

Research Initiative, or organizations such as GoverNext in Nova Scotia or Tomorrow's Ontario Public Service (TOPS). Outside of the public service, IPAC has also been a strong supporter of the development of new professional groups, such as the Victoria New Professionals.

Why are employees flocking to these groups? What makes them unique and essential to ensure the success of developing public service employees to face the challenges of the future?

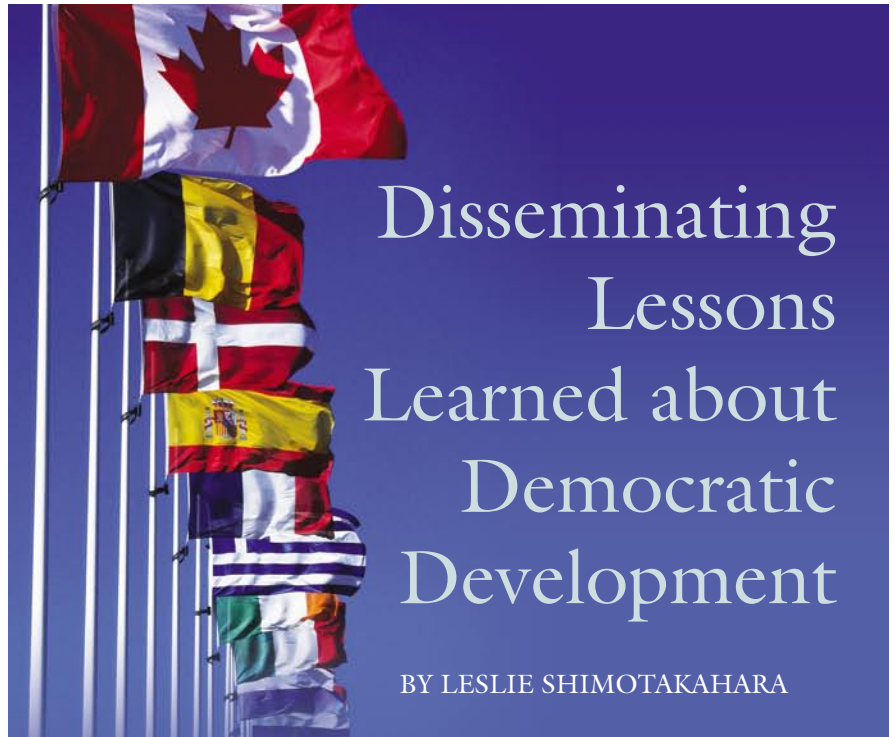
Participation in these groups has given me with the opportunity to practice leadership and project management skills in a low risk environment, while being supported by my peers. It is a workspace that is forgiving of mistakes, while fostering and encouraging innovative approaches. In short, the communities are a training ground for future leaders at all levels. These events and the projects of these communities provide an opportunity for the creation of strategic networks between public servants. The future success of public service employees will depend on being able to tackle complex problems by working collaboratively with their colleagues in all areas of the organization.

For the public service, these communities enjoy a wealth of expertise and engender innovative solutions to current policy and service delivery challenges. From my own observations, new professionals often provide an honest and refreshing perspective on issues. Engaging with new professionals communities empowers employees (and their ideas), encourages people who are enthusiastic about their work and their role.

Supporting new professionals' groups leads to huge benefits for the public service, far outweighing possible risks of providing time, resources, mentorship or encouragement to them.

New professionals are the face of a new public service. By supporting these communities we acknowledge that they are integral to the continued growth and development of the public service. We are also better able to leverage the energy, enthusiasm and innovation that these employees can bring to our workforce. **M**

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What lessons can be learned from Canada's projects on democratic development? And how can these lessons best be shared with the community of public sector and development professionals and the Canadian public? Last December, a team from IPAC and Rights & Democracy met in Montreal to discuss these questions in relation to Deployment for Democratic Development (DDD), a CIDA program co-managed by IPAC and Rights & Democracy.

Launched in 2007, DDD is a four-year program through which IPAC and Rights & Democracy are deploying Canadian specialists from different sectors of the economy (government, non-government, private and academic sectors) to develop and implement rapid-response initiatives in partner countries in all regions of the world. It is anticipated that 125 initiatives will be carried out over the course of DDD. At present, 36 initiatives are completed or underway, in such countries as Niger, Bangladesh, Armenia, Indonesia, Ghana, Tanzania, Jordan, Jamaica, Ukraine, Mozambique, Botswana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Guinea-Bissau, Colombia, Bolivia and Cameroun. These initiatives address a wide variety of governance issues that fall under the sectors of Accountable Public Institutions, Rule of Law, Freedom and Democracy, Human Rights, and Conflict Prevention and Peace Building. For instance, specific initiatives cover educational reform, procurement capacity, state budget analysis, results-based management, human resource management, election monitoring, women's rights, media independence, and the court system.

DDD's knowledge sharing strategy draws upon the expertise of a team of knowledge facilitators from IPAC and Rights & Democracy, who are studying initiatives within each sector as well as horizontally across sectors and regions/countries with a view to capturing experiences, smart practices and lessons learned for future initiatives and other related projects beyond DDD. This Knowledge Sharing Team plans to author case studies and working papers on democratic development issues; enhance the DDD website (www.democraticdevelopment.ca); create a DDD e-newsletter; and organize an International Programs workshop the weekend before IPAC's Annual Conference in Fredericton. We would also like to arrange for DDD experts to present on their initiatives at IPAC Regional Group events (interested Regional Groups should contact us for more information).

To give you a taste of what DDD has to offer, below are a couple of examples of initiatives on which case studies are currently being drafted.

Educational Reform in Jordan

Canada has long played a leading role in assisting with Jordan's long-term educational and labour market reform strategy (the Employment, Technical and Vocational Education and Training strategy, as it's known). Developed over the past few years under the umbrella of the National Agenda, this ambitious reform strategy aims to increase Jordan's competitiveness by creating a knowledge-based economy that matches the labour market demands of the twenty-first century. During a two-year planning period, a host of donors, including CIDA, the EU, World Bank and USAID amongst others, worked with the Ministry of Labour to develop this strategy, taking a sector-wide approach. Stakeholders were allowed to dream in colour, producing a plan that outstretched what could be realistically implemented within budget.

involves naming, describing, and explaining change and discussing people's reaction." Through her provision of this modest amount of technical assistance over a four-month period, the project was salvaged and the project climate was turned around – yielding some valuable lessons learned about dealing with change.

Election Monitoring in Guinea-Bissau

Since gaining its independence from Portugal in 1974, Guinea-Bissau has struggled toward a democratic way of life. The legislative elections held on November 16, 2008, were considered a milestone. To assist with the conduct of free and fair elections, DDD was asked to provide two Canadian experts, an Elections Coordinator (Alain Gauthier) and Logistician (Jean Marc Baudot) to work in coordination with the National Electoral Commission (NEC). Mr.

According to Mr. Gauthier and Mr. Baudot's final report, "the Representative of the Secretary General expressed his satisfaction and relief that the Canadian presence had made possible the successful outcome of the International Elections Observers Coordination project in spite of a critically short timeframe." At a debriefing at the Canadian Embassy in Dakar, the second Secretary of the Embassy also expressed his satisfaction concerning the mission.

While reporting generally favourable observations about the election carried out, Mr. Gauthier and Mr. Baudot put forth several recommendations and lessons learned. More lead time for a preparatory assessment mission and orienting the coordination team was deemed appropriate. There was also a need for long-term observers to be deployed earlier in the mission to provide a field context and contribute to the design and testing of the observation forms and recommended procedures.

These measures would allow a more effective outreach to the heads of international observation missions and would likely improve the level of cooperation, as well as the quality of overall observation and reporting. It was recommended that for the 2010 presidential election, long-term observers be deployed two weeks in advance to review the entire voting process and procedures and serve as trainers for the short-term observers. It is hoped that an international electoral observation coordination initiative comparable to the one just completed will take place at that time.

These are just a couple of examples of the innovative projects taking place under DDD. Please contact us for more information about the program and opportunities to get involved in DDD's knowledge sharing activities.

Reference

1. Since the completion of this article, President João Bernardo Vieira was assassinated in March 2009. It is anticipated that new presidential elections will be set for May 2009. **M**

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When it came time to set up the unit that would be responsible for implementation, it became evident that the funds available were significantly more modest than what had been anticipated. It fell to Brenda Cooke, the Canadian expert whom DDD contracted to assist with the set-up of the unit, to help get things back on track. Under these circumstances, it was challenging to "maintain the momentum and commitment of all stakeholder groups," Ms. Cooke reflects. She was responsible for getting the unit up and running and helping to develop a Reform Program Implementation Model, including an organizational design for the unit, and providing policy guidance, advice on financial management and reporting arrangements, and on-the-fly training on a host of human resource management issues.

Throughout this process, Ms. Cooke was guided by "metacognitive" approaches to implementing change, which

Gauthier and Mr. Baudot provided support to 125 international electoral observers by assisting in the provision of logistics support and organizing documentation and briefings to give observers a better understanding of the country and the political/legal context for the elections and the electoral process. Mr. Gauthier had to create four different electoral observation forms and make them available in three languages (English, French and Portuguese) – all within ten days.

They also assisted the NEC with the accreditation of international observers, and proposed countrywide deployment plans designed to avoid duplication and to increase the density of observation coverage. These activities were aimed at strengthening the coordination of international observation of legislative elections and contributing to more credible and transparent elections in the long run, paving the way for the 2010 presidential election.¹