Executive Summary  April 2013

Canadian Corporate Community Investment Benchmarking Report

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE
This report is based on the results of a national survey of community investment professionals. The survey was completed by 180 companies, providing a wealth of information about their community investments. The companies responding to the survey employ almost 1 million people—about 6 per cent of the Canadian workforce. Overall, these companies contributed more than $710 million to communities in 2011.

The survey took a broad approach to community investment—looking not only at the numerous ways in which companies provide financial and other resources to support community initiatives, but also at how company employees contribute to the community by volunteering their time, labour, and expertise.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Canadian Corporate Community Investment Benchmarking Report

**At a Glance**
- This report examines the community investment activities of 180 corporations in Canada that contributed more than $710 million in 2011.
- The national survey took a broad approach to community investment.
- Very few companies are reducing their community investment budgets, even in the current challenging economic climate.

This report is based on the results of a national survey of community investment professionals. The survey took a broad approach to community investment—looking not only at the numerous ways in which companies provide financial and other resources to support community initiatives, but also at how company employees contribute to the community by volunteering their time, labour, and expertise. The survey was circulated in spring 2012 and responses were received through the summer months.

The survey was completed by 180 companies, providing a wealth of information about their community investments. Collectively, these companies employ almost 1 million people—about 6 per cent of the Canadian workforce. Together, these companies contributed more than $710 million to communities in 2011. In addition to corporate participation, we received responses from six municipalities. We kept these municipal responses separate from the main analysis and include an overview of municipal programs in Appendix B.

While many organizations are engaged in community investment initiatives, a few companies have large programs that account for most of the contributions in Canada. Of the 158 companies that reported their overall community contributions, 13 per cent of them (n = 21) made 72 per cent of the contributions tracked by this survey ($510 million).

The four most common types of community investments are the following:
1. contributing money to community organizations;
2. providing contributions through sponsorships or marketing activities;
3. providing in-kind resources, services and goods; and
4. supporting employee volunteering programs.

The most common recipients of community investment dollars are civic and community organizations (77 per cent of the companies contributed funds to organizations in this area) and health care organizations (67 per cent of the companies supported these organizations). On average, companies reported that they supported five sectors.
Very few companies are reducing their community investment budgets, even in the current challenging economic climate.

Survey respondents were asked to rank the motivations that drive their community investment program; company culture and reputation were clearly ranked as important drivers. Elements that are more immediately connected to business realities—including risk mitigation, maintaining the corporation’s social licence to operate, and investing in the community as part of a strategy to manage regulatory pressures—scored lower.

Despite the large scope of and significant resources managed by community investment programs, the staffing levels for these programs are modest. Fully 41 percent of firms surveyed noted that their community investment program operates with one or fewer full-time staff persons.

Only those companies with very large programs have larger staffing groups. Even in half of the 21 largest contributors, the staffing contingent is less than five FTEs, and five of these firms operate with two or fewer staff persons.

This report also examines forms of community investments, such as in-kind contributions, employee matching donations, employee volunteering, corporate foundations, and international community investments.