

THE SAMOA PATHWAY: ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN TRANSLATING VISION TO ACTION IN THE CARIBBEAN*

Andrew S Downes PhD

*Professor of Economics and Pro Vice Chancellor,
Planning and Development, University of the West
Indies*

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OUTLINE OF PRESENTATION

- ***Sustainable Development Challenges in the Caribbean Small Island Developing States (CSIDS)***
- ***Implementing the SAMOA Pathway in CSIDS***
- ***Role of Higher Education as an Enabler***

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES IN CSIDS

- CSIDS regarded as largely “**high human developed**” countries, with Barbados being “**very highly developed**” and Belize, Guyana and Suriname classified as “**medium human developed**” and Haiti as “**low human developed**”
- Countries in the “**efficiency to innovation**” stage of development according to the WEF’s Global Competitiveness Index
- Significant progress with the **achievement of the MDGs.**

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES IN CSIDS

- **But major development challenges in CSIDS:**
 - *Slow pace of economic growth esp since the end of the Great Recession. Declining rates over the past six (6) decades—possible “**middle income trap**”. Reliance on a few developed country markets to drive economic growth*
 - *High debt to GDP ratios and limited fiscal space*
 - *Limited production diversification and declining productivity and competitiveness—nationally and regionally*
 - *High rates of poverty, inequality and youth unemployment*
 - *High cost of energy and regional transportation*
 - *Human insecurity with increases in crime and violence*
 - *Rise of chronic non-communicable diseases (CNCDs)*
 - *Vulnerability to natural disasters, climate change and invasion of sargassum weed and lion fish in recent years*

IMPLEMENTING THE SAMOA PATHWAY IN CSIDS

- ***SIDS Accelerated Modalities Of Action (SAMOA) Pathway(2014)*** places emphasis on the following re ***implementation***:
 - ***Education and training (“people are their greatest resource” and “education for sustainable development”)***
 - ***Research and Innovation (esp with respect to the Green and Blue Economy initiatives in SIDS)***
 - ***Partnerships among Governments, private sector, NGOs/civil society, labour etc***
 - ***Capacity building and institutional training re education and training***

IMPLEMENTING THE SAMOA PATHWAY IN CSIDS

- SAMOA Pathway consists of **16 Action Areas** and several supporting activities and Implementation, Monitoring and Accountability Requirements
- Can be daunting for CSIDS with limited resources!!!

ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION AS AN ENABLER

- **Higher education institutions** (esp in colleges and universities) can play a critical role in the process of implementation.
- Higher Education provides the “**higher order skills**” required for technological innovation, absorption and diffusion required for sustainable growth and development
- UN Declaration: **Decade of Education for Sustainable Decade 2005-14** ---integrating principles and practices of SD in education and learning.
- Post- Decade **Global Action Plan (GAP)** to continue the work in 5 action areas.

ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION AS AN ENABLER

- Several higher educational institutions exist in the region– *University of the West Indies (UWI); University of Guyana (UG); University of Technology (UTech-Jamaica); University of Trinidad & Tobago (UTT); University of Belize (UB)* etc
- These entities are engaged in:
 - *Knowledge creation*: research and innovation
 - *Knowledge transfer*: teaching, learning, training, capacity building
 - *Knowledge application*: advisory services, consulting, advocacy and community engagement
 - *Direct Campus Greening activities*

ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION AS AN ENABLER

- **Case of UWI (the largest of the universities):**
 - Knowledge Creation:
 - Establishment of specialised *institutes, centres, units and networks –CERMES, ISD, SALISES, SRC, IGDS,CDRC etc* (across its **four (4) Campuses**)
 - ***Institute of Sustainable Development (ISD)*** established in 2006 to lead process in graduate teaching, research, consulting and project activities
 - Research work in such areas as: *renewable energy, marine resources, climate change, natural products, green economy, bio-fuels, trade agreements, chronic diseases, agricultural diseases, cultural services, gender etc* —all related to the **sustainable development of CSIDS and SP(2014)**

ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION AS AN ENABLER

– Knowledge Transfer:

- Certificate, diploma and degree programmes in several areas and professional training –with ***a rigid quality assurance system***
- Enrolment of almost 50,000 students and 5000 graduates each year in recent times to meet the **high order skill needs** for the SD of the region. **NB: regional enrolment is still relatively low to meet the needs of countries pushing the SD agenda.**
- ***Distance programmes*** to widen access and capacity building— **Open Campus**

ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION AS AN ENABLER

- Knowledge Application:
 - Individual and institutional arrangements w r t advisory services
 - UWI Consulting Company; SALISES, Business Schools, Business Development Offices; Caribbean Centre for Competitiveness
 - Establishment of University-Private Sector Partnerships (**UPPs**)
 - **Networking via MOUs** with several universities and institutions across the world
 - Working with CARICOM Secretariat on its Strategic Plan with theme of ***Building Resilience in the Caribbean***

ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION AS AN ENABLER

- **UWI plans to**
 - Build further capacity in such areas as: *agri-technology and food security; energy systems; tourism and hospitality; creative industries; ICT applications ; governance and regulatory systems and human security.*
 - Engage in *greater public discourse* on issues of sustainable development in keeping with **the Post Decade GAP**
 - Build out its global reach esp with other universities in small developing states (e g **University Consortium for Small Island States—UCSIS**, hosted by the ISD at UWI) to *share knowledge and develop joint programs*
 - Host the **Caribbean regional network for Sustainable Development Solutions (SDSN)** –launched May 2014 at UWI (part of UN initiative)-*focus on energy, climate change adaptation and blue economy*
 - Place greater emphasis in the area of research and innovation to assist Caribbean countries with the “*innovation stage of development*”
 - Develop creative ways of *funding* such research and innovation
- **These initiatives would assist with the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway (2014) in the CSIDS**

- *Thank you for your attention*