



**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**

**BARBADOS
OCTOBER 16-17, 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 BARBADOS' FOCUS GROUPS

Table 1(a) -1-

Table 1(b) -2-

Table 2(a) -3-

Table 2(b) -4-

Table 3(a) -5-

Table 3(b) -6-

Table 4(a) -7-

Table 4(b) -8-

Table 5 -9-

GENERAL DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS
..... -10-

APPENDIX I -11-

APPENDIX II -12-

APPENDIX III -13-

APPENDIX IV -14-

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 twelfth Focus-Group activity conducted in Barbados, October 16-17, 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.

BARBADOS FOCUS GROUPS
OCTOBER 16-17, 2006

- ❑ Focus Group Reports will document the independent views of students, employers and providers about the programme 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 the responses and is reporting the findings of the Focus Groups.

BARBADOS FOCUS GROUPS
OCTOBER 16-17, 2006



**THE FINDINGS OF
BARBADOS'
FOCUS GROUPS**

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

Rank	Students	Employers
1 st	Education including special education, skills training and correctional skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People/Soft skills • Customer Service
2 nd	ICT Training/Technology	Health Professionals
3 rd	Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hospitality/Tourism • Manager, Entrepreneur leaders/HR Practitioners • Engineering/Technical Vocational
4 th	Hospitality/Tourism	
5 th	Entrepreneurship	
6 th	-	Planning/Researchers

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

Rank	UWI Providers	TLI Providers
1 st	Research & Development	Educator/Teacher
2 nd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information & Knowledge • Educator/Teacher 	Nurse
3 rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Science • Resource Management 	Business Worker
4 th	Behavioural Sciences	Research Development Personnel
5 th	ICT Professional/Technologist	Hospitality Tourism Worker
6 th	-	Engineer

- There was no one job or skill agreed on by all groups of participants.
- Research & Development was identified as the highest priority by the UWI Providers and as the fourth highest by the TLI Providers. Both supported research driven planning. This contrasted with the priority given to People/soft skills by the Employers who were the only group to identify this as the number one priority for development in a service economy.
- Education was placed first by Students and TLI Providers.

**BARBADOS FOCUS GROUPS
OCTOBER 16-17, 2006**

- Hospitality and Tourism were selected in the top five priorities by Students, Employers and TLI Providers.
- ICT training was in the top five selected by both UWI Providers and Students.

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

Rank	Students	Employers
1 st	Education/Learning	People/Soft Skills
2 nd	Planning/Research	Management/Leadership/ Entrepreneurship/HR
3 rd	• ICT • Engineering	Education/Learning
4 th		Hospitality/Tourism/Languages
5 th	Skills Training/ Construction	• ICT Training & Technology • Engineering/Technical Vocational
6 th	Social Work/ Behavioural Sciences	-

**BARBADOS FOCUS GROUPS
OCTOBER 16-17, 2006**

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

Rank	UWI Providers	TLI Providers
1 st	Education (including information and knowledge generally)	Education (including specialist programmes - reading, critical thinking, etc.)
2 nd	Research Methods	Agriculture
3 rd	Languages for Communication	• Nursing • People/Soft Skills training (should be included in all programmes) • Human and Institutional Services
4 th	• Information fluency • Diplomatic & Negotiation skills	
5 th		
6 th	People/Soft Skills	Sports & Culture

There was concurrence about the training programmes required, since:

- Education was the top priority for UWI Providers, Students and TLI Providers and third for the Employers.
- People/Soft Skills was in the top five priority jobs and skills for Employers and TLI Providers and ICT for Students and Employers.
- Diplomatic and Negotiation Skills and Human and Institutional Services were selected by UWI and TLI Providers respectively.

Table 3(a):
Major barriers to pursuing tertiary education:

Rank	Students	Employers
1 st	Finance (especially the working poor)	Job Demands/Time Restraints/Family Responsibilities
2 nd	Attitude	Finance
3 rd	Health Issues	Attitude: lack of motivation, lack of career opportunities, low esteem, aversion to change
4 th	Awareness of programmes	Organisational Culture
5 th	Parental guidance and support	Entry Requirements
6 th	-	-

Table 3(b):
Major barriers to pursuing tertiary education:

Rank	UWI Providers	TLI Providers
1 st	Job Demands/Job Constraints	Lack of physical space
2 nd	Financial Assistance/Scholarships	Lack of Finance
3 rd	Unavailability of programmes	Time constraints
4 th	Entry Requirements	Entry Requirements
5 th	Lack of awareness of programmes	Inadequate facilities
6 th	Uncertainty of future employment	Awareness of programmes

- All groups identified Finance as a very important barrier.
- All except the Students considered entry requirements, job demands and time constraints also as major barriers to tertiary education.
- The UWI and TLI Providers felt that the awareness of programmes was very important while Students and Employers felt that attitude, including motivation, was a major barrier to enrolment in tertiary education.

Table 4(a):
Strategies for Overcoming Barriers

Rank	Students	Employers
1 st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial assistance • Self determination 	Collaborative Planning/Flexible work schedules
2 nd		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Assistance • Flexible Entry/ PLAR/Access courses
3 rd	College Fairs	
4 th	Career Guidance and teacher encouragement	Decentralized/Flexible Delivery
5 th	Decentralised and flexible delivery	Motivation/Coaching
6 th	-	Incentives/Rewards (Employer & Employee)

Table 4(b):
Strategies for Overcoming Barriers

Rank	UWI Providers	TLI Providers
1 st	Decentralised/Flexible Delivery	Flexible delivery and physical expansion
2 nd	Student Support Services	Upgrade facilities
3 rd	Financial Assistance	Financial Assistance
4 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant Programming • Marketing of programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer access courses • Marketing
5 th		
6 th	Offer access to courses	-

- Financial Assistance was a highly ranked enabler to tertiary enrolment in spite of Government financed tuition in public institutions.
- Decentralised flexible delivery was embraced by all groups as an effective way of improving access.
- The marketing of programmes through such media as college fairs and improved publicity in general were given high priority by Students, UWI and TLI Providers.

**Table 5:
Levels of education and training programmes that should be offered to meet the skills and jobs identified above.**

Rank	Students	TLI Providers
1 st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate Degree • Post-Graduate Certification 	Certificate & Diplomas
2 nd		Bachelors/Higher National Certificate
3 rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internship/On-the-job training • Bachelors Degree 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-Graduate Certification • Internship & On-the-job-training
4 th		
5 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Courses/Workshops • Certificates/Diplomas (including O' & A' Levels & Technical Vocational programmes) 	Associate Degree
6 th		Short Courses/Workshops

- All levels of education/training were seen as important by the four groups which focused on this matter - Students and TLI Providers. However, there was divergence between the groups in the relative importance of the various levels of training.
- Certificates and Diplomas were ranked at opposite poles - 1st for TLI Providers and 6th for Students whilst Associate Degrees were ranked 1st for Students and 5th for TLI Providers.
- There was fair agreement on the ranking (third by each group) of internships and on the job training, and of Bachelors degree (second and third).

GENERAL DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the general discussion, individuals emphasized the importance of the development of critical thinking in all areas of learning. It was also felt that Law Enforcement and Security were important but that the demand in these areas could be offset by emphasizing such areas as Community and Behavioural Sciences as well as on humanising the nation through a focus on the Humanities.

Lifelong learning was also considered to be critical for on-going national development.

Developing a culture of entrepreneurship was seen as a necessity, in spite of the associated challenges. Very few institutions in Barbados offer training/education in entrepreneurship and it was felt that it is imperative that institutions actively emphasize and include programmes of that nature to drive the economy as individuals are academically prepared for work but not for business development (to develop new ideas or even to improve on existing ones). The group(s) hinted that this may be so because Barbados is small and this affects the attitude of the people to think outside of the established paradigm of Caribbean culture to lead (the rest of the world) instead of following (the rest of the world). It was opined that institutions should look beyond the existing situation and come up with initiatives to engage creative individuals in organising and taking risks in entrepreneurial ventures.

Additionally, Agriculture was seen as essential for food security and Agricultural technology and diversification as a way of making the discipline more attractive. It was pointed out very strongly that there was the need to remove the stigma of Agriculture as a menial career or industry and embrace it for what possibilities it could offer the country. It was agreed however, that Barbados is not primarily an Agricultural country and it might be more economical to import rather than to produce. However, a strong argument was made for food security and spending less on imports through the promotion of home gardens.

**BARBADOS FOCUS GROUPS
OCTOBER 16-17, 2006**

It was also agreed that Information Technology should be infused in all studies as information literacy and fluency were seen as critical skills for the development of an Information Society.

In discussing barriers, it was felt that attitudinal barriers were important and these related to low self esteem and resistance to change. Employers placed great value on collaborative planning to enhance joint career planning, identification of incentives and rewards.

It was hoped that as the country went ahead with its National Strategic Plan, data from the focus group could help to inform some of its deliberations.

**BARBADOS FOCUS GROUPS
OCTOBER 16-17, 2006**

**APPENDIX I
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
(STUDENTS & POTENTIAL STUDENTS)**

NAME	INSTITUTION
Paula Joseph	Barbados Bible College
Adrian Reid	Barbados Bible College
Derek Perch	Barbados Vocational Training Board
Junior Mathurin	Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology
Victoria Best	Lester Vaughan Secondary School
Stefan Linton	Lodge School
Kristal Benskin	Queens College
Damali Daniels	Springer Memorial School
Ray Blackman	St. Lucy Secondary School
Reginald Gittens	St. Michael School
Andrea Humphrey	UWI Faculty of Humanities
Melissa Branford	UWI Faculty of Medical Sciences
Shalisha Samuel	UWI Faculty of Social Sciences
Carlyen Blackman	UWI School of Continuing Studies
Elphene Moore	UWI School of Continuing Studies
Janelle King	Potential Student
Nikita Springer	Potential Student

**APPENDIX II
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
(UWI PROVIDERS)**

NAME	COMPANY
Ian Austin	School of Continuing Studies
Henri Brewster	Registry
Colin Depradine	Faculty of Pure & Applied Sciences
David Farrell	Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology
Gale Hall	Research Officer
Sheryl Peter-Gooding	Cave Hill School of Business
Jamal Khan	Department of Management Studies
Karen Lequay	Main Library
Eric Lynch	Codrington College
Stuart Marshall	Distance Education Centre
Hazel Simmons-McDonald	Faculty of Humanities & Education
Letnie Rock	Department of Government, Sociology & Social Work
Elizabeth Watson	Learning Resource Centre
Maurice Webster	Bursary

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

NAME	INSTITUTION
Bobbi McKay	Barbados Manufactures Association
Ulric Sealy	Barbados Workers' Union Labour College
Gloria Grant	BICO Limited
Katherine Farnum	First Caribbean International Bank
Charles Brathwaite	Ministry of the Civil Service
Roslyn Hoyte	Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs & Sports
Shirley Farnum	Ministry of Social Transformation
Derek Alleyne	National Union of Public Workers

**APPENDIX IV
LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
(TLI PROVIDERS)**

NAME	INSTITUTION
Linda Ashton	Association of Tertiary Institutions
Hartley Alleyne	Barbados Community College
Sydney Arthur	Barbados Community College
Marcia Oxley	Barbados Community College
Esther Phillips	Barbados Community College
Terri Ward-Gaskin	Barbados Community College
Lindsay Waterman	Barbados Community College
Monica Best	Barbados Institute of Management & Productivity
Cassandra Delaney	Barbados Vocational Training Board
Winston Mayers	Erdiston Teachers' College
Hector Belle	Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic
Henderson Cadogan	Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic
George Herbert	Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic
Audrey Jones-Drayton	Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic
Alice Murray	Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic
Anthony Nurse	Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic
Camella Riley-Pilgrim	Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic
Geoffrey Yearwood	Technical and Vocational Education & Training Council

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

**Telephone: 246-4174506 / 08 / 09
Fax: 438-0456
Email: tliu@uwichill.edu.bb
Website: www.cavehill.uwi.edu/tliu/**