

Draft Report

**REPORT OF THE ALLIANCE OF SMALL ISLAND STATES
MEETING OF EXPERTS ON CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH TRAINING,
EDUCATION & PUBLIC AWARENESS**

**UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC, SUVA, FIJI ISLANDS
3-8 DECEMBER 2003**

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Report of the Alliance of Small Island States Meeting of Experts on capacity development for sustainable development through training, education and public awareness

Held at University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji Islands, 3 to 8 December 2003.

1. INTRODUCTION

The expert meeting on the capacity building for sustainable development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) was held at the University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji Islands. It brought together experts from all SIDS regions, from a variety of backgrounds such as Government officials, from educational institutions, tourism, private business, non-governmental organizations and other community based organizations. A large contingent of local participants also attended the sessions. Substantial financial and technical support was provided by the UNDP.

The opening ceremony was chaired by Professor Randy Thaman, of PACE-SD, University of the South Pacific, Co-Chairman of the Organizing Committee. He made a few introductory remarks and welcomed the arrival of Her Excellency Ro Teimumu Kepa, Minister of Education of the Republic of the Fiji Islands. She warmly welcomed the participants and referred to the cultural adherence of Pacific Island Peoples to their islands. She expressed the hope that the honored guests, “our vulagi dokai, from our fellow SIDS will, during their brief stay here, experience, the very close, almost inseparable feeling that the Fijian people, and other Pacific Island peoples, have for our islands and our ocean, in Fijian, our vanua. Vanua is a concept that embodies all aspects of the sustainable development paradigm that has been the central focus of development literature over the past two decades or so. The concept of vanua, is actually, a Pan-Pacific concept, whenua in New Zealand, fonua in Tonga, fanua, fenua or enua in other parts of Polynesia, benua in parts of Indonesia, and, also vanua, in Vanuatu, which has adopted it a the core of the name for their modern island nation state. As an all-encompassing concept vanua is not just land, but the land, our waters, our traditions, our ancestors, our farmlands, our forests, our architecture, our food, our very identity, and the life-giving spirit that has nurtured our peoples for countless centuries. The concepts of te aba in Kiribati, ples or kastom in Melanesian pidgin, the dreamtime, for the Australian aborigines, or even terroir, for our Francophone Pacific Island territories, stress the same emotional links that Pacific Island peoples have with their island homes and ocean as the foundation for sustainable living.”

An opening prayer was delivered by Reverend Apimeleki Qilio, President, Fiji Council of Churches, Deputy Moderator, Pacific Conference of Churches and Chairman, South Pacific Bible Society.

The Minister welcomed the participants to Fiji, and noted the crucial role of capacity building and education for sustainable development in Small Island Developing States.

The opening address was delivered by Professor Al Binger, Director, University of The West Indies Center for Environment and Development. He noted that SIDS needed to address their own challenges and to find home-grown solutions.

The closing ceremony was chaired by Al Binger, who thanked the participants for their efforts, and noted that for all SIDS, capacity building will remain a crucial component in the quest for sustainable development. The contribution from the meeting in relation to the development of the SIDS Universities proposal would be an important step in the right direction. Professor Koshy gave closing remarks on behalf of USP. A special vote of thanks was delivered by Moelagi Jackson.

The meeting requested the Government of Fiji to submit this report for circulation as a UN document.

2. PROCEEDINGS

Presentations were made by Konai Helu Thaman, Rex Horoi, Lino Briguglio, Craig Pratt, Cletus Springer, Helen Tavola, Mustafa Toure, Seema Deo, Sereana Tagivatakini, K. Koshy, Henry Smith, Danny Hunter, Moelagi Jackson, Wesley Gibbings, Bill Aalbersberg, Aisake Casimira, Sally Asker, Ashvini Fernando, Siula Bulu, Hugh Govan and Lionel Gibson, Mitesh Mudaliar and Jeanette Larue. Their presentations and their case studies are available from SIDSNet (www.sidsnet.org). Discussions were held on the presentations, and working groups were established to synthesizing those discussions. The sections found below attempts to capture the main points and major conclusions and recommendations.

3. BACKGROUND

The most important resources in SIDS are people and their capacity (skills, creative imagination, values); they provide the intellectual resources for formulating the strategies and policies that are intended to make their countries development sustainable; additionally they direct and manage the institutions that are charged with implementing the policies and activities that are intended to bring about the transition to sustainable development.

Since the early 1970s there have been growing concerns regarding the accelerated and sometimes irreversible degradation of the natural environment. By the late 1980s, concerns focused on atmospheric pollution and global warming, contamination of water bodies, harmful methods of solid waste disposal, destruction of biodiversity, and land degradation. Thus, the sustainability of development became a priority items on the global agenda.

The concept of sustainable development, despite its endorsement by senior leadership at the Barbados Meeting in 1994, institutionalizing it as the development paradigm, replacing the economic growth paradigm, is still a work in progress, facing significant obstacles, a principal one being capacity. According to the UNDP/GEF CDI capacity for

sustainable development has three main categories (individual, institutional and systemic) “Capacity” refers to the ability of individuals and institutions (thus, nations) to make and implement decisions and perform functions in an effective, efficient and sustainable manner. *Systemic capacity* refers to the overall capacity that emerges at the level where individuals and institutions intersect, namely the national, sub-regional and/or regional levels. As the word “systemic” suggests, interactions/synergies between these levels are also important to overall capacity; thus, treaties, legislation, law enforcement and regulations, policy, economic systems and incentives, specific organisations and their coordination and collaboration (nationally, regionally and internationally), as well as traditional systems, folkways and culture. *Institutional capacity* refers to the existing and future capacity of organizations, entities, and structures dealing with environmental challenges (such as biodiversity, climate change and land degradation). The roles, resource requirements and financing of government units, NGOs and community-based organisations that act as policy making and policy implementing instruments/agents/players are particularly important. Finally, *Individual capacity* is about the quantity and quality of existing and/or future staff and human resources needed to address these issues¹.

Implementing such a sustainable development strategy is fraught with both difficulties and opportunities. Even advanced economies have difficulties grasping and implementing these concepts; it is easy to see that the task is magnified for *Small Island Developing States* (SIDS) — the focus for this report — which have limited experience in tackling such complex issues, and limited resources with which to do so.

Two critical constraints, as highlighted by the UN Secretary-General in reviewing the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA), are the limited availability of human resources and a lack of financial resources for developing and strengthening institutions/mechanisms.² Subsequently the September 2000 UNDP/GEF CDI report, pointed out that the critical capacity weakness in SIDS, and thereby the major capacity obstacle to sustainable development lies in the limited individual capacity, which subsequently have a negative impact on institutional and systemic capacity; as the effectiveness and efficiency with which SIDS make the transition from the convention paradigm of development to that characterized by sustainability as defined by the BPOA will be determined predominantly by the capacity of the professional and the institutions in which they work. Therefore development of institutional capacity to deliver effective formal and informal education and training systems necessary to strengthen individual capacity will dictate the speed at which overall sustainable development proceeds within SIDS.

The purpose of convening of this Expert Meeting sponsored by the United Nations Development Programme Capacity 2015, was to assess the current state of capacity

¹ Taken from “Capacity development reports: An assessment of the special needs of SIDS” GEF Secretariat, May 2000

² UN Economic and Social Council, (E/CN.17/199) “ Report of the Secretary General: Addendum, National institutions and administrative capacity in small island developing States, page 5 and “Report of the Secretary General: Addendum: Regional institutions and technical cooperation for the sustainable development of small island developing States, page 5-6.

development within SIDS for implementing the sustainable development paradigm and to develop a set of recommendations to be submitted to the Inter-regional Meeting of the SIDS in preparation for the International Meeting to review progress with the Implementation of the BPOA, in August 2004.

4. CURRENT STATUS OF CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN SIDS

Based on the presentations and discussions including the outcomes of the recently concluded regional preparatory meeting for the ten year review of the BPOA, the meeting assessed the current state of the three levels capacity development (individual, institutional and systemic) for sustainable development in SIDS as follows:

Individual Capacity

The meeting defined individual capacity to include the acquisition of knowledge, development of skills, ability to analyze complex issues and data, formulate strategies and policies, as well as the development of self to provide leadership and cultural awareness and respect for traditional values. The presentations and discussions on the state of *individual capacity development* determined that

- i) There are a very limited number of professional within SIDS that have the skills and personal attributes to effectively integrate the three pillars (economic, social and environmental) pillars of sustainable development.
- ii) The vast majority of professionals in SIDS involved in sustainable development activities principal skills and background lie in environmental areas and specialization.
- iii) The immigration of skilled professional is negatively impacting on the professional pool in SIDS. Principal reasons for immigration is the limited prospects for career advancement and the level of financial remunerations.
- iv) Increasingly the ongoing immigration of experienced professional is resulting in their replacement by expatriates, or national with limited experience in the majority of cases. One consequence of the dependence on foreign expertise whom seldom have full understanding for the social and cultural realities of the SIDS, is that implementation of recommendations sometime have a high degree of negative unintended consequences.
- v) The present capacity development initiatives focused at the individual level of capacity by donors, and implemented through one off workshops and seminar are not effective, and should be redesigned to include more follow-up, failing that they should be minimized as an approach.

- vi) Ongoing development of individual capacity is constrained as a result of the limited, availability of technical resources, ongoing opportunities to enhance skills, and access to information.

Institutional Capacity

Ten years after the Barbados Summit on SIDS, the progress towards sustainable development can be measured by the capacity developed within institutions with responsibility for: *developing individual capacity within SIDS; formulation of policies and strategies to foster sustainable development; and implementing policies* . In the opinion of the meeting the current status is as following:

Higher/Tertiary Education Institutions

- i) The focus of the existing curriculum, patterned after western developed country education is thereby often generating graduates with skills sets that fulfill the requirements of metropolitan countries, failing to meet the needs of the communities. Consequently there is an urgent need for comprehensive review the curriculum in order to ensure that the capacity development needs of the community are met. In undertaking this review a partnership approach involving relevant government ministries, local community groups and the tertiary institutions should be encouraged. Above all, there is a need to connect the requirements for sustainable development in the communities to the training that will be provided to the students so that they can return to their communities with new and relevant skills.
- ii) Current sustainable development education and training is overwhelmingly focused on the environmental dimension. In many cases they lack relevancy to key sustainable development issues focus. For example higher education in all SIDS needs to be include – waste management, coastal zone management (in relation to climate change and sea level rise), energy management, water resources management, land use, and protection of biological diversity.
- iii) Environmental education offerings which represents in the vast majority of cases the extent of sustainable development education lack a sustainable development focus and have yet to integrate the principle laid out in the BPOA for sustainable development of SIDS into either the undergraduate or graduate the curriculum, to any significant degree. The meeting was firmly convinced that there is a need for these to cover emerging issues such as global changes – globalization, climate change, threats to biodiversity, etc., and to build the sort of capacity that is required for negotiations – international as well as domestic.
- iv) There is limited emphasis on management and participatory skills in the curriculum evident from the analysis of the failure of some projects, in order to enable practical application of that education. In this regard it was

recognized that there are essential prerequisites and electives for courses that should be introduced to the curricula. Clearly it would also be important to establish linkages to the skills taught at the primary and secondary levels, and also to consider life-long learning programs (such as education from kindergarten to gray).

Primary and Secondary Institutions

- i) Primary and secondary curriculum in many SIDS is often designed for getting graduates of secondary schools admitted to Universities. In most SIDS less than 5 percent of children who enter primary school will go to University, meaning that 95% of the students suffer through a curriculum designed so that about 5% can gain entrance university where they will learn skills of little relevance to the national need for sustainable development. This situation does not even consider what to do regarding those that fail. A further constraint is the lack of national testing systems, as many SIDS rely on metropolitan curricula and grading systems.
- ii) The existing curriculum in the majority of SIDS has only limited local content and context. This is in part a result of the University entrance focus of the curriculum as well as the fact that most SIDS have inherited their educational systems from colonial times, and as a result there are often inappropriate historical anachronisms or inaccuracies embedded in the curricula, or a high focus on the historical context of the colonial power. It is also a result of donors determining that the educational needs of the SIDS recipients are the same as the needs in the education system in the donor country. In developing the local content and context as well as the assessment regime, there is critical need for community participation in its widest perspective.
- iii) It is often found that the teachers who are responsible for delivering the curriculum and assessing student progress seldom have the appropriate training to perform effectively.
- iv) Where environmental issues are now covered by the curriculum, there is no consistency between the school environment and policies with what is taught. School administrators in collaboration with community leaders and civil society groups (churches, social clubs, etc) need to ensure that what is being taught in the classroom is reinforced in the larger school and community environment e.g. waste management, efficient use of water, energy, etc.
- v) Current delivery of curriculum particularly for environment is handicapped by the size of classrooms to the number of students, the limited availability of relevant material such as shortage of relevant textbooks and other educational materials. The use of ICT to address this problem is limited by the unavailability of proper equipment and access.

Limited resources available to the schools, which minimize or does not allow for students to participate in learning exercises outside the classroom.

- vi) Key issues of environment component of sustainable development may be in some countries curriculum but are taught as issues rather than linked to an inter-disciplinary education for sustainable development context. There is no reference to the BPOA and key sustainability issues such as using resources in a sustainable manner (e.g. water, energy – and social linkages are not included. Also absent is the relationship between humans and nature (attitudes and behaviors). Remedial action considered by the meeting included giving the ministries responsible for education nation-wide responsibility and greater influence in how education is viewed as a tool for sustainable development.

It is imperative that investment in primary and secondary education produce graduates who fully appreciate the socio-economic importance to sustainable development and can provide leadership for their communities and work environment. In this regard an education curriculum is needed that provide key information on the three dimension of sustainable development so as to provide a well-rounded basis and allow students the holistic and integrated view required for promoting sustainable development. Key issues identified that should be included in a curriculum consistent with the goals of sustainable development/ national resilience building include:

- Using resources in a sustainable manner (e.g. water, energy – and link these uses with regard to social issues)
- Relationship between humans and nature (attitudes and behaviors)
- Traditional knowledge, values

It is important to note that these key issues can and should be fully integrated into and across all subject areas.

Capacity De velopment in the Policy and Strategy Formulation and Implementation

Discussions focused on the policy intervention of SIDS government on issues such as traditional knowledge, management of natural resources, development of renewable energy resources, waste management, climate change and sea level rise, loss of biodiversity the meeting concluded that the institutions with responsibility developing strategies and policies were lacked the capacity to be effective. The meeting concluded that:

- i) There has been no significant initiative in capacity development in this institutional category since the Barbados Meeting.
- ii) The majority of initiatives to develop this category of institutional capacity has been donor sponsored and have been in the form of workshops. In the opinion of the Meeting this type of ad-hoc capacity development initiatives has minimal impact and donor should be

discouraged from continuing to use ad hoc approaches to develop capacity. Recognizing the limited partnerships in the formal educational sector for developing capacity, donors need to consider whether investments in one-off projects versus programmatic support for bringing about institutional change a more productive use of resources from the long term perspective of sustainable development.

- iii) The majority of these ad-hoc capacity development initiatives were focused on Global Environmental Agreements, and depended heavily on expertise from developed countries.
- iv) There is very limited capacity in any of the institutions for monitoring and evaluation. This is reflected in the limited availability of data, the limited skills of individuals of collecting and analyzing data and the long periods between the issuing of evaluation reports.

Systemic Capacity

Informal education, training and public awareness

The majority of the population in SIDS are not involved in, and do not have access to opportunities to continuing education once they leave primary or secondary school. There is consequently a need for informal education, training and public awareness in order to development the capacity of this large mass of population to contribute to the process of sustainable development, particularly at the community level. In general there is:

- i) Little awareness of the concept of sustainable development – links between environmental, economic and social dimensions not clearly understood.
- ii) Very limited understanding of ecological processes (ecosystems, biological diversity, carrying capacities, assimilative capacities, resilience of critical ecosystems etc.).
- iii) Inadequate analytical skills for critical thinking.
- iv) Fragmented approach to developing public awareness about sustainable development and the vast majority of the population do not feel that they are part of the sustainable development process.
- v) Inability to convert public awareness into behavior change may be partly a result of the shortage of professionals with the communications skills who understand the process of sustainable development.
- vi) Emphasis on regionalism often serves to marginalize national effort.

5. ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION

As stated earlier the most important resources in SIDS are people, with their skills and creative imagination. The development of their capabilities is an essential prerequisite for SIDS to become internationally competitive in high value-added products and services. It is therefore imperative that institutions responsible for developing individual capacity receive the highest priority in the SIDS strategy to manage their vulnerabilities. Capacity development and education for sustainable development is intended to promote acquisition of knowledge, development of skills and the upholding of values in order to enable effective participation in decisions which affect the quality of life of current and future generations. Towards this end, such training must be interdisciplinary, and based on an integrated approach, combining economic, social, environmental, ethical and political considerations, where and when this is happening in SIDS the exception.

Human resource development and capacity strengthening underpin all aspects of human endeavor and are fundamental requirements for ensuring sustainability in SIDS, as the acquisition of appropriate skills and technologies constitute an essential part of the process of building the resilience needed to reduce vulnerability to global threats, whether natural, economic, social or political that SIDS face.

As noted above, an ongoing problem in SIDS is that the educational system seldom produces graduates with skills that are relevant to the local community needs, often resulting in migration to metropolitan countries. The focus of the education system is on producing students that can go on to universities. Yet only 5% on average successfully enter tertiary institutions. The training that this 5% receives may also be of such a nature that there is a lack of appropriate work opportunities in the home community. The consequence is that the educational system dooms the too many students and their community to failure.

In general there is often reluctance within the educational system to expand the curricula to include sustainable development issues under the pretext that curricula are already overloaded, and the material content does not easily fit. Where there are efforts aimed at developing capacity for environmental education, this is limited to conservation without including management and sustainable use of natural resources.

There is a need to address this in the reformulating the entire educational curriculum, so that it includes linkages to other issues such as gender, peace and equality, health and human rights, respect of self, social responsibility and requirement of good citizenship, poverty, natural resources management issues, and sensitization to issues such as national vulnerabilities and resilience strengthening. Associated with this is a requirement of additional infrastructure and material so student can learn by doing and by experiencing the environment in a holistic manner rather than being “imprisoned” in classrooms without relevant textbooks, information material or access of ICT.

The recognition that the serious challenges facing SIDS such as climate change will result in wholly new and significant capacity development and education requirements. Consequently there is urgent need for SIDS to begin capacity development to deal with climate change. Other key areas are in energy resources, waste, biodiversity, coastal and

marine resources and trade negotiations. Traditional curricula at all levels of individual capacity development will have to be modified to expose and sensitize stakeholders to these challenges faced by SIDS in general, as well as their concrete manifestations in particular islands.

Conclusion

The critical need to develop capacity of individuals and institutions so that national initiatives can be put in place to drive the transition to sustainable development is not taking place in any meaningful way within SIDS. The situation represents a major obstacle to SIDS successfully achieving international sustainable development goals in particular the MDGs. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) adopted by the General Assembly constitute a challenge issued to governments to greatly improve the quality of life of their citizens. Based on the discussions of the Meeting SIDS lack the capacity that is needed to address the MDGs, as these are the same requirement as those for sustainable development particularly for the sustainable use of the resource base.

Achieving the MDGs will require SIDS to develop the capacity to address social, environment, and economic requirements. Achievement of these goals through ad-hoc mechanisms will not be sustainable. There is a specific context for the MDGs in SIDS, in that they are addressed through the SIDS implementation of the BPoA, and that certain SIDS challenges affect the nature of the MDGs and their implementation in SIDS.

In developing the capacity to achieve the MDGs and the longer term objective of sustainable development it is essential that all stakeholders be involved in the process of planning and these discussions should take place in an environment that is transparent and open. These groups and sub-groups need to develop their own definitions of sustainable development and to determine priority areas, nature of messages and methods/strategies for disseminating messages. These processes should also include the inputs of NGOs with relevant competencies in public awareness/education and to assist in development of information products. In this regard a thorough consideration of consumerism in SIDS should be undertaken

The 1990s witnessed the maturation and wide-scale deployment across the developed countries of new technologies for information management and communication. While the use of ICT is now regarded as standard operating procedure for businesses, government and civil society groups in the developed countries, it is just beginning to penetrate SIDS. Based on the lessons from the developed countries, ICT has even greater potential to transform the ways in which SIDS implement the strategies for development of individual and institutional capacities. Delays in exploiting the opportunities offered by ICT threaten to further increase the already wide gaps in the quality of life for those global citizens who live in developing countries, particularly those in SIDS.

The cosmopolitan based curriculum of the formal education systems continues to neglects traditional knowledge in favor of over dependence on external expertise which is showing to have unintended negative consequences making SIDS more vulnerable and less resilient, this bias needed to be urgently addressed. The primary, secondary and

tertiary education system in SIDS is failing to address the capacity development challenge of SIDS; this is reflected in the limited degree of transition to the sustainable development paradigm in SIDS.

The Meeting recognized that a great deal of effort at all levels of capacity development was required. However given the early stage of implementing capacity development for sustainable development, priority action need to focused on the educational and training institutions that are primarily responsible for the development of requisite individual capacity, which is considered as the most critical rate determinant in progress toward sustainable development.

The participants in the meeting undertook an exercise to diagnose the current situation with respect to teacher training for primary education, and tertiary education in SIDS. The meeting therefore unanimously agreed that a radical change in the educational system was required necessary to provide the national capacity needed to achieve sustainable development. In terms of sequences and priority the curriculum of teacher training and tertiary institutional should be modified first and foremost. It is clearly necessary to ensure that an appropriate teacher education curricula to be developed, to address the weakness in the capacity of teachers in the primary schools. Similarly the curriculum at the tertiary institutions that provide the professional skills for the secondary education institutions also must be modified.

The meeting recognized that bringing about change of the scale that is required represents a major political, economic and social challenge, but given the growing vulnerability of SIDS represented factors such as: by economic globalization; loss of biodiversity; climate change and sea level rise; HIV/AIDS; pollution of fresh water resources and marine environment; difficulties creating employment; continuing decline in available financial resources; and increasing criminal activity and loss social cohesion; and loss and exploitation of traditional knowledge; there is no option, the current system is failing to provide the appropriate return for money.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Individual Capacity

- 1. Establish national capacity development coordination mechanism to minimize the he present uncoordinated approach to capacity development in which a different organizations run a number of similar projects, with sometimes similar approaches, is unsustainable and to much of the limited resources go to overhead costs.*
- 2. Put in place donor coordination structures at the national level, both for NGOs as well as government. This may seem contrary to de-centralization paradigm presently being expounded by the donor community, drives, but this is another case of the one -size -fits -all prescriptions that in this case is absolutely wrong for SIDS. Thus, donors that have linear relationships with NGO's and government should encourage networks. Governments should be more rigorous in*

assessing offers of aid and project methods. In this regard the meeting agreed that an organization such as the UNDP could be well -placed to develop the necessary coordination mechanisms and procedures at the national and regional levels of SIDS, through technical and financial support and through its institutional assets, stressing the need for efficient use of limited resources.

3. *Better donor coordination will be essential in a situation of declining ODA to SIDS, and in order to avoid duplication. National project clearing houses and registries are seen as a necessary step. There are some successful examples from SIDS such as the National Coordination Mechanism in Antigua and Barbuda . Recently a project registry was established in Vanuatu. The meeting recommended that further information on the methodologies used be explored.*
4. *Sustainable development requires a change in current behaviors and actions of individuals, thus we must include religion in our discussions and programs. It is suggested that we refer to the work being done by Bucknell and Harvard universities that are evaluating and clarifying the environmental message embodied in the texts of all the major religions of the world. (<http://www.hds.harvard.edu/cswr/research/ecology/index.html>). The meeting recognized that there is a need for more involvement of religious organizations and other community actors such as the police force, trade unions, media and cultural artists, in order to fully utilize resources that may not be readily apparent but which may have considerable influence for sustainable development in the long term*
5. *Attitudes in government need a serious review to ensure that the “foreigner knows best” syndrome is set aside, and that the risk of ignoring their own traditional, national and regional expertise, and the associated unintended consequences that arise, be fully appreciated by officials. There follows on the need to base the educational curricula on the best of the local culture as against the almost wholesale adaptation of developed country systems*

Institutional Capacity

Educational Institutions (Tertiary, Teacher Training, Secondary and Primary)

National Government in SIDS needs to institute policy changes in order to transform the educational institutions into effective developers of individual capacity for sustainable development.

Capacity building and education for sustainable development has been given major importance in Agenda 21. Chapter 36 entitled "Promoting Education, Public Awareness and Training" states that: "Education, raising of public awareness and training are linked to virtually all areas in Agenda 21 ..."

“ Education, including formal education, public awareness and training should be recognized as a process by which human beings and societies can reach their fullest

potential. Education is critical for promoting sustainable development and improving the capacity of the people to address environment and development issues.”

The Barbados Program of Action, building upon Agenda 21, but focusing on the specific problems of SIDS, also assigned major importance to capacity building and education for sustainable development. In paragraphs 62 and 63, the BPoA states: *“It is a matter of high priority to strengthen national educational and training mechanisms in order to facilitate the flow of information on sustainable development issues, enhance public awareness of the environment and encourage participation in the implementation of effective solutions. “*

Desired outcomes of the policy changes at the ***Tertiary Level*** should include:

- Universities transformed into teaching as well as learning institutions that support and are responsive to sustainable development needs of stakeholders.
- Stakeholders becoming cognizant of the role those universities can play in helping them to meet their sustainable development needs.
- Mechanism instituted to facilitate interaction between the academia and stakeholders, for assimilating stakeholder participation in the decision making process of universities. ???Towards this end, best practice of existing governance models in different Universities should be explored.
- Universities taking the lead in promoting sustainable development ideas and practices, internally as well as externally.
- Re-engineering of the education and training curricula at Universities to produce graduates with a holistic appreciation of sustainable development, with the appropriate values, ethical behavior, and problem solving skills.
- Tertiary education research and outreach activities, including informal education, focused on addressing sustainable development issues.
- Incorporation of systems for effective dissemination of research results conducted by Universities to stakeholders in a manner in which it can be easily understood and applied.
- Universities collaborating to study of the special sustainability concerns of SIDS, as expounded in the Barbados PoA, and as likely to be reviewed at the BPoA+10 international meeting in Mauritius.
- Significant increases in the use of ICT
- Tertiary education institutions in SIDS should engage in networking and partnerships at the national, regional and international levels.
- Teacher training programme for secondary education that produce graduates that can meet the requirement listed below.
- Inclusion of mandatory curriculum elements that ensure better understanding of management, cultural and social issues.

Desired outcomes of the policy changes at the ***Secondary Education Level*** should include:

- Development, delivery and assessment method for a curriculum that give graduates the following:
 - Graduates who have good communication and facilitation skills

- A sense of self and worth
 - Respect for cultural values and traditions and the importance of their use in the current SIDS context
 - Ability to synthesize and analyze information
 - Capacity for good citizenship
 - An understanding of what values they hold and why they hold them;
 - An ability to voice and rationalize a personal stance on life issues;
 - Self management skills;
 - Principles of good stewardship of the environment and natural resources
 - Comprehensive understanding of eco-systems, capacity limitations, and vulnerability
 - Imparts the necessary tools and values consistent with sustainable development through informed choice e.g. using resources in a sustainable manner
 - Capacity for critical thinking to address cross-cutting non-sectoral matters such as disaster management, risk reduction, family management and personal health;
- Systems instituted for effective participation by the stakeholders in the development, delivery and assessment of the new curriculum.
 - The incorporation of proven curriculum development tools, and practical aspects to sustainable development teaching including field trips and extra-curricular activities in support of sustainable development should also be encouraged.
 - Elevation and increases resource allocation to what is now called “Vocational Schools” a term with significant negative connotations, which should be re-titled so as to remove this stigma, and the incorporation of sustainable development concepts into the training.
 - Assessment methods that identify early students whose motivation and education interest lie in vocational areas.
 - A comprehensive participatory monitoring and evaluation system.

Desired outcomes of the policy changes at the *Teacher Training Level for Primary Education* should include:

- A new teacher training curriculum that gives significant coverage to traditional knowledge, culture, links between human and nature, and the integration of sustainable development issues and student exploration of sustainable development issues across the curricula.
- Education for change in the status quo of the environment, social, economic and natural.
- Action-based learning and consequent skills in problem identification and formulating remedies with students.
- An effective system of assessing learning and individual inquiry based not only on written exams.
- Personal health and hygiene, and gender sensitivity.

- Facilitation skills for creating an open and non-threatening classroom dynamic where students are encouraged to express different views and debate. In this way students reveal to themselves and others where their values lie.
- Dispute resolution and the characteristics of good citizenship.
- The role of community participation in education for sustainable development.
- Traditional knowledge must be given sufficient attention, which entails giving recognition of indigenous knowledge as important foundations for sustainable development.
- Effective participation in democratic processes and community decision-making.
- How to create pride in the school by the community to create strategic local ownership of the curriculum.

Desired outcomes of the policy changes at the **Primary Education Level** should include:

- The development and effective delivery of a new curriculum that provided graduates with the following:
 - Basic communication skills and preparation for basic participation in democratic processes.
 - Enhancing self-esteem aspects
 - Appreciation for working in cooperation, as this is a key requirement for sustainability.
 - Conveys good values, and responsibility of citizenship
- A primary education for sustainable development that has a high level of participation and ownership by the local community reflecting the realities of the community livelihood systems and linked to the national sustainable development strategy.
- Brings about a reduction in the drop out rate of students

These changes will present a major challenge to teachers in training as it will require them to 'de-learn' many of the ways they themselves were taught. However the outcome of such policy changes will benefit the citizens of SIDS as a whole especially if the formal education sector is able to reach out and include the knowledge contained in the informal sector in and as an integral part of the students' learning process.

Systemic Capacity

“E le o lau e ave ae o lea o le a tuu – it is not what you take away but what you leave behind.” Samoan saying . **In developing systemic capacity, government needs to formulate policies and initiatives that result in strengthening Informal Education, Training and Public Awareness : specifics recommended actions are to:**

- Engage all stakeholders/shareholders in developing awareness and educational programming. To do this we should create database of regional/national/local organizations/agencies involved in sustainable development public awareness.

This process should involve a roundtable process to engage discussion and coordinate activities.

- Identify specific target audiences, including non-traditional partners such as trade professionals (architects), judiciary, religious leaders, etc, and develop the appropriate information material.
- Recognize the need for professional input in capacity building for communication and development of outreach programmes.
- Include public awareness & consultation as high priorities in initial planning of sustainable development initiatives.
- Determine inter-sectoral, national contact points on sustainable development public awareness who will institutionalize lines of communication amongst key stakeholders; for example national sustainable development committees.
- Encourage a coordinated approach to implementation of public awareness for different sustainable development projects; e.g. more joint production of public awareness outputs.
- Establish a small grants mechanism to facilitate local/community efforts involved in sustainable development that otherwise might not be able to source funds, a possible source of funding is the UNDP Capacity 2015 project.
- Encourage more experiential learning opportunities that communicate real life examples of sustainable development messages that can be manifested in individual behavior systems.
- Utilize SIDSNet to access an inventory, with downloadable materials, of sustainable development resources. Allocate more financial resources directly to local communities, to undertake awareness building and training for sustainable development. This should also be combined with capacity building and training for leadership development at the community level.
- Develop capacity to generate more earned media outlets.
- Develop a SIDS wide network of journalists and communicators, potentially through use of SIDSNet.

7. PROPOSED STRATEGY for IMPLEMENTATION

Primary, Secondary , and Teacher Training Educations Institutions

In bringing about the change there is need to build partnerships with institutions such as spiritual and religious places of worship which are critical agents for mobilizing the general population to this end. But these groups need to be provided with relevant information in order to be an effective partner in promoting these changes. Science and religion are both vital in our efforts to achieve sustainable development. Most of our behavior is more determined by our heart than our head. Our spiritual beliefs and values are the foundation of our actions.

It will also be necessary to co-opt local politicians to partner in sustainable development projects and make it their priority to bring education for sustainable development (through decade of ESD) to the fore.

The meeting identified a number of possible strategies for further evaluation in addressing *primary, secondary and teacher training education* some of which will also be applicable at the *Tertiary* level:

- Push for the development of sustainable development policies across the board. Education at all levels should be a government priority, and should be pursued by all levels of the government administration.
- Establishment, where necessary, of a Sustainable Development Education Coordinating Committee (SDECC) will be required. Stakeholders will include: NGOs, Ministries (tourism, environment, local government, education), All relevant educational materials must come through this committee for the committee to pre-test materials and see how best to put it into the existing curriculum. The SDECC will also quantify the outcomes of a student of ESD principles and provide a forum for suggesting design and appropriate examination mechanisms to a National Curriculum Unit. The Committee also needs to work on an environmental educational programme for schools, and to support the schools in achieving the programme. Individual schools need to create an environment committee and have an environment coordinator so as to carry out environmental education programmes and projects and foresee the integration of sustainable issues in all subjects in their respective schools. A first step could be an environmental audit of the school.
- Establish a National Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) to work with the conventional education officials, parent and teacher committees, school management and principals and the SDECC to develop the Primary, Secondary and Teacher Training Schools curricula. The CDU would develop partnership with local and national sustainable development leaders for their participation in the process of development monitoring and modification. There is a need for regional and inter-regional partnerships among SIDS to foster the development of teacher-training curricula and cooperation, exchange of educational materials and teacher exchange.
- CDU in SIDS to utilize existing national institutes to buttress partnerships that may allow students to learn through involvement with the wider community.
- Establish a national streamlined strategy for education for sustainable development strategy, policy in all schools, schools would be rated based on how well they perform and additional incentives would accrue to schools meeting the goals. This strategy should be developed from existing regional ESD strategies where they exist, e.g. the existing Regional ESD Strategy for the South Pacific.
- Utilize ICT and international SIDS infrastructure such as SIDSNet to facilitate cooperation across SIDS on primary and secondary curriculum for education for sustainable development.
- Development of regional and inter-regional partnerships among SIDS to facilitate the development of the new teacher-training curriculum, to initiate education for sustainable development at the primary education level.
- Nurture partnerships with private sector to give and encourage mentor-ships for students to gain skills to be able to strive for environmental awards that incorporate community outreach.
- Support for SIDS-SIDS cooperation in web-based curricula development.

- Encourage cooperation between the teacher training institutions and programs, and to create a network of cooperation and exchanges to develop appropriate skills for sustainable development curricula. Through the use of ICT there is great potential for a higher level of information dissemination of materials that train teachers and assist them in adapting materials to the local conditions.
- Systematically support cataloguing effective methods for sustainable development education and for documenting successful capacity development efforts, particularly at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels would be of benefit to SIDS.
- Support for SIDS-SIDS cooperation for comprehensive information documentation of textbooks, training materials and documentaries that facilitate sustainable development education be catalogued and made available.
- Support for SIDS-SIDS cooperation to put in place appropriate legal instruments to provide protection for indigenous knowledge so that such information can be appropriately utilized in curriculum development.
- Partnerships should be promoted at all levels for primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. In this regard the use of Type 2 modality should be considered – including civil society dimensions to the proposals.

Tertiary Education Institutions

The magnitude of the challenge, and the limited availability of resources at the tertiary level require that a strong partnership between SIDS tertiary institutions and regional organizations, as well as other knowledge-rich institutions, be established. In this regards the meeting endorsed the Type II Partnership initiative developed during the UNDP sponsored Ministerial Roundtable on Vulnerability in SIDS, held in Montego Bay, Jamaica, in May 2002. The document is annexed to this report. Additionally the meeting also endorsed the extension of the sustainable reefs project to other SIDS regions, based on the critical role this ecosystem plays in SIDS economy. .

Informal education, training and public awareness

The strategies to develop capacities in this area should focus on:

- Development innovative teaching modules that involve positive feedback loops from students, and utilization of distance learning.
- Increased utilization of ICT for sustainable development education.
- Establishing through SIDSNet an electronic library on sources of innovative approaches and information resources. Sources identified by the meeting were: Wan Smolbag (tellusconsultants.com/wansmolbag/welcome.html) Live and Learn (liveandlearn.idea.org.au); Ocean Futures Society (oceanfutures.org).
- Capitalizing on the opportunities offered by the mass media to derive maximum benefits from generically produced outputs. The broadcast media can help override concerns related to literacy levels, and growth in the number and distribution of newspapers offers access solutions in most urban centers in SIDS.
- Addressing legitimate concerns about the ability of mass media strategies to sustain behavior change but they must, of necessity, be viewed as spearhead activities complementarily linked to other, more specific interventions at national and local levels. All communication channels, but the mass media in particular,

must also be seen not only as antecedents to behavior change but as agents of behavior maintenance. The monitoring of these processes is also critical and, to some extent, there are common areas and techniques of surveillance. But there is no single, generic approach that will satisfactorily address all the specific requirements.

- Mobilizing additional resources to avoid budgetary constraints which more often than not, steered otherwise knowledgeable communicators in the direction of an evolving, veritable template of activities which has made the task of communication planning a much simpler, convenient one but not necessarily a more effective exercise.
- The need for feedback and monitoring to test effectiveness of public awareness initiatives is essential and in this regard social impact assessments and opinion surveys have become standard fare. Other activities have now come to include: workshop forums, contact group sessions, theatrical performances, music jingles, public service announcements on the broadcast media, print advertising, news releases and features, media relations products (press briefings and conferences, press kits, promotional material, advisories), radio and television documentaries, print products such as annual reports, newsletters, flyers and brochures, corporate sponsorship, exhibitions, demonstrations and tours, newspaper features and releases, Internet publications and various hybrid versions of some of these. The template is then repaginated according to the availability of financial resources and the individual strength or weakness of the professional communicator.
- The mass media in SIDS requires training in reporting on and explaining sustainable development, and in order to assist there should be established dedicated networking. In this regard there is a need to utilize existing resources such as Pacific Islands News Association and Pacific Islands Broadcasters Association, Caribbean Environmental Reporters Network, etc.
- In SIDS sustainable development requires a community determined process and successful realization requires partnerships among a number of different stakeholders with the requisite capacity. Where such capacity is lacking there is a need for a programmatic approach to strengthening skills and mobilizing resources. The UNDP is a critical partner in this regard.

7. THE WAY FORWARD

There is a need to ensure greater donor appreciation for monitoring and evaluation issues in SIDS. It may be necessary to insist that a requirement for donor agencies must have a better understanding of the realities of local level implementation in SIDS. In this regard, there should be more flexibility in the implementation procedures for projects to take into account the special constraints of SIDS.

There is also need to develop a small grants program for capacity development for sustainable development, using UNDP, for seed funding. GEF small grants program is now being extended, and will provide opportunities in this regard. There is also a need to identify additional sources of seed funding.

The meeting congratulated Malta and Cyprus on their imminent accession to the European Union. Interest was expressed in the proposal emanating from the regional preparatory process for the BPOA+10, that Cyprus and Malta consider utilizing their new donor status to the benefit to other SIDS. In this regard, particular attention to capacity development to foster sustainable development and increase cooperation amongst SIDS should be priority considerations

A critical requirement in implementing the recommendations is a supporting infrastructure for the effective exchange and movement of information, in this regards the meeting identified SIDSNet. The meeting expressed the opinion that at present SIDSNet was not functioning effectively in supporting capacity development in SIDS. Too much of SIDSnet resources were being spent in New York and not in the SIDS this need to addressed Additionally it was decided that SIDSNet should:

- Be upgraded in its design to allow for greater community level usage and to effectively support capacity development beyond the current activities of storage of scientific and technical information about SIDS.
- Undertake an exercise to ataloguing capacity development methodologies and results at the primary, secondary and tertiary level in SIDS.
- Disseminate the capacity development initiative (UNDP) report should so as to allow officials responsible for education to take advantage of this opportunity.
- Have regional oversight committees for SIDSNet, consisting of the host organization, country representatives and relevant NGOs.

Resources Mobilization

The major rate-limiting step to implementation of the recommendations and associated strategies is financial resources. The meeting is of the opinion that substantial new resources could be made available to aid implementation if donors could be convinced to coordinate their capacity development activities. As pointed out previously a prerequisite for this is the existence of facilitating capacity, the UNDP is well positioned to play this role and to initiate the dialogue with donors about the use of one-off training, as these are largely ineffective. Further they seldom have any monitoring and follow-up activities and fail to recognize that learning is a process.

The UNDP is also a potential source of funding through its SIDS Capacity 2015 Project which has as it goals the addressing the growing Vulnerability of SIDS. Another UNDP Capacity development project the CDI whose goal is to help the SIDS develop capacity at all three levels to implement the Multi-lateral Environment Agreements (Climate Change, Biodiversity, International Waters, and Desertification).

The United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development represent an additional opportunities for SIDS to mobilize donor resources and the Inter-governmental organization ins SIDS needed to develop collective strategy to tap available support.

Continuing Actions

In order to ensure that the recommendations generated by the Meeting are acted on with immediacy the Meeting agreed to take the following action and seek subsequent endorsement and participation at the SIDS Inter-regional meeting in The Bahamas in January 2004. Actions to be taken:

1. University collaboration - Establishment of a steering committee to develop and guide the university collaboration [December 2003 steering committee, final proposal to be adopted at Mauritius]
2. Extension of Ocean Futures sustainable reefs project to other SIDS regions [2005-2006]
3. New teacher-training curriculum development. [work in progress]
4. Put together a plan of dissemination of workshop materials, using the participants as the local contact points, and seek funding for partnership with international community to use, collect and disseminate educational materials – UNEP, UNESCO, SPREP, etc., using SIDSNet as platform [January 2004, Bahamas]
5. Organize meeting of community leaders, teachers and educators to discuss educational reform for sustainable development [UVI, July 2004]
6. Bring journalistic community together to discuss education for sustainable development [Trinidad and Tobago, June 2004, Caribbean Media Association]
7. Establish dialogue between SIDS Ministers for Education [initiated by Pacific Education Ministers meeting in January 2004 – SPREP to arrange]
8. Establish meeting of community leaders, elders and traditional and chiefly representatives of SIDS [mid-2004, UWICED to draft proposal]