



**THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES
(UWI)**

TERTIARY LEVEL INSTITUTIONS UNIT



**Assessing the Human Resource Needs of CARICOM Countries:
Planning the Tertiary Education Sector Response**

**ST. VINCENT & THE GRENADINES
MARCH 17, 2006**

.....Planning for Caribbean Development

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION -I-

THE OBJECTIVE -I-

THE DELPHI TECHNIQUE -ii-

THE PROJECT OUTPUTS -ii-

THE PROCEDURE -iii-

**THE FINDINGS OF ST. VINCENT & THE GRENADINES FOCUS
GROUPS**

Table 1 -3-

Table 2 -4-

Table 3 -5-

Table 4 -6-

Table 5 -6-

GENERAL DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS -7-

APPENDIX I -9-

APPENDIX II -11-

APPENDIX III -12-

INTRODUCTION

The University of the West Indies, through the Tertiary Level Institutions Unit (TLIU), has developed and implemented a project to assess the Human Resource Needs of CARICOM countries. This project was conceptualized to identify regional socio-economic development goals, identify jobs and skills needed for the future development of CARICOM countries; assess current and projected demands for tertiary education and training; determine the gaps between current education programmes and future programme needs and propose how they should be addressed. The project also emphasizes partnerships among development stakeholders: education providers (private and public), employers (public and private), government policy makers, students (potential/prospective and present), labour organizations (Trade Unions and Workers Associations) and Professional associations. Ultimately, the project will establish priorities and propose strategies to advance regional development through tertiary education.

The project has two major components: Focus Groups and a survey. This is the report of the fifth Focus-Group activity conducted in St. Vincent & The Grenadines, March 17, 2006. The Focus Group provides a forum for knowledgeable experts from among the major stakeholders (education providers, employers, policy makers, students, labour organizations, professional associations) to prioritize identified needs and the tertiary education response using an adaptation of the “*Delphi Technique*”.

THE OBJECTIVE

The purpose of the project is to provide information that should inform policy and establish priorities in relation to the advancement of a fully integrated tertiary education sector and the formulation of a human resource development strategy for the region. Specifically this activity will:

1. identify jobs and skills needed for the future national and regional development;
2. determine the tertiary education needs of individual countries and

- the region;
3. determine the nature, scope and level of the region's tertiary education provision; and
4. establish the gaps between existing supply and demand in the tertiary education provision.

THE DELPHI TECHNIQUE

The Delphi Technique (modified) was the method used in the Focus Groups. This technique originated at the Rand Corporation (Dalkey and Helmer) for the purposes of technological forecasting and futuristic opinion gathering. It is now an important methodology in industrial decision making, educational planning and quality of life studies. The technique uses a panel of experts to analyze situations and issues with a view to proposing prioritized alternative scenarios to address and improve the issues and situations. Further, it is used in forecasting, futurist opinion gathering, establishing importance, and strategies for action.

The technique is predicated on anonymity, through the use of questionnaires and statistical group response. The systematic procedures are intended to ensure some level of objectivity in the outcomes of the exercise. Further, the procedure is conducted as a sequence of rounds with the results of previous rounds being fed back to participants; it also summarized group results and enabled flexibility in its execution.

THE PROJECT OUTPUTS

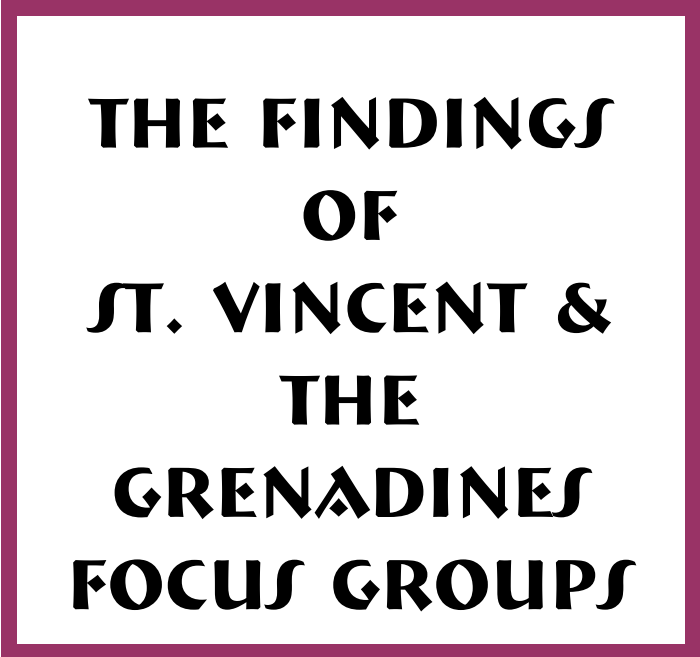
- ❑ Data from Secondary sources to give information on the Socio-economic and tertiary education environment.
- ❑ Country Surveys to elicit views on development imperatives and the required tertiary education response.

- ❑ Focus Group Reports will document the independent views of students, employers and providers about the program priorities which should be pursued to prepare students with the appropriate skills for the jobs which will drive the countries' economies.
- ❑ Overall comparative report.

THE PROCEDURE

The procedural steps used in conducting the Focus Groups were as follows:

1. A stakeholder specific questionnaire, comprising of five open-ended questions, was administered to a purposive sample of stakeholders (employers, tertiary education providers, students, labour organizations and professional Associations).
2. Completed questionnaires were returned to the TLI Unit where the responses were analyzed and master lists of responses prepared.
3. At the Focus Group sessions, the master lists of responses were given to the participants to determine the major needs, issues and concerns and to rank/prioritize them.
4. The ranking of the responses was conducted a number of times until consensus was reached.
5. The TLI Unit analyzed and is reporting the findings of the Focus Groups.



**THE FINDINGS
OF
ST. VINCENT &
THE
GRENADINES
FOCUS GROUPS**

**ST. VINCENT & THE GRENADINES FOCUS GROUPS
MARCH 17, 2006**

With respect to the investigation in Saint Vincent & The Grenadines, it was reported that students ranked important reasons for enrolling in a tertiary programme thus:

- 1 Choice of future career
- 2 Country's needs
- 3 Good employment opportunities
- 4 Social prestige
- 5 Influence by family
- 6 Influence by friends

Their reasons for continuing in tertiary education were:

- 1 Commitment
- 1 Sense of achievement/ambition
- 3 Focus on the goal
- 4 Availability of finance/scholarships
- 5 Family expectation/Expectations of others

Students had seen the following as factors contributing to their enrolment in tertiary education:

- 1 Professional qualification
- 1 Professional skills
- 3 Job prospects
- 4 Better pay
- 5 Community service/country's needs

Their ideas for additional tertiary education programmes needed in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines were:

- 1 Agriculture/Environmental Studies
- 2 Engineering/Skills Training/ICT
- 3 Medical Sciences/Allied Health
- 4 Education
- 5 Communication and Media
- 6 Economics/Banking/Finance
- 7 Hospitality & Tourism and Graphic Arts

**ST. VINCENT & THE GRENADINES FOCUS GROUPS
MARCH 17, 2006**

Students had been funded by:

- 1 Family
- 2 Self
- 3 Loans
- 4 Government scholarships
- 5 OAS & other scholarships

Students wished to see improvement in student services with respect to:

- 1 More qualified (effective) teachers
- 1 Available resources
- 3 More computer laboratories
- 4 Longer library opening hours
- 4 Proper infrastructure
- 6 Student support body

Table 1:
Jobs and skills which will drive national development as identified by various stakeholder-groups.

Rank	Students	Employers	Providers
1 st	Educator / Teacher	Educator / Teacher	Educator / Teacher
2 nd	Agriculture	Hospitality / Tourism	ICT Professional / Engineer
3 rd	Medical sciences / Allied health	Agriculture / Farmer	Hospitality / Tourism
4 th	Hospitality / Tourism	Entrepreneur	Agriculture / Fisheries / Agro-processing
5 th	Planning	ICT Professional	Entrepreneur
6 th	Entrepreneurs	Building/Related Skills	

Table 2:
Types of education and training programmes that should be offered to meet the skills and jobs identified above.

Rank	Students	Employers	Providers
1 st	Agriculture / Environmental Studies	Hospitality / Tourism	Teacher / Education
2 nd	Engineering / Skills Training / ICT	Agriculture	ICT / Engineering
3 rd	Medical Sciences / Allied Health	Entrepreneurship	Hospitality / Tourism / Cultural Studies
4 th	Communication & Media	Behavioural Sciences / Social Work	Skills Training
5 th	Economics / Banking / Finance	Skills training	Behavioural Science

Table 3:
Levels of education and training (e.g. degrees, certificates, diplomas, associate degrees, on the job training, short courses, workshops) that are needed to meet the jobs and skills required by the country.

Rank	Employers	Providers
1 st	Short courses, Workshops	Bachelor's Degrees
2 nd	Internships, On-the-job-training	Internships, On-the-job-training
3 rd	Certificates, Diplomas, Associate Degrees	Certificates & Diplomas
4 th	Bachelor's Degrees	Associate Degrees
5 th	Postgraduate Certificates and Diplomas	Short courses, Workshops

Table 4:
Major barriers to pursuing tertiary education:

Rank	Employers	Providers
1 st	Attitude	Finance
2 nd	Finance	Physical distance
3 rd	Job demands	Programme availability
4 th	Programme availability	Inadequate facilities
5 th	Access	Job demands

Table 5:
Strategies for Overcoming Barriers

Rank	Employers	Providers
1 st	Incentives, rewards	Financial assistance
2 nd	Financial assistance	Decentralised, flexible learning
3 rd	Relevant programmes	Relevant programmes
4 th	Increased access	On-the-job-training
5 th	Flexible programming	Incentives, paid leave

GENERAL DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Areas of convergence of opinion included:

- Acceptance by students of their own responsibility for tertiary education.
- Convergence among all three groups about priority jobs or skills: hospitality, education, agriculture.
- Surprises: Absence of ICT from students' list - but explained as a matter of infusion into all areas.

On the other hand, there was:

- Divergence about priority programmes:
- Agreement on agriculture, education and engineering by students and providers.
- Entrepreneurship training selected only by employers.
- Medical sciences and communication and media selected only by students.

Divergence about levels:

- Employers ranked bachelor's degrees as fourth, providers ranked it first.
- Employers ranked short courses and workshops first, providers ranked it sixth.
- Providers ranked associate degrees fourth and employers did not rank it in the top six.

Divergence about barriers:

- There was agreement about finance, job demands and programme availability.
- Whereas employers ranked attitude as number 1, providers did not recognise this as a major barrier.

Divergence about overcoming barriers:

- Employers cited incentives and rewards as more important enablers than modes of delivery whereas providers cited mode of delivery as more important than extrinsic motivators, once financing was available.

In the general discussion, employers and providers were passionately divided over the priority of programmes (short-term courses versus bachelor's degrees) and the value or utility of the bachelor's degree, citing experiences with UWI and Cuban engineering graduates (the latter having relevant experience in dealing with obsolete equipment, and knowledge of Spanish).

In conclusion one could express surprise that no medical/allied health sciences were chosen by employers or providers but by students; that no building/engineering was chosen by students but ranked 6th by employers. The discussion confirmed the view that younger students were very career oriented and older students were motivated by more economic considerations.

The findings indicated a need for:

- Policy makers to be attuned to market requirements in formulating scholarship/training policy.
- Providers to utilise job market information inputs e.g. through advisory committees.
- Stronger private/public sector partnerships for funding and relevance.

APPENDIX I
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
(STUDENTS & POTENTIAL STUDENTS)

NAME	INSTITUTION
Shauna Lewis	Bequia Community High
Godwyn Gibson	Dorsetshire Hill Government School
Kimeisha Bailey	Girls' High School
Omar Williams	Intermediate High School
Arianne Beache	St. Joseph Covenant
Kayshorn Findlay	St. Vincent Grammar School
Glenvort Allen	St. Vincent & The Grenadines School of Nursing
Vivirt Bridgewater	St. Vincent & The Grenadines School of Nursing
Maxyan Cato	St. Vincent & The Grenadines School of Nursing
Yon Ellis	St. Vincent & The Grenadines School of Nursing
Ratiqua Hadaway	St. Vincent & The Grenadines School of Nursing
Casi-Ann Hepburn	St. Vincent & The Grenadines School of Nursing
Alphonzo Jordon	St. Vincent & The Grenadines School of Nursing

APPENDIX I Cont'd

NAME	INSTITUTION
Jerella Phillips	St. Vincent & The Grenadines School of Nursing
Gail-Ann Timm	St. Vincent & The Grenadines School of Nursing
Nsenga Howard	St. Vincent & The Grenadines Teachers' College
Kimberly Joseph	St. Vincent & The Grenadines Teachers' College
Shannel Latham	St. Vincent & The Grenadines Teachers' College
Melissa Ashton	St. Vincent & The Grenadines Technical College
Kanika Garraway	St. Vincent & The Grenadines Technical College
Hazel-Ann Hazell	St. Vincent & The Grenadines Technical College
Necia James	St. Vincent & The Grenadines Technical College
Ike Williams	St. Vincent & The Grenadines Technical College
Camille Jacobs	Sunshine School
Sylvannus Horne	UWI

**APPENDIX II
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
(EMPLOYERS)**

NAME	COMPANY
Yvette Daniel	Central Water & Sewerage Authority
Lloyd Small	C.T.A.W.U.
Junior Bacchus	East Caribbean Group of Companies
Cyprian Neehall	Gonsalves Liquors
Lydia Ollivierre	National Youth Council
Christine John	Office Essentials Ltd
Leroy Lewis	Roy's Inn
Luke Boyea	St.Clair Investments
Jerome Burke	St. Vincent Corrugated Containers Inc.
Jillian Williams Douglas	St. Vincent Electricity Services Ltd.

**APPENDIX III
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
(EDUCATION PROVIDERS)**

NAME	INSTITUTION
Jimmy Lawrence	Kingstown Medical College
Rosa Vanloo	St. Vincent & The Grenadines Community College
Veronica Marks	St. Vincent & The Grenadines Community College
Sylvia Williams	St. Vincent & The Grenadines School of Nursing
Alson Jack	St. Vincent & The Grenadines Teachers' College
Monica Browne	UWI School of Continuing Studies
Adrian Fraser	UWI School of Continuing Studies
Sylvannus Horne	UWI School of Continuing Studies

Produced by:
The University of the West Indies
Tertiary Level Institutions Unit (TLIU)
May 2006

Telephone: 246-4174506 / 08 / 09

Fax: 438-0456

Email: tliu@uwichill.edu.bb

Website: www.uwichill.edu.bb/tliu/