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Annette Insanally

Caribbean universities, largely operating in small island states (small-scale economies, populations, and political structures) represent catalysts for national and regional development. In this context, some have been more successful than others in responding to social demands, characterized by their degree of success in developing a critical mass of expertise, maintaining professional and intellectual legitimacy, their efficient use of resources while maintaining qualitative objectives and establishing external links. At the operational level, creating evaluation mechanisms, networks, regional centers, the use of new information technologies and delivery systems, advances in science and technology. (See OECD Publishing, **Beyond GDP: Measuring What Counts for Economic and Social Performance - Country-experiences with using well-being indicators to steer policies**, November 27, 2018).

An important consideration for Caribbean higher education institutions (HEIs) is how to ensure that they are not left behind in the global thrust for resilience and survival amidst a multiplicity of man-made and natural disasters. In this context, the institutions' focus on continuous quality improvement can be a worthy mechanism if a multi-pronged, institution-wide approach is taken for a rational response to the inherent challenges.

Increasingly, Caribbean institutions are recognizing that a value-added mechanism could be transformational partnerships to cultivate global dialogue and expand the capacity of each institution for educating students, conducting research and serving communities. This calls for complementary regional action, whereby the combined strengths of the network of institutions can be harnessed and weaknesses mitigated, strategic action and best practice can be shared and emulated and challenges and failures analyzed. Of merit would be the production of a regional database informing on successful activities and new ideas of higher education practitioners working on solving global problems through innovative international collaboration. This would set the agenda and establish partnerships for future initiatives in key development areas: Priorities for LAC countries; Strategy and Policy; Research Collaboration; Student Mobility (including short-term, project-based and practical professional experiences); Faculty Mobility and Collaboration; Collaboration with the Productive Sector to Address Global Challenges; Innovative Use of Technology for

International Collaboration; Resource Mobilization and Partnership Building for Sustainable Development; Transformative agendas; Curriculum revitalization and cross-cutting themes; Teaching and Learning Effectiveness and implementation of Quality Policy.

An important point of departure is the fact that 2019 is a milestone year for the Sustainable Development Goals (Agenda 2030). It includes the first comprehensive review of progress on the entire 2030 Agenda since implementation began in 2016. This review will be held as the 74th Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) kicks off in September 2019. Twenty-one (21) of the SDGs' 169 targets will mature in 2020, and with 12 of them focused on biodiversity, they are essential for the success of the SDGs and the Paris Agreement on climate change. The Caribbean has a critical window of opportunity for clear and coherent action by Member States to address the future of these targets.

In January 2019, The University of the West Indies (The UWI) was selected by the International Association of Universities (IAU) as its global leader in the mobilization of research and advocacy for the achievement of a climate-smart world. The UWI has already selected a global cluster of universities from Europe, Africa, Asia, the Americas and Oceania to assist in the task of achieving SDG 13 having recognised decades ago that climate change, rising sea levels and ocean temperatures, were an existential threat to the Caribbean, small island states, and the world, and to this end provided a body of scientific knowledge to prove and promote the case. The UWI's commitment to supporting the Caribbean region in the development of a culture of resilience and resilience planning as part of its Triple A Strategic Plan 2017-2022 is evidenced through a number of initiatives with global impact. In August 2018, The UWI was selected by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the World Bank, and Virgin United to host the launch of the Caribbean Climate-Smart Accelerator, a ground-breaking initiative to support the Caribbean becoming the world's first 'climate-smart zone.' (Sir Hilary Beckles, www.uwi.edu)

Caribbean HEIs would do well to participate in Forums which provide a unique interface for them to share their experiences and strategies for advancing the sustainable development agenda. The Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI), a partnership between UN-DESA, UNESCO, UNEP, UN Global Compact's Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) initiative, UNU and UN-Habitat, is one of the key implementation partners of the Global Action Program on Education for Sustainable Development (GAP)¹ and is a forum for dialogue and for sharing how universities are integrating the SDGs into sustainability strategies in the form of research, teaching, pedagogy, and campus

¹ GAP, which was launched in 2014 in the follow-up of the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) (2005-2014), seeks to generate and scale-up Education for Sustainable Development and accelerate progress towards sustainable development. All higher education institutions may join the network freely.

practices. Students could join, and be actively engaged in national and international student organizations, to ensure their voice is heard and receive the necessary support.

UNESCO-ISEALC has an integral role to play in this and is galvanizing the endorsement by regional HEIs of a consistent and coherent plan of action (CRES 2018 Plan of Action) and so guarantee their commitment to joint action for the sake of the region's sustainable development and to ensure that the region is not left out of global efforts and achievements. It is envisaged that regional networks will contribute to the creation of a Regional Common Knowledge Space intended to harness the productive good of regional HEIs and be conducive to the creation of harmonized accreditation systems, increased facilitation of joint programmes and increased accessibility to the regional HEI product. An important partner would be the Caribbean Nucleus of the Regional Center for Cooperation in Higher Education (CRECES) with which the Universities Caribbean Association has a Cooperation Agreement.

Current strategies and practices at Caribbean HEIs are trending towards a value-creating use of knowledge resources for innovation and entrepreneurship. This stems from an increasing awareness that to effectively support entrepreneurship and innovation, HEIs themselves need to be entrepreneurial and innovative in how they organise education, research and engagement with business and the wider world. Several HEIs have taken a proactive approach and piloted new ways of integrating new teaching methods into their curricula, developing activities to stimulate the entrepreneurial mindset, supporting start-ups, strengthening collaboration with business and the wider world, and taking a more international approach to their activities.

The Youth Progress Index is one of the first ever concepts for measuring the quality of life of young people independently of economic indicators. This framework can be a significant contribution to the policy debate, including for advocacy, as well as scholarly research, on measuring performance of societies related to youth matters, and defining progress beyond economic achievements. Young people from around the globe must be encouraged to take advantage of opportunities to discuss, understand, share, find solutions to and develop strategies on Caribbean and global issues pertaining to ocean conservation and preservation, marine pollution, climate change-related impacts on the oceans, sustainable blue economy, coral reefs and fisheries, among others. Young people are directly affected by these problems, and actively engaging youth on sustaining and improving the health of our oceans is imperative if we want to successfully implement the SDGs, especially Goal 14 (life under water). (POLICY TOOLKIT Youth Entrepreneurship for the Green and Blue Economies, published by The Commonwealth Secretariat, 2018). Linguistic differences must not constitute a barrier to integrated action for development.

Science and technology is generally considered key to the future of all developing countries and an important solution to inequality in our societies. Caribbean HEIs must participate in inter-related local and global action to encourage our children to think as innovators; increase the number of science academies in our communities; increase access to education using internet technology to greater numbers of our population and mobilize policy support for development and capacity.

The articles in this edition address these issues of human capital management and development and provide us with important information for a better understanding of the challenges facing our higher education sector.

1

Topic 1:

Higher education, innovation and economy

- **The Caribbean University- Innovation and Economic Development**
Dr Bhoendradatt Tewarie
Member of Parliament, Government of Trinidad & Tobago
- **Tertiary Education–Private Sector Engagement: A Strategic approach to catalysing innovation, economic revitalisation, and inclusive development in CARICOM countries**
Dr Glenford Howe, Dr Halima-Sa'adia Kassim,
Dr David Rampersad
The University of the West Indies, St Augustine Campus, Trinidad & Tobago

Tertiary Education–Private Sector Engagement: A Strategic approach to catalysing innovation, economic revitalisation, and inclusive development in CARICOM countries

Dr Glenford Howe,
Dr Halima-Sa'adia Kassim,
Dr David Rampersad

:: ABSTRACT

This article provides an analytical framework for assessing and facilitating productive collaborations between the higher education sector and the private sector in the Caribbean. It argues that such partnerships can be crucial to economic growth, innovation and inclusive development in the region. The paper however points to certain challenges which must be tackled if meaningful and lasting benefits for the region are

to be derived and maximised. These include addressing the lack of clarity in definition of the private sector as well as tackling the weak institutional capacities and the paucity of effective strategic partnerships among Caribbean higher education institutions.

Keywords: higher education; Caribbean; private sector; development; innovation

L'Enseignement Supérieur - Engagement du Secteur Privé: Une Approche Stratégique pour catalyser l'innovation, la revitalisation économique et le développement inclusif dans les pays de la CARICOM

Dr Glenford Howe,
Dr Halima-Sa'adia Kassim,
Dr David Rampersad

:: RÉSUMÉ

Cet article fournit un cadre analytique pour évaluer et faciliter les collaborations productives entre le secteur de l'enseignement supérieur et le secteur privé dans les Caraïbes. Il soutient que de tels partenariats peuvent être essentiels à la croissance économique, à l'innovation et au développement inclusif de la région. Le document souligne toutefois certains défis qui doivent être abordés si l'on veut obtenir et maximiser des avantages significatifs et durables

pour la région. Il s'agit notamment de remédier au manque de clarté dans la définition du secteur privé, ainsi que de remédier à la faiblesse des capacités institutionnelles et au manque de partenariats stratégiques efficaces entre les établissements d'enseignement supérieur des Caraïbes.

Mots-clés: Enseignement supérieur; Caraïbes; secteur privé; développement; innovation

La Educación Superior: participación del sector privado: un enfoque estratégico para catalizar la innovación, la revitalización económica y el desarrollo inclusivo en los países de la CARICOM

Dr Glenford Howe,
Dr Halima-Sa'adia Kassim,
Dr David Rampersad

:: RESUMEN

Este artículo proporciona un marco analítico para evaluar y facilitar las colaboraciones productivas entre el sector de la educación superior y el sector privado en el Caribe. Argumenta que tales asociaciones pueden ser cruciales para el crecimiento económico, la innovación y el desarrollo inclusivo en la región. Sin embargo, el documento señala ciertos desafíos que deben abordarse para obtener y maximizar benefi-

cios significativos y duraderos para la región. Esto incluye abordar la falta de claridad en la definición del sector privado, así como abordar las débiles capacidades institucionales y la escasez de alianzas estratégicas efectivas entre las instituciones de educación superior del Caribe.

Palabras clave: educación superior; Caribe; sector privado; desarrollo; innovación

A Educação Superior: participação do setor privado: uma abordagem estratégica para catalisar a inovação, a revitalização econômica e o desenvolvimento inclusivo nos países da CARICOM

Dr Glenford Howe,
Dr Halima-Sá'adia Kassim,
Dr David Rampersad

:: RESUMO

Este artigo fornece um enquadramento analítico para avaliar e facilitar as colaborações produtivas entre o setor da educação superior e o setor privado no Caribe. Argumenta que tais associações podem ser cruciais para o crescimento econômico, a inovação e o desenvolvimento inclusivo na região. Contudo, o documento assinala certos retos que devem se tratar para obter e maximizar benefícios

significativos e duráveis para a região. Isto inclui abordar a falta de clareza na definição do setor privado, as fracas capacidades institucionais e a carência de parcerias estratégicas efetivas entre as instituições de educação superior do Caribe.

Palavras-chave: Educação superior; Caribe; Setor privado; desenvolvimento; inovação

:: Introduction

The overarching objective of this paper is to articulate a framework for the tertiary education sector and private sector in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) to work more collaboratively, and exhibit a greater sense of shared purpose in accelerating economic revitalisation, growth and inclusive development in the region. It proposes a significant strengthening and expanding of the collaboration between tertiary level institutions (TLI) and the private sector as a strategic initiative to help countries achieve the sustainable development goals (SDGs) through the leveraging of financing, technical expertise, and the other capacities of both partners. It also outlines other benefits for both the TLIs and the private sector, as well as for critical areas of the economy and society. An issue of particular interest is how the tertiary sector can in a mutually beneficial manner engage with both the larger and more formal private sector entities and the many small and micro businesses.

:: Background

Member States of CARICOM are among the most vulnerable in the world with ten of them fitting into most definitions of “micro states”. These countries share a range of social and economic development challenges and vulnerability to natural disasters, as well as specific severe deficits with respect to human development, employment, gender equality, social inclusion, technology, knowledge and information, production and productivity, and trade.

For the last two decades much of the region has experienced high debt to GDP ratios, limited fiscal space, declining productivity and competitiveness, escalating energy and regional transportation costs, high rates of crime and violence, high migration rates particularly of the tertiary educated sub-population, and an increasing prevalence of chronic non-communicable diseases (CNCDs). This has contributed to slow economic growth when compared to the rest of the world. One of the cumulative impacts of these structural weaknesses is the high rate of poverty and extreme poverty in many countries, with Haiti being among the most severely affected.¹ The severity of these development challenges threatens to stall or even reverse social and economic progress in the region, unless decisive measures are taken.

At the same time, fundamental changes have occurred in the structure and orientation of CARICOM economies. These have direct implications for the

1 See for poverty rates, UNDP (2016) Caribbean Human Development Report, p.28

composition and needs of the private sector, as well as what is required from the tertiary education sector to help advance private sector development and economic growth. Over the past few decades, there has been a decisive shift away from agriculture and labour intensive manufacturing while services have become more significant.² As Caribbean societies become more modernised and knowledge-based driven, critical institutions like universities, colleges and other TLI, as the main producers of knowledge and builders of human capital, must re-align their vision, institutional mission, strategic processes and policies to enable them to act as engines of socio-economic change and innovation and critical partners in achieving growth and sustainable development. As such, they must be encouraged to collaborate more effectively to ensure that peer learning and the exchange of ideas and best practices in tertiary education-private sector engagement can be adopted or adapted to serve the particular institution's needs, circumstances, and ambitions.

Consequently, given the growing importance of knowledge in the 21st century, it is imperative for a new paradigm of social and economic development to be pursued which privileges the contribution of a strengthened, capacity-enabled, empowered, cost effective, and streamlined tertiary education sector, as a key catalyst or driver of the knowledge economy and society.

Although there are varying definitions for the definition of the term 'private sector', this paper adopts a Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) definition, viz. "the private sector refers to the sphere of economic activity where physical and/or financial capital are privately owned, and where business decisions are made for private gain. It is that part of the economy whose activities are under the control and direction of non-governmental economic units. According to this definition, the private sector includes local micro- and small-scale informal entrepreneurs, individually- or family-owned small and medium-sized enterprises, locally established and resident businesses with non-Caribbean origins or affiliations and non-resident, non-Caribbean, foreign-owned enterprises which operate as branches or subsidiaries of multinational companies."³ Recognition is also given to the fact that areas of the tertiary education sector, including privately operated TLIs and the business activities of public TLIs through certain for-profit services they offer, can be considered part of the private sector.

2 ECLAC (2015) The Caribbean and the Post-2015 Sustainable Development Agenda. Symposium on sustainable development goals for the Caribbean within the post-2015 development agenda held in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 24-25 June 2015, <https://unite.un.org/events/sites/unite.un.org/events/files/Final%20Paper%20on%20SDGs%20for%20the%20Caribbean.pdf>

3 [http://www.caribank.org/uploads/publications-reports/staff-papers/PSDS62\[1\].pdf](http://www.caribank.org/uploads/publications-reports/staff-papers/PSDS62[1].pdf). P.3

However conceived, it remains true that in order to stimulate sustainable growth in the region private sector development needs to be prioritised. As The Economist concluded, “Private-sector-oriented solutions will be essential, including improved firm-level productivity, economic diversification, greater engagement of Diasporas, and deeper involvement with local educational institutions.”⁴ For these reasons among others, the development of a robust private sector has become a national priority among Caribbean countries.⁵ Private sector development is also vital to the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME) given the similarities of the challenges and opportunities facing private sector entities across the region. Understanding the character, challenges, needs and potential of the private sector is therefore critical to charting a way forward for meaningful, tertiary education engagement with that sector. There is thus an urgent need for innovative strategies to foster TLI-private sector engagement which goes well beyond the intermittent and generally *ad-hoc* traditional approaches which focus on workforce development and human capital formation initiatives, or the creation of demand-driven programmes or short courses. This vision envisages a more meaningful and sustainable TLI-private sector partnership which sees both as mutually reinforcing and supportive partners in the common cause accelerating regional growth and development.

:: Overview of the private sector in the region

Within the Caribbean, there is a large number of informal, micro, small and medium enterprises and a small number of larger enterprises. The services particularly tourism and retail, as well as the mining and energy sector, dominate the Caribbean private sector. A 2016 IDB Report noted that “three-quarters of Caribbean firms operate within seven industrial sectors: retail (24 percent), hotels and restaurants (15 percent), food and tobacco (10.7 percent), transport (8.7 percent), construction (7.6 percent), services of motor vehicles (4.7 percent), and wholesale (4.7 percent).”⁶ The services sector is the “largest contributor of growth in the region: value added of the services sector accounts for more than 50% of GDP” in Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Domini-

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- 4 The Economist (2015) Private Sector development in the Caribbean: A Regional Overview. A report from the Economist Intelligence Unit. <http://jamaicachamber.org/jm/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Report.pdf>
 - 5 Executive summary [http://www.caribank.org/uploads/publications-reports/staff-papers/PSDS62\[1\].pdf](http://www.caribank.org/uploads/publications-reports/staff-papers/PSDS62[1].pdf)
 - 6 Ruprah, Inder and Ricardo Sierra (2016) An engine of growth?: The Caribbean private sector needs more than an oil change. A report from the Inter-American Development Bank, p.18. <https://publications.iadb.org/bitstream/handle/11319/7997/Engine-Growth-Caribbean-Private-Sector-Oil-Change.pdf>

ca, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Suriname, St. Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.⁷ Manufacturing remains small generally. The mining and energy sector is the second-largest contributor to economic activity in the region. Guyana, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago rely heavily on commodity export revenue.⁸

The average Caribbean firm is smaller and older than its rest of the small economies (ROSE) of the world, with “small” in this case defined as countries with populations of fewer than three million people.⁹ Moreover, the ownership of Caribbean¹⁰ firms is predominantly local, with relatively larger proportions of limited partnerships and sole proprietorships, and fewer than 20 permanent full-time employees. In addition, they conduct their business in small- and medium-sized towns and lack strong links to the international economy.¹¹ Consequently, sales and employment growth at many of these firms lag behind those of their peers in other small economies. These businesses tend to be concentrated in the tourism and retail sectors, and nearly 75% are classified as small, compared with 66% in small economies globally.

From the perspective of the drivers of competitiveness, the performance of countries in the region is mixed, reflecting the findings of the WEF Report 2016-2017. They are said to be in the “efficiency-driven” stage (Jamaica), transitioning to the “innovation-driven” stage (Barbados) or in “innovation-driven” stage (Trinidad and Tobago).¹² Based on this the Caribbean must now identify the measures required to create domestic industries that generate jobs and boost economic growth as well as the entire value chain related to new economic activities and promote the creation and growth of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs),¹³ while also targeting increased productivity and export

7 The Economist (2015, p.15)

8 The Economist (2015, p15)

9 Ruprah, Inder and Ricardo Sierra (2016) An engine of growth?: The Caribbean private sector needs more than an oil change. A report from the Inter-American Development Bank. <https://publications.iadb.org/bitstream/handle/11319/7997/Engine-Growth-Caribbean-Private-Sector-Oil-Change.pdf>

10 For the IDB, the Caribbean is classified into tourism-dependent countries include Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Caribbean commodity-dependent countries include Guyana, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago; all of which are Member States of CARICOM.

11 IDB, 2016, 15-16.; Compete Caribbean 2015, 16.

12 WEF2016-2017, 38. http://www3.weforum.org/docs/GCR2016-2017/05FullReport/TheGlobalCompetitivenessReport2016-2017_FINAL.pdf

13 Compete Caribbean, 2015, 33.

competitiveness of local firm. This will also entail taking into consideration the innovation-competitiveness- entrepreneurship ecosystem, HRD, research and development, all areas that the tertiary education sector can contribute to developing/enhancing.

One of the defining characteristics of the private sector is the fact that “by global standards, almost all formal businesses in the Caribbean would be classified as medium, small and micro enterprises (MSMEs) – with possibly 1% being categorised as “large”.”¹⁴ MSMEs constitute the largest segment of the regional private sector and make a significant contribution to job creation and economic growth. They currently account for more than 50% of regional enterprises, and over 50% of Gross Domestic Product in CARICOM.¹⁵ They also account for the vast majority of jobs across the Caribbean, providing approximately 90% of jobs in the Jamaican economy, and, it is estimated, accounting for around 70% of jobs in CARICOM.¹⁶ MSMEs also contribute to social development through job creation for women, poverty reduction, and the provision of opportunities for many of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged persons in the region.

Despite their importance to job creation and in facilitating the development of entrepreneurship skills and the use of indigenous resources,¹⁷ the MSMEs sector, especially the informal segment, remains largely under-supported, and hampered by many challenges.¹⁸ Even with these challenges, or indeed because of them, there is tremendous scope and opportunities for MSMEs and TLIs to become more beneficially engaged. In this regard, the support of governments, IDPs, and inter-governmental bodies like the CARICOM and its organs in

14 http://www.caribank.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Study_Micro-Small-and-Medium-Enterprise-Development.pdf. P.17

15 http://www.caribank.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Study_Micro-Small-and-Medium-Enterprise-Development.pdf

16 <http://www.mic.gov.jm/content/medium-small-and-micro-enterprises-msmes>; see for similar statistics across the region, The Guardian (Trinidad) April 17 2014 <http://chamber.org.tt/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/nova-sme-conference-ijchambers.apr-17-14.pdf>;

17 Tewarie, B, Khan, A. & Guyadeen, V. G. (1997) Small & Medium Sized Enterprises in the Caribbean. Trinidad and Tobago: UWI/Institute of Business; Jonathan Lashley (2003) “Small and Micro Business Issues in Barbados: Investigating the Contingent Environment”, Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies (SALISES), The University of the West Indies, Barbados. Paper Presented at SALISES Fourth Annual Conference, Sherbourne Centre, Barbados 15th-17th January. <http://www.caribank.org/uploads/publications-reports/research/conference-papers/development-strategy-forum/Small%20and%20Micro%20Business%20Issues%20in%20Barbados.pdf>

18 P. 13 http://www.caribank.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Study_Micro-Small-and-Medium-Enterprise-Development.pdf

particular, Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) is vital to the formation of sustainable TLI-private sector engagement. Given the fact that it is “by far the largest and fastest growing component of the Private Sector - from Belize in Central America through the archipelago to Guyana and Suriname in South America”, there are significant opportunities and justifications for the tertiary education sector to engage beneficially with the MSME segment of the private sector.

:: Understanding TLI-Private sector Engagement

Tertiary education-private sector engagement can be described as “a two way communication exchange and series of interactions between the education and training sector and the world of work”.¹⁹ It is a means by which the tertiary education system can pursue a change agenda to become more responsive, and make itself more relevant and connected to the world of work by facilitating dialogue with employers and supporting smoother graduate transitions into the world of work. Likewise, it provides an avenue of cooperation between the two sectors to focus on broader socio-economic challenges and to pursue desirable national and international development agendas such as those contained in the sustainable development goals (SDGs).

• Types of engagement

TLIs and the private sector may opt for different approaches depending on their motives and capacities for the collaboration. Generally, however, engagement might include three broad categories of interface including the development/improvement of teaching and learning (inputs and outputs), promoting research and development activities, and service engagement. These may include the following knowledge-based and resource-based initiatives:

1. Private sector, especially with respect to the larger firms, support for construction and development of physical facilities at TLIs
2. Staff and institutional consultancies and contracts
3. Joint research initiatives

¹⁹ QQI (2014). Education and Employers: Joining forces to promote quality and innovation across further and higher education and training-A strategic approach to employer engagement. Report by Quality and Qualifications Ireland., p.6 <https://www.qqi.ie/Publications/Publications/Education%20and%20Employers%20-%20A%20Strategic%20Approach%20to%20Employer%20Engagement.pdf>

4. Private sector provision of workplace-based training for students through student placements, internships, mentorships, and arrangements to absorb graduates
5. Deployment of the concept of Professors of Practice
6. Knowledge exchanges and skills transfers between TLI and the private sector
7. Exchange of ideas on curriculum development as a means of enhancing programme relevance
8. Interactions through professional, statutory and regulatory bodies, such as standard setting committees
9. Joint monitoring and evaluation of projects and programmes
10. Supporting start-ups, incubators, venture capital, and angel investors initiatives

While the employability of graduates, through the acquisition of industry experience and skills, might be at the heart of many TLI-private sector collaboration, there are also broad benefits for all stakeholders. These include for example:

- Enabling the private sector to outsource its research and development activities, particularly in such sectors as energy, agriculture, mining etc
- Helping TLIs to strengthen new or neglected research areas, and undertake exploratory research in new areas
- Providing all segments of the private sector with access to state of the art research and development facilities, networks and innovations, intellectual property, and tech-transfer expertise.
- Allowing both sectors to access or develop problem-solving strategies to tackle their particular challenges, and broader socio-economic and development problems.
- Enhancing profits for the private sector since their activities for social good often translate into economic benefits over time.

While there is little research showing the scale and intensity of TLI-private sector engagement in CARICOM, many TLIs do participate in varying degrees in such activities. However, these relationships tend for the most part, to be ad hoc and lack sustainability. This is especially true with respect to the non-university TLIs

are generally constrained by government policies with respect to this type of engagement or by the lack of resources to support engagement activities.

Importantly, neither the TLIs, the private sector, nor any of the other stakeholders can by themselves effectively tackle the issues of economic growth and development in the Caribbean. This paper therefore advocates for stronger tertiary education leadership within the context of multi-stakeholder, and public-private partnerships, and multi-stakeholder/public-private inter-sectorial initiatives.²⁰ Such partnerships have the potential to produce significant benefits for both the TLIs and the private sector and other key stakeholders including learners and local communities. New information and communication technologies offer unprecedented opportunities as a platform for supporting these types of partnerships and inter-sectorial engagement.

:: Moving from Talk to Action

The tertiary education sector through the creation and dissemination of knowledge, capacity building and training, including technical and vocational training, has an important role in driving national and regional development, and fostering innovation and entrepreneurship. However, a comprehensive and well-coordinated approach is required to address the multiple issues, including that of knowledge generation and transfer. More specifically, the following matters have to be addressed in such an approach:

1. Determining how, in the context of TLI-private sector partnerships, the tertiary education sector in CARICOM can develop and strengthen the indigenous capacity of the Caribbean to foster innovation, competitiveness and socio-economic resilience
2. Articulation of proposals for effective and efficient realignment of academia with industry, thereby ensuring that higher education becomes a significant engine of economic development
3. Preparation of a plan of action that enables the tertiary sector to be a successful partner, with the private sector, that may entail:

20 The World Bank Group (2016) defines a public-private partnerships (PPP) as a “long-term contractual arrangement between a public entity or authority and a private entity for providing a public asset or service in which the private party bears significant risk and management responsibility.” See, World Bank Group (2016). PPP Arrangements/Types of Public-Private Partnership Agreements. Available at: <https://ppp.worldbank.org/public-private-partnership/agreements>; World Bank Group (2016). Overview: Public-Private Partnerships. Available at: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/publicprivatepartnerships/overview#1>.

- Development of strategies to enable the tertiary sector to be a partner with the private sector, and other partners in project conceptualisation and implementation for national and regional development.
 - working with the private sector to identify regional and national development projects where the expertise, experience and regional reach of the tertiary sector/individual TLI can ensure sound conceptualisation and design of projects that are realistic and can be implemented successfully.
 - Articulation of recommendations for governments to create enabling national and regional policy, legislative and financial environments for supporting successful private sector and TLIs collaboration; including for example, strengthening the regulatory framework governing research and development, intellectual property, tax incentives, access to finance, and cluster development.²¹
 - developing strategies to address such issues as the strengthening of the private sector, motivating each party to work more intensely and extensively with each other, and improving the image and perceptions each party has of the other.
 - establishing a Focal Point for relationships with the private sector and propose a governance structure to support the relationships
4. The establishment of a regional research and innovation funding agency backed by private sector and multi-stakeholder support that advances research and innovation to create knowledge economies.
 5. Clearly outlining strategies which address the issue of how the private sector and the TLIs can be motivated and incentivised to collaborate with each other.
 6. Preparation of a framework for a regional research agenda to include both regional and national priorities, and that takes into account the issues in the CARICOM Strategic Plan and the Strategic Plans of some of the tertiary education institutions (where relevant), which identify research and innovation as a central plank. This would add value across the region in addition to other positive outcomes, including:
 - increase the likelihood of collaboration among regional tertiary education institutions and the dissemination of their priorities

21 See CDB (2017) Enhancing Productivity and Growth in the Caribbean.

- help identify areas where it was necessary to build capacity in individual TLI and help create a level playing field
- TLI with strengths in specific areas would lead relevant research activities, thereby ensuring equitable participation, and
- since the agenda would have been formulated with the input of key regional institutions and partners, including those outside of the higher education sector, the basis would have been laid for enhanced collaboration.

Consideration needs to be given to the establishment of an appropriate mechanism to facilitate and catalyse the above mentioned activities, and devise strategies to overcome barriers to TLI-private sector collaboration²². This mechanism, in the form of, for example, a TLI-Private Sector Working Group, may be mandated to report periodically to CARICOM Heads, through the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED).

:: Conclusion

This paper emphasises the growing importance of collaboration between TLI and private sector partners to spur inclusive economic growth and development. Both sectors are critical to adding mutual value to their respective missions and to stimulating and supporting socio-economic revitalisation nationally and regionally. They must be underpinned by effective co-ordination, coherence and symbiotic relationships supported by other partners including communities, governments and international development partners. Critical changes in the national and international environments, including the shrinking or reallocation of funds for education, and the importance of knowledge, agility and technology utilisation in ensuring private sector competitiveness, add a sense of urgency to this collaboration. Sound strategies, policies and legislative frameworks emanating from dialogue among the partners are required to strengthen such partnerships, and achieve outcomes which foster growth, prosperity and inclusive development in CARICOM.

22 Barriers include for example, the fact that: a) a sizeable segment of the MSMEs sector are not considered part of the private sector due to their informality; b) the MSME sector is disparate, disorganized, and lacking common focal points which can represent their interests; c) the TLI have generally failed to make a compelling case for the private sector to increase its engagement with them; d) TLI have taken a haphazard uncoordinated approach to private sector engagement, and therefore not set up the appropriate offices, mechanisms and internal processes to facilitate effective engagement.

BIOGRAPHY NOTE

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Dr. Glenford D. Howe, Senior Programme Officer in the Open Campus, The University of the West Indies, studied at the UWI Cave Hill campus (1987-1990) where he obtained a BA in History and Political Science. He then proceeded to the University of London (1991-1993). His thesis “Race War Nationalism: A Social History of West Indians in the First World War” was turned into a TV documentary by Channel 4 TV and published as a book, made into a radio documentary by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in 2016.

Dr. Howe has written and published on a wide variety of subjects including history, politics, education, health, the rule of law, child protection, and consulted for the UNESCO International Bureau of Education in Geneva, the UNESCO International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean in Venezuela, UNICEF, the United Nations Development Programme, Caribbean governments, and the BBC among others. His multidisciplinary scholarship is being used in a number of leading universities globally. Together with Professor Alan Cobley, he produced the first book on HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean. He also drafted CARICOM’s 2030 HRD Strategy under the supervision of the CARICOM HRD Commission, and specialises in tertiary education policy in the region.

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Halima-Sa'adia Kassim has over fifteen years of research and management experience in national and regional organisations reflecting a rich and diverse experience in project writing and grant funding, teaching, education administration, and in inter-governmental organisation. She is the author of several technical papers on gender and development, gender-based violence including cyber-violence, child protection, migration, MDGs, and changing population dynamics in the Caribbean region. She also authored several peer-reviewed articles/book chapters on the Muslim community related to education, religious organisations, gendered identities, cultural retention and negotiation in Trinidad and Tobago and on issues related to higher education administration and gender. She is the author of a monograph on a credit union development in Trinidad and Tobago. She obtained her Ph.D. from the University of the West Indies (UWI). She is currently employed at the University Office of Planning, The University of the West Indies. Her academic research interests include the evolution of the Muslim community with a particular focus on Trinidad and Tobago, gendered identities, cultural retention and negotiation.

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Dr. David Rampersad, Senior Adviser to the Vice-Chancellor of the University of the West Indies (UWI), has more than twenty-one years' experience in the field of higher education management. Beginning as a fund-raiser, first for the University of Oxford and subsequently for the University of Cambridge, he has worked with key stakeholders of the UWI since 2002 to establish value-creating links with local and regional private and public sectors and international funding agencies. He has aimed to influence and direct the creation of an entrepreneurial approach to institutional productivity and execution, with the aim of increasing both traditional and non-traditional forms of revenue. Oversight and management of the preparation of proposals for national, regional and international funding; the negotiation of contracts; project management; research management; knowledge transfer; and the implementation of the UWI's internationalization strategy have all been central to Dr. Rampersad's responsibilities at the UWI.

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