CARIBBEAN LEADERSHIP PROJECT
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Regional Learning Needs Assessment Team

"Helping to build regional capacity"

Learning Needs Assessment Guide

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Introduction

A Learning Needs Assessment (LNA) is a critical activity that should be conducted by organizations that seek to develop a culture of continuous learning. It contributes to organizational effectiveness by ensuring that organizations have a constant supply of the competencies required to effectively execute the activities necessary to achieve set goals and objectives. The current regional Public Sector environment is characterized by tight fiscal policies and austerity measures along with increased public agitation for higher levels of productivity, efficiency and accountability. Consequently, public officers need to ensure that resources are allocated in a manner that is geared towards achieving higher results at lower costs.The LNA is a tool that can assist in achieving this objective by identifying and prioritizing learning needs and recommending appropriate strategies for meeting these needs.

It is envisioned that this guide will be used by public sector officers across the region as a guide to conducting a LNA. It is intended to make the process of conducting an LNA easier for officers by providing a step by step approach to conducting an LNA and introduces techniques and strategies that may be utilized to achieve success. The guide is meant to serve only as a guide and has the built-in flexibility to allow the user to make modifications based on his/her unique situation. It is our hope that the use of this guide will prove useful in helping the user to gather, analyse and interpret the information necessary to effect needed organizational change.

This learning needs assessment guide has been developed in conjunction with the *Learning Needs Assessment for the Government of Saint Lucia*, conducted by the Regional Learning Needs Assessment (RLNA) Team under the guidance and support of the Caribbean Leadership Project.

This guide is meant to replicate steps taken by the RLNA Team to help strengthen and build capacity for learning and development specialists in the Region so that other organizations and countries may benefit from conducting their own learning needs assessments.

What is a Learning Needs Assessment?

A Learning Needs Assessment (LNA) is a systematic approach to identifying the gaps between existing and desired performance and competencies (knowledge, skills, attitudes),and determining the learning interventions which may be used to bridge those gaps.

An LNA seeks to build institutional capacity and improve organizational performance through learning. It represents a paradigm shift from the traditional Training Needs Assessment (TNA) to embrace the idea that there are a wide variety of methods and approaches that may be applied to equip staff with the requisite competencies to achieve organizational effectiveness; and training is only one such method/ approach.

The primary objective of an LNA is to improve organizational performance through learning; other objectives also includethe organization's ability to:

- Inculcate a culture of continuous learning
- Embrace non-traditional forms of learning
- Optimize expenditure on learning interventions
- Build the capacity of staff to respond to current and future challenges
- Justify investment
- Ensure that learning interventions target organizational needs/ priorities
- Ensure that learning is transferred to the workplace

The LNA can be either proactive or reactive in nature; proactive in that a proper LNA takes into consideration opportunities and trends to determine competencies that will be required to ensure continued organizational success; and reactive in response to situations where current performance is below expectation / established standard.

An LNA may be conducted for:

- An entire public sector – to determine the priority areas for the government as a whole
- A specific ministry/ agency – to determine those competencies necessary for that ministry to achieve its mandate

- For a specific department/ unit – to determine those competencies necessary for that agency/ department to achieve its mandate

Regardless of the level at which the LNA is done, it is necessary to ensure that the approach aligns the required competencies to the national agenda, priorities and strategies. It is therefore important that major policy documents such as national development plans and corporate/ strategic plans are reviewed to ensure this alignment.

The Learning Needs Assessment Process

The LNA process may be triggered by the presence of or expectation of a performance gap. A proactive approach to conducting an LNA may be triggered when an organisation recognizes that it does not have the comptencies required to achieve its future plans. On the other hand the process may be triggered by the identification of performance gaps based on performnace reviews such as performance appraisal, or based on the organisation's performance as identified in its balanced scorecard.

The LNA process can be conceptualized as a five-step process which begins with planning for the needs assessment. Subsequent steps in the process include the collection, analysis and synthesis of data, developing appropriate plans of action and presenting the LNA report. It is helpful to view the LNA process as a cycle since the dynamic nature of organizations and the environment in which they operate dictate a commitment to continuous learning and development if success is to be achieved. The steps in the LNA process are meant to increase the value of the data collected and improve the quality of the decisions that are made regarding improving organizational performance. Figure 1 shows the steps in the Learning Needs Assessment process.

Figure 1: The LNA Process

STEP 1: Planning the Learning Needs Assessment

a. Determine the scope of the needs assessment
b. Develop a project plan that defines clearly the roles and responsibilities for conducting the LNA
c. Identify key partners and champions who will support the process
d. Sensitize the relevant stakeholders of what a LNA is and its importance and value to the organisation

Determining the scope of the assessment:

An LNA can be triggered by the recognition of an existing or forecasted gap between current and desired state. The gap may be as a result of deficiencies in current performance or the presentation of opportunities that the organization cannot seize due to existing limitations.

An LNA is designed to arrive at decisions that will bridge the gap between existing and desired states of performance by the use of appropriate learning interventions. The scope of an LNA is therefore determined by the specific problem one is trying to solve and the expected results.

The following questions should be considered when trying to determine the scope of an LNA:

1. What problem are we trying to fix?
2. Where does the problem exist?
3. Who and what is impacted by this problem?
4. What information is required and where does this information exist?
5. What timeframe is allocated for the completion?
6. What results are we expecting?

The answers to these questions will help to determine if the LNA should be conducted for the entire public sector, a specific ministry or agency, or a unit/ department within a ministry or agency.

There are a number of situations that will help to determine the scope of an LNA.

A public sector-wide assessment may be required if:

- The performance gaps are likely to have a negative effect on the general citizenry.
- There are performance issues that are endemic to the public sector.
- The achievement of national goals is being threatened by the performance issues.
- A sector-wide assessment has never been done before.

An assessment at the ministry/ agency level may be required where the ministry/ agency:

- Is performing below expectation and is failing to meet its strategic objectives.
- Has a challenge delivering and/or meeting key performance targets.
- Is going through a restructuring exercise.
- Needs to position itself to capitalise on opportunities identified by way of an environmental scan.

An assessment that focuses on specific units or departments becomes necessary where the unit manager has made a specific request or where:

- the department or team(s) within the department is/are performing below expectation
- there are changes (internal/external) that will affect a particular unit department.

Conducting initial interviews with key persons will provide the information needed to determine the scope of the LNA. A clear understanding of the scope of the LNA is necessary as it acts as a blueprint; a guide that helps to ensure that the objectives of the process are achieved. Terms of reference should be developed once the scope of the LNA has been determined.

Identifying key partners to the process:

The support of key strategic partners such as permanent secretaries and their deputies, directors and managers at all levels,along with representatives from key interest groups, iscritical to the success of an LNA. Such partnerships help to define and determine the level of importance that is placed on learning and development in the organization. Strategic partners may support the LNA process and subsequently the learning interventions in one or more of the following roles:

- **Conceptualizer** – Helps in the crafting and articulating of a vision and direction for learning, and in building a learning culture in the organization.
- **Champion** – Builds support for the LNA process by investing time energy and other resources that would aid in its success.
- **Sponsor**–Treats learning as a strategic priority by committing organizational resources and assisting in gathering additional resources. The sponsor should also use his office and personal influence to assist in clearing obstacles that may inhibit the LNA process.
- **Spokesperson** – Promotes learning, encourages others to participate in the LNA process, and articulates the organization’s commitment to learning in public speeches and reports.

Through their involvement, these key partners will help the LNA process to flow smoothly and will also greatly enhance the quality of data that is gathered.

Develop a project plan and assign responsibilities:

At this point a detailed plan regarding the various tasks and timelines are determined and individuals are assigned specific responsibilities based on their areas of expertise. Critical to the success of an LNA is having a team of persons with the required competencies as the workload involved is typically too burdensome for a single individual. Also, to preserve the integrity of the data, atleast one member of the team should be external to the organization. It may be useful to have smaller teams depending on the number of persons who will be directly involved in the process. It is important to engage the members of the team in team building exercises such as

The Reflection Circle (see Appendix I) which will help to establish group norms and encourage sharing of expectations, experiences and ideas/feelings. This becomes even more critical if the members of the team are working together for the first time. Key roles/ teams include:

- LNA Team Leader (Project Manager)
- Public Relations Team (Includes strategic partners and champions)
- Administrative Staff
- Data Collection Staff
- Data Analysis and Synthesis Staff
- Reporting and Presentation Team

Sensitize stakeholders of the LNA process and its benefits:

The LNA process can only be effective if the persons from whom data is to be collected are supportive of the process. To this end, there is tremendous value in first sensitizing all relevant stakeholders as to what the LNA is, the steps involved in the process and how the LNA is meant to benefit the organization before attempting to collect data. Highlighting the difference between an LNA and a TNA at this point is a necessary step in transforming mind-sets that learning takes place in a variety of methods other than training and that continuous learning is necessary for organizational success.

The use of a stakeholder mapping technique such as the stakeholder grid (see appendix II) will prove helpful in identifying and categorize the stakeholders in a way that will help to determine how the various groups/individual stakeholders should be engaged during the process.

Step 2: Data Collection

a. Determine from whom, when, and how data will be collected.

b. Design data collection methods and tools to determine the:
   - I. Existing gaps
     - i. Clarify the mandate and strategic objectives of the organisation.
     - ii. Determine the extent to which the mandate and objectives are being achieved.
     - iii. Clarify the core and functional competencies necessary to achieve the mandate/ objectives. Collect data at the following levels:
       - Organizational Level
       - Operational Level
       - Take an inventory of the current competencies. Collect data at the Individual Level
   - II. Current trends and the implications these will have on the relevance of existing core and functional competencies.
   - III. Existing learning culture.

Determine from whom, where and how data will be collected:

The scope of the LNA and specific performance issue(s) that the LNA is meant to address will serve as a guide in determining the appropriate data collection sources and methods. The initial interviews conducted in step one as part of determining the scope will provide preliminary information on the current state of the organisation to include issues and trends. This information may also be referred to at this point.

Data Sources include:

- Staff
- Suppliers
- Customers
- General Public
- Annual Reports
- Customer Service Reports/Feedback/Surveys
- Job Descriptions
- Policy Documents
- Performance Appraisals

- National Development Plan
- Executive and Management
- Strategic and Corporate Plans
- Public Speeches of Ministers and Permanent Secretaries

There are a variety of data collection methods which may be used either individually or combined, these include:

- Surveys
- Interviews
- Job Analysis
- Observation
- Focus Group
- Delphi Method
- Document Review

The following table presents examples of situations in which each method is best suited and some advantages and disadvantages of each.

Table 1: Advantages and disadvantages of various data collection methods

Data Collection Method	When to Use	Advantages	Disadvantages
Surveys	• When the population is large. • When respondents are geographically dispersed.	• Inexpensive. • Relatively easy to develop. • Allows for easy summary. • Appropriate for large populations.	• Lacks detailed responses – no opportunity for follow up questions. • Characterized by low response rates.
Interviews	• When the target audience is very small • When there are selected individuals who have a good understanding of the issue being investigated. • When detailed responses are required for better understanding of the issue.	• Allows for focused discussion and follow up questions. • Allows the exploration of unanticipated issues. • Questions may be modified on the spur of the moment. • The interviewer has the opportunity to observe non-verbal responses. • Rich in qualitative data	• Time consuming and often difficult to schedule. • Data collection is restricted to a chosen few thus reducing the validity of the data. • Analysis of data is more difficult. • Requires a skilled interviewer.
Observation	• When specific details regarding the work environment, operational procedures, and general execution of a specific job/ task is required.	• If done unobtrusively, it can provide data that accurately describes a job and its relevant environment. • Minimizes interruption of work. • Does not rely on the perspectives or memories of the incumbent.	• Does not provide clarification on why things are done. • Observer bias may contaminate the data. • It is time consuming.
Focus Group	• When collecting data from a small (5-12) homogenous group. • When issues are complex or	• Allows for probing into issues. • Questions may be modified on spot. • Allows for the exploration of unanticipated issues.	• Requires an expert facilitator. • A few individuals may dominate the discussion. • Some participants may be reticent, especially if the group has a mixture

Data Collection Method	When to Use	Advantages	Disadvantages
	controversial. • When consensus is necessary.	• Allows participants to build on each other's comments.	of upper and lower level staff. • Difficult to schedule. • There is the possibility for group think to develop.
Delphi Method	• Where a jurisdictional perspective is required. • Where the opinion of subject matter experts (SMEs) is important to understanding the issue. • Where a problem is complex and multifaceted.	• Relatively easy to schedule. • Allows experts to reflect on their views and adjust where necessary. • Allows a panel of expert to analyse the opinions of each other. • Highlights areas of consensus.	• Process is time consuming. • Needs a panel of experts on the matter at hand. • Due to the iterative nature, it requires involvement of the panelist over a period of time. • Data gathered are of a subjective nature.
Document Review	• Where data that has already been collected for other purposes can be used to inform the LNA. • Where you are interested in collecting independently verifiable data. • Where the interest is in collecting data regarding procedure, policies and processes.	• Information is usually independently verifiable. • Usually an objective source. • Less expensive than collecting primary data.	• Can be time consuming • Data may not be in appropriate format for the LNA. • No control over the quality of data collected.

Tips for effective data collection

Surveys:

- Use simple language
- Avoid ambiguous questions
- Limit use of open ended questions
- Do not write leading questions
- Avoid double negatives
- Limit the number of questions such that instrument can be completed in less than 10 minutes.

Interviews:

- Create a comfortable atmosphere
- Listen to responses without interrupting
- Do not ask leading questions
- Do not record the interview without the interviewee's permission
- Take copious notes
- Do not argue or debate with the interviewee

Observation:

- Observe the entire process
- Try to be inconspicuous
- Use multiple observers to validate findings and eliminate bias

Focus Group:

- Develop and articulate a specific goal for the session.
- Use an experienced facilitator.
- Remain neutral – do not share your personal views.
- Assign a note taker.
- Allow group members time to think about their responses.

Delphi Method

- Utilize strategic partners to secure the commitment of experts
- Incentivize panelist after each round to keep them interested in the process.
- Keep in constant dialogue with participants.

Document Review

- Where possible, verify the accuracy of the data
- Develop a system for collecting and reviewing the documents
- Seek clarification of technical language where necessary
- Ensure that data is not obsolete
- Arrive at consensus on review protocol if there are several reviewers

Pilot the instrument and make necessary adjustments before administering to the sample group.

See Appendix III - VI for sample data collection instruments.

Step 3: Data Analysis and Synthesis

a. Analyse data using appropriate statistical software (such as Statistical Package for the Social Sciences [SPSS], MINITAB and Statistical Analysis Software [SAS]) that allows cross tabulations and other sophisticated data analysis techniques.
b. Determine the difference between actual competencies and desired competencies.
c. Categorize needs into learning and non-learning needs.
d. Prioritize learning needs based on organizational goals and objectives.
e. Determine if the existing culture is suitable for bridging the divide between existing and required competencies

Analyses data using appropriate methods

Data analysis techniques fall into two broad categories: qualitative and quantitative. It is therefore important to categorise the data into these categories so that the appropriate techniques can be utilised. The use of **statistical software** makes it easier to analyse the data. A wide variety of statistical software exists and deciding on which one to use depends largely on features and availability of the software. It is recommended that the following factors be considered when selecting a statistical software package: your operating system, the capabilities of the package to perform statistical analysis such as *Crosstabs*, *T-test*, *ANOVA*, *Regression*, *Correlation Coefficient* etc.

Content analysisis another method that can be used to analyse data. It is used for the analysis of qualitative data especially interview or focus group data. It sumarizes comments into meaningful categories by first identifying any recurring comments then generate themes that consolidate responses that are similar. The respondents' answers are then placed into the categories developed and the categories with the most responses represent the themes most common.

Determine the difference between actual and desired competencies and performance

From the data collected identify both the competencies that are required to successfullyperform the various jobs/tasks and those competencies that are actually present. Then compare the two (desired and actual competencies) to identify any gaps that may exists. It would be useful to do this analysis at the various levels or departments instead of in a general way so that the information can be used for developing recommendations that are specific tounit/departmental levels in addition to the organisational level.

Categorize needs into learning and non-learning needs

It is important to determine the reason/s for the gaps identified. Answers to the following questionscan help to provide the information needed to categorize the needs:

- Is the gap a result of low motivation levels?
- Do the employees have the knowledge and skills needed?
- Do employees feel valued?
- Are employees satisfied with the level of leadership and compensation?

Learning needs are identified where the gaps are a result of a lack of skills and competencies. However if the gaps exist because of environmental factors then those will be your non learning needs.

Step 4: Plan of Action

a. Develop a plan of action to meet the learning needs of the individual, unit/department and organization.
b. Where necessary, develop a plan of action to create a learning culture that is embracing of various learning approaches.
c. Collaborate with learners, managers, and other relevant personnel to develop a transfer of learning plan.

Develop a plan of action to create a learning culture that is embracing of various learning approaches

The plan of action should be both a high level learning strategy that is tied to strategic objectives as well as a practical plan that includes a diverse range of learning approaches, in the hopes of reaching and impacting the widest possible audience. The learning approaches to consider include:

- Action Learning
- Experiential Learning
- Project Based Learning
- Self-Directed Learning

Step 5: Development and Presentation of LNA Report

a. Prepare a detailed report of findings
b. Make recommendations

Prepare a detailed report of findings

The Learning Needs Assessment report should contain:

- A definition of a Learning Needs Assessment and a Training Needs Analysis and the difference between the two;
- A summary of the data collection methods used;
- A summary of the persons interviewed
- A summary and analysis of the evidence collected
- Recommendations
- Next Steps

Make recommendations

When providing recommendations for the Learning Needs Assessment Guide:

- Anchor the recommendations to helping the organization achieve its strategic objectives through learning, and keep recommendations forward-looking
- Provide the rationale or evidence to support each recommendation;
- Clearly state the specific steps that need to be taken in order to fulfill each recommendation.
- Be cognizant of any limitations or areas of weakness when making suggestions, so recommendations are always feasible and realistic.
- It is helpful to group the recommendations in terms of :
  - Short term, medium term, long term or
  - High priority, medium priority and low priority.

Appendix I

Team Building Exercise

The Reflection Circle

The Reflection Circle is a basic form of reflection that is commonly used with teams. The Circle allows participants to think critically about their experiences and to also become aware of and understand the experiences and viewpoints of their teammates. As the name suggests, the participants are required to be seated in a circle (including the person facilitating the session). A reflection question is posed by the facilitator and the participants are encouraged to respond. Questions can be structured around a specific theme identified for the exercise or they can be developed based on the discussion. Questions may also be broad "How was today for you?" or specific "Based on the feedback of the audience, how do you feel about your presentation?" Reflection questions may also take the form of "What? So what? Now what?"

- What?
    - Descriptive
    - Facts
    - Group interaction

- So what?
    - Interpretive
    - Meaning of experience for each participant
    - Feelings involved, lessons learnt
    - Why?

- Now what?
    - Contextual; Big picture
    - Applying lessons learned/insights gained
    - Future goals/plan of action[1]

The Reflection Circle can be used at the Team's initial meeting to share person's understanding about the process to be performed. It may also be ongoing to "check in" on how persons feel about the work being done, what the experience means for them etc. As part of the closing

[1] http://www.uvm.edu/~dewey/reflection_manual/activities.html

activity, The Circle can be a useful tool to reflect on the entire process and the individual experiences. It is important to note that the Circle should be “safe space” in which

- Each participant has a right and opportunity to speak
- Every idea has value and can contribute to learning[2]

Despite the fact that The Circle is commonly used, not all groups or group members may feel comfortable sharing in this format. If the efforts to increase participants’ interest and foster interest and familiarity in the group fail then it you should try different approaches such as breaking the team into smaller units. Remember that the critical thing is to have the participants feel safe and comfortable.

[2] http://www.uvm.edu/~dewey/reflection_manual/reflectioncircle.html

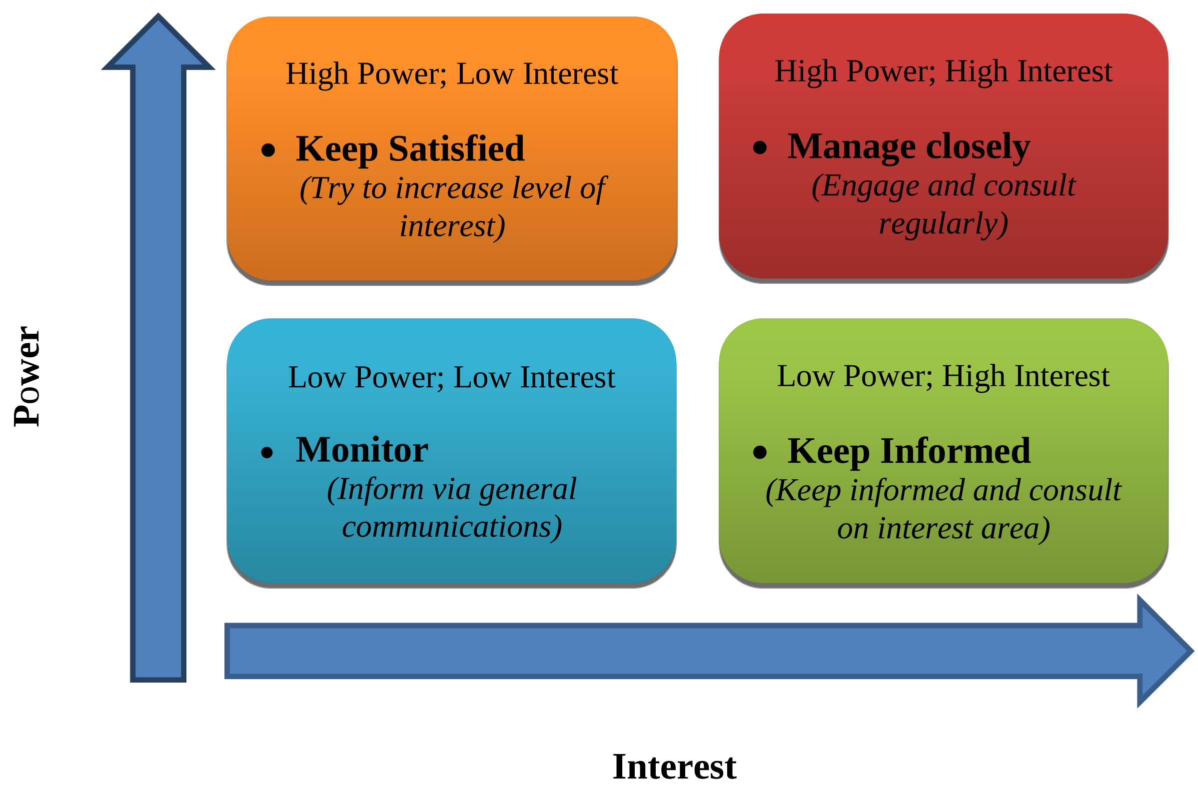
Appendix II

Stakeholder Analysis:

Stakeholder Grid

A stakeholder refers to any group or individual who can affect or who is affected by the activities of an organization or by the achievement of the organisation's objectives. Stakeholder analysis identifies who has vested interest in the project, what their views and expectations are and how they might influence the project. Stakeholder management is critical to the success of the LNA as by engaging the right people in the right way can make a big difference in the outcome.

The stakeholder grid is one of the easiest ways to identify and classify stakeholders. The first step is to listall the persons or groups interested or associated with the LNA. Then using the diagram/grid below, categorizes the stakeholders according to their interest and power.



Interest refers to how likely the stakeholders will be affected by the process and what degree of interest or concern they have about the process and the outcome. *Power* measures the influence they will have on the project and to what degree they can help achieve or block the success of the process.

- It is important to engage and bring onboard the stakeholders with both high power and interest in the LNA.
- Stakeholders with high interest but low power need to be kept informed.
- Those with high power but low interest should be kept satisfied and try to win them over to become supporters of the LNA.

The following table may also be used as a tool for conducting your stakeholder analysis:

Stakeholder	Stakeholder interest in project, impact on stakeholder	Stakeholder influence	Stakeholder attitude	Strategies for getting support or reducing obstacles

The following data collection instruments were developed as a part of the *Learning Needs Assessment for the Government of Saint Lucia*, conducted by the Regional Learning Needs Assessment (RLNA) Team. The instruments are intended to be a guide and as such they should be modified to meet the user's purpose/needs.

Appendix III

Initial/Preliminary Interview

KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

1. **What is the Strategic Direction envisioned for the Organization?**

2. **What are some of the skills that can be deemed vital to your organization in realizing its Strategic goal/ direction?**

   If possible, try to source the department/ ministry's strategic plan before the interview. In the event that the interviewee is not aware of the organization's strategic goals/ directions, you may be able to provide this information in order for them to answer this question.

3. **How are these goals linked to the National Development Plan *or other overarching national strategy* for your country?**

4. **Can you highlight some of the areas that require strengthening in your organization?**

   Clarify that you are specifically looking at areas of learning that need to be strengthened and provide examples if necessary. This question can easily drift into areas that are not relevant to the learning needs analysis (such as infrastructural, equipment or staffing needs)

5. **What is the general view towards learning and development in your organization and country?**

Appendix IV

Online Survey: Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Departments

This survey was developed and is being administered by RLNA Team to identify the learning needs of the public service of the Government of Saint Lucia. Data gathered will be aggregated and analysed in a report which will include recommendations on how best to improve the learning that is taking place within the public sector and ensure that the learning can be transferred to the workplace to improve the current level of productivity. Your input is valuable and as such we ask that you respond to all the items. Please note that your participation is voluntary and confidential.

Select the correct response for items 1-5 by placing an X in the box provided.

1. How long have you been employed to the public service of Saint Lucia?

☐ Less than a year ☐ 1- 5 years ☐ 6 - 10 years ☐ 10 – 15 years ☐ 16 years and over

2. What is your highest level of qualification?

☐ High school certificate or equivalent ☐ Community College but no degree
☐ Associate degree ☐ Bachelor Degree
☐ Graduate Degree ☐ Other (please specify)

3. What is your current substantive grade? ______________

4. How long have you been appointed to your current substantive post?

☐ Less than a year ☐ 1- 5 years ☐ 6 - 10 years ☐ 10 – 15 years ☐ 16 years and over

5. How many persons do you supervise?

☐ Less 10 ☐ 11 - 20 ☐ 21 - 30 ☐ 31 - 40 ☐ 40 and over

6. What are your views on the importance of continuous learning?

____

7. How do you transfer learning to the workplace?

____

Select the degree to which you agree/disagree to the following statements

Key: SA - Strongly agree**; A** - Agree**; DA** -Disagree**; SDA** - Strongly disagree

	Statements	SA	A	DA	SDA
8.	The Ministry's goals/objectives are clearly defined and understood?				
9.	Your departmental /division/section goals are clearly articulated to employees?				

10.	Each employee understands how his/her job contributes to the achievement of the departmental /division/section goals.				
11.	The organization has a robust orientation programme for new employees				
	Statements	**SA**	**A**	**DA**	**SDA**
12.	Employees are oriented each time their roles/jobs/positions change.				
13.	Personal development plans are produced for each employee.				
14.	Employees are encouraged to identify their own developmental needs.				
15.	Employees have access to all the information required to work effectively.				
16.	Employees are trained when new processes, products or tools are introduced.				
17.	Periodic training and training updates are offered.				
18.	There are wide and varied opportunities for employees to learn in the organization.				
19.	Time is made available for education and training activities.				
20.	Organizational knowledge, learning and ways of working are captured and stored in an accessible way.				

Write the responses for the following items on the space provided.

21. How can managers ensure that transfer of learning takes place?

____

22. How can we change the culture that learning or training should be rewarded instead of looking at it as lifelong/continuous learning and personal development?

____

23. Funding challenges for training continue to be present. What steps or strategies do you recommend tomove GoSL's priority learning needs forward?

____

24. What are the factors that are most likely to affect an officer’s ability to attend training organised by the public service.

____

If there are any other information, suggestions or recommendations you want to make to the team in relation to professional learning and development in the Public Service of Saint Lucia please note them below.

____
____
____
____

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey☺

Appendix V

Online survey to cross section of Public Officers

This survey was developed and is being administered by RLNA Team to identify the learning needs of the public service of the Government of Saint Lucia. Data gathered will be aggregated and analysed in a report which will include recommendations on how best to improve the learning that is taking place within the public sector and ensure that the learning can be transferred to the workplace to improve the current level of productivity. Your input is valuable and as such we ask that you respond to all the items. Please note that your participation is voluntary and confidential.

7. How long have you been employed to the public service of Saint Lucia?

☐ Less than a year ☐ 1- 5 years ☐ 6 - 10 years ☐ 10 – 15 years ☐ 16 years and over

8. What is your highest level of qualification?

☐ High school certificate or equivalent ☐ Community College but no degree
☐ Associate degree ☐ Bachelor Degree
☐ Graduate Degree ☐ Other (please specify)

9. What is your current substantive grade? ______________

10. How long have you been appointed to your current substantive post?

☐ Less than a year ☐ 1- 5 years ☐ 6 - 10 years ☐ 10 – 15 years ☐ 16 years and over

11. Which of the following do you think describes the functions of your post (you may select more than one)

☐ Managerial ☐ Administrative
☐ Technical/specialized ☐Other (please specify)

5a. Are you aware of the key competencies required for your job? ☐ Yes ☐ No

5b. If yes, name five (5) of the main competencies.

____

Select the degree to which you agree/disagree to the following statements

Key: SA - Strongly agree**; A -** Agree**; DA -**Disagree**; SDA -** Strongly disagree

	Statements	**SA**	**A**	**DA**	**SDA**
6.	I know the strategic direction of my Ministry/Department				
7.	I am aware of the national goal/plan				
8.	I know how the strategic plan of my Ministry/Department fits into the national plan/goal				

9.	I am aware of the learning goals of the organization.				
10.	The organization's process of identifying training and professional development needs is effective.				
11.	The training and development needs identified are usually met.				
12.	My organization provides learning opportunities that caters to my learning style.				

For the following items, please write your responses in the space provided.

13. What factors motivate you to learn?

14. What are the barriers (if any) that would most likely hinder your learning within the organization?

    ____

15. Given the opportunity, how would you transfer learning to the workplace?

    ____

16. What challenges do you (or your team) face that could be resolved through a learning intervention?

    ____

17. What improvements (if any) can the GoSL make in the opportunities it provides for its members to

learn? ____

If there are any other information, suggestions or recommendations you want to make to the team in relation to professional learning and development in the Public Service of Saint Lucia please note them below.

____

____

____

____

____

____

Appendix VI

Focus Group Checklist

Remember to *do* the following…

- ☐ Become very familiar with the research objectives
- ☐ Arrive at the focus group location a few minutes before participants to organize the room and your materials

- ☐ Welcome focus group participants
- ☐ Explain, in a general and brief way, the purpose of the focus group and how information collected during focus groups will be used and toward what goal
- ☐ Introduce yourself, the note taker and other observer (if present)
- ☐ Explain participants' rights and what participating in the focus group will entail
- ☐ Remind participants of the duration of the focus group, emphasizing the importance of their participation during the entire discussion
- ☐ Inform participants of the location of the closest restroom facilities
- ☐ Obtain written/oral consent to participate and have the focus group recorded
- ☐ At the end of the focus group, give the participants the contact information of the contact person should they have any questions
- ☐ Ensure that tapes are labeled appropriately

http://www.rowan.edu/colleges/chss/facultystaff/focusgrouptoolkit.pdf

Focus Group Questions

This focus group was developed and is being administered by RLNA Team to identify the learning needs of the public service of the Government of Saint Lucia. Data gathered will be aggregated and analysed in a report which will include recommendations on how best to improve the learning that is taking place within the public sector and ensure that the learning can be transferred to the workplace to improve the current level of productivity.

Please note that your participation is voluntary and as such you can leave the group at any time you decide. Confidentiality is crucial to the process therefore the experiences or views shared in the group should not be disclosed to anyone else. In an attempt to accurately capture the information being shared, we seek your consent to record the session in addition to the taking of notes.

Housekeeping

- Timing of sessions
- Washrooms
- Keep phones on vibrate
- Step out of room to answer all necessary calls
- Respect of each other’s opinions
- Confidentiality

Ice breaker

Each participant will be required to share his/her:

- Name
- Ministry/department
- Is continuous learning important to you

1. What is your understanding of the difference between learning and training?
2. What are your views on employees’ attitude towards learning within the public service?
3. How suitable is the current culture of learning within the public service for achieving high levels of efficiency and productivity?
4. Why do persons see learning or training as something that should be rewarded instead of looking at it as lifelong/continuous learning and development?
5. How can we improve the current learning culture that exists in the public service?
6. There is a general perception within the public service that knowledge and skills gained from training/learning interventions are not transferred to the workplace. What are your views on this?
7. How do you recommend that we improve the level of transfer of learning in the public service?

8. A number of examples have been cited where technical specialists are promoted into management positions where this may not necessarily be the best fit (whether due to skills or interest). How can we use learning interventions to effectively deal with such situations?
9. Funding for training and learning are sometimes driven by external donors. This approach may not necessarily enable those learning interventions that are strategic or that meet GoSL priority needs and as a result the learning and training agenda is not being driven by GoSL. What steps or strategies would you put in place to move GoSL priority learning needs forward?
10. Do you have any examples of best practices or evidence of strategies that work from other areas, jurisdictions, Ministries or companies that we should be considering as part of this learning needs assessment?
11. What are some of the skills that can be deemed vital to your organization in realizing its strategic goal/direction?

Thank you for taking the time to be a member of the focus group ☺