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Provisional Agenda Item 6

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**CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE;  
PROGRAMMATIC AND FINANCIAL CONSIDERATION,  
CARIBBEAN**

Commonwealth Secretariat  
Marlborough House  
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## COMMONWEALTH YOUTH PROGRAMME CARIBBEAN CENTRE

### Centre of Excellence Youth Work Education and Training (YWET) Draft Proposal

#### 1. Background

##### Mandate

Commonwealth Youth Ministers' Meeting in The Bahamas, held in May 2006, agreed that: *In order to optimise the benefit of Pan Commonwealth lessons and experiences, the CYP Asia Centre, in association with sister organisations in the region, will be a focal centre for cooperation and learning in the field of youth and local government under the programme area of Governance, Development and Youth Networks (GDYN). The Meeting further agreed that the other three regional centres (Africa, the Caribbean, and the South Pacific) will be developed as Centres of Excellence in research, knowledge gathering and information sharing in the fields of crime and violence, HIV and AIDS, youth enterprise and sustainable livelihoods, and youth work education and training.*

##### Action Taken

At the Regional Advisory Board (RAB) August 2007, held in Trinidad and Tobago the meeting recommended that the CYPCC should be developed as a Centre of Excellence in Youth Work Education and Training.

#### 2. Commonwealth Youth Programme Caribbean Centre's Plan of Action for advancing the Youth Work Education and Training Agenda.

The Commonwealth's Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment 2007-2015 reminds us that *"Today's livelihoods programmes must take account of adolescent-headed households, out-of-school youth, economic migrants, internally displaced persons and refugees. In this more fluid social landscape youth work expertise is needed to help resolve resource conflict issues, build consensus between the generations and promote skills transfer where traditional pathways have broken down. It is also needed to ensure cross sector collaboration on youth livelihoods interventions."*

The focus on human resource development (HRD) as a central feature of the CYP's activities reflects the growing awareness of and commitment to "people as the key factor in the development process and of investing in human capital" (Foundations for the Future). HRD forms an essential element of the integration of young women and men into social, economic and civic development. The dividends from the investment in human capital will be repaid in:

- The reduction of their poverty and social exclusion
- Their enhanced health and well being and
- Their increased skills and knowledge

The achievement of literacy, expansion of knowledge, development of values and acquisition of skills are principal factors in determining whether young people are able to participate effectively in decision making and be successful citizens, employees or entrepreneurs. The role of

education and training in promoting growth of the economy, social development and democracy is therefore integral to a national development strategy.

UNESCO defines education as “organized and sustained instruction designed to communicate a combination of knowledge, skills and understanding valuable for all the activities of life.” Training is defined as “the systematic acquisition of skills, rules, concepts or attitudes that result in improved performance in the work situation. Education has a part to play in eradicating poverty at the community and national level and therefore a professional cadre of youth workers, which appreciates the value of education and training and transmits that value to young people, is an integral part of a national development strategy. Therefore, investment of resources in youth development training and education is increasingly considered mutually beneficial to young people as well as society. CYP implicitly accepts the aforementioned thoughts and seeks to prepare youth workers across the Commonwealth for their role in development and implementation of national and regional development strategies.

The main thrust of the Caribbean Centre’s Centre of Excellence for Youth Work Education and Training is to develop and implement a plan for the further professionalizing of Youth Development Work across the Commonwealth. Building on the enormous experience acquired over the last 24 years, CYPCC will partner with governments, educational institutions and other stakeholders. This plan will provide opportunities for policy makers and planners, youth workers and trainers, youth leaders and other young women and men who can exert a multiplier effect in the development of youth to acquire the necessary youth development competencies.

## **2.1 Project Objectives**

- 2.1.1 Promote the adoption of competency standards, backed by appropriate values and principles, the creation of a new occupational category of worker, the youth development worker, in public service departments.
- 2.1.2 Promote and provide opportunities for policy makers and planners, youth workers and trainers, youth leaders and other young women and men, who can exert a multiplier effect in the development of youth, to acquire the necessary youth development competencies.
- 2.1.3 Collaborate with other stakeholders to ensure that there are youth development training programmes at the certificate, diploma, undergraduate and post graduate levels; customized programmes and certifiable units of training also to be made possible.
- 2.1.4 Increase the number of partner Institutions offering the youth development programmes so as to facilitate easy access by all youth workers.
- 2.1.5 Develop appropriate training materials for all aspects of the YWET Training programmes including a module on Youth and Governance.
- 2.1.6 Facilitate the mainstreaming of youth development in other disciplines.
- 2.1.7 Promote the experiential and transformatory learning models.
- 2.1.8 Collaborate with agencies to promote and implement an evidence based approach to youth development work planning.

- 2.1.9 Collaborate with other agencies to develop youth counseling and parenting programmes.
- 2.1.10 Build the institutional capacity and management systems of tertiary institutions for the delivery of the YWET training programmes through face to face and distance education.
- 2.1.11 Build a body of knowledge and make it available to stakeholders
- 2.1.12 Facilitate the formation of national and regional youth workers associations.

## **2.2 Programmatic Content:**

- 2.2.1 Competencies as outlined in the Competency Standards for Youth Development Work
- 2.2.2 Knowledge and skills for Youth Leadership and Governance
- 2.2.3 Youth mainstreaming
- 2.2.4 Involvement of agencies providing training in parenting and counseling skills and offering counseling services.

## **2.3 Methodology**

- 2.3.1 Development, production and distribution of Interactive training modules for training at the Certificate, Diploma, Undergraduate and Post graduate degree levels; customized programmes and certifiable units of training.
- 2.3.2 Workshops, forums and conferences
- 2.3.3 Capacity building workshops
- 2.3.4 Endorsement and promotion of competency standards
- 2.3.5 Consultations with stakeholders including policy makers, Youth Ministries, Tertiary Institutions and NGOs.
- 2.3.6 Collaborative arrangements (through Memoranda of Understanding and Financial Agreements) with Tertiary Institutions that will deliver the training in partnership with CYP.
- 2.3.7 Research
- 2.3.8 Quality Assurance mechanisms
- 2.3.9 Partnership building with other international agencies and tertiary institutions across the Commonwealth.

## **2.4 Monitoring Indicators**

- 2.4.1 Awareness of competency standards by all member countries and the existence of the occupational category, youth development worker, in 90% of the Commonwealth Countries
- 2.4.2 YWET programmes accessible and affordable to policy makers and planners, youth workers and trainers, youth leaders and other young women and men
- 2.4.3 The number, profile and age of participants and graduates in YWET programmes
- 2.4.4 The opportunity for YWET graduates to access universities for higher level qualifications

- 2.4.5 Modules developed by CYP to help participants acquire knowledge and skills
- 2.4.6 The number of tertiary institutions offering CYP YWET training programmes
- 2.4.7 Enhanced delivery of youth development programmes at the agency/country level
- 2.4.8 Body of knowledge
- 2.4.9 Enhanced capacity of tertiary institutions to deliver YWET programmes using the experiential and transformatory learning models.
- 2.4.10 Access to counseling and parenting programmes for parents and increased number of youth counselors accessible to young people.
- 2.4.11 Efficient delivery of YWET programmes by tertiary institutions.

## **2.5 Expected Outcomes**

- 2.5.1 Recognition of a new category of worker, the youth development worker in 90% of the Commonwealth countries.
- 2.5.2 Competency Standards in youth development work used as a foundation for determining appropriate training standards and monitoring of training and assessment of youth development workers
- 2.5.3 Development, production and distribution of training materials which are gender and regionally sensitive, and conform to the highest standards of youth development work training
- 2.5.4 Pan-Commonwealth Quality Assurance mechanisms in place to ensure parity
- 2.5.5 Increased number of CYP YWET graduates at all qualification levels and delivery of customized programmes and stand alone modules provided on demand in each region.
- 2.5.6 A trained and expert cadre of tutors and other personnel in each partner institution available for delivery of CYP YWET programmes by face to face or distance education.
- 2.5.7 Skills development, through cost -effective training and educational programmes, accessible to a wider range of young people through collaboration with local institutions.
- 2.5.8 Increased cost-effectiveness, flexibility and responsiveness to emerging needs of stakeholders.
- 2.5.9 Career path for youth development workers clearly articulated.
- 2.5.10 The collection of data to inform planning by youth development stakeholders.
- 2.5.11 Documentation of best practices across the Commonwealth.
- 2.5.12 Expanding of a consortium of universities and institutions involved in delivering a common programme who share experiences across the Commonwealth.
- 2.5.13 Body of knowledge for youth development work.

### 3. Implementation Strategy

3.1.1 CYPCC will be working with a five member committee representing key stakeholders in the region to spearhead the implementation of the Centre of Excellence.

#### 3.1.2 Phase 1

CYPCC has requested a meeting with the President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, host country of the Caribbean Centre to discuss their partnership in the development of the Centre.

Management Committee to develop and agree on implementation plan and estimated cost.

Development of a marketing strategy.

The concept of the Caribbean Centre of Excellence has already been agreed on by Directors and youth representatives across the region but CYPCC will roll out its marketing strategy with effect from June 1<sup>st</sup> 2008 to mobilize resources from other agencies including international development partners.

#### 3.1.3 Phase 2 (February – June 2009)

Host country for Centre of Excellence to be agreed on.

CoE Management Committee to agree with Pan Commonwealth Office and Host Country on the proposed implementation plan for the development of the centre and the day to day management on completion.

Memorandum of Understanding with major strategic partners to be signed.

Revised budget and timelines to form part of a financial agreement with partners.

#### 3.1.4 Phase 3 July 2009 – June 2010)

First Disbursement of funds released

Implementation of Plan

Operationalization of Centre of Excellence