

## **PRESIDENT’S REPORT FOR NOVEMBER, 2010 TO OCTOBER, 2011**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Since its establishment in 2004 as a network of the International Network for the Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE), the Caribbean Area Network for Quality Assurance in Tertiary Education has continued to pursue its mandate which is to **“enable members to share information about the maintenance, evaluation, accreditation and improvement of higher education and to disseminate good practices in the field of Quality Assurance”**. CANQATE currently has a membership of 113 members of whom 68 are full members, 6 are associate members and 39 are individuals.

1.2 One of the CANQATE’s major capacity building activities is the hosting of its Annual Pre Conference and Conferences. To date, the organization has held eight (8) Pre Conferences and Conferences, the most recent Pre Conference and Conference being hosted by the College of the Bahamas in the Bahamas from October 5-7, 2011.

### **2.0 ACTIVITIES & ACHIEVEMENTS**

#### **Meetings of the Board of Management Meetings**

2.1 The Board of Management held three (3) meetings during the period under review. One meeting was conducted electronically using “Skype” and two (2) other meetings were convened via face-to face in The Bahamas.

#### **Sub/Working Committees**

2.2 The Board appointed the following sub/working committees of the Board:

- Development of the Strategic Plan
- Selection Committee (for GIQAC funded activities e.g. scholarships, service providers)
- Constitution Reform
- External Quality Assurance Training – review of UNESCO/International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) training materials

## CANQATE-GIQAC Funding

2.3 CANQATE continued its partnership with the UNESCO and the Global Initiative for Quality Assurance Capacity (GIQAC), World Bank which resulted in the provision of US\$128,125.00 being granted towards the undertaking of the following activities:

- a) Offering of scholarships to support regional and international development and networking opportunities;
- b) Upgrading further CANQATE's website into a fully functional web portal with Country Core Group web pages, data management and stakeholder web services; and supported by virtual network for capacity building.
- c) Developing a Database and Register of Peer Reviewers and Consultants
- d) Conducting of Peer Review/Evaluator Training based on the 2010 Baseline Study for Peer Review Training
- e) Strengthening the Clearinghouse at the Secretariat; and
- f) Offering training in External Quality Assurance for Higher Education Managers

### **a) Offer of Scholarships**

2.4 Funding of US\$27,200.00 was provided towards 14 scholarships aimed at enabling members to travel and participate in relevant international conferences and/seminars on quality assurance in tertiary/higher education. A letter of invitation by the President to apply for the scholarships along with an application form was placed on the website as well as circulated via email to the membership. An invitation was also extended to relevant authorities responsible for accreditation of tertiary institutions in Haiti.

2.5 The criteria for the scholarships were:

- Contribution from CANQATE
- Contribution from Organization
- Contribution from Other Source
- Staff of New/Emerging Agency
- First time Recipient
- Motivation for Participation
- Stated Objectives for Organizational Impact

2.6 Ten (10) applications were received and six (6) scholarships were granted for members to attend the Biennial Conference of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) held in April, 2011. However, only four (4) were taken up by the awardees, namely:

- Dr. Ruby Alleyne – University of Trinidad & Tobago
- Mr. Mervyn Extavour – Cipriani College, Trinidad and Tobago
- Dr. Angela Penny – University Council of Jamaica
- Dr. Louis Whittington – University of the West Indies, Open Campus

2.7 For the Annual CANQATE Conference held in October, fourteen (14) applications were received and ten (10) scholarships were granted. The awardees were:

- Mrs. Descina Alexander-Hamilton – St. Vincent and the Grenadines National Accreditation Board
- Ms. Monica Dempster – Church Teachers’ College, Jamaica
- Mr. Maurice Fletcher –University of Technology, Jamaica
- Ms. Nursita Johnson – HEART-National Training Agency(NTA), Jamaica
- Ms. Arlene Lawrence – University Council of Jamaica
- Dr. Nicole Manning – HEART-NTA, Jamaica
- Ms. Nadine Nugent –University of Technology, Jamaica
- Dr. Arthur Potts –University of Trinidad and Tobago
- Mr. Michael Porter – National Accreditation Council of Guyana
- Mr. Michael Theodore – affiliated through the Accreditation Council of Trinidad and Tobago

2.8 The disbursement process was as follows:

- Funds provided on registration at the Conference
- An evaluation report submitted via a form to be submitted by the awardees on the value added experience of the opportunities provided through attendance and participation at the Conferences.

2.9 It should be noted that Board members were not allowed to vote in situations where they were being considered for scholarships.

2.10 No nominations from Haiti were submitted to CANQATE.

**(b) Upgrading of the Website**

2.11 Additional funding was received for the further upgrading of the website to include Country Core Pages as well as data management and stakeholder services e.g. online payment for member services, conferences and workshops.

2.12 The procurement process took the form of an Expression of Interest was placed on the website which was also circulated to the membership. Four (4) IT providers from Trinidad and one (1) from Barbados/USA submitted Expressions of Interest and a selection committee interviewed the prospective providers.

2.13 The EOIs were reviewed by the Board and the service providers will be notified of the outcome.

2.14 One major area of concern pertains to the current website where it has been reported that members seem to have difficulty with accessing the forum platform in an easy manner. This challenge seemed to have prevented interaction and commenting on critical matters as anticipated. The lack of user-friendliness in this regard will be addressed given the need for the website to be used as a key communication tool.

### **(c ) Developing a database of Peer Reviewers and Consultants**

2.15 Six (6) Expressions of Interests (EOIs) were received in response to the invitation posted on the website and notice circulated to the membership. The EOIs were considered by the Board and the service providers will be notified of the outcomes.

### **(d) Conducting of Peer Review Training**

2.16 Two (2) applications were received to the Expressions of Interest which was placed on the website as well as the notice circularized inviting applications for a facilitator to conduct the training. Dr. Ruby Alleyne and co-facilitator Mr. Jason Stafford were selected to conduct the training based on their qualifications and extensive practical experience in the area of peer review training.

2.17 The training was conducted during the period July 18-20 in Barbados. The venue was the PomMarine Hotel (Hospitality Institute of the Barbados Community College).

2.18 The feedback provided in the evaluation report indicated that it was a valuable learning experience for the participants. In addition, the participants indicated that they expected to transfer the learning through mechanisms which included the hosting of sensitization sessions for their line Ministries and other Government officials, facilitating similar training programmes and improving the quality assurance systems within their respective institutions and agencies.

2.19 The participants noted that they would be expected to offer their evaluator services to the region. Further, that they would be included in the Peer Reviewers database to be compiled electronically by CANQATE.

2.20 CANQATE will follow up with the participants in six (6) months time in keeping to ascertain the impact of the training in their respective territories.

### **(e) Strengthening the Clearinghouse**

2.21 Ms. Katrina Ifill continued to offer her services to CANQATE where she was responsible for communicating with the membership and other key stakeholders; preparing and publishing the CANQATE newsletter; handling any queries and updating the website.

2.22 During the period under review, two (2) editions of the CANQATE News were published: May, 2011 and October, 2011.

### **(f) External Quality Assurance Training**

2.23 Invitations were extended to the membership to submit their expressions of interest to serve as Chair of a Working Committee, Coordinator (Online Discussion) and Resource Person (Case Study). Only one (1) EOI was received in respect of Chair, Working Committee.

2.24 Ms. Pamela Dottin was selected as Chair of the Working Committee to review the materials developed by the IIEP/UNESCO. The other members of the Committee were:

- a. Mrs. Sharon Alleyne, Accreditation Officer, Barbados Accreditation Council
- b. Mr. Mervyn Extavour, Treasurer of CANQATE and Coordinator, Cipriani College
- c. Ms. Grace Gordon, Director of Accreditation, University Council of Jamaica
- d. Ms. Raquel Sukhu, Accreditation Officer, University Council of Jamaica

2.25 The Module Moderators will be the following three members who attended a Trainer of Trainers Workshop in Paris in March this year:

- a. Ms. Pamela Dottin
- b. Mr. Mervyn Extavour
- c. Ms. Grace Gordon

2.26 Special invitation was extended to the External Quality Assurance Agencies to submit nominations from their respective territories. Over 30 nominations were received and further interest has been expressed by participants at this Conference. In addition, members were invited to submit applications for the training via a Notice posted on the website and a circular to the members. The Board of Management and the Working Committee had considered that 25 participants for the training would be adequate at this time given it is the first time that CANQATE would be offering the training.

2.27 It is anticipated that this training will commence in November this year once the web support services have been agreed and necessary work completed to facilitate the training.

**(g) Project Coordination/Administrative Services**

2.28 CANQATE invited applications for the engagement of services as Project Coordinator/Administrator. Ms. Gloria Jones, an experienced secretary and administrator was engaged to undertake the requisite responsibilities from May, 2011 until October 31 but no later than November 15.

**(h) Implementation Support Review (ISR) Meeting**

2.29 In August, Ms. Emily Helmeid, Consultant with UNESCO visited Barbados to meet with the Project Monitoring Committee of CANQATE to discuss the progress of the project activities.

2.30 It should be noted that CANQATE achieved a rating of Highly Satisfactory towards achieving its overall objectives and 80% success rate (Highly Satisfactory) towards achieving its intermediate indicators as stated in its results framework. Its Procurement practices were also deemed as Highly Satisfactory.

2.31 CANQATE has since been invited and subsequently submitted two proposals for additional funding – from Korea and UNESCO/GIQAC to support its capacity building initiatives, including the establishment of Core Groups within the territories. This project period will end in June, 2012.

2.32 The UNESCO/GIQAC Committee is currently considering proposals from all networks and it is anticipated that CANQATE will receive a favourable response.

Strategic Plan 2011-2014

2.33 A three year Strategic Plan (2011-2014) has been developed to guide the direction of the organization along with a Financial Plan for the same period. Six (6) strategic goals have been identified, namely:

**Goal 1:** Secure Support from regional and other stakeholders

**Goal 2:** Increase and Sustain Membership Growth

**Goal 3:** Pursue avenues to secure CANQATE's financial viability and sustainability

**Goal 4:** Establish an Effective and Efficient Organizational System

**Goal 5:** Facilitate Commitment to Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) – Institutions and Agencies

**Goal 6:** Be a Centre for Research and Development

2.34 The draft document was placed on the website and circulated to the membership for comments/feedback from August 18 to September 16. Only three (3) members commented and

generally, the feedback was positive. The document will be brought to the Annual General Meeting for approval and adoption.

2.35 Once approved by the AGM, the Strategic Plan will be made available via the website and hard copies.

### Finance

2.36 The Treasurer will present the audited accounts for the financial year September 1, 2010 to August 31, 2011.

2.37 A draft Financial Management and Procurement Manual was approved, with amendments, by the Board of Management at its October, 2011 meeting. This document outlines the role and functions of the Finance Committee, the budgeting process and the process and procedures for procurement, amongst other pertinent details. The document will be placed on the website on completion of the amendments.

2.38 The budget for the financial year 2012-2013 is outlined in the Financial Plan appended to the Strategic Plan.

### Honorary Members

2.39 The Board of Management has appointed the following persons to be Honorary Members given their distinguished contribution to CANQATE and commitment to the advancement of QA in the region:

- Dr. Ethley London – Immediate Past President
- Ms. Esther Brathwaite – Floor Member

### Quality Award

2.40 The first Quality Award will be offered for outstanding contribution to the advancement of QA in the region to Dr. Ethley London at the Gala Dinner to be held at the Closing Ceremony of the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Friday, 7<sup>th</sup> October, 2011.

2.41 The criteria and other specifications for the Quality Award will continue by the Board of Management.

### CANQATE Ethley London Foundation

2.42 The Board of Management agreed to the establishment of CANQATE Ethley London Foundation which would be initially financed by funds generated from conferences hosted by the University Council of Jamaica. The funds would be utilized for special projects.

2.43 Prof. Kenneth Hall, former Board Member of the University Council of Jamaica was proposed to Chair the Board of Trustees.

#### Annual Conference 2011

2.44 A proposal (which included possible hotel conference venue and current costs) was received from the University Council of Jamaica (UCJ) for the hosting of the 2012 annual Conference. The Board of Management accepted the proposal which would be put before the Annual General Meeting for approval.

### **3.0 AREAS FOR TO BE ADDRESSED/FOLLOW UP**

#### **Constitution Reform**

3.0 It was anticipated that areas the reform of the Constitution would have been completed and the amendments put to the General Assembly for adoption at this Annual General Meeting. Mr. Michael Theodore, member of the Committee had commenced the process by presenting his findings at the 2010 Conference held in Trinidad. The findings were later placed on the website for comments and/amendments from members. None was forthcoming.

3.1 Mr. Theodore has since presented his findings on “*Reconstituting the CANQATE to face an evolving Higher Education Sector in the Caribbean*”.

#### **Relations with Haiti**

3.2 Continued efforts will continue to make effective contact with Haiti with a view to ascertaining that country’s needs and the areas by which CANQATE can assist and/or collaborate with the relevant accreditation/recognition body(ies) and tertiary educational institutions to achieve mutual objectives.

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

4.1. During the period under review, CANQATE made significant strides aimed at capacity building via key mechanisms such as the upgrading of the website; exposing the membership to regional and extra-regional developmental opportunities and building relations between the external quality assurance agencies through the harmonization of standards, policies and procedures.

4.2 CANQATE looks forward to the continuous improvement and achievement of its strategic goals in the 2012-2013 financial year.

4.3 The impact of these aforementioned activities must be seen through the enhancement of quality tertiary educational provision in the Caribbean region.



