



In November 2011, Le Groupe-Conseil Interatalia, an independent consulting firm that specializes in monitoring and evaluation of international development projects, programs and organizations, was engaged by CIDA to evaluate the Coady International Institute's performance. The evaluation looked specifically at the Coady Institute's performance and impact as it relates to the goals set out in the five-year contribution agreement between CIDA and the Coady Institute for 2007 - 2012. The following are highlights from the final evaluation. The full evaluation report is available online at [www.coady.stfx.ca](http://www.coady.stfx.ca).

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## **The Coady Institute builds visionary, informed, and capable development leaders through the delivery of transformative education programs; a fundamental building block for all other development.**

- Coady is an institution that has a demonstrated capacity for learning, evolving and constantly adapting to the changing international development context. (p.1)
- Coady is an organization that learns and applies its learning for ongoing program improvement. In its transformative education programs, the type of courses offered and the related learning content is constantly being updated based on input from participants, pilot testing of innovative approaches in the field, evaluation and action-research. (p.30)
- ...Coady promotes aid effectiveness principles through its foundational approach of citizen-driven development by fostering communities' articulation of their own development plans and priorities (alignment); strengthening local systems of community organization and mobilizing local resources and assets (harmonization); resulting in improved local ownership for results and sustainability. (p.7)
- ...the Coady approach strengthens governance and democratic development by supporting citizens to influence decision-making and hold authorities to account with regard to their local development priorities and plans(p.7)
- 94% of graduates surveyed agree that they have been able to apply new skills and knowledge gained from Coady training in their work while 90% agree that they have introduced new ideas and practices at work since their training. Finally, 91% of participants surveyed agree that they have broadened their contacts, networks and linkages with other actors and organizations as a result of their experience at Coady. (p.11)

## Coady is an organization that learns and applies its learning for ongoing program improvement.

... partners described Coady as respectful, effective and inspirational. They feel their partnerships were characterized by mutual respect and open dialogue – partners are free to adapt Coady resources to their local contexts and practices, while collaboration was felt to be equitable, transparent, and mutually beneficial. Southern partners feel the capacity development and learning works in both directions – while they are building capacity through their pilot experiences at the community level, these projects are also informing Coady and being used by Coady to improve their educational programs and development innovations. (p.28)



## The Coady Institute is recognized as unique and valuable in the development sector.

Coady is seen to work with a level of practitioner, those whose work is rooted in the community and in grassroots development.

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Coady's value-added relative to IDS, lies in its emphasis on community and in-country leadership, social justice and critical thinking. While IDS is seen to help senior managers become effective development practitioners and technocrats, within the existing development paradigm... Coady is credited with effectively promoting transformative learning – that is, ...helping people to be more critical, to challenge current development thinking, and step outside of the current doctrine. Coady is seen to work with a different level of practitioner than IDS, those whose work is rooted in the community and in grassroots development (p 10)

The quality and value-added of Coady's programme is recognized by partners internationally, while providing networks of alumni in countries all over the world who have a connection to Canada. (p 1)

Given (Coady's) international relationships, which appear to be expanding and deepening, it would seem that many significant, international development actors recognize Coady's programming offer as relevant as well as worthy of support, investment and collaboration. It would also seem that there are few, if any, other Canadian NGOs or universities that can demonstrate the same level of support, recognition, and interest among such a varied array of international development partners.(p.10)

The fact that Coady's teaching staff is made up of highly experienced development practitioners is something that sets Coady apart from other universities and training institutes. (p.26)

*The most important effects are that now I am able to critically analyse every situation of my work especially when dealing with decisions that relate to human beings. I always try to understand their thoughts, emotions, and intentions. Furthermore, I am able to ensure all the projects we implement there is gender lens, governance lens, sustainability lens, well being lens, culture lens and livelihood lens. These have proved to be important lenses for development leaders. (p.14)*

*Organizational learning was the most precious course which was applicable right back home. It has been easy to apply in my organization and other groups I am working with. This course has resolved a problem in my organization at crucial moment than I expected. (p.14)*



*I have changed my thinking and practice from doing to facilitating in communities, a process of unlearning to learn. I have built strong networks, linkages and contacts that continue to add value to my interventions at grassroots level. I have now given space for others to exercise and experiment their thinking. (p.14)*

*Coady allowed us to reflect on why development has failed up until now. We can't keep going into communities as experts. We need to acknowledge indigenous knowledge and skills. It has completely changed my view on my work. Now I go into communities to learn, starting with local knowledge. (p. 14)*

*With the diploma program I am the agent of change to my organisation and the country as a whole. I was exposed to different skills and explored much from Coady as well as fellow participants from other countries worldwide through best practice sharing. I am now involved to represent my country in international conferences. My organisation has confidence in me that I am a performer and can deliver. (p. 14)*

*It has enabled me to get a deeper sense of who I am, as a person, leader, and manager. It has located me in different knowledge and action network. It has increased my critical thinking and analysis skills. (p.14)*

## Coady Institute is highly relevant and supportive to Canadian organizations working internationally. Our partners recognize the difference that the Coady Institute provides.

Oxfam Canada distinguishes Coady's approach from other participatory and appreciative techniques... Oxfam Canada describes Coady's approach as transformative as it helps people change their vision of themselves from asset and capacity-poor to rich. As the organization explains, it has complemented and deepened Oxfam Canada's participatory development approach:

*It is not simply a set of tools or techniques. [Coady's ABCD] approach is a new way of conceiving of development and your role in it. Working with Coady has influenced [Oxfam] in subtle ways, especially in our development discourse. It has influenced the way we work...we are more conscious of the role we play and how we engage with partners and in communities... The tools are so simple. In a few hours you can begin to see changes in perception in communities. (p.9)*

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**...97% of women surveyed reported they had gained confidence in their professional skills and knowledge as a result of Coady training.**

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(Canadian NGOs working with Coady) feel the training to be very relevant to their programming goals and an important input to their capacity building of partners overseas. As one partner explains:

*There are not many learning institutes available in our field. We can't afford private training and Coady is affordable because of its mandate. Coady courses are very focused on specific issues relevant to our partners and the courses are delivered by very skilled facilitators...Coady has a very special niche of providing really tailored certificates that most organizations in development do need...*

*I don't think anything else like Coady exists...a dynamic learning organization, always evolving, it's as relevant now as fifteen years ago. The environment changes and so does Coady.*

*Coady is unlike other training institutions. It has an incredible reputation; it's very familiar with development issues. It's very respectful of overseas partners...it offers not just training but learning, sharing, networking. (p.9)*

## Coady helps its partners to adopt innovative approaches to development and test their effectiveness at the community level.

### A few examples include:

**In Ethiopia:** (Coady partner) Hundee has effectively shifted from a needs-based to an asset-based approach to development and has integrated ABCD (Asset-Based, Community-Driven development) into its programming approach, with significant results demonstrated at the community level in terms of increased savings, the strengthening of women's groups, and improved community infrastructure. (p.16)

**In Zambia:** Women for Change (WfC) credits Coady with helping develop a cadre of animators who are considered the best in Zambia; helping WfC to shift to an asset-based and community-driven approach to microfinance over a banking model; developing a stronger network of advocates for social justice in the country; and developing individual staff capacity for leadership and confidence within the organization. (p.17)

**In Ghana:** CIKOD credits Coady for introducing the organization to the PATH (People Assessing Their Health) process and the development of a community health impact assessment tool. CIKOD has since used the process and tool in gold mining area of Northern Ghana, documented the process and results, and used the evidence for advocacy purposes, generating significant debate in the country. Further training by Coady enabled the PATH process and results to be disseminated to NGOs across Africa. (p.17)



## Coady's foundational Asset-based, Citizen-driven approach (ABCD) to development, aims to improve local ownership, reduce aid dependency and ensure more sustainable development results.

### At the community level:

...there is evidence that targeted communities have increased savings, improved infrastructure, diversified economic activities, developed more inclusive and effective community organizations, improved relations with local authorities, and enabled greater participation by women in household and community decision-making. (p 11)

*Since ABCD, there has been a real shift in attitude of the people. There is now a savings culture and women's groups are much more active. If you go to the community now, they don't come with a catalogue of problems. Now they tell you they have planned this, they have raised these resources, and they ask for only a minimum of support. For example, they were building a dam and asked for some cement that wasn't available on the local market. They are now responsible for generating their own development. We help where they ask us to. (p 24)*

### At the National level:

...particularly in Vietnam and South Africa, broad-based networks and communities of practice are emerging around Coady's asset-based, community-driven development (ABCD) while Coady is seen to be facilitating policy dialogue on development approaches across civil society, government and private sector actors. (p 11)

## Gender equality is a foundation of Coady's approach

Coady mainstreams gender equality in all its education programs in Canada. Gender equality is also central to Coady's choice of key programmatic areas it focuses on and partnerships it nurtures in the global South.



- ...With regard to women's advancement, 81% of women participants surveyed, reported that they had gained more responsibility at work as a result of their Coady training while 97% of women surveyed reported they had gained confidence in their professional skills and knowledge as a result of Coady training. (p.11)
- Observations by community members on the effects of Coady's Asset-Based Community-Driven development approach in Ethiopia on gender equality:
  - *In the past, women were not entitled to attend meetings, now they can attend them freely, receive training, and make decisions together with men.(p.22)*
  - *Before ABCD, we were expecting our husbands to provide for the family and we ate from what he brought. Since I have been involved, I have learnt many things. We used to buy a lot from outside, now we grow more vegetables together as a family to decrease expenditure. We are able to save time, learn together, help one another. (p.22)*

The findings, interpretations, and conclusions expressed herein are those of the evaluator and do not necessarily reflect the views of CIDA or the government of Canada. CIDA does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this work.