

# Global Citizens for Change Evaluation

Revised Report



June 2007



## A c r o n y m s

CCI	Canadian Crossroads International
CCIC	Canadian Council for International Co-operation
CECI	Canadian Centre for International Studies and Cooperation
CESO	Canadian Executive Service Organization
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CWY	Canada World Youth
ED	Executive Director
GCC	Global Citizens for Change
GTAG	Global Treatment Access Group
LAC	Local Action Committee
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PC	Project Campaigner
PE	Public Engagement
PM	Project Manager
RV	Returned Volunteer
SC	Steering Committee
SUCO	Solidarité, Union et Coopération
TORS	Terms of Reference
VCA	Volunteer Cooperation Agencies
VSO	Voluntary Service Overseas Canada
WUSC	World University Service of Canada

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## 1. Introduction

GCC is a collaborative project of Canadian international volunteer cooperation agencies (VCAs) designed to enhance the individual capacities of VCAs to engage returned volunteers. The GCC pilot phase (July to December 2005) was funded by the Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation and involved the collaboration of four VCAs<sup>1</sup>. The pilot focused on targeted mobilization in western and Atlantic Canada. However during this period all nine agencies continued to meet regularly, all nine agencies informed the project and tools were made available in English and French to all members. Following the success of the pilot phase, GCC received funding from CIDA to implement a second phase from April 2006 to March 2007 that involved nine VCAs,<sup>2</sup> and has recently signed an agreement with CIDA for a third phase.

In the fall of 2006, GCC stakeholders (including VCA Executive Directors and the GCC Project Manager) commissioned Universalia to conduct an external evaluation of the second phase of the project.

This document is the report on the evaluation and is organized into four chapters. Following this introduction, Chapter 2 presents the background on GCC and a profile of its activities; Chapter 3 provides the key findings of the assessment; and Chapter 4 presents a conclusion, recommendations and lessons learned.

### Evaluation Foci

During the course of developing the evaluation workplan with GCC stakeholders, Universalia reviewed the original evaluation objectives in the context of evaluation resources and time constraints. Universalia proposed, and VCA Coalition members agreed, that the evaluation would focus on the following:

- An assessment of the **context** within which GCC operates and the implications for the future evolution of GCC
- The **relevance** of GCC
- The **effectiveness** of GCC in realizing its stated objectives and outcomes
- The extent to which GCC was **designed, managed and governed appropriately**; and
- The **sustainability** of GCC results
- **Lessons learned and recommendations** regarding any subsequent phases of GCC.

### Evaluation Methodology

The assessment was carried out by three Universalia's consultants: Geraldine Cooney, Marc Vallée and Martin Carrier. The work planning took place in January 2007 and the data collection was carried out from January to March 2007.

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<sup>1</sup> Canadian Crossroads International (CCI), Voluntary Service Overseas Canada (VSO), Canadian Centre for International Studies and Cooperation (CECI) and World University Service of Canada (WUSC)

<sup>2</sup> The four original VCAs, plus Canada World Youth (CWY), the Canadian Executive Service Organization (CESO), CUSO, SUCO, and Oxfam Québec

The methodology for the evaluation was based on a document review, stakeholder interviews, four focus groups, and a questionnaire that was sent to and completed by representatives of the nine VCAs. The interview protocols and bilingual questionnaire were submitted to, and approved by, the VCA Coalition as part of the workplan.

Through interviews, focus groups and questionnaires, we consulted 47 individuals, including two GCC staff members, representatives of all nine VCAs, Steering Committee members, 21 volunteers, one CIDA representative, and representatives of two funding organizations involved in public engagement.

The list of documents reviewed is presented in the Appendix I, and the list of informants is presented in Appendix II.

### **Limitations**

Given the timeframe and resources for the evaluation, interviews were conducted with a limited number of volunteers and VCA representatives directly involved in GCC. As a consequence, our findings may not do justice to the views of all volunteers involved in GCC or to other VCA representatives not actively involved in GCC.

## 2. Profile of GCC

### 2.1 Background

For more than 50 years, Canada's international volunteer cooperation agencies (VCAs) have engaged Canadians in support of international development issues through overseas volunteer placements in developing countries and through volunteer work in Canada. The public engagement work undertaken individually by VCAs has had a positive impact on Canadians' understanding of and openness to different cultures. It has increased their knowledge of international development issues and has led to the increased involvement of Canadians in international development.

However, a CIDA-commissioned evaluation in 2005<sup>3</sup> noted some significant weaknesses in the public engagement efforts of VCAs. As a result, a group of VCAs developed the Global Citizens for Change – a joint project that aimed to enhance the individual capacities of VCAs to engage returned volunteers through collaboration.

The main assumption behind the collaboration was that VCAs would become more efficient in public engagement activities by pooling resources to support volunteers and to develop programs, supporting materials and key messages. It was felt that this would increase the reach and effectiveness of VCAs in terms of the number of volunteers engaged. It was also believed that developing common and coordinated campaigns and engaging volunteers for a common cause across the country would enhance their combined efficiency, effectiveness and impact.

**GCC Pilot Project** – In July 2005, four of Canada's VCAs (CCI, VSO, CECI and WUSC) applied for and received a grant of \$50,000 from the Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation for the GCC pilot project. The goal of the pilot project was to build a constituency of educated and informed young people, working to mobilize the members of their communities to influence and enhance Canada's leadership in international development. The project focused on eight selected communities and 35 campus groups. During the pilot phase, GCC hired a staff person on a contract basis (a Community Outreach Officer /Campaigner) who was based at the offices of Canadian Crossroads International (CCI) in Toronto.

**GCC Second Phase** – The success of the pilot project led to a second phase, funded by a one-time grant of \$250,000 from CIDA, to build on and expand VCA efforts across Canada from April 2006 until March 2007. The second phase purpose was to build a constituency of educated, informed and active people who are working to mobilize their communities to influence and enhance Canadian policies to reduce global poverty and to strengthen Canada's leadership role in fostering sustainable development globally. During this phase, the VCA Coalition hired a second staff member who was based at the CCI offices in Montreal; both staff members became known as Project Campaigners (PC).

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<sup>3</sup> *The Power of Volunteering: A Review of the Canadian Volunteer Cooperation Program* (Universalialia, March 2005)



## Evaluation of Global Citizens for Change

TYPE/NAME OF ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY	DATES
Mobilization Manual	Workshop manual given in hard copy to volunteer leaders <u>Modules available online:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation Skills (under How to do a great presentation)</li> <li>• Political Action Kit</li> <li>• Hosting Great Events</li> </ul> Media How To (under Connecting with Local Media)	Developed for the Leadership training in August 2006
Pre-departure/Return Training Manual	Common public engagement training module developed which integrates public engagement programming into pre-departure training, overseas placement and post placement.	
<b>Events</b>		
AIDS 2006 Volunteer Thank You Event	Event to thank volunteers for their contribution to the response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic.  The event took place in Toronto. Approximately 250 volunteers and partners participated including one Member of Parliament and a couple of CIDA representatives.	August 2006
International Day of the Volunteer	Event organized to celebrate the International Day of the Volunteer.  The event took place in Montreal and mobilized 179 volunteers, and 2 CIDA representatives.	December 2006
<b>Activities</b>		
GTAG HIV/AIDS Postcards Campaign	In collaboration with GTAG, GCC sponsored the printing and diffusion of post cards to ask the Canadian government to take decisive action on the global AIDS pandemic.  Approximately 17,000 postcards sent to the Prime Minister	July–August 2006
Public relations firm	With the support of a public relations firm, Media Profile, GCC developed a three phased media campaign aimed at increasing the profile of the contributions of overseas volunteers to development in targeted communities. The program focused on three events - the International Day of the Volunteer, International Development week and International Women's Day.  The program generated more than 30 print, on-line and broadcast hits with an audience reach of more than 4-million in total. Highlights include an Op-ed in the Prime Minister's riding and two Op-eds in the Minister of International Cooperation's Riding and an Op-ed signed by all EDs in Ottawa's Embassy Magazine.	November 2006 – March 2007
Support Funds (100\$&500\$):	Support funds available to individual or groups to undertake activities in their community around MDGs  Four grants were provided (1 x 500\$; 3 x 100\$)	

## 3. Key Findings

### 3.1 Context

#### 3.1.1 VCA Context

**Finding 1: The VCA Coalition is relatively young, modestly resourced, and has limited experience in managing joint programming activities. While members share common challenges in public engagement, they have different views on the purpose and targets of public engagement.**

#### **New and modestly resourced coalition**

The VCA Coalition started in 2000 in response to some difficulties that individual VCAs were having with CIDA contracting and other management matters. The VCA Executive Directors worked together to manage corporate issues with CIDA, and also established other working groups of VCA officers who worked together on areas of common interest (e.g. volunteer recruitment, orientation, selection of volunteers and, more recently, public engagement). In 2005, the Coalition began working on its first joint programming activity – GCC.

Members' costs of participating in the Coalition are borne by individual members; the Coalition has no dedicated budget or staff. Moreover, Coalition members' time and resources for engaging in Coalition activities is limited. VCA staff assigned to Coalition activities carry out these tasks in addition to their own regular workloads.

#### **Common challenges**

Some of the common challenges that VCAs face include:<sup>4</sup>

- Difficulties in reaching new audiences, as most PE activities undertaken generally engage the “converted” returned volunteers
- Lack of resources to follow-up and support returned volunteers effectively, which results in missed opportunities to engage more volunteers
- Difficulties in providing adequate follow-up with RVs (to provide guidance and direction to engage them) – the CIDA study “The Power of Volunteering” (2005) showed that it is usually the RVs who initiate contact with the VCAs.

“By **public engagement** we mean the processes and activities of engaging citizens that enables people to move from basic awareness of international development issues, through to an understanding of the causes and effects of global issues to personal and informed action”

GCC Evaluation Terms of Reference (December 2006)

In 2005, the Coalition established a working group to explore the possibilities for collaboration in addressing mutual challenges and objectives related to public engagement (PE) and the reintegration of returned volunteers. This culminated in the birth of the GCC pilot project.

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<sup>4</sup> CIDA (2005). The Power of Volunteering - A Review of the Canadian Volunteer Cooperation Program

## Different perspectives

While the VCAs share common challenges in PE, they have different target audiences, different strategies to engage the public and different resources to do so. For example:

- **Different target audiences:** CESO internal volunteers are usually senior or retired professionals, while CWY volunteers are generally youth with limited previous work experience.
- **Different strategies to engage the public:** Some VCAs, such as CWY and CESO, conduct activities to raise awareness of international development (e.g., in schools, social clubs, etc. in Canada) while others, such as SUCO, favour direct local solidarity to inform and engage the public in specific communities as they do abroad.
- **Different resources:** CUSO currently has four outreach staff members working on PE issues, while SUCO has no staff specifically assigned to PE. There are similar variances among the VCAs in terms of their annual revenues and budgets: some are well diversified and have large budgets (e.g. WUSC and CECL, while others are dependent on smaller revenue bases (e.g. SUCO).

## Increasing competition among some VCAs

A final contextual issue (which seems to be affecting VCAs differently) relates to what appears to be a re-emergence of feelings of increased competition among some VCAs for CIDA's financial support of their programs. While VCAs have always competed for CIDA resources, since 2000 these have been counter-balanced by positive collaborative activities including the establishment of the VCA Coalition. The balance between competition and collaboration has been changing recently, with some VCAs placing more emphasis on competition.

This has implications for VCA collaboration. For example, in deciding the objectives, strategies and activities of joint PE projects such as GCC, program planners must consider that the needs and expectations of individual VCAs may be quite different – depending on their individual purposes, values, priorities and resources. This can present challenges in identifying a shared purpose and common expected results.

### 3.1.2 GCC Context

#### **Finding 2: GCC is a new and ambitious project with modest dedicated resources.**

GCC is a new project that began in 2005 under the name “Global Citizens for Action Against Poverty” when four VCAs applied for and received a grant from the Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation. The pilot was followed by a second phase that involved nine VCAs who jointly submitted a proposal to CIDA and received sponsorship for one year.

<b>GCC Grants Received</b>
<u>Pilot Phase:</u> \$50,000
<u>Second Phase:</u> \$300,000

The second phase of the GCC project was quite ambitious, particularly in light of the expected results (six objectives and eight outcomes listed in the proposal to CIDA), the one-year timeframe, the modest budget (\$300,000) and limited human resources (two full-time staff). See discussion in section 3.5.

### 3.1.3 Public Engagement Funding Context

**Finding 3: There are a variety of funding sources available for public engagement in Canada, but most potential donors target specific audiences.**

In order to obtain a sense of the funding context, we interviewed representatives of three funding organizations familiar with GCC and public engagement– the Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation, the McConnell Foundation, and CIDA.

The representatives of the two foundations confirmed their interest in public engagement initiatives, but noted that they only support innovative projects that address issues related to their specific public audiences. For example, the WG Foundation is interested in educating and engaging youth on international development issues, while the McConnell Foundation funds local innovative initiatives that address significant issues of national concern, promote resilient communities, and demonstrate potential for national dissemination.

CIDA’s interest in and support for PE has fluctuated over time. CIDA is currently supporting PE efforts of VCAs as part of their current contribution agreements through the Volunteer Cooperation Program based in Canadian Partnership Branch that was negotiated several years ago, and is up for review in 2008/09. In 2006/07 and 2007/08, additional CIDA funding was also made available to Canadian non governmental organizations for PE through a stand alone Public Engagement Fund of the CIDA Partnership Branch.

Although we were not able to obtain figures, we received confirmation that WGF and McConnell budgets for PE will remain stable in the short run. The interviewed CIDA representative noted that PE is of growing interest in the Agency, and that more resources will be allocated to PE next year. However, this information will need to be revisited as CIDA’s resource allocations are vulnerable to changes in the political context.

## 3.2 Relevance

**Finding 4: GCC is generally viewed as relevant by its stakeholders.**

Most interviewed VCA representatives (EDs and SC members) said that GCC is highly relevant to their organizations. In interviews, they indicated that GCC has provided them with a valuable opportunity to discuss common challenges and issues related to PE, learn from PE specialists and from other VCAs about their experience in PE and jointly address common issues (e.g., building RV skills). They also noted that GCC provides opportunities for VCAs to utilize their resources more efficiently (see sidebar).

VCAs report that GCC provided them with opportunities to engage returned volunteers in ways that they would not have been able to carry out individually because of the associated costs and/or risks (e.g., the AIDS 2006 Volunteer Thank You Event and the International Day of the Volunteer).

The volunteers we interviewed indicated that GCC is extremely relevant as it offers them the opportunity to acquire knowledge and develop new skills.

CIDA considers GCC as relevant as it provides VCAs with a potentially effective and efficient means to work together on issues of mutual interest. Since 2004, CIDA has been actively support joint collaboration among the VCAs and has actively encouraged their collaboration. Interviewed funding partners indicated that GCC is relevant if its priorities are congruent with theirs. For example, WGF indicated that GCC is relevant if GCC targets the education youth Canadians on international development issues engagement and engage them in a sustainable ways.

### 3.3 GCC Effectiveness

**Finding 5: The VCA Coalition supported the undertaking of several successful activities and outputs. It did not realize most GCC objectives and outcomes, due to several important limitations with the project design.**

The principles of good project management suggest that project objectives, outcomes and outputs be “SMART”, i.e. that they are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound given the resources at hand. The GCC design encompassed many objectives and outcomes. Overall, these were not commensurate with available financial and human resources allocated by the VCA Coalition for the project, nor to the modest (one year) project timeframes. Project stakeholders tended to focus more on the delivery of activities and outputs, than on outcomes identified in the project proposal. On hindsight, it would have been better if the outcomes were instead defined in terms of the Project timeframe and resources. While GCC was partially successful in undertaking many activities and some outputs related to its objectives and outcomes, most planned GCC objectives and outcomes were not realized.

Effectiveness is “the extent to which the development intervention’s objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.” OECD, 2002

The GCC objectives and expected outcomes are shown in Exhibits 3.1 and 3.2 below, along with VCA reports and our own analysis.

In summary, we consider that:

- GCC was relatively more effective in undertaking activities related to:
  - Providing capacity building activities to increase RVs and interested Canadians understanding around specific themes (MDGs, Trade, Poverty, Canada’s role and potential role, etc.)
  - Providing capacity building activities to improve volunteer leaders knowledge of recruitment, mobilization, media relations, and advocacy
  - Developing activities to increase volunteers’ capacities and develop their knowledge on specific issues
- GCC was somewhat effective in undertaking activities related to:
  - Developing individual VCA capacities to mobilize RVs and youth and other interested Canadians to take action in support of public policy that supports the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals
  - Developing and testing activities to support local involvement from a distance
  - Developing and testing activities to enable RVs and the general public to have an impact on decision makers
- GCC was least effective in undertaking activities related to:
  - Providing RVs with opportunities to engage through existing or new local action committees or networks
  - Creating coordinated opportunities for interested Canadians to take action in local communities or existing local action committees (LAC). After the August 2006 training, the Steering Committee decided not to focus in the future on creating coordinated opportunities for interested Canadians, and not to support LACs.
  - Testing and evaluating strategies.

**Exhibit 3.1 Effectiveness: Objectives**

OBJECTIVES	VCA REPORTS AND OUR ANALYSIS
<p>To increase the capacity of Canada's nine International Volunteer Cooperation Agencies to mobilize volunteers (especially returned overseas volunteers) including youth and Diaspora communities, to take action in support of public policy that supports the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals</p>	<p>GCC has developed new tools and resources on MDG issues (e.g., the HIV/AIDS Community Mobilization Kit). It is premature to assess the extent to which these have increased the capacity of VCAs to mobilize volunteers to take action in support of public policy that supports the achievement of the MDGs.</p>
<p>To create coordinated opportunities for interested Canadians to take action in local communities and to focus the actions of existing local committees on common themes and messages across the country</p>	<p>VCAs report that GCC provided training for volunteers to build their knowledge of specific development issues (e.g., HIV/AIDS Telephone Training; Women, Poverty and Trade Telephone Training); and for volunteer leaders to develop their capacity in political action (Leadership Training Workshop, August 2006). They also report that they did not devote more resource to establishing or supporting autonomous local action committees beyond the initial training with key leaders.</p> <p>The national telephone training events provided centrally coordinated opportunities for Canadians across the country to take specific action to deepen knowledge on a particular issue related to an MDG. Each training session provided a specific individual action or task for each participant. In addition, mobilization kits were provided to support local action. It was noted that while the training enhanced the capacities of individual volunteers, but that volunteers did not necessarily organize subsequent activities. .</p> <p>In addition, the media relations programs provided centrally coordinated opportunities for some volunteers to speak out on common issues/themes.</p> <p>GCC provided support to at least two LAC (e.g., the Project Campaigner supported the leader of an LAC in Montreal who wanted to recruit volunteers to develop a play on MDGs).</p> <p>However, the objective of focusing the actions of existing local committees on common themes and messages across the country seems overly ambitious.</p>
<p>To develop, test and evaluate public engagement strategies that have appeal to returned volunteers (alumni) and the general public and ultimately have an impact on decision-makers</p>	<p>GCC supported the development of several PE strategies. However, GCC did not establish, nor did we have the evaluation resources to assess what impact (if any) these strategies have had on decision makers. Interviews with selected stakeholders led to the identification of three GCC activities that produced examples of potential impact areas, but no data is available on impacts realized, if any.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a result of the HIV/AIDS Postcard Campaign, 17,000 postcards were sent to the Prime Minister to remind the Canadian government to keep its promises with respect to HIV/AIDS</li> <li>• As a result of the Leadership Training Workshop (August 2006), 57 volunteers subsequently interacted with MPs and 45 volunteers were involved with the media</li> </ul>

OBJECTIVES	VCA REPORTS AND OUR ANALYSIS
<p>To develop and test strategies and tools to support local involvement from a distance</p>	<p>During the course of Phase II, GCC developed and tested activities to support local involvement from a distance. These included a website, training to develop VCA volunteer leaders, as well as opportunities to engage RVs in new ways (e.g., telephone training) and the creation of local action committees.</p> <p>The website and its forum were established in January 2007, so it is too early to assess its effectiveness in this regard. However, by mid February, the website had been visited 6,186 times.</p> <p>One of the objectives of the August leadership training was to provide volunteer leaders with tools/knowledge they required to take action and to develop a LAC. This objective was changed following the August 2006 workshop.</p> <p>As a result of the Leadership Training Workshop (August 2006), three new local action committees (LACs) were created, bringing the total number of LACs to four (one remained active from the pilot phase). However, this is far short of the planned total of 20 LACs.</p>
<p>To build VCA capacity to engage returned alumni and to keep them engaged in activities in support of international development issues</p>	<p>VCAs noted the utility of the GCC Mobilization Kit and the Pre-Departure/Return Training Manual). While some VCAs are using these resources (e.g., CWY will be using the Pre-Departure/Return Training Manual for their volunteers), other VCAs reported that collaboration did not significantly increase their capacities to mobilize volunteers. Some explained that they will not be able to replicate GCC activities within their VCA.</p>
<p>To raise the profile of international volunteering</p>	<p>GCC supported press campaigns aimed at covering the different events (AIDS 2006 Volunteer Thank You Event, and the International Day of the Volunteer) in August and December 2006. VCAs report that these events increased their profiles in ways that they could not have done individually. While these are positive contributions, they are modest in the context of the stated objective. It is clear that this objective is quite ambitious for GCC given its limited resources, scope and timeframe.</p>

**Exhibit 3.2 Effectiveness: Outcomes**

OUTCOMES	VCA REPORTS AND OUR ANALYSIS
Youth and other returned volunteers have increased understanding of Canada's role and potential role in international issues	<p>In interviews, returned VCA volunteers reported that GCC-sponsored training sessions (Leadership Training Workshop, HIV/AIDS Telephone Training) had increased their understanding of global issues, how Canadian policies affect global issues, and what individuals can do to affect global issues.</p> <p>GCC's evaluations of training sessions assess participants' satisfaction with the training and present a narrative description of the activities. GCC does not have a mechanism to assess if or how training has influenced participants' understanding of international issues.</p>
Youth and other returned volunteers have increased understanding of trade, debt and aid, the Millennium Development Goals, and how global policies impact the development of poorer countries	<p>GCC reports that training increased volunteer understanding in all of these areas. For example, GCC's own evaluations report that 94% of participants learned new and useful information as a consequence of the AIDS Telephone Training (July 2006); 89% felt they improved their knowledge of the MDGs following the Leadership Training Workshop (August 2006); and 84% said they increased knowledge following the Telephone Training about Women, Poverty and Trade (February 2006). All volunteers who were interviewed corroborated this evidence.</p>
Volunteers have gained experience in recruitment, mobilization, media relations and advocacy	<p>GCC reports 92% of the participants in the Leadership Training Workshop (August 2006) increased their knowledge in all of these areas; following the workshop, 6 volunteers wrote articles, 57 interacted with MPs, and 45 got involved with media. Much of this information was validated during our interviews with the volunteers (e.g., contacting MPs and media involvement) but none of those interviewed said that they put in practice the recruitment skills they gained.</p>
VCA members have increased organizational and joint capacities to mobilize returned volunteers and Canadians	<p>GCC developed and partially tested new tools, such as the telephone training, the GCC website and forum, the volunteer leaders training (August 2006) and various kits (see section 2.2). Some VCAs who have used these tools report increased expertise in using the telephone training method. There is no data to assess whether the VCAs have increased their capacities to mobilize returned volunteers and Canadians. Moreover, it is not clear that the development of these tools will be sufficient to realize the stated outcome.</p>
Effective strategies developed to support local action from a distance have been tested and refined	<p>GCC supported the development of various activities to support local action from a distance (e.g., training volunteer leaders to develop LACs, the GCC website, and the use of email to share information). The effectiveness of these activities varies.</p> <p>Interviewed volunteers noted the benefits of emails which kept them informed about GCC activities and some development issues in general. However, only two of the four LACs are engaging volunteers on a regular basis (in Montreal and Kelowna), and the GCC website is too new to assess its effectiveness in supporting local action.</p> <p>GCC focused more on developing activities than developing strategies; at the time of data collection, activities had not yet been adequately tested and refined.</p>
Technology is tested and evaluated as a mobilization tool	<p>GCC supported the use of technology in several ways, including the use of telephone training, a website, an on-line advocacy module and email. GCC reports that telephone training was a generally effective way to reach RVs and volunteers from a distance and to mobilize them around a common theme. The use of the website for mobilization has not yet been tested.</p>

OUTCOMES	VCA REPORTS AND OUR ANALYSIS
<p>Returned volunteers have increased opportunities to take action in their community by joining or establishing local action networks with returned volunteers from several volunteer cooperation agencies</p>	<p>We examined the extent to which RVs have increased opportunities to take action because they join or establish local action networks or committees with others RVs.</p> <p>At the end of phase II, four LACs were in place, but only two of these were undertaking action. In our interviews, we gathered no other evidence that other RVs were involved with an action network composed of RVs.</p>
<p>Increased recognition of the role of international volunteering and increased organizational profiles in 20 communities and campuses</p>	<p>This objective was ambitious, given the resources and timeframes for the project. That being said, GCC sponsored various activities that they believed would increase recognition of international volunteering. These included: increased media coverage, formally inviting all MPs to attend International Day of the Volunteer celebrations and formal recognition by MPs of four different political parties of the International Day of the Volunteer and the contributions of Canada’s overseas volunteers through statements in the House of Commons. Additional information including correspondence and advocacy letters generated by volunteers would were shared with local MPs and relevant Ministers.</p> <p>With respect to the second part of this outcome, the assumption that LACs would provide a sustainable way to involve volunteers did not take into consideration that the creation and sustainability of LACs depends on the availability of individuals who are already very involved with other commitments, and the need for other inputs besides training of volunteers.</p>

### 3.4 Design

**Finding 6: The GCC design included too many overly ambitious objectives and outcomes and too many target audiences for a one-year project.**

As noted earlier, the VCA Coalition set very ambitious objectives for a one-year project with a modest budget and limited human resources. In particular, two of GCC objectives (“To raise the profile of international volunteering” and “increased recognition of the role of international volunteering”) are clearly long-term objectives that require significantly more resources than were available.

In terms of the six GCC objectives, these were not only overly ambitious to achieve in a single year, but they also targeted many different groups – VCAs, returned volunteers, the Canadian public, etc – the sheer number of targets was not realistic in terms of GCC resources. The objective “To build VCA capacity to engage returned alumni and to keep them engaged in activities in support of international development issues” might have been a more realistic objective for a one-year project.

Of the eight GCC expected outcomes, the four that concerned volunteers were very wide-ranging and demanding, and included: “volunteers have increased understanding of Canada’s role and potential role in international issues... of trade, debt and aid, the Millennium Development Goals, and how global policies impact the development of poorer countries... have gained experience in recruitment, mobilization, media relations and advocacy... and have increased opportunities to take action in their community by joining or establishing local action networks.” GCC conducted activities in these areas, but there was no mechanism to evaluate their effectiveness – just training satisfaction evaluations – so the effectiveness of these is difficult to assess.

Another limiting factor is that most of the GCC objectives and outcomes had several imbedded components, which effectively compounded the number of potential foci. For example, the first objective (see sidebar) had several such imbedded objectives (to mobilize volunteers and to take action). Which of these was a realistic focus for GCC Phase II? Finally, there was considerable overlap among objectives and among outcomes. This contributed to ambiguity about the major objectives and outcomes of the program.

To increase the capacity of Canada’s nine International Volunteer Cooperation Agencies to mobilize volunteers (especially returned overseas volunteers) including youth and Diaspora communities, to take action in support of public policy that supports the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

Finally, the design did not respect one of the principles associated with managing by results-SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound) objectives.

Agreeing on specific areas of collaboration must have been a challenge for the VCAs, given the previously noted differences in their individual organizational objectives, values, target audiences, and resources – and that different agencies place different values on different types of collaboration. In the pilot phase, the GCC design attempted to accommodate many of these differences, with negative implications for the project’s effectiveness.

Overall, the GCC second phase design contained many laudable and desirable goals that were simply not attainable.

**Finding 7: GCC roles were not clearly articulated in the project design and this has contributed to some confusion and tension among GCC stakeholders.**

### Roles and Responsibilities

The second phase of GCC involved a significant number of internal stakeholders at different levels – nine Executive Directors (ED), 13 Steering Committee (SC) members, one Project Manager, and two Project Campaigners (PC). The last three groups were also involved in three sub-committees: Event, Campaign, and Communication.

With the exception of the Project Campaigners, none of the GCC roles were defined or clearly articulated – i.e., for the EDs, SC members, or the Project Manager. And, while the PCs do have written job descriptions in their contracts, we found in our interviews that various internal stakeholders have different understandings and expectations regarding the PCs' role – even the PCs themselves see their role within the project slightly differently (e.g., to support volunteers first, to support the VCAs first, etc.)

The role of the sub-committees within the SC is not clear. In our interviews, sub-committee members reported that sometimes it was expected that they would make suggestions to the SC and other times that they would take action within their sub-committee. Some respondents noted that they were not clear as to whether their role is operational or strategic.

“SC does not differentiate the types of our contributions – more operational or more strategic.” One SC member

### Governance

The VCA Coalition did not draw up a formal agreement on how they would collaborate on GCC. CCI effectively took on a leadership role in project governance (largely because of their commitment to the project and the fact that they had signed the agreement with CIDA and felt morally obliged to guide it), supported by the Executive Director of WUSC. Both played active roles in guiding the Steering Committee as required over time.

The lack of a clear governance structure or written agreement has led to some mixed messages about the roles of the Steering Committee and the Committee of Executive Directors. This has contributed to some inefficiency at best, and some frustration. The comments in the sidebar highlight the need for clarification of roles and responsibilities.

“It happens that SC made a decision and planned it and then the EDs gave their contribution. We had to step back and adapt our plan before continuing.” SC member

“There are many bosses at GCC.” SC member

“When an activity becomes political, the EDs are more present.”  
[One ED and one SC member]

### 3.5 Management & Resources Utilization

**Finding 8: GCC planning is short term and focuses resources on conducting activities.**

#### Planning

A review of the minutes of SC meetings shows evidence of activity planning, but limited evidence of strategic planning or planning by results.

In terms of strategic planning, it is recognized that the GCC design was made within a one year time horizon. However, in hindsight, it would have been helpful if a longer term vision for the program had been explored by VCA Coalition members and possibly even included in the planning document, to give a sense of potential future directions. The absence of such a clear vision inhibited longer term planning (see sidebar).

“We plan three months at a time only.” SC member Finally, as noted earlier, insufficient attention was paid to managing for results – which means having a strategy and a workplan that focus on realistic results. For the future, project partners should understand the purposes and benefits of strategic planning and workplanning and planning for results.

“We did not have a consensus and commitment on what, why and when. Without a shared understanding of the change you are trying to affect, it undermines the effectiveness of all you undertake. Frequently decisions taken were revisited or revised which left us scrambling. The fundamental problem was not having a clear vision which resulted in disagreements about what and how much is needed.” SC member

#### Resource utilization

All the data we collected points to the fact that GCC is an activity-driven project that invested significantly more of its resources on logistic and operational matters.

- At the PC level, most staff time is consumed by logistical and operational tasks required to support activities, leaving less time to support local involvement, the volunteers they trained, or to follow-up on regular basis with volunteers.
- At the SC level, members’ involvement with GCC is in addition to their regular workloads. SC members devote the time they have available to supporting GCC activities, and have little time for thinking about and developing strategies for PE or for GCC as a whole.

“Most of my time is spent to set up the activities, we do not have much left to reflect and develop strategies.” SC member

**Finding 9: GCC communications are generally efficient and satisfactory.**

SC members noted that communication from the PCs to the VCAs was very effective (but in the opposite direction it is not always the case). Stakeholders report that they are kept informed, and that SC and Sub-Committee meetings are well organized, and minutes are taken. However, it requires considerable time for the PC to organize and follow up on this.

The PCs assumed responsibility for monitoring GCC activities and reporting to SC members at SC meetings. During our evaluation, we reviewed the minutes of the meetings of the SC and the Sub-Committees, as well as the Executive Update reports. The minutes are well structured and standardized, providing the SC with important information and corporate memory of GCC in regard to operational matters. The Executive Update reports, prepared by the Project Manager and PC, keep the VCA Executive Directors up to date on GCC.

**Finding 10: GCC reports on activities and operations, but pays little attention to reporting on strategic matters and results.**

**Reporting**

Several reports are prepared by the PCs to report on GCC activities as shown in the following table. Reports are prepared immediately after an activity takes place, and no provisions are made to assess longer term outcomes – which limits the ability to assess effectiveness and sustainability of results.

**Reporting**  
 Reports provide some information regarding the number of volunteers that contacted MPs. However, it is not undertaken on a regular basis, so the usefulness of the information is somewhat limited. Moreover, we are not clear why PCs, rather than VCAs, are doing this follow up.

Reports we reviewed tended to focus on activities, rather than reporting on results. This reflects the overall orientation of GCC, the short-time frames (it is difficult to report on anything but activities in a short time frame).

The preparation of all of these reports requires time, particularly by the PCs. We are not clear on the cost-benefit of these reports to stakeholders, given their current orientation (activities). We would encourage GCC stakeholders to review and streamline reporting practices, and change the orientation of reports to encompass more reflection on results and strategic matters.

REPORT	PURPOSE	AUDIENCE	FREQUENCY
Steering Committee Minutes	Report on meeting, activities, progress and next steps	Steering Committee members and Project campaigners. Also available for Executive Directors	Following each meeting
Sub-Committee Minutes (Campaign, Communication and Website, and event)	Report on meeting, activities, progress and next steps	Steering Committee members and Project campaigners. Also available for Executive Directors	Following each meeting
Executive Directors update	Present updates on GCC activities	Executive Directors	(4 prepared during Phase II)
Training evaluation	Summarizes the activities	Steering Committee members	Following training
Media coverage report	Summarize the activities	Steering Committee members	Following events

### 3.6 Sustainability of GCC Results

**Finding 11: At the level of volunteers and individual VCAs, there is evidence that some outputs are sustainable. While GCC's financial sustainability appears reasonable in the immediate future, its institutional sustainability is less certain.**

#### Volunteer level

The volunteers we interviewed were very enthusiastic about GCC and the opportunities it provides for them to contribute to activities they are interested in. Some volunteers reported that they used the knowledge, lessons and advice they gained from the GCC training (e.g. how to contact MPs, relations with media), and two also said they used that for the benefit of the organizations they work with. Several volunteers reported that they organized activities for other volunteers around themes sponsored by GCC, and informed friends and relatives about GCC activities.

#### Individual VCA level

Four Steering Committee members we spoke with mentioned that they used, adapted, and sometimes tried to integrate some of the GCC material for the benefit of their VCA. These include the postcard campaign, mobilization kits, and a pre-departure/return training manual.

A couple of SC members noted that their organizations do not have sufficient resources dedicated to public engagement to fully utilize the tools and expertise developed with GCC support. For example, one SC member said that the telephone training is very interesting, but as their VCA is already involved in many ongoing activities, they do not have the resources to develop it for their own use. A few SCs reported that similar mobilization kits already existed in their VCAs.

#### GCC sustainability

The future sustainability of GCC has several dimensions – the most important being the financial and institutional sustainability of the project.

To date, financial support for GCC has been provided mainly by external funding partners (initially the Walter Gordon Foundation and more recently CIDA). At the time of writing, financial support from CIDA for GCC appears secure for 2007/08, however, longer term financial support is not guaranteed as CIDA priorities and financial resources change over time. While CIDA is currently able to provide only one year of funding for PE, it is our understanding that in future funding agreements with CIDA (which will be negotiated in 2008/09?) VCAs could earmark funding for joint VCA coalition activities in PE should they wish to. Therefore, there appears to be reasonable prospects for financial sustainability of the project in the immediate future.

The institutional sustainability of GCC is a function of VCA members' commitment to the project (evidenced by in-kind and other types of support over time), as well as the existence of a clear, joint vision for the project in terms of its purpose, target audiences, and results in the short and long term. To date, there has been considerable in-kind support from most of the VCAs involved in the Coalition – although this varies from one VCA to another – primarily in the form of time invested in GCC by the Executive Directors of the VCAs and especially their assigned staff members who participate in GCC Steering Committee meetings and GCC activities. In particular, CCI and WUSC (who were among the original GCC champions) have provided significant support from their Executive Directors, and the CCI representative who serves as Project Manager has invested a great deal of time on GCC in addition to her regular CCI responsibilities.

However the clarity of VCA members' vision, purpose, targets, and results for GCC is less evident to us. The first two project phases have focused on the delivery of GCC activities. While interviewed VCA members generally feel positive about the continued existence of the project, they have not yet invested much time in reflecting on the project's future. Initial reflections in April 2007 revealed a divergence of views and expectations among VCA members; it is clear that members require more time to clarify these questions. In part, this is to be expected, given that the initiative is still so new. However, in our view, members need to begin clarifying these matters if they wish to justify and secure future funding for GCC from their own organizations or others.

## 4. Conclusions

This chapter presents the general conclusions of our evaluation, our recommendations, and the main lessons learned that emerged from this evaluation.

### 4.1 Summary of Main Observations

**GCC Context and Relevance** – The current context supports the notion of VCAs collaborating and taking joint action to improve public engagement. VCAs face some common challenges in regard to PE and acknowledge the value of their collaboration to date through GCC. External funding agencies also see the potential value of collaborative approaches to public engagement by the VCAs, and are willing to support this, under certain conditions.

However, agreeing on specific areas of collaboration is a challenge, as there are significant differences in VCAs' individual organizational objectives, values, target audiences, and resources – and different agencies place different values on different types of collaboration. In the pilot phase, the GCC design attempted to accommodate many of these differences, with negative implications for the project's effectiveness. These differences also impeded the emergence of a common, long-term vision for the initiative.

A final contextual issue (which seems to be affecting VCAs differently) relates to what appears to be a re-emergence of feelings of increased competition among some VCAs for CIDA's financial support of their programs. This appears to have reduced the feelings of trust and collaboration that existed a couple of years ago.

**GCC effectiveness and design** – The GCC design for the second phase was overly ambitious and not realistic given the resources and time frame. It is therefore not surprising that while there was considerable satisfaction expressed by VCAs in regard to the types of activities supported by GCC, stated GCC objectives and outcomes were not realized. GCC effectiveness and design was limited by the absence of an agreed to, long-term vision for the initiative.

**GCC sustainability** – There is some evidence of sustainability of results at the VCA and individual levels, but the sustainability of GCC as a whole is less assured. While financial resources can be found, the more significant challenge is for the VCAs to identify and agree on a joint purpose, objectives, and expected results for GCC in the immediate and medium terms. During the second phase, GCC stakeholders have been consumed with activities, leaving little time for more strategic considerations. Finally, sustainability was also negatively affected by the absence of a long-term vision for the initiative.

**GCC management and governance** – Most of the limitations in GCC management and governance relate to the GCC's "youth" and can be easily addressed, but some roles, responsibilities and reporting relationships are not as clearly defined as they should be.

### 4.2 Recommendations

Our recommendations are as follows:

1. The VCA Coalition should consider developing a subsequent phase of GCC to support strategically selected common challenges in public engagement. However, unlike the previous phases, any future support should respect the following principles:

- GCC should be grounded in a common short- and medium-term vision in terms of its target audience, purpose, objectives, and results. GCC should not attempt to be all things to all VCAs, and should not try to solve all the challenges faced by VCAs in PE.

- GCC should be designed in keeping with SMART and results-based management principles.
- Roles and responsibilities for GCC governance and management should be clearly defined.

### 4.3 Lessons Learned

The key lessons learned from this evaluation are identified below.

- The absence of a clearly understood vision or purpose for a project can seriously impede its effectiveness, efficiency, impacts and the sustainability of intended results.
- A project is more likely to realize results when it is designed in keeping with SMART principles, targets are clearly identified, and results are adequately supported with available financial and human resources.
- Small projects can consume as much time for planning, monitoring, communication, coordination, problem solving and decision making as large projects. Stakeholders should ensure that sufficient resources are set aside for such purposes, and that roles and responsibilities for such processes are clearly defined and known.
- Capacity development is more effective and sustainable when:
  - The design is based on assessment of needs
  - Expected results are clearly defined and understood
  - Sufficient and appropriate types of resources are allocated for identified results
  - Key assumptions and risks are identified and assessed

## Appendix I Documents Reviewed

- CIDA (2005). The Power of Volunteering - A Review of the Canadian Volunteer Cooperation Program
- CIDA (2006). Global Citizens for Action Against Poverty. Jointly submitted by the Canadian International Volunteer Cooperation Agencies.
- CIDA (2006). Global Citizens for Change. Interim Report. Jointly submitted by the Canadian International Volunteer Cooperation Agencies.
- CWY (2006). Impact Evaluation Synthesis Report 2006
- Development initiatives (2006). Discussion paper for IVCO 2006. Trends in international cooperation and volunteering – Over 2006 and the last 5 years.
- Development initiatives (2006). IVCO Survey Results (2 documents)
- Imagine Canada (2006). Results of the research on “Canadians Overseas, Canadians Back Home – Volunteerism Without Borders”.
- Lusthaus, Charles and Christine Milton-Feasby (2006). The Evaluation of Inter-Organizational Relationships in the Not-for-Profit Sector
- Plewes, Betty (2005). Promoting global citizenship: Canada corps within a CIDA policy framework, CCIC.
- Walter & Duncan Gordon Foundation (2005). Global Citizens for Action Against Poverty. Jointly submitted by CCI, VSO, CECI, WUSC.
- Walter & Duncan Gordon Foundation (2006). Global Citizens for Action against Poverty – Final Report. Jointly submitted by CCI, VSO, CECI, WUSC.
- 5 GCC Steering Committees minutes
- 15 GCC sub-committees minutes
- 4 VCA Executive Directors updates on GCC activities
- Project campaigner job description
- HIV-AIDS Mobilization Kit
- Global Citizen for Change Mobilization manual. August 2006.
- Various activity evaluations

## Appendix II List of Contacted Informants

### GCC Staff

NAMES	ORGANIZATION	POSITION
Heather Harding	GCC	Community Outreach Officer /Campaigner
Suzanne Ouellet	GCC	Community Outreach Officer / Campaigner

### VCAs

NAMES	ORGANIZATION	POSITION
<b>ED committee</b>		
Karen Takacs	CCI	Executive Director
Michel Chaurette	CECI	Executive Director
Paul van der Wel	CESO	Executive Director
Jean-Marc Mangin	CUSO	Executive Director
Paul Davidson	EUMC / WUSC	Executive Director
Pierre Véronneau	Oxfam Québec	Executive Director
Mary Stuart	VSO	Executive Director
Suzanne Guay	SUCO	Interim Executive Director
<b>SC Members</b>		
Christine Campbell	CCI	National Director, External Relations
Carine Guidicelli	CECI	Co-ordinator, Communications & Fund-Raising
Patrick Lohier	CESO	Public Engagement Officer
David Comerford	CUSO	Director, External Relations
Kristie Kelly	CUSO	Government & Media Strategist
Vanessa Conrad	CWY / JCM	Communication and Marketing Coordinator
Daniel Lussier	WUSC / UNITERRA	Uniterra Team Leader
Christine Laliberté	Oxfam Québec	Directrice adjointe des programmes au Québec
Luc Richard	Oxfam Québec	Agent d'éducation du public
Heidi Lasi	VSO	Senior Advisor, Public Engagement and Communications
André Fortin	SUCO	Responsable du programme d'éducation du public

## Volunteers

NAMES	LOCATION
Leo Cheverie	York, PE
Yves Francis Danteu	Toronto, ON
Sophie Duchaine	Gatineau, QC
Danica Francis	Halifax, NS
Jason Goveas	Ottawa, ON
Sarah Hamdi	Montreal, QC
Leanne Holt	Ottawa, ON
Rodolphe Moreau	Québec, QC
Julie Nadeau	Moncton NB
Myriam St-Denis Lizée	Sherbrooke, QC
Doris Tang	Burnaby, BC
Jovette Vallée	Montréal, QC
Martine Villeneuve	Québec, QC
Stéphanie Rajotte	Ottawa, ON
Kristine Randall	Montreal, QC
Marie MacKay	Kakamega, Kenya
Michel Carroll	Sherbrooke, QC
Caitlin Bentley	Montreal, QC
Lijeanne Lee	Toronto, ON
Two Anonymous	

## Other Stakeholders

NAMES	ORGANIZATION	POSITION
Lilian Chatterjee	CIDA	Director General for Agency Services and Canadian Relations
Dennis Howlett	Make Poverty History	Coordinator
Marjan Montazemi	Walter and Duncan Gordon Foundation	Programme Manager, Global Citizenship
Tim Brodhead	Mc Connell Foundation	President and Executive Director
Joan Kuyek	Mining Watch	Coordinator