
KEY COMPONENTS OF THE REVISED CARICOM REGIONAL TVET STRATEGY

Report on the CANTA Consultative Review of the CARICOM Regional
Strategy for TVET (1990)

April 30, 2012

Submitted to:

CARICOM Secretariat

Submitted by:

Caribbean Association of National Training Agencies (CANTA)

In Collaboration with:

CARICOM Education for Employment Program (C-EFE)

A program implemented by the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC)

And financed by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)

Message from Caribbean Association of National Training Agencies (CANTA)

The Caribbean Association of National Training Agencies (CANTA) is proud to have been selected by CARICOM to partner with the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC) to implement the CARICOM-Education for Employment Program (C-EFE), a program funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

The review of the 1990 Regional TVET Strategy and the drafting of this new Strategy is the first program initiative of this five (5)-year program. This strategy is expected to provide the Region's TVET stakeholders, policy makers, practitioners and clients with a progressive and prescriptive framework within which to evolve creative focused interventions which will effectively develop and certify, to international standards, the competence and productive capacities of the Region's workforce. CANTA is convinced that through the promotion of this newly developed high quality Workforce, the Region can sustainably attract and absorb, the high quality job-creating foreign and domestic investments required for both economic growth and competitiveness.

The drafting of this document was informed by a series of twelve one-day national consultations conducted across the Region, involving representatives of the social partners; employers, workers, social and economic sector government ministries; education, industry and investment, finance, labour as well as TVET practitioners. This bottom up and inclusive approach was very time consuming, however, we believe it to be the best method to engage the wider TVET community and build the ownership needed for the strategy's effective Implementation. CANTA wishes to acknowledge the effort of the two consultants, one Caribbean and one Canadian, responsible for conducting the consultations and for the drafting of this strategy, Brenda Cooke and Robert Gregory.

CANTA recognizes the critical historic social and economic cross roads at which the Region is now positioned, facing the challenges and implications of the Global Knowledge-Based Market Economy. We are confident that the new **Regional TVET Strategy for Workforce Development and Economic Competitiveness**, once developed, can become a transformative platform on which the Region's workforce and economy can confidently take advantage the many opportunities presented by this new global dispensation.

Mrs. Elphege Joseph
President
April 30, 2012

Message from Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC)

The Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC) is pleased to have been selected by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) to implement the CARICOM Education for Employment Program (C-EFE) in partnership with the Caribbean Association of National Training Agencies (CANTA).

During the inception phase of C-EFE, both CANTA and CARICOM stressed the importance of reviewing and updating the Regional TVET Strategy, a sound document that launched the establishment of National Training Agencies (NTAs) and TVET Councils in the early 1990s. Significant changes in the nature of work and approaches to education and training over the past 20 years made a review of the regional document timely, and C-EFE recognized that updating this document should be the first significant program initiative undertaken in collaboration with CANTA.

A profound vision for change, articulated in the proposed title for the updated strategy, “Regional TVET Strategy for Workforce Development and Economic Competitiveness,” emerged from the consultations with TVET stakeholders in the 12 countries participating in C-EFE. CARICOM member states recognize the key role of education and training in building a strong regional economy and stressed the importance of shifting the paradigm of education in the region away from a model of exclusivity to one of inclusivity as a strategy for ensuring the productivity and well-being of all CARICOM nationals.

ACCC would like to thank the NTAs and TVET Councils for bringing together key representatives from each of the social partners responsible for ensuring the strength of an advanced skills training system – educators, employers, workers, and government. The breadth of the stakeholder input led to a richer, deeper vision of the elements required to prepare individuals, from primary through to tertiary education and in the workforce, for employment in the knowledge economy.

The recommendations which have emerged, when adopted, will lead to a stronger system of certification for graduates and the current workforce, increased employment in the region for CARICOM nationals, and a more demand-driven training and education system.

The work of the two consultants, Brenda Cooke and Robert Gregory, presented here distills the input from 12 country consultations, the ground-breaking UWI/UNESCO conference on TVET and Human Capacity Development held in March 2012, the research into best practices globally and the views presented at CANTA meetings. ACCC applauds them for their ability to articulate so effectively the region’s vision for the way forward.

Paul Brennan
Vice President, International Partnerships
April 30, 2012

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ACRONYMS

ACCC	Association of Canadian Community Colleges
ACTI	Association of Caribbean Tertiary Institutions
C-EFE	CARICOM -Education for Employment Program
CANTA	Caribbean Association of National Training Agencies
CAPE	Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CEO	Chief Education Officer
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
COHSOD	Council for Human and Social Development
COL	Commonwealth of Learning
COTED	Council for Trade and Economic Development
CQF	Caribbean Qualifications Framework
CSEC	Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate
CSME	CARICOM Single Market and Economy
CVQ	Caribbean Vocational Qualification
CXC	Caribbean Examinations Council
EU	European Union
GSE	General Secondary Education
HEART	Human Employment and Resource Training
ILO	International Labour Organization
LMI	Labour Market Information
LMIS	Labour Market Information System
MoE	Ministry of Education
NTA	National Training Agency
NTATT	National Training Agency of Trinidad and Tobago
OECS	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
PLA	Prior Learning Assessment
PSC	Program Steering Committee
RCM TVET	Regional Coordination Mechanism for TVET
SIC	Standardized Industrial Classification
SOC	Standardized Occupational Classification
TVET	Technical and vocational education and training
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UWI	University of West Indies
WB	World Bank

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The review of the 1990 Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Regional Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Strategy and the preparation for the new 2012 Strategy employed a bottom up consultative process involving decision makers drawn from the Region's leading TVET practitioners, representative employer and worker groups, and relevant Government ministries and agencies.

The consultations took place in 12 countries between February and April 2012, with each stakeholder group spending an entire day reviewing the 1990 strategy and updating it to reflect the imperatives of the world of 2012 and the anticipated future. The individual country reports were then consolidated into this draft document, reflecting the consensus or majority opinions of each of the groups.

This report calls for the new TVET strategy to redefine TVET as an economic development activity designed in response to globalization and the knowledge-based economy, developments which have accelerated the transformation of all occupations across all sectors. This means that the concept of what is considered 'TVET' needs to be expanded to include the higher skill level occupations that the 21st century requires and which constitute about 75% of the workforce.

Not only does TVET need to be redefined as an engine of economic growth, but it also needs to be repositioned within the educational system. There is call for fundamental reform of the Region's education system to embrace new approaches such as open access, outcomes and competency-based education, learning and learner centered systems, life-long learning and the integration of TVET with general secondary education to create a richer, more comprehensive secondary system preparing graduates for transition either to work and /or further education. This is consistent with world-wide trends and consistent with recommendations made by global leaders such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the World Bank (WB).

This report endorses the continued development of a regional CARICOM Training System as it was envisioned by the original strategy, with each country housing a National Training Authority (NTA) which works in concert with a Regional Coordinating body. It recognizes the constraints facing smaller nations in particular and, to ensure the system is to be sustainable, it calls for a strong regional coordinating body, the Caribbean Association of National Training Agencies (CANTA), and an attitude of sharing expertise among all countries. It recommends that CARICOM legally institutionalize and support CANTA to fully and properly coordinate activities and resource support to assist the region's NTAs to fulfill their complete roles. CANTA should assume the task of coordinating members' regional access to occupational classifications and standards, Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) curricula, and training and assessment resources including labour market intelligence. It also recommends the significant deepening of the engagement of the social partners in shaping the workforce of the future.

If TVET is to succeed, it needs to be structured within the Caribbean Qualifications Framework (CQF), and aligned within this framework with all the other levels of education. It is recommended that a strengthened CANTA re-engage the regional education and training community regarding their adoption of and compliance with the CQF not only to facilitate the articulation of CVQ holders within regional educational institutions, but also to benefit the holders of degrees and other credentials offered by

institutions, which are part of and adhere to the regulations of the regional qualifications framework. What is called for is a 'whole system' reform so that education is competency-based, certifications are recognized by each of the participating institutional and country systems and students are able to move freely within systems. Such broad change calls for urgent action from each country and a coordinated regional effort to determine common definitions and procedures.

The recommendations presented acknowledge the efforts made to date to develop labour market information systems (LMIS) at regional and national levels and the importance of informed decision making; however they call for predictive, intelligence gathering mechanisms to more flexibly and in a more focused way, detect present and future demand for TVET. In the development of a new approach to labour market information (LMI), both the supply and the demand sides must adopt common occupational definitions. There is an urgent need to review the existing hybrid regional system of occupational classifications and standards.

The image of TVET remains a major concern. The consultation led to calls for the creation of an all-encompassing Public Awareness campaign to announce the 'new TVET' as an instrument of workforce development and economic competitiveness. So positioning it changes the dialogue: TVET is about employment; it is about employers having a certified and competent workforce; it is for adults and high school students; it is accessible through an open and accessible reformed educational system; and it is integrated within the Caribbean Educational Framework, thus allowing TVET graduates access to lifelong learning.

This renewal of TVET will require the renewal of Career Guidance and Instructor Training, with a focus on having well qualified and trained counselors and instructors to achieve the goals of TVET, namely the employment of graduates with demonstrated competence. Just as TVET should be integrated within general education, so too should Career Guidance, in a progressive and age-appropriate way. There is an urgent need to establish Workforce Assessment Centres for adults wishing to have their skills assessed, to achieve credentials or to make informed alternate career choices.

The inadequacy of training infrastructure remains a pressing concern. TVET cannot be the cutting edge provider of workforce training using its current facilities and equipment. It is recognized that funding is shrinking; and that stronger engagement of the private sector and new models of training are called for. Ministries need to rationalize their programs and institutions, moving towards Centres of Excellence. TVET needs to adopt a sector approach with key sectoral bodies, where the public and private sector come together to plan for and fund sectoral human resource development, with the value proposition of a work-ready trained and qualified workforce.

Finally, the consultations called for greater accountability with regular monitoring, evaluation and reporting at both the regional and national levels.

As a next step, it was recommended that the report findings be presented to a wider base of regional stakeholders for validation before the new 2012 **Regional TVET Strategy for Workforce Development and Economic Competitiveness** is crafted and presented to the Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD) and the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) for a Ministerial approval.

INTRODUCTION

A TVET strategy for CARICOM was first developed in 1990, reflecting a progressive awareness of the need for new approaches to the institutions and processes of human capacity development and their alignment with other sectors in the overall development process. The strategy spoke specifically to more modern approaches to TVET within the education sector, as a means of equipping the region's workers to learn and use the tools of science and technology, which were at the time beginning to impact the workplace as sophisticated computerized mechanization and automation.

The 1990 Strategy called for a radical change in how TVET was organized and delivered, both nationally and regionally. Specifically it called for the creation of a Caribbean-wide standardized, internationally benchmarked set of qualifications called the CVQ to be set within a CQF that would provide for an articulated, seamless educational system whose credentials were articulated across and between the systems. The end goal was to have a flexible and mobile, well-trained and qualified workforce with regionally and internationally recognized credentials that could meet the needs of an ever changing and increasingly demanding marketplace.

The strategy, adopted by CARICOM's Ministers of Education at their Eighth Meeting in Trinidad and Tobago in May 1990, has provided the roadmap for the development of a regional TVET system over the last twenty two years. Since its inception, several substantial achievements have been made including the development of a five-level CQF and the establishment of a regional coordinating body, CANTA, to coordinate the TVET apex groups from around the region. All the countries have established their TVET coordinating agencies (variously called NTAs, TVET Councils, and most recently, St. Vincent and Grenadines' Sector Skills Development Agency.) Standardized protocols have been developed for various activities such as the development of occupational standards and the training of assessors. While progress has been uneven across the region, largely due to disparities of size and access to funds, it must be said that the development over the 22 years has been, by and large, consistent with the directions of the 1990 Strategy.

In light of the enormity of the changed world circumstances since 1990 and with a growing recognition across the world of the pivotal role TVET has in economic development and prosperity of nations, CARICOM has requested that the 1990 strategy be reviewed and updated.

PROCESS

The consultation process to update the 1990 strategy took place between February and April 2012. On behalf of CANTA and in collaboration with the CARICOM Education for Employment Program (C-EFE), a five-year program funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), two consultants were engaged, a Caribbean, Robert Gregory, and a Canadian, Brenda Cooke, to jointly facilitate a review process. Over the three-month period, the facilitators conducted a "bottom up" participatory consultative process to review the current 1990 strategy and to recommend elements of a new 2012 strategy, which will be named '**CARICOM Regional TVET Strategy for Workforce Development and Economic Competitiveness.**'

The team facilitated consultations throughout the CARICOM with a total of 16 visits covering twelve countries that are part of the C-EFE (Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.) The report also included input from the inaugural University of West Indies (UWI) / UNESCO conference on TVET and Human Capacity Development held in March 2012 and from views presented at CANTA and C-EFE Program Steering Committee (PSC) meetings and was informed by the consultants' research into global best practices.

Each country assembled a group of from 12 to 30 people with representation from education and training, government, employers and unions. Each group came together for a full day to review the eleven points of the 1990's strategy and provide a country perspective on what should be in the new strategy. Notes were recorded at each consultation, and after each consultation, were sent back to the country groups for endorsement. These country reports will then be used to influence the formulation of the proposed new strategy.

A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT (1990 – 2012)

During the decade leading up to 1990, CARICOM had begun to confront the impact of globalization and the thrust toward trade and market liberalization. Both of these forces of change were viewed as a disruptive threat to the highly protected, relatively uncompetitive economies of the Region, steeped in the concepts and precepts of the planned economy with its "supply-side" orientation---a region deeply dependent on preferential trade agreements covering the banana and sugar export industries, as on sun sea and sand resort tourism, assembly manufacturing for import substitution, along with the extractive industries of bauxite and petroleum.

The Region's plantation era, exclusionary and elitist education system had been designed to ensure a steady supply of under-educated labour to fill up the ample supply of manual labour jobs. Even though the manual labour jobs were beginning to disappear with the decline of the plantation economy, the deeply engrained assumption that the Region's population consists largely of persons who are not "academically inclined" but good at working with their hands remained intact.

The consequence of this systemic dysfunction (limited access and high dropout and failure rates) was the steady production of huge numbers of under-educated (labeled under-performing) school leavers for whom there were fewer and fewer manual labour jobs, as the plantation economy contracted. Therefore, many of these school leavers joined the ranks of the at-risk and unattached youth for whom the prescription was "skills training" or stigmatized TVET programmes to be trained in largely outdated manual trades to after join the workforce in an often frustrated search for employment.

As a consequence of the Region's primary and secondary education failing 80% of its clients, the Region's under educated, uncertified workforce has been profiled as "low skill/ low wage" (cheap labour) only able to attract low level job-creating investments, sustaining the persistent low competitiveness and productivity of the Region's economies.

By the first decade of the 21st century, the Region's economic base with the exception of Trinidad and Tobago, Suriname, Belize and Guyana has become services-based, competing in a world that demands

international standards of service. Trade preferences have disappeared and new reciprocal trade agreements have been signed or are being negotiated. The global economy of which the region is a part is knowledge-based, requiring a workforce of knowledge workers equipped with a full and rounded secondary education which prepares learners for lifelong learning, higher education, training, retraining and upgrading, as the changing career demands in a dynamic market. Eighty percent of the workforces of advanced economies consist of these TVET knowledge workers.

The Region's education and training system therefore is no longer fit for its 21st century purpose -- which is to effectively produce a workforce and citizenry with a blend of the knowledge and skills today's market requires and functional in a world of constant change—with the ability to learn, to solve problems, to think critically and to master new learning and skills throughout a lifetime. It is a system that is inclusive, accessible, flexible and articulated and one in which lifelong learning is facilitated.

As a small regional entity, with a population of 7 million, the CARICOM needs to decide how it will survive and prosper against the giants in this era of global competitiveness. This involves learning lessons and benchmarking the many countries who have met the challenges, for example, Ireland, Finland, Korea and Singapore which have all accomplished economic and social miracles—some of them with no natural resources and limited land mass. Singapore is smaller in size than most CARICOM countries with a population of five million persons but through the focused, efficient and effective education of its only resource, its people, today boasts a per capita income of approximately \$40,000 and minimal brain drain of its educated and trained people. Some common characteristics of these countries include treating every young citizen as a valued and respected human resource to be developed, infusing from early childhood high self-esteem and sense of identity. They have embraced and responded to the demands of the knowledge-based market economy and have aligned their education system with their country's economic growth priorities. The CARICOM does not have the option of doing nothing. Facing the full force of the tidal wave of globalization and liberalization, with competitive strategic minded countries knocking at the Region's door, it too must empower and equip its human resources to take advantage of the opportunities the 21st century presents. As one of the consultation participants in Barbados said, "The Caribbean community should look at what is happening in first world countries because inevitably those are the future trends for the Caribbean as well."¹

DOMINANT THEME – THE GLOBALLY COMPETITIVE, MARKET-DRIVEN, KNOWLEDGE-BASED ECONOMY OF 2012

Each year the World Economic Forum releases a Global Competitiveness Report which ranks countries using its Global Competitiveness Index, a comprehensive tool that measures microeconomic and macroeconomic foundations of a nation's competitiveness, which is defined as "the set of institutions, policies, and factors that determine the level of productivity of a country".² In this year's report, among 142 countries that were ranked, Barbados was ranked 42nd, Trinidad and Tobago, 81st and Jamaica, 107th. This might be compared with Chile, ranked 31st, Malaysia, 21st and Taiwan, 13th.

¹ Barbados Country Report, Feb. 27, 2012

² Klaus Schwab, Editor, World Economic Forum Global Competitiveness Report 2011-2012, Geneva, Switzerland, 2011.

Perhaps even more relevant to education and training, the World Bank (WB) also benchmarks countries in the Knowledge Economy. Using the Knowledge Assessment Methodology, the study zeros in on four factors that measure a country's strength to operate in the Knowledge Economy:

1. Having an economic and institutional regime that provides incentives for the efficient use of existing and new knowledge and entrepreneurship.
2. Having an educated and skilled population, that creates shares and uses knowledge well.
3. Having an efficient innovation system of firms, research centres, universities, consultants, practitioners all tapping into the growing stock of global knowledge, assimilate and adapt it to local needs and create new technology.
4. Having information and communication technology to facilitate the effective creation, dissemination and processing of information³.

In the rankings for 2008, Barbados ranked 38th, Dominica 46th, Trinidad and Tobago 54th, Jamaica 66th and Guyana 78th. This might be compared with Singapore ranking 24th, and Brazil 55th. The WB declares that the economics of the knowledge economy is not of scarcity but of abundance because, unlike most other resources that become depleted when used, knowledge can be shared and actually grows through its application.

Given that knowledge (TVET) workers make up over 80% of the workforce in advanced economies, the role and positioning of TVET as an economic activity well integrated within the education system must be an imperative for CARICOM's sustainable development and prosperity.

We are in the midst of a global focus on TVET. The Education for All Global Report has chosen TVET as its focus this year; UNESCO is producing a World TVET Report this year; and many countries have identified TVET as a top priority. TVET has moved front and centre onto the world stage. All around the world, leaders are calling on TVET to provide their nations with a competent and certified workforce with a blend of knowledge, technical skills and employability competencies to drive their economic growth. TVET's time has come.

IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGY

During the consultation sessions across the Region, there was a persistently voiced request that the new Strategy must have a greater level of accountability attached to it. Participants requested a formal commitment to a process for the systematic, country by country implementation of the Strategy once the new Strategy is approved by CARICOM, with timelines and milestones. The formulation of a formal, country-specific implementation process was deemed necessary to maintain the momentum and to ensure consistency of implementation across the region. Participants in the consultations were all seized with the urgency of the times and hence the need to expedite the implementation of the Strategy according to each country's implementation plan and timelines, for which they will be accountable to CARICOM through CANTA.

³ World Bank Institute. Benchmarking Countries in the Knowledge Economy: Presentation of the Knowledge Assessment Methodology (KAM), Nov. 9, 2004

During the March 2012 meeting of the C-EFE PSC, chaired by CARICOM Secretariat and CIDA, the Committee agreed on a process leading up to CARICOM's approval of the new strategy, as follows:

Participants agreed this report will be subjected to another regional forum before a final report and draft 2012 strategy will be prepared. As soon as CANTA and the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC) have reviewed and approved the proposed new Strategy, it will be submitted to CARICOM Secretariat to be tabled for Ministerial approval. Prior to this meeting of the Ministers, the proposed new strategy will be shared with the NTAs (and Education Ministries, for those who have not set up NTAs yet) which hosted the national consultations. It was agreed that the NTA hosts would lead and coordinate selected participants from the consultation in an advocacy and lobbying effort to sensitize and educate the Minister(s) who will represent their country at Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD) and Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) meetings later in 2012. It was felt that when these Ministers arrive at COHSOD and COTED, fully briefed and knowledgeable as to the benefits to be derived nationally and regionally from the new Strategy, it will have better chances of getting the Ministerial approval.

Once approved at the Ministerial level, the NTA in each country agreed to take responsibility and be held accountable to CARICOM through CANTA, for developing the Strategy's national implementation plan with its activities and timelines. An annual implementation progress report to CANTA measured against their plans' activities would allow CANTA and CARICOM to monitor, evaluate and strategically assist NTAs when needed.

CARICOM, through CANTA, will therefore be able to compile a regionally-aggregated Strategy implementation status report and report annually to COHSOD and COTED on progress across the region.

The embracing of this process of planning, implementing, evaluating, reporting and planning again, required for this Strategy's effective implementation will strengthen and help institutionalize the **culture and discipline of accountability and responsibility which are essential for the social and economic success of CARICOM and its member States.**

THE NEW STRATEGY

It is proposed that the new Strategy contain eight (8) key components, which represent a re-ordering, combining and re-prioritizing of the 1990 Strategy's 11 components.

1. TVET Redefined for Workforce Development and Economic Competitiveness
2. TVET Integrated into General Education
3. A CARICOM Training System
4. Labour Market Intelligence
5. Public Awareness
6. Career Guidance and Counseling
7. Instructor Training
8. Infrastructure

COMPONENT 1: TVET REDEFINED FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

INTRODUCTION

The 1990 Strategy called for major action to review, upgrade, intensify and extend TVET offerings. The intention was to infuse all education (primary, secondary and tertiary) with technology which would then serve as a strong basis for TVET, particularly, the strategy specified, in agriculture, manufacturing, tourism and other services.

While there is no doubt that technology is a critical element of education in today's world, the perspective offered in 1990 was, typical of the time, a supply- side orientation. What is needed in TVET today is a demand-side orientation to programming: **programming that meets market needs.**

The difference between a supply-side and a demand-side orientation is best described in a Wall Street Journal article out of India, announcing their new approach to TVET. "The concept of vocational training usually brings forth images of IIT (Indian Institutes of Technology) classrooms filled with relevant machinery for learning technical skills – with the one catch that those technical skills may not be relevant for the Indian market."⁴ The article goes on to name the new programs that have been developed for the new economy. They include, in the science stream, refrigeration, hospital waste disposal management, sericulture and biotechnology; in the social science and humanities stream, applied sociology, applied psychology, tourism, fashion designing, translation proficiency, television and video production; in the commerce stream, the courses are insurance, banking, e-commerce, world trade, foreign exchange trade, retailing etc.⁵ These are the occupations of the new economy: and this is TVET in the 21st century.

In addition to the highly specific, market driven programs as illustrated above, TVET programming in today's context has two dimensions that were not part of the thinking of 1990: **innovation and entrepreneurship.**

In the knowledge economy, innovation is one of the key factors that strengthens a company's competitiveness--companies need to stay on the cutting edge and to do that they need employees who can understand customers' needs and respond to them with innovative and creative solutions. It is not just the technical skills employees need: they need to learn how to be part of a dynamic and flexible workplace. These skills apply equally to entrepreneurs, who, according to statistics, comprise 40% of the workforce. If entrepreneurs are to be successful, they need to be client-centred, innovative and have good problem-solving and critical-thinking skills. TVET programming has to provide that dimension, which it does through competency-based curricula, learner-centred methodologies, internships in industry and applied research projects, to name just a few of the strategies of the new TVET. In today's context, TVET clients are not just school and college students; they are the burgeoning population of

⁴ Govt to introduce new 'market-driven' vocational programmes, LiveMint.com, Wall street journal, New Delhi, Oct. 29, 2008

⁵ Shital, Octo. 29, 2008 <http://thinkchangeindia.wordpress.com/2008/10/29/market-driven-vocational-training/>

workers, a large percentage of whom have not passed through secondary school, who need training, re-training, up-skilling and certification.

FINDINGS

The consultation participants recognized that they need to develop programs that feed into the emerging occupations. They need to be, 'looking outwards, not inwards' as one St. Kitts participant said. Rather than consolidating programs, many participants noted that there are huge untapped markets for training.

"We need to expand the array of programming options we currently have; we are targeting a much larger, yet untapped group. We need to have flexible, modularized programming that will lend itself to future articulation."

Participant, Jamaica Consultation,
March 14, 2012

In a market-responsive environment, new programs are often developed as a result of certification being a condition of employment, e.g. taxi driver training. This can be a great opportunity for new program development, both as a way of upgrading the skills of workers and also an opportunity for revenue generation for the institutions. It was suggested that there should be more legislation dictating certification requirements and that programs should be modularized so they are easily and flexibly adapted to the needs of the workforce.

Just as there is a need to expand programming to untapped markets, so too, there is a need to optimize outcomes by rationalizing program offerings especially where a large resource investment is required. Centres of Excellence are identified as an excellent means of sharing and maximizing scarce resources while at the same time increasing quality. It is also a powerful mechanism for attracting industry investment. This needs to be done on a systematic basis at the country and regional levels. With the introduction of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), it is imperative that program rationalization emerges from a *regional* focus on the Region's labour market needs of today and tomorrow.

"We cannot offer everything in every institution. We need to plan for the rationalization of programming and development of specializations through Centres of Excellence."

Participant, St. Vincent Consultation,
Mar. 23, 2012

It is noted that in today's world there is an increased emphasis on environmental issues and on inclusiveness in the workplace and therefore, TVET programming needs to reflect these realities by incorporating environmental issues into programming and ensuring that programs are gender-neutral, accessible to both male and female students.

Everyone recognizes that one of the main strengths of TVET programming is that it is competency-based. Not only does this approach allow for alignment with the skill requirements of the workplace, but it also, by its very nature, is an inclusive process. The competency-based approach is 'success-oriented': students work at their own pace until they master the required skills. While the CVQ system is generally well-regarded, participants noted that the system needs to be standardized and based on a select single international occupational classification system to allow for consistency both among already-developed CVQ standards and for the way forward. The work ahead in standardizing the CVQs is formidable, but it is of critical importance and will be one of the cornerstones of a successful CSME.

"With regard to TVET programming, we need to think environmentally friendly, and we need to concentrate on gender."

Participant, Antigua and Barbuda
Consultation, March 5, 2012

The reach of the CVQs needs to be extended to the existing workforce and the unemployed. Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) needs to be an integral part of the NTAs' outreach and open access activities. Similarly, entrepreneurship initiatives such as the creation of Business Resource Centres, mentorship

programs and workshops on writing business plans and other activities to support entrepreneurs should be introduced to serve the growing population of entrepreneurs.

Employers must be sensitized to the value of the CVQ in identifying the strengths and gaps of their current workforce.

TVET programming needs to be modularized so that it can be flexibly delivered to the many varied clients of TVET, including existing workers who might need only one module, or for contract training, where an institution can customize a program to a company's needs by drawing on various modules of existing programs or designing new modules. Such modularization allows for easier review and upgrading of programs and promotes the approach of co-delivering programs with industry partners using their facilities, an approach that would be particularly effective with cultural industries. Current CVQ development supports this approach as it allows for certification for individual units within an occupational standard.

"The idea of TVET as a program for those who can't make it in the academic stream, for 'dunces' or people with disabilities, or for those 'not academically inclined' has to be eradicated."

Participant, Guyana Consultation,
April 2, 2012

Some countries are making strides in market-driven program planning; however, in most instances, program planning remains a supply-side activity. What is called for is a systematized process of program planning that is informed by labour market intelligence and is set within the larger context of regional, national and sometimes local, economic development priorities. While this is desirable, for the most part it is not happening. The economic development community by and large does not include education in their deliberations, and the TVET decision-making bodies do not have a market-driven orientation towards training. Labour market intelligence is not readily available to inform planning, and the NTAs and institutional personnel are not fully capacitated to engage in market-driven program planning.

"Grenada has an economic development strategy that rests on 5 pillars: programs should be aligned with those pillars. We are missing the synergy between those who organize for the pillars and education."

Lincoln Morgan, Chief Executive Officer,
NTA Grenada
Grenada Consultation, March 26, 2012

NTA and institutional leaders recognize that, in order to be truly 'market-driven,' they need to have greater autonomy and authority. They need to be able to engage industry in a meaningful way, and must have the capacity to allocate their resources according to their business plans. Institutions also need to be able to become more entrepreneurial, developing new revenue sources through the sale of training and services.

In order to be responsive to industry, the NTAs and the institutions need to have the capacity to manage educational support functions such as collecting and analysing LMI; developing business partnerships among industry sectors, donors and government groups; engaging in a systematic program planning, development, review and evaluation process; undertaking tracer studies and reviews; quality assurance; and public awareness. In short, they need to be capacitated to operate like a business. The less developed countries are receptive to learning from those that are further along in the development process.

"What I would like to see is that we become competitive along the lines of Jamaica and Trinidad."

M. Denroy Tillett, National ITVET Coordinator,
Ministry of Education and Youth, Belize
Belize Consultation, Mar. 16, 2012

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. All TVET programs be converted to a standards-based CBET modality.
2. Centers of Excellence be considered as a way of concentrating and optimizing resources for maximum effectiveness by sector in line with national and regional economic priorities.
3. Entrepreneurship be supported through various initiatives such as the creation of Business Centres or workshop activities to assist entrepreneurs with their business plans, market studies, development of prototypes, etc.
4. A regional standardized market-driven model for program design, development, review, and revision be developed to ensure coherence of the system for articulation and certification purposes.

COMPONENT 2: TVET INTEGRATED INTO GENERAL EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

The 1990 strategy document prescribed a visionary view of TVET: it stated that “TVET covers all programmes and schemes that contribute towards the development of the knowledge and skills required for work. It transcends education systems provided by Ministries of Education and includes many additional non-formal programmes, provided by other Government Ministries and Departments, by private colleges and by informal in-plant and on-the-job training”.

The 1990 document went further, stating that if the Region was to meaningfully compete in the coming decades in the world market place for its development, it was essential that it put in place a comprehensive human resources development programme aimed at strengthening its capability in science and technology, and that Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) should form a cornerstone of such a programme. TVET was acknowledged as both a vehicle for the development of marketable and entrepreneurial skills and as an engine for development.

However, notwithstanding the above declarations, the region’s education system continues to relegate TVET to the role of an alternative educational option for those deemed “not academically inclined”. It serves as a vehicle for re-engaging disaffected and unattached youth. The occupational preparation for workforce participation provided by most TVET programmes across the region has been largely at the entry level preparing learners for the traditional artisan trades. The low level of educational competence of most TVET learners constrains the level of sophistication and complexity of training and certification that has been offered and also limits learners’ upward mobility once employed.

“I strongly feel that the only hope we have as a developing country is if we find ways and means for our brightest and best minds to pursue Technical and Vocational Education and master it...that is a reality and I am not going to change from that mindset.”

Olato Sam, Chief Education Officer (CEO),
Ministry of Education (MOE), Guyana
Kaleteur News, Guyana, March 20, 2012

Now, in 2012, we are experiencing the full force of what was then a glimmer of the future in a knowledge-based global economy. With the advent of the knowledge-based economy and new age occupations, mostly associated with technology, computerization and automation of work/business processes across all economic sectors in the region, a new and different attention has been focused on TVET and its economic role in worker preparation. The adage “education makes you trainable and training makes you employable, while attitude keeps you employed” has found new resonance. Investors, both local and foreign, are increasingly demanding for workers with lifelong learning capacities and clearly-specified higher level competences, with certification to prove these. Employers are increasingly aware of the direct relationship between workforce quality and competence and their firms’ productivity and competitiveness, by extension, the same relationship holds true for the national and regional economies.

Countries are proclaiming education and training as the key to success in the global marketplace, with TVET having an ascendant role. In fact, the TVET model, with its emphasis on competencies and the practical application of knowledge is serving as a basis for reform across the educational spectrum. TVET’s time has come, and not as a ‘poor second cousin’ to general education, but as an integral part of the education and training system.

UNESCO's Secondary Education Reform document clearly makes the case for the integration of TVET and academic streams: "...too often, General Secondary Education (GSE) seems to have been designed almost exclusively to prepare young people for higher education, though in reality only a small selection enter institutions of tertiary learning. On the other hand, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) at the secondary-level is seen as the domain of those others whose academic capabilities are deemed inferior. In such systems the acquisition of "knowledge" often remains distinct from the acquisition of "practical skills". A secondary education system that maintains the distinction between the two streams must certainly fail to maximize the effectiveness of its graduates when they take their place in societies that increasingly require individuals to possess a combination of knowledge and practical work and social skills."⁶

This trend towards convergence of TVET and General Education has also been articulated by the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) in the Impact Assessment of their guiding document, Pillars for Partnership and Progress: "Certainly, the theme that has been emerging in the past decade is that education and training are not only to assist learners to progress through a structured set of learning experiences to the successful completion of the formal school cycle and "graduation," but also to prepare for the world of work, so that those emerging from the education system can obtain meaningful, productive employment that will improve their individual quality of life and contribute to national and regional development."⁷

"In respect of our views of TVET in relation to General Education, we have taken a view of redolence and shortsightedness, disregarding the equivalence and real importance of technical education. This is the watershed conference when the people come together to say there is no second class position for TVET."

Hon. Ronald Thwaites, Minister of Education,
Jamaica, UWI/UNESCO TVET Conference,
Montego Bay, Mar. 7, 2012

UNESCO's Four Pillars of Learning: Learn to Know, Learning to Do, Learning to Live Together and Learning to Be,⁸ provide the context for an effective, integrated education and training system. However, creating such a system requires changes in our approaches at all levels of education. As stated by one of UNESCO's experts, "We need to facilitate holistic approaches to reorganizing educational contents, and to build national capacity in developing key competencies required of all learners through curriculum renewal in emerging knowledge-based societies of the 21st century."⁹

As countries begin to recognize the centrality of the role of TVET, they have begun to look at where TVET should be placed in the educational spectrum, with strong preferences to integrate it with the traditional educational system, changing both for the better.

"TVET is not something that goes with General Education, but it IS, in many ways, General Education."

Dr. Martin Baptiste, Caribbean Development
Bank, UWI/UNESCO TVET Conference,
Montego Bay, Mar. 7, 2012

Also, as TVET rightfully assumes its central role in economic development, its stakeholder base is beginning to expand to capture a more strategic approach to

⁶ Iwamoto, Wataru. Secondary Education Reform: Towards a convergence of Knowledge Acquisition and Skills Development, UNESCO 2005

⁷ Impact Assessment for the new OECS 2012-21 prepared by FocalPoint Consulting Consortium, Jan. 13, 2012

⁸ <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/networks/global-networks/aspnet/about-us/strategy/the-four-pillars-of-learning/>

⁹ Four 'Pillars of Learning' for the Reorientation and Reorganization of Curriculum: Reflections and Discussions, Zhou Nan-Zhao, UNESCO, www.ibe.unesco.org/cops/Competencies/PillarsLearningZhou.pdf

workforce planning. The base includes not only employers but increasingly, Line Ministers, donors and investment communities working together at all levels, from governance to implementation to develop the workforces of key economic sectors. These bodies are the new drivers and funders of TVET.

The vision of TVET in the 1990 strategy was the right one: the time has come to make the systemic changes required for TVET to assume its rightful role as an engine of economic development and as an integral and valued part of the educational system.

FINDINGS

The consultation indicated a solid consensus that TVET needs to be integrated with the general education system. The separation of TVET from General Education has generated two polarities and has contributed to the 'second class' status of TVET. The reality is that in the modern world, both general education and TVET need a blend of academic and technical skills. Similarly both need workplace and career development skills as well.

Even though in most countries students can take subjects in both academic and technical subjects, the secondary school examination system discourages participation in TVET: high Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) scores are needed for university entrance and without articulation between TVET programs and college or university programs,

“At the end of secondary education, candidates must have a general education; it must include academic achievement, communications skills and competencies that would enable learners to fit into a developed and competitive workforce and community.”

Mr. Randy Taylor, Clarence Fitzroy Bryant College, St. Kitts and Nevis Consultation, Feb. 17, 2012

TVET students are disadvantaged if they wish to study further. People are in favour of labeling TVET differently, with suggested names such as 'TVET for Workforce Development,' 'Technical Training,' 'Career Development,' 'Education and Training for Workforce Development and Economic Competitiveness,' 'Preparation of a Competent Workforce,' and 'Education and Workforce Development.'

At the UWI and UNESCO-sponsored, first ever TVET Conference held in Montego Bay, Jamaica in March 2012, Mr. Paul Brennan, ACCC Vice President and keynote speaker, indicated that Canada does not use the term 'vocational' at all, preferring instead to call the training 'Advanced Skills for Employment' and the training institutions, 'Institutions of Applied Learning and Research.' "Changing the image starts with branding"¹⁰ he said, and he confirmed that this change has had definite benefits for Canada, including increased support from industry and from government particularly to support research.

“We need a 'nice marriage' of both the technical and the academic. But we need to have “demonstrated appreciation by employers and demonstrated acceptance in schools of the value of both streams.”

Eunice Sandy-David, Permanent Secretary, Human Resource Development, MoE, Grenada Consultation, March 26, 2012

When formulating a position for TVET within the educational spectrum, we must acknowledge the undeniable importance of lifelong learning. Education, whether it is TVET or tertiary, must serve lifelong learners. It is an imperative of the knowledge-based global economy that citizens continue to update

¹⁰ Paul Brennan, ACCC Vice-President, Presentation at UNESCO TVET conference, Montego Bay, Jamaica, March 8, 2012.

and upgrade their skills and knowledge. In TVET this means that training needs to be modularized and easily accessible to the entire workforce throughout their lives so that they can keep pace with the fast-paced changing world. TVET learners are not only secondary students; they are university graduates, high school non-completers, workers and entrepreneurs.

An important conclusion was reached: Changes cannot occur in TVET alone: the rest of the educational system also has to move towards an outcomes and standards-oriented, flexible, well-articulated system with competency-based curriculum and learner-centred institutions. Central to the development of a holistic system is the faithful implementation by all stakeholders of the CQF.

In addition to changes required to the educational system, TVET, when seen as an economic development activity, requires a broader range of players at the table and a broader governance purview. For example, as economic sector representatives engage in planning for the growth and development of their sectors, education and training must be part of the planning. There are several examples of megaprojects where line ministries joined the investment bodies and foreign partners to plan for and fund sector-specific training leading to employment.

“Testing should be to find out what you know and build on what you know rather than, as is the case now in the Caribbean, to find out what you don’t know and then exclude you.”

Participant
St. Vincent and Grenadines Consultation,
March 24, 2012

“The system is highly academic and therefore academics are seen as the standard and TVET is seen as for those who cannot meet that standard. There needs to be a cultural shift.”

Mr. David Leacock
Chief Executive Officer, MoE
Belize Consultation, March 16, 2012

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. CARICOM vigorously support the rededication and implementation of the CQF to ensure internationally bench-marked standards at all levels of qualification and seamless articulation and transfers between the programmes and institutions within the Framework.
2. The region’s education systems integrate TVET with general education as a means of better preparing secondary school leavers to effectively transition from either school to work or school to further education and provide the option for all learners to access lifelong post-secondary academic and/or workforce credentials.
3. PLA be given top priority as a critical component of an accessible, flexible and well-articulated education and training system, with each country developing its capacity to assess prior learning or occupational competence so as to determine a candidate’s credit award for appropriate advanced placement or the award of appropriate work-based certification.

COMPONENT 3: A CARICOM TRAINING SYSTEM

INTRODUCTION

The 1990 Strategy called for the creation of a regional TVET system as the cornerstone of CARICOM's Regional Human Resources Development Plan.

Each country was directed to establish an NTA that would serve as a single coordinating body, bringing together the disparate agencies and regimes delivering TVET. It would create functional linkages between the various Ministries delivering TVET and the organizations and other systems concerned with TVET. A model of an NTA was proposed and a comprehensive set of functions was ascribed for the NTA that covered the entire training process, from identification of labour market needs through to development of occupational standards through to testing and certification.

It also called for the creation of a regional coordinating body made up of broad representation from the NTAs, TVET institutions, universities and colleges, the OECS Secretariat, the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC), and business and professional groups. The regional body would oversee the implementation of the Strategy and would coordinate certain regional activities such as the Occupational Standards Framework, the certification system, and regional mechanisms for teacher training and certification through the establishment of appropriate sub-committees. Its functions would include regional programme articulation, certification, accreditation and validation as well as regional issues of procurement, training needs identification, public awareness, etc.

The Strategy proposed major action to 'create effective linkages among TVET programs and institutions.' It called for the establishment of an articulation and accreditation system that would be meaningful in terms of knowledge skills and attitudes and that would allow seamless transfer for learners between one institutional system and another. To facilitate standardization, it called for modularization of programming using a competency-based approach.

FINDINGS

Establishment of NTAs

To date, progress in establishing the NTAs has been uneven. The first three countries to create NTAs were Jamaica, with the Human Employment and Resource Training (HEART) Trust/NTA in 1991; Barbados with the TVET Council in 1993; and Trinidad and Tobago with the National Training Agency of Trinidad and Tobago (NTATT) in 2001. The other countries have moved at a slower pace, largely due to their small population size and funding constraints. Where there has been a TVET fund of some sort (Jamaica and Barbados) the implementation has been smoother and more successful. As of 2012, all but two countries had passed their legislation and set up their agencies. Not all countries have chosen to call their bodies 'NTAs': some are called 'TVET Councils' and another, 'Sector Skills Development Agency.'

There is general consensus that the functions ascribed to the NTAs are the right ones and most countries, in spite of legislative delays and other severe restraints not the least of which is funding, have made significant progress. They are optimistic that with innovative approaches and collaboration with

their more fully-developed sister country agencies and CXC, and in some cases with donor assistance, they can fulfill their mandate. No country is interested in 're-inventing the wheel' but they want to be able to have meaningful participation in the development and implementation of the system.

While the countries recognize that each of the functions is important, there are some functions that they have not yet been able to undertake. The issuing of CVQs, one of the primary functions of NTAs, has progressed slowly: seven of the twelve C-EFE countries have not yet issued any CVQs. Even for the more developed organizations, there are some

functions such as monitoring and evaluation that are not fully developed. The countries acknowledge that lack of funding is a real and serious restraint in pushing forward with the development of the CVQs and in participating in the umbrella organization, CANTA. Some countries are lobbying to get dedicated funds from their Ministries or other bodies.

There is an urgent need to coordinate activities so that the countries can move forward. There is acknowledgement by all the countries that developing and maintaining CVQs requires resources and it is incumbent on all the countries to contribute equitably. It is not sustainable to have one or two countries carrying the burden of support, especially if they are using funds from the levy of their country. CANTA will not be sustainable if it has to rely on ad hoc or 'core recurrent' funding; nor can individual countries support it fully from their already-strained budgets.

Most of the NTAs' efforts to date have been in the area of school aged students; however, Trinidad and Tobago has made noteworthy advances in establishing Workforce Development Centres, thus providing a mechanism for assessing and certifying the skills of adults in the workforce. This is a highly important area that needs to be addressed. With the new vision of TVET as 'TVET for Workforce Development and Economic Competitiveness' the concept has to move beyond school-aged children. All countries support the broader view of TVET and believe they will be able to garner broader support from the employer community and attract new funding sources, such as from the investment community and from economic line Ministries with a vested interest in having a trained workforce in their sector.

Establishment of a Regional Coordinating Mechanism

The establishment of the Regional Advisory Committee to oversee the advancement of the 1990 Strategy did not materialize as envisioned; however, two other bodies, CANTA and the Regional Monitoring Mechanism, have been created and are carrying out the functions ascribed to the Regional Advisory Body.

CANTA was formed in 2003 with the goals of promoting the development of a competitive regional workforce and to facilitate free movement of certified skilled workers within the CSME. It has been endorsed as the implementation arm of the CARICOM Regional Coordinating Mechanism for TVET (RCMTVET). Its objectives are to ensure uniform provision of competency-based training, assessment and certification; to establish a regional certification scheme - CVQ; to promote career and vocational

"We are in a new era of TVET and have the legislative authority to make substantive changes. However the national and regional bodies need the authority, autonomy, resources, 'know how' and organizational structure necessary to do proper market driven training."

Dr. Margarita Gomez, Director
Employment Training and Education Services,
Ministry of Education and Youth
Belize Consultation, March 16, 2012

guidance throughout the CSME; to support a regional LMIS; and to promote lifelong learning and the image and status of TVET in the region.

CANTA as it is currently operates is resource poor and vulnerable to the vagaries of domestic politics within the region. Without legal status or a permanent operating arrangement, it is seriously hampered in fulfilling its supportive role and mandate to its member NTAs and to CARICOM.

“We need to make better use of technology so that countries can participate fully and equally in CANTA.”

Mr. Colvis Samuels, President, Saint Lucia
Technical and Vocational Educators
Association
St. Lucia Consultation, Feb. 24, 2012

The countries of the region believe that CANTA is central to achieving the new regional strategy. They believe it is important to put CANTA in the domain of the entire Caribbean, creating it as a legitimate corporate entity with a formal structure and sustainable funding. They believe that heads of government should recognize CANTA as their TVET coordinating body and help support it in its efforts to achieve the Strategy. Many countries suggested that the powers of RCM TVET be given to CANTA so that CANTA can speak directly to CARICOM and its ministerial bodies such as COHSOD and COTED.

Many countries have expressed the difficulties they are having in being an equally participating member of CANTA, citing costs for support services such as standards, curriculum, assessors and logistical difficulties in travelling as the main reasons. They have suggested that CANTA needs to make better use of technology to communicate with its memberships and individual countries need to upgrade their telecommunications infrastructure (bandwidth) and ensure availability of a video conferencing suite for purposes of collaborating with regional partners.

“We’ve got this splendid opportunity among the technical colleges to create something in articulation. We need to open access to our institutions to our ordinary citizens and show them a pathway to certification.”

Henderson Eastmond, Executive Director,
TVET Council Barbados,
Barbados Consultation, February 27, 2012

Establishment of an Articulation and Accreditation System

A CVQ framework was adopted with the assistance of the Commonwealth of Learning as the basis of an articulation and accreditation system that would allow seamless transfer for students between one institutional system and another; however it is neither widely known nor implemented. In a recent TVET Conference in Montego Bay, Ms Paulette Dunn-Smith made the case for its operationalization and for the urgent establishment and implementation of the broader body, the CQF, which would provide the framework for the broader accreditation among all education and training regimes.¹¹

“TVET institutions across the Region offer a wide range of courses certified in a variety of ways. This causes problems for determining equivalencies, transfer from one institution to another and validation of programmes.”

Ms. Patricia Thomas,
Quality Assurance Officer, NTATT
Trinidad & Tobago Consultation, April 4, 2012

In a recent Focal Point meeting of the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) in the Caribbean, the need for further development of the CQF was noted and was included in COL’s three year plan, 2012 – 2015.¹²

¹¹ Dunn-Smith, Pauline. “*Whither the CVQ? Challenges in implementing the Caribbean Vocational Qualifications Framework*”, TVET Conference, Montego Bay, Jamaica, March 7-9, 2012

Overall, there is concern that the system that was to allow free movement of skilled and qualified workers across the Caribbean has failed. The issuing of CVQs has progressed slowly. As of 2011, only 5,135 CVQs had been issued: 2,872 in schools and 2,263 in the workplace. Seven of the 12 C-EFE countries surveyed have not yet issued any CVQs. In the 10-year period, 2000-2010, CARICOM governments issued 83,000 work permits of which 63,000 were issued to extra-regional skilled workers and professionals. Half of the 20,000 CARICOM nationals who received work permits were beneficiaries under CARICOM's "Skills Certificate" regime. The promise of the free movement of skilled certified workers which the CVQ was established to facilitate has not yet materialized. Clearly, much work needs to be done to firmly establish and promote the CVQ system across the Caribbean.

"We can maximize resources of the region by selling ourselves as a place with a comprehensive training system, building on other countries' areas of expertise, e.g. Barbados might have training in financial services while Jamaica has training in data mining so together we can go after large contracts in the BPO sector."

Dr. Carolyn Hayle, Executive Director

Except for isolated instances, there is very little articulation between programs and institutions even at the local level. Bodies still act as silos. The countries recognize the importance of collaboration, both within the country and regionally, not only as a cost-effective measure, but also as an asset in regional bargaining power when attracting investments. They also express concern about the repercussions of not having a fully articulated system: students unable to pursue a continuous career path in the Caribbean education and training system, may go abroad to study, thus perpetuating the 'brain drain,' and foreign institutions may sense the opportunity and locate in the Caribbean to provide the opportunities that Caribbean institutions do not.

Without a strong articulated system, it is feared that the Caribbean region will fall behind the rest of the world. A more open and accessible system that allows multiple pathways to careers and lifelong learning is needed. The academic system that may have served the Caribbean countries well in earlier years is now holding the region back in a time when the world is demanding high skills and internationally-benchmarked qualifications and when students are demanding well-articulated programs and systems. A 'whole system' change--in primary, secondary and tertiary levels--is called for that will allow for lifelong learning opportunities for all citizens. Some see TVET as leading the way for the rest of the system.

"We need to have a clear model for TVET – including specifying who does what, where, when. Clarity is needed on the following: What TVET will be done in primary, secondary and tertiary; how it will be done; and what certification will be granted."

Mr. Merrill Matthew, Chairman, TVET Council
Dominica Consultation, April 13, 2012

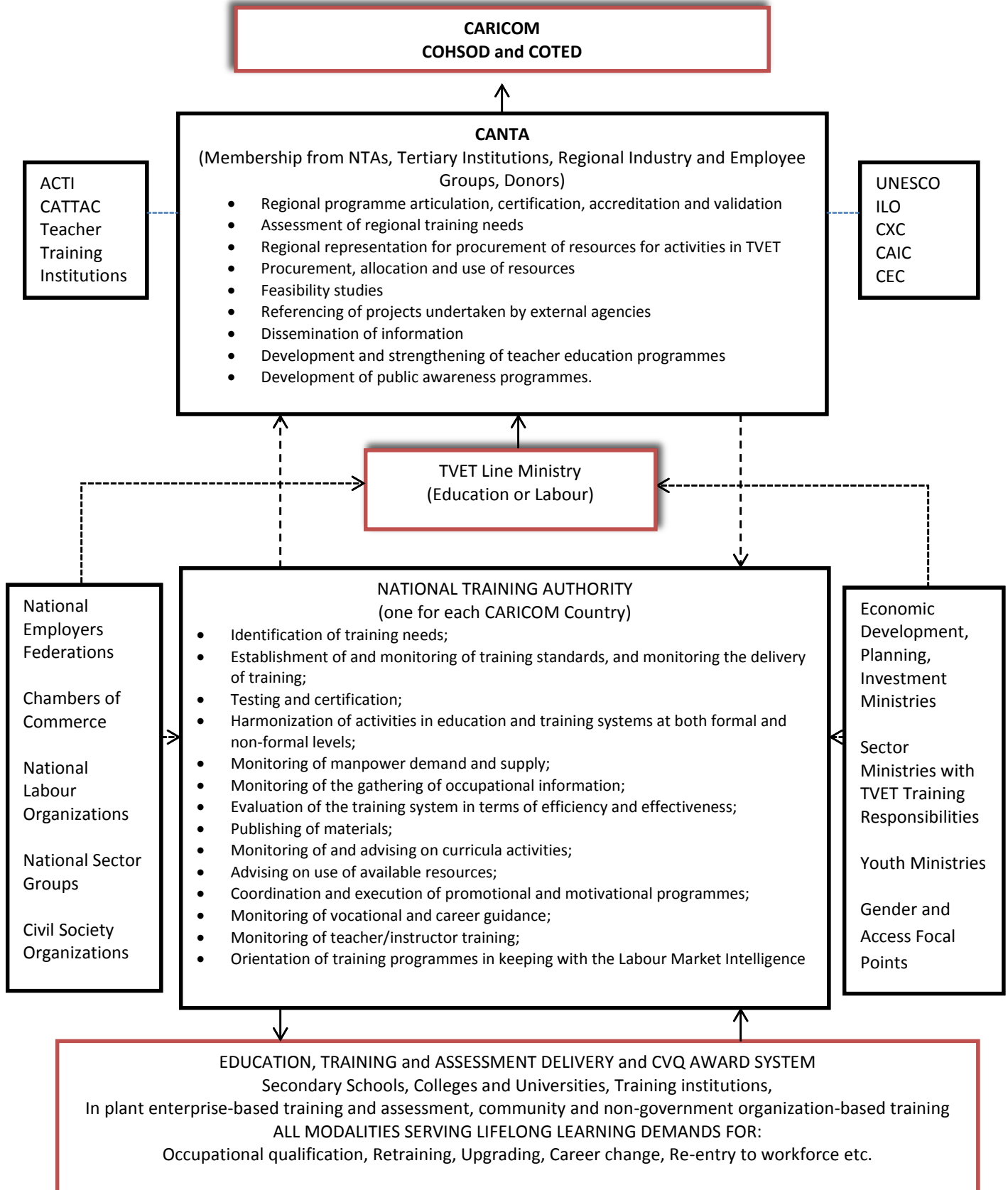
Some attempts have been made to collaborate between the CXC and the NTAs; however, there is need to improve the processes and follow established protocols. Many expressed concern that the CXC process for assessing CVQs had become overly complicated and not as intended, a simple, competency standards-based measure of knowledge and skill proficiency. There is a potential threat of competition from the various other, easier to use, external certification systems available, such as City and Guilds and EDEXCEL.

¹² Van Wyk, Trudi & Kaushik, Prof. Madhulika, COL. "Report on Regional Focal Point Meeting Caribbean." Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, March 28-30, 2011.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The development of the NTA system be continued as prescribed and that efforts be made to ensure its sustainability and the equitable participation of all countries in assessment and awarding the CVQ.
2. CANTA be given legal status as an organ of CARICOM and the support necessary to fulfill and sustain its mandate and that the mechanism for approval of occupational standards and CANTA decisions be rationalized and streamlined so that the recommendations to CARICOM from CANTA are not delayed in any way.
3. All CANTA members together, work towards developing a business case for its ongoing sustainability and commit to the spirit and practice of pooling and sharing of their resources through CANTA, so that each country has access, to other countries' contributions to the regional effort, including market determined training needs, developing occupational standards and training programmes leading to CVQs, training materials, assessor services, LMI and intelligence.
4. CARICOM direct its member countries to proceed forthwith in the implementation of a CQF across the whole educational spectrum working among the various systems and regimes to standardize definitions and classification systems.
5. CARICOM reconcile its "Skills Certificate" work permit regime with its approved "CVQ" of skilled persons. CANTA be re-named the Caribbean Association of National Training 'Authorities', rather than 'Agencies' so as to properly incorporate the nomenclatures of all its members.

REGIONAL TRAINING SYSTEM DIAGRAM



COMPONENT 4: LABOUR MARKET INTELLIGENCE FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

The 1990 Strategy recognized the need to establish a rational basis and reliable mechanism for human resource planning and to link that planning to national and regional economic development plans. It saw the development of a comprehensive LMIS as the primary vehicle for informed decision-making in TVET. The LMIS called for a comprehensive collection of information on a variety of demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the workforce and of employment, underemployment and unemployment as well as information about the occupational and industrial structures of employment. It would include both labour supply and labour demand components which would be up-to-date, economical and established within an adequate institutional framework.

It recognized that in order to collect information across a spectrum of independent countries with differing occupational, employment and educational systems, there would need to be standardization of definitions and key instruments such as a Directory of Occupations, Standard Industrial Classifications and a Standard Classification of Education and Training.

One important area of the 1990 strategy, the call for the development of standardized instruments such as occupational classifications and a regional classification of education and training on which to base information gathering, has seen significant progress, as evidenced by the initiation of three key instruments of regional standardization—Standardized Occupational Classification (SOC), the CVQs, and the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC). The development of these instruments is imperative to enable CSME mobility, and this will take time and commitment.

This view of an all-encompassing LMIS represented a positive shift towards informed decision making and recognition of the role education and training play in the human capacity development of a country. However, consistent with the experience of many countries over the last twenty years, the task of creating and maintaining such a comprehensive system has been overwhelming, and, in most cases, has not generated the desired direct result of a well-informed workforce development process. It has become recognized that, while certainly important, an LMIS is not a panacea. In this information age, the problem is often not so much a lack of information as it is an overabundance of it, and success lies in knowing what information to use for what purpose. We need labour market ‘intelligence’ rather than ‘information’ to bring focus to the level of detail needed to be able to provide the proper skills in the right place at the right time.

Accurate and timely LMI in the Caribbean region is difficult to obtain, but is essential to the design of relevant TVET programs. Although Ministries of Labour have national statistics, they tend to track historical trends at a macro level and generally are not useful at a micro level to inform new program solutions.

One trend in the collection of LMI for TVET planning is towards a more customized sectoral approach such as the one discussed at the recent University of West Indies (UWI)/UNESCO TVET conference in Jamaica called the ‘just-in-time, good enough’ LMIS. It is a practical and pragmatic process of engaging education, industry and government in partnership with the goal of confirming labour market current and future needs and developing a shared plan for responsive human resource development within the sector. The LMI process begins with the identification of a potential growth sector/program which is then studied in depth, combined with existing LMI and augmented with intelligence from dialogue with industry and sector bodies through the use of such mechanisms as rapid surveys, focus groups and interviews. The demand-side TVET planning model starts with LMI on areas of potential promise in identified national strategic growth sectors.

FINDINGS

While stakeholders across the region accept the usefulness of a LMIS and acknowledge the efforts of the ILO to help governments establish both LMIS and labour exchanges, none of the member states claims to have a fully established LMIS. They indicate that while LMIS is a useful tool, it alone cannot provide the basis for effective workforce planning.

“The concept of ‘Manpower Planning’ represents an outdated view of a planned economy and as such is too narrow for the realities of today’s dynamic, competitive, market-driven, rapidly changing economies. Central planning is a thing of the past.”

Mr. Clyde Christopher, Chairman,
St. Kitts and Nevis TVET Council,
St. Kitts and Nevis Consultation, Feb. 17, 2012

Many stakeholders have the opinion that the practice of ‘Manpower Planning’ represents an outdated ‘supply side’ approach too static and inappropriate for the realities of today’s dynamic market demands. Suggested labels for the activity include ‘Market Intelligence’, ‘Market Demand Detection’ or ‘Market-driven Workforce Planning.’

Most countries have recognized the importance of informed decision making and their organizations’ reliance on information as a key ingredient of the planning process. However, given the vast quantity of information and the variety of sources by country and by region, the idea of having a single, regionally managed LMIS is no longer feasible. What is suggested is something modeled on the system used by the European Union (EU): a Caribbean-wide repository to which all national and regional organizations would contribute information and have portal access. There would be shared maintenance responsibilities among user organizations, each of which would have a designated LMI point person responsible for updating inputs to the repository.

“We need a much more enlightened approach to how we take into account LMI and labour market intelligence.”

Mr. Dwight Lewis,
National Qualifications Department, MoE
St. Vincent and Grenadines Consultation,
March 23, 2012

In addition to having demographic and employment information, the TVET leaders said that for planning TVET they need to have information on strategic national and regional investment promotion priorities; information from the private and public sector investment communities, both

“You need many ‘tentacles’ to keep a handle on the marketplace – not just the LMIS. It should be looked at as a resource of the TVET Council, not as an end in itself.”

Mr. Felix St. Hill, Permanent Secretary,
Ministry of Labour
St. Lucia Consultation, Feb. 24, 2012

foreign and domestic; information from other government departments such as Trade, Industry, and Line Ministries relevant to key economic sectors; tracer studies; ‘snapshots’ of skills demand as gathered through such mechanisms as measuring the number and categories of work permits issued and want ads; and information from employers as to their present and future needs. The information gathering is from formal and informal sources, with both primary and secondary data, driven by the particular skills demand of the sectors being considered. The educational community wants to be engaged in the dialogue about economic development planning so that they can better align and plan their programming response to trends and investment priorities.

“There is no systematic approach to TVET planning based on labour market information. Similarly there is no process for reviewing TVET programming according to labour market information.”

Mr. Leonel Soetosenojo,
Assistant Permanent Secretary, Ministry of
Education and Community Development,
Suriname Consultation, April 9, 2012

There is a growing recognition of TVET as an economic development activity, and as such, a realization that the TVET community needs to be included in discussions related to development in the early planning stages so that they can plan their response. As one participant in the consultation said, “Nobody brings the MoE into the economic development equation so we are never at the planning table.”

Many commented on the lack of sharing of available information on, for example, job vacancies in other Caribbean countries. They said that for CSME to be effective in achieving the free movement of skilled certified workers and for the effective issuing of work permits, they need to know where the jobs are and where the qualified people are in other countries in the region. Even though the institutions are not ‘training for export’ the reality is that people will go to where the jobs are: it is an inevitable consequence of a connected world.

“For the CSME to be effective in achieving free movement of workers and for the effective issuing of Work Permits, we need to know where the jobs are and where the qualified people are.”

Mr. David Prendergast, Head CSME Unit,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Foreign Trade
Jamaica Consultation, March 14, 2012

It is widely felt that having LMI readily available would lessen the dependence on foreign labour, which at this time represents a significant percentage of work permitted jobs holders. According to a recent CARICOM study, over the ten years 2000-10, 85,000 work permits were issued in the CARICOM, 63,000 or 75% were issued to extra-regional workers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. CARICOM initiate a regional approach to the collection, sharing and forecasting of labour market intelligence in the form of a web-based portal to which all users can post their LMI and intelligence and from which all users can access relevant LMI from across the region
2. CANTA take a lead role in the coordination of information at the regional level to support informed TVET planning and decision-making and its portal be the focal point for the CSME implementation and maintenance of the SOC, CVQ and SIC frameworks.

3. Ministries responsible for TVET become more involved in economic development discussions so that TVET is aligned with the country's strategic direction.
4. CARICOM adopt a standard occupational classification system to ensure consistency in occupational naming, the development of occupational standards, and the benchmarking against international occupational standards.
5. CANTA establish a regional format for the publication of occupational standards to ensure consistency in the articulation of standards across occupations and across the region.

COMPONENT 5: PUBLIC AWARENESS

INTRODUCTION

TVET's poor image is a perennial problem, not just in the Caribbean but, to varying degrees, world-wide. The image issue was identified in the 1990 strategy and the suggested actions to redress it included infusing TVET with science and technology programs and targeting a campaign towards parents and students.

In today's world the image problem persists, but strategies to redress it must include fundamental changes to TVET so that it is a genuinely viable option for students and adults who wish to have a solid platform for a career and lifelong learning. When TVET is integrated into general education rather than presented as the option for excluding students from a general education, it gains a legitimacy that is appealing to many students who have an interest in technical and technological subjects and who want a career in those areas.

TVET in today's world has to be seen in terms of the requirements of the knowledge-based economy. In an article in the Wall Street Journal about skill shortages it was noted how significantly manufacturing jobs have become high tech. "A majority of U.S. manufacturing jobs used to involve manual tasks such as basic assembly. But today's industrial workplace has evolved toward a technology-driven factory floor that increasingly emphasizes highly skilled workers."¹³ This new trend in manufacturing, widely known as "advanced manufacturing," leans heavily on computation and software, sensing, networking and automation and the use of emerging capabilities from the physical and biological sciences.¹⁴ As one College President remarked: "In the 1980s, U.S. manufacturing was 80% brawn and 20% brains, but now it's "10% brawn and 90% brains." ¹⁵

The trend is not exclusive to manufacturing. Sophisticated technology has infused every occupation: autotronics, computer aided design and drafting, sound engineering, robotics, process engineering, dental hygiene, power engineering technologist, fashion technology, logistics, alternative energy technology, to name just a few. These are the domain of the new TVET and they require a well-rounded, well-educated and trained individual with a mixture of knowledge and skills, both technical and academic, with employability skills such as problem solving and critical thinking.

The strategy for the future is two pronged: TVET has to assume its rightful role in the educational spectrum and it has to be promoted and marketed as a truly viable option for a productive future.

FINDINGS

Stakeholders across the region remark that TVET is greatly misunderstood. They call for a public awareness campaign that informs the public about the 'new TVET' and dispels the misconceptions that

¹³ Thomas A. Hemphill and Mark J. Perry, U.S. Manufacturing and the Skills Crisis, Wall Street Journal, p. A13, Feb. 27, 2012

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Hughes, Ed. President and CEO, Gateway Community and Technical College, Kentucky, U.S. Manufacturing and the Skills Crisis, Wall Street Journal, p. A13, Feb. 27, 2012

exist. They recognize that changing the image of TVET in itself is insufficient: TVET needs to be re-positioned within the education system and within an operational CQF. It has to be re-branded in terms of the potential it offers in knowledge, skill and attitude development in line with market needs. It needs to be taken out of the context of a school 'subject' and into the context of an empowered workforce. The more a 'culture of certification' is strengthened, the more appealing TVET becomes.

Even with a repositioning and rebranding of TVET the participants in the consultation admit that there is a pervasive academic bias in all the Caribbean countries, which will not quickly be eradicated. But there is optimism, and best practices in other countries would bear out that when TVET assumes its rightful role in the educational spectrum and when it 'gets good at what it does', i.e. when the training and facilities are first class, when employers are on board and when employment results are excellent, it really does become a viable option, and often a preferred option, alongside a university education.

"The general public needs to be sensitized about what TVET is: they don't understand what's involved in TVET; they only see it as physical labour."

Pauline Finley, CEO, MoE, Grenada
Grenada Consultation, March 26, 2012

One of the obstacles to the acceptance of TVET is the lack of knowledge about it. Many people have the wrong idea, or have no knowledge whatsoever, about TVET, the CVQs or the CQF. If they do know about the CVQs they do not know how it compares to the various better known credentialing systems such as the CXC, Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examinations (CAPE), City and Guilds, etc.

The participants in the consultations identified many 'publics' to whom a promotion and marketing campaign would be directed and the key messages for each of the groups.

"We must bring glamour and clamour for vocational work."

Henderson Thomson, Director,
Barbados Vocational Training Board
Barbados Consultation. Feb. 27. 2012

The value proposition of TVET for employers is that a qualified competent workforce will increase their productivity, competitiveness and profitability. They are getting a well-trained and certified individual with a potent mixture of academic, technical and employability skills who can 'hit the ground running.' The message to employers is that 'We are giving you what you have asked for.' The certification of the TVET graduate attests to his/her competences and it is at international standards.

The value proposition to parents is that their child will be getting a valuable, well-balanced education and internationally-benchmarked certification of his/her skills. The child will be able to earn a good living in a career that requires both knowledge and advanced skills. A TVET education is a 'ticket' to employment and to self-sufficiency and a well-paid career or to self-employment. A TVET graduate is contributing to the creation of a strong Caribbean economy.

"We need to profile TVET in its modern day context, for example, Auto Mechanics which used to be 80% mechanical skills is being replaced by Auto technician, which is now 80% electronics skills. Also, we need to show the possible salaries of different occupations, for example, an Executive Chef makes more money than a General Manager."

Participant
St. Vincent and Grenadines Consultation
Mar. 23, 2012

The value proposition to potential students is that, contrary to public perception, TVET is not for those 'not academically inclined'. On the contrary, in addition to requiring academic qualifications, a TVET student needs to

develop competencies in high level technical skills which are certified at international standards. TVET is the 'ticket' into the new economy, which requires a person to master new technologies and have an ongoing commitment to continue to learn as technology changes. A student might be reminded of what President Barack Obama recently told a group of students. He said that dropping out of high school was no longer a personal option and that by doing so, they would jeopardize America's future and its ability to compete with the world. The same could be said to Caribbean students.

Similarly, to adult students, the message is a simple, 'Welcome.' By choosing TVET they are choosing to have a career for life and to make a commitment to lifelong learning. They are never too old to learn.

The value proposition to existing workers is that they are able to get recognized for what they already know through Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition and they can receive training for what they are missing. Their internationally-benchmarked certification will make them more locally and globally competitive and marketable. They are able to move up the ladder of success according to the levels of the CQF.

To policy makers, the message is clear: not investing in TVET is not an option. TVET is the engine of growth and competitiveness for the region's economy. It is the vehicle for mobilizing the CSME, by providing a mobile workforce with internationally-benchmarked qualifications. TVET today is a higher education thrust. Investing in TVET is investing in the human capital of the country and the region, and it provides a good return on investment. TVET makes money; that is, a TVET institution is able to generate much of its own revenue through the selling of its products and services. There are huge, untapped markets for TVET training.

"HEART'S best public awareness strategy is the actual people working in TVET, showing graduates in their professions, doing well."

Dr. Carolyn Hayle, Executive Director,
HEART Trust
Jamaica Consultation, March 14, 2012

The participants call for a multi-media, high quality, pervasive promotion and marketing campaign that informs the public about the realities of today's TVET and that speaks to the various stakeholder groups with relevant and compelling messages. In addition to a multi-media campaign they suggest such activities as participation in skills competitions, presentations to service organizations and churches, national and regional fora, career fairs, and scholarships, to name just a few. Showcasing successful graduates is one of the most effective tools for the promotion of TVET.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. TVET be re-positioned in terms of outputs and impact, i.e., as 'TVET for Workforce Development and Economic Competitiveness' and that a promotion and marketing campaign, endorsed at the highest levels, be initiated.
2. TVET credentials be accepted as equivalent to the General Education Certificate in secondary schools and the Associate degree in tertiary institutions with the additional benefit of providing workforce qualifications.
3. CARICOM promote the CVQ as a portable certificate (like a driver's license) that workers could carry around to show to potential employers or clients their qualifications and competences.

COMPONENT 6: CAREER GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

INTRODUCTION

The 1990 strategy recognized that Vocational and Career Guidance services in the region were either non-existent or severely limited. It noted that ‘where there were services offered the majority of counsellors were unaware of their own gender biases and prejudices and of the negative effects and far-reaching consequences that these have. The advice the counsellors gave had little to do with the realities of the changing needs of the labour market.’ The 1990 Strategy recognized that having a good career guidance system was an essential consideration in the promotion of TVET. This echoes the position articulated by UNESCO, “Utilising a Career Guidance and counselling system promotes improved course selection for students leading to benefits for learners, who are more pleased with their selection, and benefits for TVET institutions which experience a lower drop-out rate. Good career guidance can also help decrease the gap between education and un/underemployment, on the one hand, and productive livelihoods on the other and is thus considered an effective means of improving the status of TVET in the public perception.”¹⁶

The value of career guidance is documented. In a review of employment outcomes for youth done by The Education and Employer’s Task Force, it was determined that in England and the U.S, there are statistically significant positive relationships between employer contacts during secondary school and the confidence of 19 – 24 year olds in the workforce, their likelihood of attending school or being employed between the ages of 19 and 24, and their earnings if they were employed.¹⁷

Career guidance also makes good economic sense. In TVET in particular, where costs are exceptionally high and resources exceptionally scarce, having students make the right career choices is critical. As noted by the WB, “Career guidance services support economic efficiency by making the labor market operate more effectively. They can help to ensure that individuals’ decisions are based on self-assessments and labor market information, thus reducing market failures. For developing and transition economies, most of which have limited resources, Career Guidance services can increase the efficiency of the use of scarce education and training resources. The services also promote social equity and inclusion by helping to ensure equal access to information on labor market and education opportunities.”¹⁸

The Strategy called on the NTAs to coordinate vocational and career guidance services.

¹⁶ http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=34376&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

¹⁷ Mann, Dr Anthony. Director of Research and Policy, Education and Employers Taskforce. “It’s Who you meet: Why Employer Contacts at school make a difference to the employment prospects of young Adults.” February 2012

¹⁸ Watts, A.G. and Fretwell David H. Public Policies for Career Development: case studies and emerging issues for designing career information and guidance systems in developing and transitional economies. World Bank 2004 <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2004/03/3581044/public-policies-career-development-case-studies-emerging-issues-designing-career-information-guidance-systems-developing-transition-economies>

FINDINGS

With the exception of the recent establishment of Workforce Assessment Centres in Trinidad and Tobago, very little has been done in a systematic way to integrate Career Guidance into the educational system over the last twenty two years. While there are isolated instances of exemplary practices in particular institutions, these are ad hoc and as such not sustainable. The same issues that were identified twenty two years ago still persist: little or no career counselling is available and where there are counsellors, many are untrained, unqualified and ill-suited for the job.

“The situation described in the 1990’s strategy persists and still needs to be addressed, i.e. non-existent or severely limited services, mainly ad-hoc delivered by unqualified individuals, focused mainly on behavioural issues.”

Fitzroy Marcus, NTATT
Trinidad and Tobago Consultation,
April 4, 2012

Across the region people recognize the importance of having a good Career Guidance system and they know what a good system should entail. They note that Career Guidance, in the context of ‘TVET for Workforce Development and Economic Competitiveness’ requires a paradigm shift in terms of the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are required for the profession. To be effective, Counsellors need to have labour

“The current school system has kids on a ‘treadmill—more like a conveyor belt’, which moves kids along the academic belt, not allowing them to express who they are and pursue their dreams.”

Participant
Jamaica Consultation, Mar. 14, 2012

market intelligence and be aware of the occupational landscape of that market, knowledge of the job market, contacts with local employers, and skills to assess clients’ interests and aptitudes. They need to be knowledgeable about all aspects of the education system including the CVQs and the CQF. And, they need tools to help clients’ discover their own aptitudes and interests as well.

Above all else, Guidance Counsellors need to understand the needs of the global knowledge-based economy and TVET’s critical role in it. They need to use the language of the new economy, referring to occupations in their 21st century contexts, such as ‘autotronics’, ‘environmental engineering’ etc., to make them more appealing to students and to show the range of skills and knowledge required of such careers.

“It is important to break away from the current practice of schools pushing kids into sciences because they’re bright rather than letting them choose according to their aptitudes.”

Participant,
Guyana Consultation, April 2, 2012

They need to have disabused themselves of the pervasive ‘academic paradigm’ that promotes the use of students’ test scores as the basis for making career choices. Along the same vein, the teaching/learning paradigm needs to shift towards being more student-centred, which will encourage students to make informed choices for themselves.

Career guidance can be seen as an excellent vehicle for redressing the current inequities in participation in the workforce. Armed with demographic and labour market information, Career Guidance Counsellors can be instrumental in encouraging participation in non-traditional training for both males and females and also persons with disabilities.

It is recognized that Career Guidance is a profession, and as such, people entering or practicing it need to be trained and certified. The NTA community has the wherewithal to conduct an occupational analysis of the profession and identify what is required. Training for both new and existing staff is

required. Other elements of an effective TVET system, such as Labour Market Intelligence, need to be developed and made available to support Career Guidance providers.

Career Guidance is not just the purview of school children. As TVET strives to engage the existing workforce, the unemployed, the aging population, the disaffected youth and other untapped markets, there is a need to have a variety of access points. Workforce Assessment Centres are considered an excellent vehicle in this regard. Entrepreneurs, who are a key part of the new workforce of the 21st century, also need to have advice and assistance in developing their competencies, business ideas and marketing plans. This could be an important function of the Workforce Development Centres and other outreach programs that might be developed.

Many informal promoters of TVET can be recruited. For example instructors, who are often instrumental in influencing students' career choices, can be provided with information and marketing tools to assist students in career decisions. Parents can be educated about various professions that might be suitable for their children. In addition to schools and Workforce Assessment Centres, there are many informal partners whose assistance can be sought in providing career guidance; for example, churches, Scouts, labour unions and service organizations. Similarly, there are many events and activities that can be initiated such as Career Fairs, the Caribbean Youth Science Forum, Teen Cuisine Program, Career Days, Mentorship Programs, Skills Competitions and Employment Services. Universities, colleges and other TVET training providers could initiate 'Career Samplers' as short summer programs to attract students into TVET careers.

"Many students do their training in an area that does not match their interest or aptitude, and so they do not pursue it as a career after graduation. As things stand now, the return on investment from TVET is low: only about 25% of those who are trained in a field are using what they have been trained to do."

Mr. Lenrick Browne,
Georgetown Technical Institute
St. Vincent and Grenadines Consultation,
March 23, 2012

There is general consensus that Career Guidance should be mandatory throughout school with age-appropriate interventions at all levels. A three-tiered model was favoured, whereby in early primary children would begin to explore the work environment of their neighborhoods (Career Awareness); in early secondary, students would begin to identify careers they might be interested in (Career Exploration); and in late secondary, students would begin to prepare for a particular career, perhaps through training and work experience (Career Preparation.)

The lack of action in this area can be linked to delays or inaction in other parts of the 1990 Strategy, i.e., the delays involved in setting up the NTAs whose responsibility it was to coordinate efforts, the lack of LMI available to Counselors and the pervasive and continuing poor image of TVET. However, going forward, now that the NTAs are in place, it is an urgent priority to establish policy and practice in this important area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The name, 'Vocational and Career Guidance Counselling' be changed to 'Professional and Career Counselling' or 'Career Guidance and Counseling.'
2. An occupational analysis of the profession, Career Guidance Counsellor, be undertaken and that a region-wide policy for establishing a Career Guidance System be established and training be developed accordingly.
3. Each country develop the capacity to offer Career Guidance and Counselling to students and adults including provision of online resources.
4. Ministries of Education region-wide adopt and implement a three-tiered approach to Career Counselling:
 - a. Career Awareness (late primary)
 - b. Career Exploration (early secondary)
 - c. Career Preparation and Training (late secondary)

COMPONENT 7: INSTRUCTOR TRAINING

INTRODUCTION

The importance of having well-trained and knowledgeable instructors of TVET is indisputable. As articulated in a UNEVOC publication, “At the very centre of quality TVET lies an effective interaction between teachers/trainers and learners. In fact, an overall improvement in vocational skills for employability and citizenship can only be realised if there is an improvement in the quality, effectiveness and relevance of teaching ... Having a pool of skilled and knowledgeable people within the TVET industry is as important to the TVET industry as it is to the industries TVET serves.”¹⁹

The sourcing of TVET instructors has been and continues to be a challenge in CARICOM countries as it is in most developing countries and to some extent in developed countries as well. Many developing countries have begun to establish standards for instructors that recognize the need to balance technical proficiency with general educational knowledge and pedagogical skills.

As TVET is redefined and repositioned within the educational spectrum of the CARICOM over the next decade it is of critical importance to have an adequate supply of knowledgeable, skilled and up-to-date TVET instructors and systems and mechanisms in place for the ongoing recruitment and training of TVET professionals.

FINDINGS

In keeping with new approaches to education and training world-wide and in particular with the competency-based approach of TVET, it is felt that the term, ‘instructor’ or ‘learning facilitator’ is more appropriate than ‘teacher.’

The challenges in attracting TVET instructors across the CARICOM countries are similar--including salaries that are not competitive with those of the private sector; the poor image of TVET; the lack of availability of suitably trained professionals with requisite literacy and soft skills; and, in some cases, unfavorable working conditions.

There is common agreement as to what would constitute an ideal TVET instructor. It is agreed that instructor/facilitators need to have both technical and pedagogical competencies and credentials. They must have current knowledge and skills in their occupational field and possess credentials relevant to their area of expertise.

In terms of recruitment, all countries agreed that “it is easier to teach a plumber to teach than it is to teach a teacher to ‘plumb’” and therefore hiring practices would favour selection on the basis of occupational skills and qualifications, which would then be supplemented with modularized, self-directed instructor training in pedagogy and other TVET-related subjects. In the trades, qualifications

“In Dutch, ‘teacher’ is ‘Leer-kracht,’ which translates roughly to ‘the power of learning’ --the teacher is a person who teaches a student how to use knowledge. This definition is compatible with the idea of learner-centred education.”

Marijke Bhaggoe
Ministry of HI (Trade and Industry)
Suriname Consultation, April 9, 2012

¹⁹ Bunning, Frank and Zhae, Zhi-Qun (eds.) TVET Teacher Education on the threshold of Internationalization. UNEVOC Aug. 2006

would be at craftsman level as a minimum and in tertiary institutions; candidates would have to possess whatever technical certification the institution grants as a minimum. Maintaining currency in industry operations and possessing up to date qualifications must be a condition of continued employment.

At the current time countries differ in their capacity to train TVET instructors. With regard to pre-service training some countries offer only General Teacher Training, whereas others also offer specialized TVET Instructor training. In addition to pre-service training, some countries also offer in-service training that is modularized. This allows institutions and Ministries to draw from a broader spectrum of instructor candidates, for example, to be able to hire TVET professionals in the off-season for evening and part time courses providing them with training modules in pedagogy and other TVET-related subjects according to the nature of their employment assignment. Modularized training also supports recurrent training of TVET instructors.

“Facilitators must have industry attachments even while in active employment. Currency the field of expertise should be a mandatory requirement of employment.”

Fitzroy Marcus, NTATT
Trinidad & Tobago Consultation, April 4, 2012

In addition to occupational and pedagogical subjects, instructor training should also include CBET methodology, facilitation of learning, entrepreneurship, and mentorship. In addition to basic instructor training as requirement for entry to the profession, instructors should also be required to undertake recurrent training and upgrading to maintain their currency in the field. An instructor training regime should provide opportunities for involvement in sabbaticals, consultancies, return-to-industry leaves, etc. Instructors should be encouraged to maintain currency through subscription to trade journals. They should also develop their industry contacts through participation in professional organizations and community events. Doing so will bring value back to the profession and to the organization. It will help enormously to build the education-industry partnerships.

All countries agree that TVET instructor training should be systematized across the region. It is suggested that CANTA establish standards and a CVQ for instructor training on a regional basis which would be adopted on a national level. Once standards are set and become a requirement for employment the NTAs need to implement a quality management system to assure the maintenance of standards.

“Teacher training now is just concerned with is academic subjects. We need to provide training for TVET instructors in competency-based training, curriculum development, methodology, etc.”

Mr. Stephenson Hyacinth, CEO, MoE,
Dominica Consultation, April 13, 2012

It is recommended that teachers be required to be re-certified every few years according to set standards.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Language be re-examined to reflect new teaching learning paradigm for knowledge economy: Change the term, ‘Teacher’ to ‘Instructor’, ‘Trainer’ or ‘Facilitator’ and ensure the language in instructor training programs reflects the new learner-centered paradigm and is gender neutral.
2. CANTA initiate the development of a CVQ for TVET instructors for adoption and implementation by all CARICOM countries.

3. Methodologies that support TVET be incorporated into teacher training programs (CBET, learner-centred, use of technology, etc.)
4. Each country's instructor hiring regime be reexamined to ensure flexibility and responsiveness and quality of personnel, i.e., those instructing in TVET have up-to-date industry skills and qualifications as well as skills in facilitating learning.
5. PLA be utilized in assessing instructor skills and granting qualifications.

COMPONENT 8: INFRASTRUCTURE

INTRODUCTION

Even as the world has begun to realize the significant role TVET has to play in the development of a competitive workforce, an equally daunting realization has emerged that governments can no longer be expected to fund TVET to the levels required to meet the needs of the modern world of work. The challenge of keeping TVET infrastructure up to date and relevant in an increasingly sophisticated and rapidly changing world requires new and creative solutions.

Increasingly, around the world, countries are looking towards public private partnerships, not only to improve program quality and relevance, but also to leverage the resources of industry to support training. Partnerships with industry and employers are essential to keeping the training current and employment-ready.

A recent research study of the challenges and issues facing TVET primarily in the South-East Asian countries cited the need for improvements to the learning infrastructure as one of the main challenges. To address the challenge they posed the following recommendation: “Public-Private and Community Partnerships has been identified as one of the key strategies to further develop TVET in the region. A new cooperative “culture of partnership” which emphasized a “win-win” approach needs to be strengthened across the region to overcome various constraints it faces.”²⁰

Similarly, the EU has recognized that the key to developing a successful TVET reform strategy and improving the quality of TVET is the establishment of decentralized and demand-driven Enterprise Training Partnerships. “These are autonomous, legally recognized entities developed on a sectoral basis that ensure enterprises have a leading role in shaping TVET in their sector, with Boards consisting of two-thirds membership from the private sector. The partnerships identify the needs of industries, develop training programs and initiate the demand driven training within the TVET institutions and companies’ training centres.”²¹

CARICOM has also recognized the need for new partnership models as evidenced by the call for the establishment of NTAs with strong representation from the private sector. Its creation of the CSME also acknowledges the strength in partnership and collaborative efforts to meet common challenges.

In the upcoming years, building on the strength of the NTAs’ mandate to engage business and industry meaningfully in TVET will be critical to addressing the issue of TVET infrastructure. Approaching TVET from a sectoral workforce development perspective will rally a broad range of supporters with vested interests in the provision of world class TVET.

²⁰ Challenges and Issues of TVET in Colombo Plan Staff College (CPSC) Countries. 2010
<http://www.cpsctech.org/files/research/Chapter5.pdf>

²¹ TVET Reform Project. Co-funded by EU and Government of Egypt. [Nttp://www.tvet.org/etps.html](http://www.tvet.org/etps.html)

FINDINGS

All of the countries recognize the need to forge new partnerships with industry in order to face the challenge of providing high quality TVET that meets industry standards. However, they also recognize that there is much that can be done within the existing systems to greatly improve TVET infrastructure.

The primary change called for at the country level is the rationalization of existing resources. TVET budgets are most often not prioritized within overall education budgets, with TVET often suffering from relative underfunding. Even though governments may declare the importance of TVET, the budgets often do not reflect their priority. In many instances, TVET is spread among several Ministries, with no single point of oversight and no rationalization of resources. This makes it difficult for the newly formed NTAs to plan for a coherent system that reflects the needs of the labour market and to develop the kind of credentials and standards-based system they are mandated to provide. In most instances, particularly in countries with widely spread out populations TVET resources are spread too thinly to provide any one centre with sufficient equipment.

Currently most countries' facilities and equipment are underutilized: they could be open to evening or weekend use. Linking one occupational area to another could assist in more effective utilization of resources. Greater sharing within institutions and among institutions would similarly increase efficient use of resources.

Many solutions to improve TVET were offered: for example, one country suggested that the use of equipment could be stretched by offering some of the more theoretical parts of the program online, using the facilities only for the practical application. Several countries suggest consolidating precious resources by creating Centres of Excellence.

There is a general call for institutional reform, particularly in the area of greater institutional autonomy. Institutions want to have more control over the management of their own resources. Not only would they be able to reallocate resources to priority areas but they would also be in a position to generate revenue from the selling of training and consulting services and TVET products in an effort to increase institutional budgets.

"If you look closely, we are trying to make milk out of water: we are trying to prepare today's people for the world of work tomorrow using yesterday's technology. With our labs being so antiquated, we are trying to do the impossible-- to prepare our young people to work in this digital age."

David Fleming, Dean,
School of Continuing Education., T. A.
Marryshow Community College and Deputy
Chair of the Grenada Council for TVET,
Grenada Consultation, Mar. 26, 2012

"TVET is spread out too thinly, with the result that the classrooms/workshops are under-resourced and do not simulate an actual workplace."

Participant
Dominica Consultation, April 13, 2012

"We are not maximizing use of our buildings: many institutions can be made available after hours – We need better utilization of space. Furthermore, we cannot afford to be all things to all people: we have to start creating centres of Excellence, sharing well equipped facilities."

Vier Dublin, CEO, NTA,
Antigua and Barbuda Consultation,
March 5, 2012

"Schools look very similar now to how they looked in 1990. They need to change to accommodate administrative functions such as marketing, evaluation, planning, etc. and to accommodate new technologies, to improve access and to support increased capacity."

Henderson Eastmond, Executive Director,
TVET Council Barbados,
Barbados Consultation, Feb. 27, 2012

At the current time there is little incentive for an institution to generate its own revenue, since all earned revenues are returned to the consolidated fund of central government. Having such autonomy would greatly improve their public image and would also help in building relationships with their business and industry communities. Institutions, particularly in the more populous and developed countries, express the need to more fully develop their institutions along a business model: they need to have the ability to handle the many functions demanded of a market-driven training system, namely, program planning, evaluation and review, labour market analysis, quality assurance, instructor development, revenue generation, industry needs assessment, etc.

NTAs, with the mandate to do labour market analysis and strategic program planning and review, in many cases, need capacity building to be able to undertake such functions. They also need access to mechanisms and systems of government that will ensure their plans are implemented.

While internal improvements to the TVET delivery system are important, it is recognized that the critical factor for the future of TVET is in the forging of new partnerships.

The 'new' partnerships being spoken about are major public-private partnerships of government, education and industry in the area of sectoral economic development. With TVET repositioned as 'TVET for Workshop Development and Economic Competitiveness' there is a great opportunity for TVET to be funded as part of major economic development initiatives undertaken by broad based partnerships of regional and national sectoral bodies and various government departments. In this model, TVET is not seen as the sole purview of the Ministries of either Education or Labour. It is also the concern of line Ministries such as Energy, Mines, Transportation, Industry and Investment or Agriculture.

In addition to the big public-private partnerships, TVET needs to get closer to industry at the local level. Greater efforts need to be made in involving industry in the planning, evaluation, development, review of training and in training students using a variety of modalities. These local level efforts to involve industry meaningfully in training have the potential to lead to larger partnerships. One country related an example of a Centre of Excellence at Humber College in Toronto, Canada, where the college and Suzuki Canada have created the Suzuki Centre, with Suzuki donating 50 motorcycles every year for students to use in training. Similar partnerships could potentially lead to donations of land for agriculture programs and equipment and facilities in other areas of TVET study.

"Business and Industry need to understand the value proposition of getting a 'work-ready' employee if they let the student be trained on their equipment."

Dr. Margarita Gomez, Director,
Employment Training and Education Services,
Ministry of Education and Youth
Belize Consultation, March 16, 2012

"Policy regarding contributions from Multinationals investing in TVET is needed; e.g. any development project should have x% of the contract dedicated to training."

Mr. Harris Khan, Project Manager, Energy
Industry Competency Development Initiative,
Trinidad and Tobago Consultation
April 4, 2012

"TVET institutions need to operate on a horizontally integrated business model. We need instructional leadership to manage the educational processes. Institutions need to broaden their capacity to do educational support functions such as QA, public awareness, institutional development, etc."

Dr. Carolyn Hayle, Executive Director,
HEART Trust/NTA
Jamaica Consultation, March 14, 2012

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Ministries develop strategic plans to optimize their use of school resources designated for TVET, including the sharing of space, establishing Centres of Excellence linked to economic priorities of the geographic area, and collaboration with industry regarding the sharing of space.
2. Wherever possible, governments develop policy regarding mandatory workforce development (TVET) and local understudy or funded traineeship provisions as a condition for issuing work permits to any domestic or multinational investor; e.g. x percentage of projects dedicated to TVET training and understudy.
3. Governments put the necessary measures in place to allow training institutions to interact flexibly and entrepreneurially with industry to build alliances that lead to improved reciprocated access to industry's resources and training institutions' programmes.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Component #1: TVET Redefined for Workforce Development and Economic Competitiveness

1. All TVET programs be converted to a standards-based CBET modality.
2. Centers of Excellence be considered as a way of concentrating and optimizing resources for maximum effectiveness by sector in line with national and regional economic priorities.
3. Entrepreneurship be supported through various initiatives such as the creation of Business Centres or workshop activities to assist entrepreneurs with their business plans, market studies, development of prototypes, etc.
4. A regional standardized market driven model for program design, development, review, and revision be developed to ensure coherence of the system for articulation and certification purposes.

Component #2: TVET Integrated into General Education

1. CARICOM vigorously support the rededication and implementation of the CQF to ensure internationally bench-marked standards at all levels of qualification and seamless articulation and transfers between the programmes and institutions within the Framework.
2. The regions' education systems integrate TVET with general education as a means of better preparing secondary school leavers to effectively transition from either school to work or school to further education and provide the option for all learners to access lifelong post-secondary academic and/or workforce credentials.
3. PLA be given top priority as a critical component of an accessible, flexible and well-articulated education and training system, with each country developing its capacity to assess prior learning or occupational competence so as to determine a candidate's credit award for appropriate advanced placement or the award of appropriate work-based certification.

Component #3: A CARICOM Training System

1. The development of the NTA system be continued as prescribed and that efforts be made to ensure its sustainability and the equitable participation of all countries in assessment and awarding the CVQ.
2. CANTA be given legal status as an organ of CARICOM and the support necessary to fulfill and sustain its mandate and that the mechanism for approval of occupational standards and CANTA decisions be rationalized and streamlined so that the recommendations to CARICOM from CANTA are not delayed in any way.
3. All CANTA members together, work towards developing a business case for its ongoing sustainability and commit to the spirit and practice of pooling and sharing of their resources through CANTA, so that each country has access, to other countries' contributions to the regional effort, including market determined training needs, developing occupational standards and training programmes leading to CVQs, training materials, assessor services, LMI and intelligence.
4. CARICOM direct its member countries to proceed forthwith in the implementation of CQF across the whole educational spectrum working among the various systems and regimes to standardize definitions and classification systems.

5. CARICOM reconcile its “Skills Certificate” work permit regime with its approved “CVQ” of skilled persons. CANTA be re-named the Caribbean Association of National Training ‘Authorities’, rather than ‘Agencies’ so as to properly incorporate the nomenclatures of all its members.

Component #4: Labour Market Intelligence

1. CARICOM initiate a regional approach to the collection, sharing and forecasting of labour market intelligence in the form of a web-based portal to which all users can post their LMI and intelligence and from which all users can access relevant LMI from across the region
2. CANTA take a lead role in the coordination of information at the regional level to support informed TVET planning and decision-making and its portal be the focal point for the CSME implementation and maintenance of the SOC, CVQ and SIC frameworks.
3. Ministries responsible for TVET become more involved in economic development discussions so that TVET is aligned with the country’s strategic direction.
4. CARICOM adopt a standard occupational classification system to ensure consistency in occupational naming, the development of occupational standards, and the benchmarking against international occupational standards.
5. CANTA establish a regional format for the publication of occupational standards to ensure consistency in the articulation of standards across occupations and across the region.

Component #5: Public Awareness

1. TVET be re-positioned in terms of outputs and impact, i.e., as ‘TVET for Workforce Development and Economic Competitiveness’ and that a promotion and marketing campaign, endorsed at the highest levels, be initiated.
2. TVET credentials be accepted as equivalent to the General Education Certificate in secondary schools and the Associate degree in tertiary institutions with the additional benefit of providing workforce qualifications.
3. CARICOM promote the CVQ as a portable certificate (like a driver’s license) that workers could carry around to show to potential employers or clients their qualifications and competences.

Component #6: Career Guidance and Counselling

1. The name, ‘Vocational and Career Guidance Counselling’ be changed to ‘Professional and Career Counselling’ or ‘Career Guidance and Counseling.’
2. An occupational analysis of the profession, Career Guidance Counsellor, be undertaken and that a region-wide policy for establishing a Career Guidance System be established and training be developed accordingly.
3. Each country develop the capacity to offer Career Guidance and Counselling to students and adults including provision of online resources.
4. Ministries of Education region-wide adopt and implement a three-tiered approach to Career Counselling:
 - a. Career Awareness (late primary)
 - b. Career Exploration (early secondary)
 - c. Career Preparation and Training (late secondary)

Component #7: Instructor Training

1. Language be re-examined to reflect new teaching learning paradigm for knowledge economy: Change the term, 'Teacher' to 'Instructor', 'Trainer' or 'Facilitator' and ensure the language in instructor training programs reflects the new learner-centered paradigm and is gender neutral.
2. CANTA initiate the development of a CVQ for TVET instructors for adoption and implementation by all CARICOM countries.
3. Methodologies that support TVET be incorporated into teacher training programs (CBET, learner-centred, use of technology, etc.)
4. Each country's instructor hiring regime be reexamined to ensure flexibility and responsiveness and quality of personnel, i.e., those instructing in TVET have up-to-date industry skills and qualifications as well as skills in facilitating learning.
5. PLA be utilized in assessing instructor skills and granting qualifications.

Component #8: Infrastructure

1. Ministries develop strategic plans to optimize their use of school resources designated for TVET, including the sharing of space, establishing Centres of Excellence linked to economic priorities of the geographic area, and collaboration with industry regarding the sharing of space.
2. Wherever possible, governments develop policy regarding mandatory workforce development (TVET) and local understudy or funded traineeship provisions as a condition for issuing work permits to any Domestic or Multinational investor; e.g. x% of project dedicated to TVET training and understudy.
3. Governments put the necessary measures in place to allow training institutions to interact flexibly and entrepreneurially with industry to build alliances that lead to improved reciprocated access to industry's resources and training institutions' programmes.