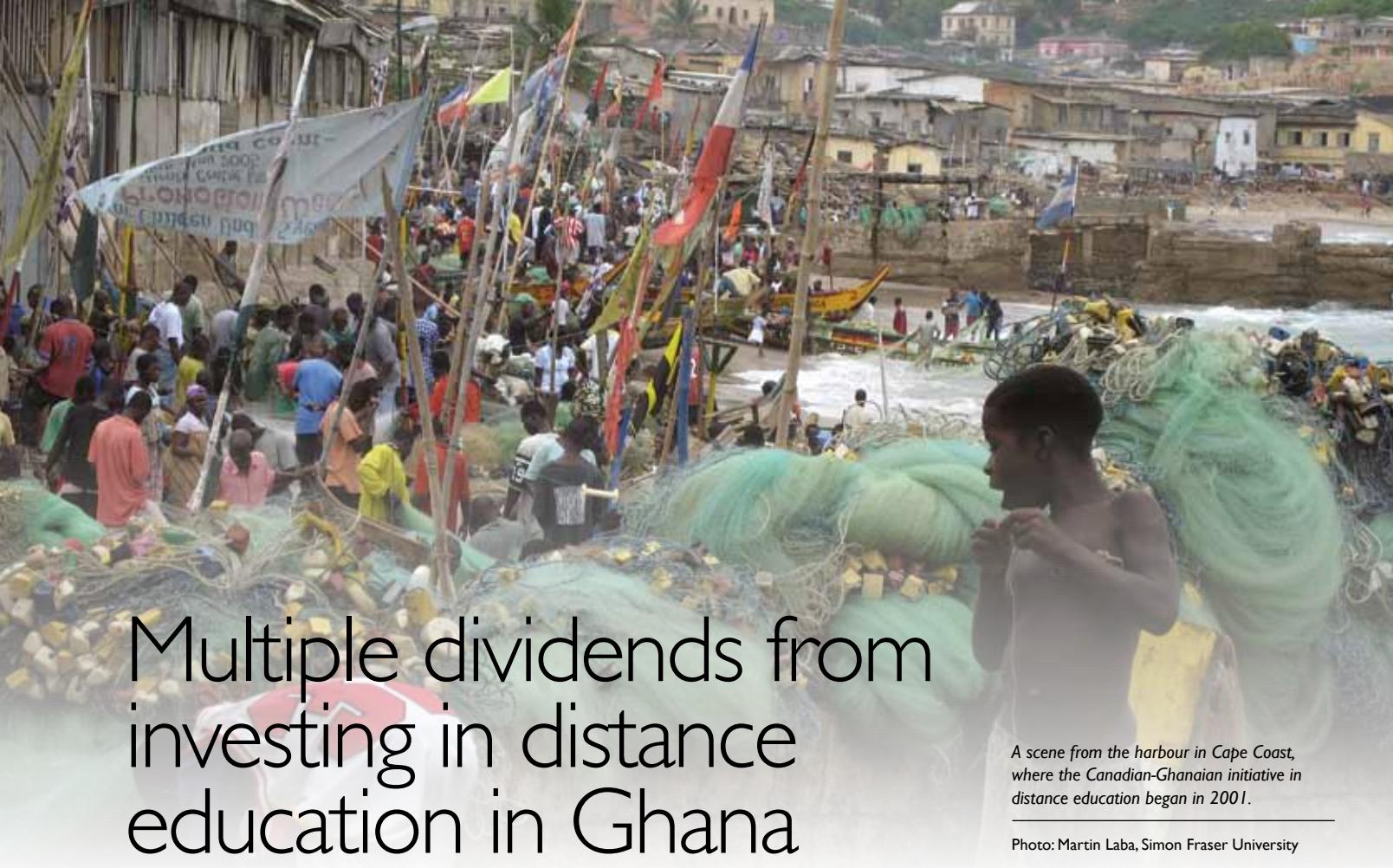
She adds that the government's outlook and new accreditations prompted 39 additional universities to start BSW programs. Other positive outcomes of the original project include a social work practice centre at ULSA that provides

services to the community; undergraduate and diploma curricula translated into Vietnamese; and three research projects completed under the guidance of Memorial's social work faculty.

To help meet the continuing shortage of social work teachers, field supervisors and social workers, a three-year CIDA-funded "scaling up" project will begin shortly. It will see the launch of a new MSW program at ULSA to be taught by international and local professors. Scaling-up projects are intended to extend the reach of successful, previously completed projects.

Twenty social work instructors with a range of backgrounds will enter the MSW program, and the plan is to educate a second cohort after that, says Dr. Gien. Four of the original MSW graduates, including Ms. Thai Lan and Ms. Huong, will continue their doctoral work abroad.

These freshly minted PhDs will eventually return home to conduct research and provide leadership for MSW programs and social work development. One of the main goals is to develop a set of standards for the Vietnamese universities providing social work education. 



Multiple dividends from investing in distance education in Ghana

by Elizabeth Smith

Blue chips? Bonds? Maybe pharmaceuticals? Investment analysts often recommend strategies to avoid undue risk, and to look to the long term. And that's exactly what thousands of Ghanaian students have done, buying into their own advancement through enrolling in distance education programs made possible by a successful Ghanaian-Canadian partnership.

Starting in November 2001, the first 750 students enrolled in a distance education diploma program at Ghana's University of Cape Coast (UCC). Ten years later, some 18,000 students in education and 15,000 in business programs have graduated. As a result, they are earning higher salaries, and their families, communities and the national economy have benefited indirectly.

Before this project, administered by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) and funded by the Canadian International Development

Agency (CIDA), distance education was not an option in this developing country of about 23 million people. Yet the demand for tertiary education was overwhelming. In 2010 alone, 7,200 students were admitted in education and 4,800 in business programs. Currently UCC offers five programs in education and eight in business studies with 1,786 tutors and 33 study centres around the country.

"It was evident that our universities had limited physical capacity to accommodate increasing demands for admission," notes Albert Koomson, director for the Centre for Continuing Education at UCC. He was one of the architects who worked along with distance education experts from Simon Fraser University (SFU) to realize this alternative approach.

"We recognized back then that the approach of delivering education in a traditional classroom was just not feasible for the swelling number of students who wanted to have access to a university education."

Partnering with SFU

SFU is known for its high-quality design of distance education courses. The two institutions were brought together through the University Partnership for Cooperation and Development (UPCD) program, which AUCC manages; its aim is to strengthen Southern higher education institutions.

Martin Laba of SFU's School of Communication, and the academic project director for a recent collaborative education project with three Ghanaian universities, emphasizes the need for distance education courses to be continuously reviewed and revised to achieve ongoing relevance and cultural appropriateness, and to maintain high standards.

"In our work with the Ghanaian institutions, everything from the details of course content to issues of media, technology, and modes of delivery received attention and revision throughout the project."

A scene from the harbour in Cape Coast, where the Canadian-Ghanian initiative in distance education began in 2001.

Photo: Martin Laba, Simon Fraser University



An instructor gives a slide presentation to a class of adult learners. A variety of media are used in distance learning to respond to demands for access to tertiary education in Ghana.

Photo: ©ACDI-CIDA/Roger LeMoine

He adds that in Ghana, access to technology can vary considerably, especially from rural to urban communities, and a wide range of delivery modes – low tech and some high tech – need to be analyzed and implemented. "Audio cassettes, video, radio broadcasts, television, mobile phones, texting capacities and the Internet are all part of the mix of possibilities," he notes.

Three other Ghanaian institutions formed part of the partnership. University of Ghana provides a range of courses, and Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology offers distance education in civil engineering. University College of Education of Winneba focuses on improving the quality of primary and secondary school teachers (as does UCC), along with "training up" employees in the commercial sector.

Education is the best investment

Now, CIDA's original input of \$1 million

has directly raised the professional competence of thousands of teachers and other education sector personnel, as well as employees across commerce and industry.

"We owe a lot to our friends at SFU," says Mr. Koomson. "Investing in higher education is showing high payoffs. The increase in individuals' compensation and promotion potential has positive effects overall on the Ghanaian economy."

He adds that salaries are usually tripled as a result of getting a UCC diploma, and employers often pay for tuition. In some cases, the government even reimburses the cost.

At the same time as ensuring a brighter future for many, the fees, considered very affordable by Ghanaian standards, now self-sustain the UCC program. The development of a new \$9-million study facility on campus was made possible with internally generated funds. The building will be officially opened this year and will be used for program development, labs, and extra lecture and

seminar space for students and trainers.

Furthermore, adds Mr. Koomson, the centre wishes to explore options of using video-conferencing to deliver courses, and if Canadian suppliers could offer competitive pricing "we'll pay for it."

The project partners actively encouraged the Ministry of Education to make distance education a priority. In 2006, Ghana officially amended its education policy, recognizing distance education as a way of redressing the critical issues of access, quality and relevance of tertiary education. The move proved to be a good investment, in terms of human resources for the country, economic advancement for individuals and communities, and achieving national goals.

As for the original pioneering 750 students who took the diploma program back in 2001, the ones who didn't finish it were held back by financial or health reasons, says Mr. Koomson. Remarkably, 689 completed the program. ☺

Investir dans la formation de professionnels francophones

Le témoignage d'un ancien boursier du Programme canadien de bourses de la Francophonie
par Armel Nguimbi

Tout a commencé par une convention que l'École Normale Supérieure de Libreville au Gabon avait signée avec l'Université Laval au Québec pour une formation à la maîtrise en didactique. Au terme de la formation, un certain nombre d'étudiants gabonais méritants, dont je faisais partie, ont séjourné au Québec pendant quatre mois. Des offres d'admission au doctorat nous ont alors été proposées, mais il fallait obtenir du financement.

L'obtention de la bourse a été une formidable chance pour moi. J'avais un désir ardent de poursuivre mes études le plus loin possible, c'est-à-dire jusqu'au doctorat, mais ce n'était pas gagné d'avance, vu mes origines modestes et les conditions d'attribution de bourses au Gabon. C'est grâce au financement de l'Agence canadienne de développement international que j'ai pu étudier au Canada pendant quatre ans. Le plus important est que le Programme canadien de bourses de la

Francophonie a permis à la société gabonaise de se doter d'un cadre de haut niveau, prêt à s'investir pour l'émergence de son pays en matière d'éducation.

Quelques mois après mon retour en 2009, j'ai été nommé directeur adjoint de l'Évaluation et de la

Prospective du système

scolaire gabonais. Je ne m'attendais pas à cet engagement. Il faut dire que j'ai peut-être été chanceux, quoique, mon retour au Gabon n'est pas resté discret; il est fort probable que le ministre ait été sensible à ma nouvelle formation reçue au Canada.

La direction de l'Évaluation et de la Prospective joue un rôle technique de premier plan. Ses avis sur le fonctionnement et le rendement de l'École gabonaise sont



Armel Nguimbi

très attendus. Nous sommes le baromètre du système scolaire; ce qui me place toujours en situation de recherche. Il n'y a donc pas de place pour la routine, source de sclérose, et d'inaction. Il n'y a de place que pour l'innovation.

Au cours de mes études, je me suis penché sur des questions en lien avec mon contexte gabonais. Pourquoi devrais-je me contenter des instruments d'enseignement inventés ou élaborés par les autres et dans des contextes éloignés du mien? Pourquoi les appliquer à la lettre avec souvent peu de succès? L'obtention d'une bourse pour le Canada a été l'aboutissement d'un rêve. Je suis passé du statut de simple exécutant des directives officielles à un véritable

professionnel : praticien réflexif, critique et créatif. 

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