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This section includes articles specifically designed to assist Ministers and Senior Officials in the efficient running of their Ministries. It includes a variety of papers from promoting good governance in the Commonwealth to advice on peace building and conflict resolution.

Governmental Priorities
This section outlines the key priorities facing governments throughout the Commonwealth. The 40 articles cover a range of topics with opinion pieces, case studies and transferable solutions written by multi-sectoral authors from across the globe.

- Economic Growth & Investment
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In 2009, we celebrate the fact that the modern Commonwealth is 60 years old. Its antecedence is much longer, stretching back to the 1870s. Its future can be longer still, if it is true to its theme for 2009: thecommonwealth@60 – serving a new generation.

The Commonwealth has stood the test of time. It stands tall as an organisation of shared values, dedicated to protecting and advancing its principles. It has been flexible and dynamic in meeting the changing challenges of its times, and sensitive to the needs of its smaller and weaker members. It has always been a part of the wider global community. As a champion of democracy, development and diversity, the Commonwealth has a powerful story to tell. It is bonded together as a community both of governments and of peoples.

The London Declaration of 1949, which brought us into being, saw the far-sightedness of eight countries constituting themselves anew. In so doing, they made the Commonwealth the first real example of an international community representing a collective, consultative, mutually respectful approach to international relations. Nehru put it this way: ‘if you approach another country in a friendly way, with goodwill and generosity, you will be paid back in the same coin, and probably in even larger measure’. Of such vision was the Commonwealth born.

Yet our greater task this year is to look straight ahead – and ask how we can continue serving a new generation in 2009 and beyond.

What sort of 21st Century will our young people inherit? Will they know greater peace and prosperity than their parents? Will they exercise their most basic entitlements to food and education, healthcare, a vote? The Commonwealth has always had an eye on the people and the tasks of tomorrow. Now, it must be prescient again in safeguarding and promoting the guarantors of the best hopes for its future: its young people.

At the international level, the Commonwealth can argue that young people be both seen and heard at the global decision-making table, and that the planet itself must be preserved for their use. At the national level, the views of young people must be heard and acted upon in every corner of public life, and the contributions of the young should be embraced. At the community level, we should continue to instil in young people a sense of shared responsibility. At the level of individual young people, we must continue to build both skills and a sense of self-belief. These pressing tasks share the urgency of the times.

The Commonwealth’s diamond anniversary year is about celebrating, reflecting – and serving a new generation.

The Secretary General’s 2009 Commonwealth Day Message.
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Sixty years ago, the Commonwealth broke free from its colonial past when prime ministers met and adopted the London Declaration, a seminal document which stated that all member countries would be ‘freely and equally associated’. Since then this unique association has grown from eight to 53 countries, which encompass the world’s largest and smallest, richest and poorest, and are home to some 2 billion citizens of all faiths and ethnicities – over half of whom are 25 or under. This year the Commonwealth celebrates its anniversary with a theme that looks towards our young women and men with all their potential and hope, but also one which reminds us of our role in ensuring they are able to fulfil their promise: ‘The commonwealth@60: serving a new generation’.

The entire world was reeling 60 years ago from the devastation of a major world war, and young people were suffering extreme hardship as a result of separation, the loss of family members, and severe food shortages.

Today’s youth are faced with a set of new and urgent issues, which I have witnessed in many of the places I have personally visited. Often marginalised and discredited, young people are also disproportionately affected by the economic, social and political upheavals of our time. In most cases, they are not empowered to address their issues and concerns. Young people are dealing with the effects of HIV/AIDS, physical and sexual violence, unemployment, growing terrorism and crime, and substance abuse. All this must be seen in the context of a major world economic downturn and environmental degradation on a scale never witnessed before.

These remain very real concerns which impact on both young people as individuals and on their families and wider communities.

**Serving a new generation**

We need to see the value of young people from a development perspective. Today, one-fifth of the world’s population – more than 1.2 billion people – is between the ages of 15 and 24. Eighty-five per cent of these young people live in developing countries. No other population group has a greater potential to provide a decisive impetus to global development and effect a sustainable reduction in poverty. At the same time, young people are particularly affected by the many negative consequences of poverty and conflict.

The next generation holds much promise for countries that adopt policies to ensure that their youth are better educated and healthier than previous generations. According to the 2007 World Development Report ‘Development and the Next Generation’, record numbers of young people between the ages of 12 and 24 could give developing countries a big advantage over developed nations in the next generation, producing surging economic growth and sharply reducing poverty.

In the Commonwealth, youth development has been adopted as a guiding principle for the regional centres of the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP). We believe that young people who are empowered by their societies can be a force of great contribution and advancement both for themselves and their countries. The CYP is the only decentralised programme in the Commonwealth Secretariat which is implemented by the regional centres based in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Pacific. They are actively involved in enterprise and entrepreneurship development, addressing issues of social exclusion, HIV/AIDS awareness and training programmes for youth leaders.

Through the Commonwealth’s youth centres, 635 young people across Africa, Asia, the Pacific and the Caribbean – many of whom are HIV positive – have been trained to communicate with their peers about HIV and AIDS. They do this formally in schools and informally through the communities they live in, bringing messages of prevention, determination, compassion and acceptance.

The Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative has enabled nearly 2,917 young men and women to start their enterprises and 9,000 have been exposed to health awareness camps and exhibitions.

In the Northern Uganda Youth Development Centre (NUYDC), 200 former child soldiers are being supported to build socio-economic future for themselves and their communities as well as manage the trauma of their lost childhood through training in vocational and life skills for their future. Looking to the future, NUYDC will be organising vocational/agricultural training for 4,000 vulnerable young men women in the district.

Our Diploma in Youth Development Work is offered by 29 partner institutions in 45 countries primarily through distance education. It provides youth workers with an underpinning knowledge on which to base their work with young people and

"At the international level, the Commonwealth can argue that young people be both seen and heard at the global decision-making table, and that the planet itself must be preserved for their use. At the national level, the views of young people must be heard and acted upon in every corner of public life, and the contributions of the young should be embraced. At the community level, we should continue to instil in young people a sense of shared responsibility. At the level of individual young people, we must continue to build both skills and a sense of self-belief. These pressing tasks share the urgency of the times.”

Kamlesh Sharma
Commonwealth Secretary-General

**The Commonwealth Youth Programme**

The Commonwealth @ 60: serving a new generation

Mmasekgoa Masire-Mwamba
Commonwealth Deputy Secretary-General
the practical skills to undertake their work. Since 1998 over 4,500 have graduated with this Diploma.

The Commonwealth Youth Development Awards has brought recognition and financial assistance to projects that contribute to the development of young people. Approximately £35,000 is awarded every year to outstanding youth-led initiatives ranging from training young people in carpentry, tailoring and welding to promoting fishing as a source of livelihood.

### Youth and sport

We believe that sport and youth work should be closely linked because of the enormous influence sport has on positive and cohesive transformation of societies, particularly on the self-esteem and self-confidence of young people. Indeed, in many Commonwealth countries the sport and youth ministries fall under the same umbrella.

The Harare Declaration of 1991, which mapped out a course for the Commonwealth in the new millennium, pledged to concentrate on “the development of human resources, in particular through education, training, health, culture, sport and programmes for strengthening family and community”.

Sport has the power to inspire young people and to engage them in a way that little else can. It provides a common language around the world and can help to build bridges and break down barriers between countries, communities and young people themselves. There are many good examples from across the Commonwealth that show how sport can be used to tackle key health issues such as HIV/AIDS, improve educational attainment and achievement, develop leadership and citizenship and lead to greater social inclusion and conflict resolution.

Sport can also encourage international, national, and community exchange among young people. It provides a focus for social activity, an opportunity to make friends, develop networks and reduce social isolation, so it is well placed to support the development of social capital. The development of sports programmes have shown that social divides and differences can be set aside to attain a greater goal.

In Mathare, Nairobi, there is a project which emerged out of local demand from young people. Now, the Mathare Youth Sport Association (MYSAs) is one of the largest youth organisations in Africa today. The programme has given young people a new focal point that has created a basis for identity building, dignity, and self-respect. For the females too, research has shown that the programme has provided girls with a ‘public identity’ – something that most girls in Mathare do not possess. In breaking down barriers and facing prejudices, the MYSAs programme not only provides the space and ability for girls to participate but also enables the boys to face their prejudices.

We value sport as a tool for building individuals and communities, harnessing young energies, breaking down barriers and reinforcing common humanity and interests. It is also a tool for development – especially in areas like public information and education, often on matters of health and especially sexual health. We have made major inroads in establishing a Commonwealth sporting community: now, the public spectacle of events like the Commonwealth Games need to translate into the local reality of Youth Ministries across the Commonwealth adopting specific sports policies to develop and empower youth.

The Commonwealth Games, which are held every four years, are for many people across the world one of the most visible aspects of the Commonwealth. Known as the ‘friendly games’, competition at this global sporting event is between individual sportsmen and women, not countries. The 19th Commonwealth Games is due to take place in New Delhi in October 2010.

In October 2008, the Commonwealth Youth Games took place in Pune, India. It is the third time that these youth games have taken place since their inauguration in Edinburgh in 2000, and we look forward to these games taking place in 2011 on the Isle of Man.

### Respect and understanding – a new agenda for youth engagement

In 2005, when Commonwealth leaders met in Malta, they expressed concern about the rise of terrorism and extremism and its impact in their countries. As a result, the Secretary-General set up a Commonwealth Commission on Respect and Understanding, comprising 11 members, including Eliane Sihotani Howard, Executive Director of Tonga National Youth Congress and a Chairperson of the Commonwealth Regional Youth Caucus. The Commission was chaired by Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen, and its resulting report, ‘Civil Paths to Peace’, was presented to Heads of Government in Uganda in 2007.

The importance of young people and education warranted an entire chapter in the report, in which it was stated: “With appropriate support and political will, young people can be an active, positive force for development, locally, nationally and internationally.”

But for this to happen, it states, young people need to be seen and treated as potential assets and engaged in processes of dialogue and decision-making. When young people have no voice and experience humiliation, they may be drawn to other movements or ideologies that give them an identity and place in the world.

The Commonwealth’s work through the CYP, which promotes meaningful engagement of young people in its own governance structures, and the inclusion of young people as members of the Commonwealth election observation missions are two examples of empowerment in action. The Pan-Commonwealth Youth Caucus networks young people regionally across all 53 countries of the Commonwealth, and enables youth to express their views, opinions and feelings concerning the strategic direction and focus of the youth development agenda in the CYP.

Since the report’s launch, the CYP has held four regional workshops on Respect and Understanding – engaging young people involved in conflict resolution in their own countries.

### Youth: the way forward

As mentioned above, one-fifth of the world’s population – more than 1.2 billion people – is between the ages of 15 and 24. Eighty-five per cent of these young people live in developing countries. No other population group in history has a greater potential to provide a such decisive impetus to global development. Young people have organised to tell us what they want to see change, and we need to pay attention to what they are doing and ask how we can support them as agents of change.

If we are to look to the past to inform our future, it is worth remembering that the modern Commonwealth developed as a forum for young, newly-independent countries led by a fresh generation of vibrant and visionary leaders. The impetus for change was clear and this bold partnership encapsulated a spirit of collaboration and reconciliation.

Most of us will not live to see the events of this century unfold. The Commonwealth Secretary-General has said: “Young people will inherit the 21st century. The hope of mankind rests with the youth of the world.” The future of the Commonwealth lies with its youth and we ignore them at our peril.

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The Commonwealth Ministers Reference Book – 2009

15
Mobilizing Money Movement:
Q&A with Western Union on Africa’s rise as a mobile money transfer market

Western Union’s Head of Digital Ventures and the company’s Regional Executive for Africa discuss emerging mobile trends in Africa and traditional needs met by new technology.

What is Western Union doing in the mobile arena?

Khalid Fellahi: The majority of people in developing markets lack easy or direct access to financial services, but they do have a mobile phone. “Mobilizing” the services we offer today may make them more accessible to a greater number of people in the future.

Matt Dil: We are working to evolve the definition of what it means to be an agent for Western Union. Today our global agent network includes bank branches, post offices, and various merchant points of sale. We see mobile phones emerging as an effective tool for putting value directly into the hands of consumers.

How is Western Union’s service different from others offered by mobile operators or banks in the region?

Khalid Fellahi: First and foremost, Western Union is a money-transfer business. Rather than emphasizing the mobile aspect of the service, we tend to emphasize the financial aspect of the service – how money moves. How regulatory compliance is achieved, who is responsible for supporting the customer when something goes wrong.

Matt Dil: I agree. Most of the mobile financial services emerging today in Africa are domestic or single-country in nature. If there is a support issue or a fraud issue, it can be handled relatively easily by the mobile operator or bank involved. As these services begin to cross-borders – and money is handed off between various entities – we believe it is important that a level of transparency and accountability remains. Western Union has procedures for dealing with these issues. We work closely with governmental and regulatory bodies in each market that we service, and we believe ultimately that this is what differentiates our mobile service proposition.

How does Western Union’s mobile service offering work?

Khalid Fellahi: We have had an active pilot program underway in the Philippines for several months. We are beginning to introduce similar programs with leading mobile network operators in Africa. Western Union connects into their domestic service and adds a cross-border component.

Matt Dil: It’s a pretty simple concept to start with. A customer can put cash down on a Western Union counter in one country, and that value is processed through Western Union’s money-transfer system and is paid out to an account tied to a mobile phone in another country. We place limits on the amount or frequency moved according to local regulation, and we perform compliance checks and AML monitoring.

How is Africa different from other markets where you have launched mobile money transfer pilots?

Khalid Fellahi: Africa demands a unique perspective and approach. There are more mobile initiatives here than in any other region. We have an opportunity as a business to create a strategy for growth that takes into account the real-world experience of the local population.

With Western Union’s agent network and presence in each of the countries, we can be more aggressive in introducing cross-border transactions to or from the mobile phone. We can make a concerted effort to introduce mobile services as a core component of our product and brand.

Western Union by the numbers

- 150-year-old company
- 376,000 agent locations
- 15,000 money transfer corridors
- 200 countries and territories
- 90% brand awareness
- $67 billion moved in 2008
- 46 countries in Africa
- 11,000 agent locations in Africa
This section includes articles specifically designed to assist Ministers and Senior Officials in the efficient running of their Ministries. It includes a variety of papers from promoting good governance in the Commonwealth to advice on peace building and conflict resolution.
Promoting good governance in the Commonwealth: political will matters

By Dr Roger Koranteng, Advisor, Governance and Institutional Development Division, Commonwealth Secretariat

The Commonwealth Secretariat views governance as the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country’s affairs at all levels. Good governance enables the development of public values by promoting the principles of accountability, transparency, predictability, capacity and participation throughout the institutions and processes that regulate the public realm. Good governance, thus, is a fundamental requirement for a nation’s progress and general well-being. Corruption, which undermines development, is generally an outcome or a symptom of poor governance and, thus, Commonwealth countries are encouraged to develop national strategies to promote good governance and eliminate corruption. These strategies require strong political will at the highest level of government if they are to succeed.

Good governance cannot be externally imposed: policies to promote governance must be internally driven, championed and owned, based on the specific concerns and circumstances of each country. National governance strategies in every country need to be comprehensive in bringing about transparency and accountability in all sectors by empowering and strengthening all the key institutions involved in ensuring good governance and combating corruption.

Political will provides the foundation for all good governance efforts. This is more than pious rhetoric. Fired by consuming political will, government can remove all obstacles to good governance. Political will is the cornerstone of effective governance and the foundation stone for its success. It provides the right climate for growth and sustenance of development. State initiatives or state-sponsored endeavours have a better chance of success than those driven by interest groups with conflicting group interests.

The role of the executive – custodian of political will

The leadership role of the executive in ensuring good governance cannot be overemphasised. The executive plays a central role in building, maintaining, and respecting the country’s governance system and is expected to provide the requisite degree of principled, ethical leadership, and exercise oversight over the civil service responsible for executing its policies. In the course of discharging its considerable responsibilities, the executive must ensure strong political will to maintain clean government; its own actions must be lawful, transparent, and fully accountable; the independence of the courts must be respected and their judgments complied with; and the watchdog agencies must be given the resources and the mandate to discharge their functions without fear or favour.

Leadership is tremendously important in promoting good governance. Leadership at various levels should have the resolve and political will to provide guidance as well as to bring about the necessary changes.

It is essential that the executive respects the independence of the judiciary and other governance institutions with powers of independent action. In many countries with poor governance, much of the blame lies with the executive for its refusal to accept the concept of judicial and prosecutorial independence.

The role of parliament

An elected national parliament or legislature is a fundamental pillar of any governance system based on democratic accountability. Its task, simply stated, is to express the sovereign will of the people through their chosen representatives, who, on their behalf, hold the executive accountable on a day-to-day basis. Likewise, a government gains its legitimacy from having won a mandate from the people.

Besides its primary function of making laws for a nation the legislature should exercise the role of a watchdog and scrutinise actions by the executive and compel it to operate within permissible limits.

With its multiple roles as a watchdog, regulator, and representative, the modern parliament is at the centre of the struggle to attain and sustain good governance and to fight corruption. To be fully effective in these roles, parliament must comprise individuals of integrity. If seen as a collection of rogues who have bought, bribed, cajoled and manoeuvred themselves into positions of power, a parliament forfeits whatever respect it might otherwise have enjoyed, and effectively disqualifies itself from promoting good governance and minimising corruption, even if it wants to do so.

Parliaments can reduce secrecy, monopoly, and discretion, but they do not guarantee honest and clean government, nor do they eliminate all corruption. Legislation can reduce the extent, significance, and pervasiveness of corruption, but as is repeatedly demonstrated in the some Commonwealth countries, other institutions will be needed, not least to alert parliaments to what they need to know.

It is therefore clear that the parliamentary public accounts committee operates more effectively if Commonwealth parliamentary practice is followed and its chairperson is a member of a party in opposition to the government. To sustain good governance, the recommendations of the public accounts committee should be generally accepted and acted upon by the executive.

The role of the judiciary

The superior courts play pivotal roles in sustaining good governance. Not only do they fulfil a function by holding public officials to account, but they are also charged with upholding the rule of law, so that the executive governs ‘under’ the law and not ‘with’ the law. The judiciary is an arm of government that plays a critical role in advancing good governance by defending and protecting the institutions of democracy. However, this task can only be discharged effectively when the judiciary operates in a free and independent environment.

An independent judiciary that ensures justice is dispensed speedily and fairly, without fear or favour, is also highly critical in instilling confidence among the people. Adequate personal security, facilities, salaries, and status are important in ensuring judicial independence.
Experience in Commonwealth countries has shown that constitutional provisions designed to protect judges from arbitrary removal can be manipulated quite shamelessly when a powerful executive is determined to have its way. It is essential that the task of assigning cases be given not to public servants but to the judges themselves, and that the chief justice enjoys the full confidence of his or her peers.

When a particular judge falls from executive favour, a variety of ploys can be used to try to bring the judge to heel. He or she may be posted to unattractive locations; benefits may be withdrawn; court facilities may be run down; or there may be a public campaign to undermine the judiciary.

Judges are required to be independent but this does not free them from being accountable. Other arms of governance are directly accountable to the people, but the judiciary is accountable to higher values and to standards of judicial correctness.

The role of the auditor-general

A prime accountability mechanism is vested in the office of the auditor-general. Supreme audit institutions stand at the apex of the financial accountability pyramid in most democratic countries. The office of the auditor-general (AG) is guaranteed by most constitutions for the purpose of providing transparent and credible accounting within the public service. AGs are government auditors whose roles are to ensure that governmental institutions adhere to strict budgetary principles. The AG’s office is an important tool in controlling corruption; however, the office cannot function effectively if it does not have the appropriate support from parliament.

The role of the public service

It is through the public service that the actions of the government take place. It is, therefore, important the public service is transparent in its relations with the general public to guarantee good governance. Accordingly, all public servants should operate under the rule of law by ensuring that the rights of the citizenry are respected [see box]. When services are provided in an efficient manner, fewer opportunities for corruption arise as citizens are no longer required to compete, often by way of paying bribes, for the scarce and inefficient services.

But members of the executive, too, must know where the lines are drawn, and respect these. This classic question remains as an example: where a public servant is instructed by a superior, or even a minister, to take an action which the public servant believes to be illegal, what should he or she do? The public servant may be able to persuade his or her superior that the instruction should be withdrawn, perhaps pointing out that they would both be liable to prosecution or disciplinary action were the instructions to be carried out.

Civil service guidelines

In any public service, there should be clear rules and procedures which ensure that civil servants understand both their rights and their responsibilities. Examples of these are the following:

- Civil servants should not misuse their official position to further private interests.
- Civil servants should not receive compromising benefits from a third party.
- Civil servants should not without authority disclose official or confidential information.
- Civil servants should not seek to frustrate the policies, decisions, or actions of their administrations.
- Civil servants should continue to observe their duties of confidentiality after they have left public employment.

In a case where the superior insists, it should be possible for the public servant to present his views to a further superior officer or the head of the civil service. If this is not practicable, and if at the end of the day compliance with an improper direction is unavoidable, the facts of the matter should be set out in a formal note on file, with times, dates, and the names of the persons involved. It is always important for the government officer to record whatever directives or decisions that are made by the minister, so as to safeguard the decision-making process.

The role of the anti-corruption agencies

Most democratic governments worldwide have established anti-corruption agencies. However, in principle, most institutions play a watchdog role. Parliament watches the executive; the auditor-general watches public finances and those who handle them; the judiciary upholds the constitution; the private media are alert to public indiscretions, and so on. It is therefore, imperative, that all democratic institutions are made to work effectively.

Anti-corruption agencies include all the primary watchdog institutions charged with combating corruption in the public and private sectors. These agencies can only function effectively if they have an appropriate degree of independence. They need to work within a framework of appropriate laws and to be appropriately resourced. Anti-corruption agencies also need to be accountable, but in ways that do not undermine their effectiveness.

The classic independent anti-corruption commissions are those of Hong Kong and Singapore, and while it is true that these two Commonwealth countries have chalked up outstanding successes, their models have not been transplanted very effectively into other countries. This is generally because those implementing countries lack the political commitment to fight corruption.

Political will is paramount

The concept of good governance is very much interlinked with institutionalised values such as democracy, observance of human rights, accountability, transparency and the general criminal justice system. In promoting good governance in the Commonwealth, political will to implement measures to improve governance and reduce corruption is paramount. The absence of good governance, within the Commonwealth as everywhere else, has proved to be particularly damaging to the developmental and interventional role of governments. Strategies for promoting good governance must be holistic in approach with strong political leadership as the prime mover.

Dr Roger Koranteng is Adviser (Governance), Governance and Institutional Development Division, Commonwealth Secretariat. He has specialised in policy making and analysis, public administration and governance. Dr Koranteng holds PhD (Public Policy) from University of Birmingham, UK; and other degrees from the Institute of Social Studies, The Hague; GIMPA, Ghana; University of Oslo, Norway; and University of Ghana, Legon.

The Governance and Institutional Development Division (GIDD) works as a partner with all Commonwealth peoples, committed to providing excellent technical assistance for capacity building and sustainable development in public institutions in particular, and in private sector and civil society institutions with public responsibilities.

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The interrelationship of ministers and permanent secretaries

By Rishi Athreya, Research Consultant

The working relationship between minister and permanent secretary is basic to capable governance and administration, and is vital to the implementation of a government’s political programme. A critical juncture that highlights this affiliation is a transition by way of an election or reshuffle. The political administrative interface has been emphasised as important in several Commonwealth conferences.

Ministers and permanent secretaries have certain roles that are intrinsic to their office. While politicians bring popular endorsement of a democratic electorate, civil servants are professionals who have to provide administrative expertise. The minister and permanent secretary form a link between the political and administrative parts of governance.

The minister is the political head of a department. In the Westminster system the minister conventionally belongs to the political party or grouping that has a majority in the legislature. The main role of a minister is to provide policy and direction to a government. He/she must set the agenda and policy based on the agenda of the political party and government. Ministers also represent the government to the electorate, and are responsible for communicating and generating popular support for initiatives. Ministers monitor execution, thereby overseeing implementation and results.

Permanent secretaries are the professional head of the department with organisational leadership of staff. Their basic role is to implement the policies of the elected government. The three primary responsibilities for a permanent secretary are: the regular work of the department, handling a difficult situation, and working with a new minister, to provide them with advice. Permanent secretaries are responsible for planning and execution of policy. The responsibility for fiscal probity lies with them.

This watertight distinction of roles does not actually exist in the ‘purple zone’. Civil servants are often involved in policy-making, besides execution. In many ways there can be no actual distinction between politically important and unimportant.

An important aspect to the link is accountability. In any government department the permanent secretary is responsible to the minister, while the minister is accountable to the political head of government (often the prime minister) and also to the legislature. The permanent secretary is accountable to the cabinet secretary and larger civil service. An important distinction is that ministers face public accountability to the electorate, while bureaucrats face internal accountability.

The connection between ministers and permanent secretaries is supposed to be one of utmost trust; however, they are often working in an adversarial system. Respect and trust needs to be continuously gained by the public service and is not inevitable. This is especially true at the time of a transition. There can be widespread discomfort due to impermanence in policy-making and administration.

A problem that civil servants face in some countries is that ministers often use their office to provide favours to friends and relatives. This has created problems for civil servants who are being forced to substitute official procedures with the minister’s will.

One area where the politicisation of public service has been noticed is the contract appointment of public servants. Permanent secretaries can change each time a government changes. These posts are often given out as political favours. Some countries that experimented with this system have reverted to the old system. The prime minister in the Westminster system is supposed to govern with the advice of the cabinet, comprising ministers who each head a ministry. The cabinet is supposed to be the forum to

Difficult issues

While the basic roles may appear straightforward enough, it has been observed that certain contentious matters occur between permanent secretaries and ministers.

The connection between ministers and permanent secretaries is supposed to be one of utmost trust; however, they are often working in an adversarial system. In many cases it is believed that permanent secretaries bombard ministers with paperwork and procedure, making functioning difficult. While ministers accuse permanent secretaries of blocking their ideas, the latter often complain of the unpredictable nature of political agendas.

An important aspect of a permanent secretary’s role is dealing with a transition generated by appointment of a new minister. Often civil servants themselves may not have faced a transition and are at a loss to deal with a new minister or government. Respect and trust needs to be continuously gained by the public service and is not inevitable. This is especially true at the time of a transition. There can be widespread discomfort due to impermanence in policy-making and administration.

An important point that emerged during the discussion at the 2nd Commonwealth Ministers Forum on Public Sector Development 2008, ‘Managing Relationships for Good Governance and Development’, was the nature of political appointees. The role of the minister’s policy advisor can sometimes impact attempts to build a rapport, such that it can be like ‘three people in a marriage’.

A problem that civil servants face in some countries is that ministers often use their office to provide favours to friends and relatives. This has created problems for civil servants who are being forced to substitute official procedures with the minister’s will.

One area where the politicisation of public service has been noticed is the contract appointment of public servants. Permanent secretaries can change each time a government changes. These posts are often given out as political favours. Some countries that experimented with this system have reverted to the old system.

The prime minister in the Westminster system is supposed to govern with the advice of the cabinet, comprising ministers who each head a ministry. The cabinet is supposed to be the forum to
to address the major policy issues. The prime minister, while nominally primus inter pares (first among equals), in many cases actually has a very dominant role. It has been noticed in some countries that the prime minister’s office starts to operate like a parallel centre of power away from the cabinet. The cabinet secretary in some cases has to keep the cabinet and other permanent secretaries involved with the prime minister’s agenda.

A noteworthy point is that civil servants and politicians often come from different social and educational backgrounds. Civil servants in general have a better educational and academic background than politicians. This is notwithstanding the best talent not entering the civil service.

Further, the civil service in many Commonwealth countries has roots in the erstwhile colonial era and continues to be seen as being distant and superior. A common complaint that has been expressed by ministers is that permanent secretaries and other civil servants consider them less educated and disregard their opinion.

**Cooperative working**

Certain other issues may be applicable to achieve a harmonious association of ministers and permanent secretaries.

Ministers expect the public service to be focused and committed, with a good understanding of the rules. They expect the civil service to be responsive, predictable and provide timely briefings and options. An effective government department is well-integrated with internal cooperation.

Permanent secretaries have to be truthful and loyal to the minister and government, requiring clear strategic goals and autonomy in execution in their need to remain apolitical. Permanent secretaries ask for clear strategic goals and autonomy in execution. They would prefer to be apolitical.

The Ministers Forum 2008 highlighted the need for clarity of roles based on mutual trust, respect, and openness of communications as key for effectual public service.

The Ministers Forum 2008 highlighted the need for clarity of roles based on mutual trust, respect, and openness of communications as key for effectual public service. The ministers must treat the public service with respect if they want open and honest advice. The minister sets the tone as to how things will be done, while the public service follows the tone that is set. The minister should think carefully about the kind of rapport wanted with the department. Expectations must be clear to ensure that the public service knows what is and what is not important to the minister.

Permanent secretaries need access to the minister. In turn, ministers must be clear about their expectations of the permanent secretary and ministry. Ministers should provide feedback to permanent secretaries.

An effective performance management system and training opportunities for politicians and civil servants alike are often recommended. A common suggestion from bureaucrats is that politicians should be encouraging and commend publicly for good performance.

A cooperative spirit and esprit de corps between ministers and permanent secretaries to face criticism and share acclaim needs to be embedded in bureaucratic lore. This is antithetical to the ‘culture of blame’ – of ministers routinely assuming that the public service is either incompetent or deliberately sabotaging the agenda, or in which public servants complain that they are not trusted and that politicians are indecisive. Both parties must assume leadership in signalling to the ministry that they are working together on effective governance.

**In effective cooperation between ministers and permanent secretaries, practitioners recommend that certain basic points are treated as important:**

- Never assume anything - keep the dialogue open.
- Remember that the relationship really matters.
- Roles and responsibilities matter and must be clearly understood.

Sometimes the temptation of ministers is to manage things rather than lead at the strategic level. The minister should stay out of the day-to-day operations of the department. The link works best with a dynamic minister who wants to accomplish goals. During a transition, the permanent secretary needs to ascertain the style of the minister, and to decide the best way to provide support. There should be a formal protocol about how things will work. Prescribed protocols of modus operandi for the departmental work and priorities are needed. The new position is a learning curve for the minister. A permanent secretary should ask a minister their current priorities and long-term watershed plans. In turn the minister should enquire about the permanent secretary’s operative plans to fulfil the shared vision.

Both should attempt to develop teamwork to attain the same (Barbados Proceedings). At such times of transition, the political side must be open and patient, thereby giving the public service a chance to prove itself.

In times of crisis, two priorities need to be addressed, namely, dealing with the immediate requirement, and exploring opportunities for a paradigm shift.

The connection between ministers and permanent secretaries continues to be a vexed issue. Popular media portrayed this in the BBC television series 'Yes Minister' and 'Yes Prime Minister'. At the The 2008 Commonwealth Ministers Forum, it was discussed that the minister/permanent secretary rapport should be one of equals but not friends. Time should be spent building a good rapport without getting too close.

The tone for cooperative working must be set by the prime minister and cabinet secretary, who are the first among equals of politicians and bureaucracy. Their rapport should be a model for ministers and permanent secretaries. This must be mutually agreed and effectively communicated to the political and public service sides of government.

**Emerging directions**

The interrelation of permanent secretary and ministers at the provincial level in large federations needs to be studied. There are often issues arising out of the answerability of permanent civil servants to a larger bureaucracy that may be nationwide. Also, a minister may be answerable to a larger political party or establishment that is also countrywide.

There may also be political ramifications due to differences between national and provincial governments. A civil servant may be in a delicate situation due to these circumstances.

The relationship of politicians and civil servants continues being an issue at the local government level. The relationship of councillors and mayors with local government officials is also a potential topic of research.

Rishi Athreya is a researcher in the topics of International Development, Public Sector Reform, and Local Government. He has been associated with the Governance and Institutional Development Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat. Mr Athreya brings experience of Academic Research, Local Government and the Third Sector. He holds an MA (Development Studies) (Leeds), Grad. Dip Soc Sc (Flinders) and PG Cert Soc Sc Research Methods.

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The cabinet’s role in governance

By Syed Sharfuddin, Former Special Adviser for Political Affairs, Commonwealth Secretariat

The function of the cabinet has evolved over centuries to a system of political governance in which cabinet ministers work as a team to oversee government policy in the exercise of their role as the executive. The cabinet system represents an orderly and systematic process of formulating public policy, in which members of the cabinet, led by the prime minister, decide the direction of the government in regard to legislation passed by parliament. They also interpret legislation in a manner which is consistent, coherent, clear and less ambiguous for policy implementation.

In parliamentary democracies, cabinets or councils of ministers, as they are commonly known, are free to debate issues and modify proposals; however, they are obliged to publicly support the policy of the government after it has been approved for implementation. The prime minister is the head of government and the cabinet is the core of the executive.

Cabinet systems are founded on the principle of organisational hierarchy. The prime minister is ‘first among equals’ but has the power to appoint or drop a member from the cabinet, and allocate or re-shuffle cabinet positions.

Members of the cabinet seek to influence legislative policy in line with the political agenda of the government in power. In the cabinet system, executive decisions take into account the recommendations of the cabinet, concerns of members of parliament and the need for striking the right balance between political priorities and the public good.

Table 1. Cabinet membership in Commonwealth member countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Cabinet Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antigua &amp; Barbuda</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bahamas</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
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<td>Barbados</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belize</td>
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<tr>
<td>Botswana</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brunei Darussalam</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cameroon</td>
<td>42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>39</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cyprus</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dominica</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fiji Islands</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Gambia</td>
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<td>Ghana</td>
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<td>Grenada</td>
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<td>Guyana</td>
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<td>India</td>
<td>31</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jamaica</td>
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<td>Kenya</td>
<td>44</td>
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<td>Kiribati</td>
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<td>Lesotho</td>
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<td>Malawi</td>
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<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
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<td>Maldives</td>
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<td>Malta</td>
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<td>Mauritius</td>
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<td>Mozambique</td>
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<td>Namibia</td>
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<td>Nauru</td>
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<td>New Zealand</td>
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<td>Nigeria</td>
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<td>Pakistan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Papua New Guinea</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>St Kitts &amp; Nevis</td>
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<td>St Lucia</td>
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<td>St Vincent</td>
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<td>Samoa</td>
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<td>Seychelles</td>
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<td>Sierra Leone</td>
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<td>Singapore</td>
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<td>Solomon Islands</td>
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<td>South Africa</td>
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<td>Sri Lanka</td>
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<td>Swaziland</td>
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<td>Tanzania</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tonga</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trinidad &amp; Tobago</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuvalu</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
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<td>United Kingdom</td>
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<td>Vanuatu</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>25</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Source: Government websites and other internet sources.

The cabinet is the functional embodiment of the constitutional theory of ministerial and collective responsibility. It represents a set of rules and routines that the executive must follow for policy-making. As a component of the core executive, the cabinet provides an arena for political bargaining between the key players in the executive.

In the Westminster model, the cabinet collates and coordinates advice on policy issues through ministerial and official committees and the cabinet office. It has become established practice that cabinet ministers who are unable to publicly support a particular government policy owing to their political convictions must resign their cabinet position. In practice, however, such discord is usually rare as decisions are taken collectively and represent the policy of the government as a whole.

Cabinets in the Commonwealth

In Commonwealth countries the cabinet system has developed unique characteristics different from the Westminster model. For many countries the cabinet reflects the nature of the political
alignments in the ruling party or coalition. Members of the cabinet are chosen from the ruling party or the governing coalition. However, the prime minister may also select any member of parliament. From outside the ruling party or coalition, to become a member of the cabinet. Governments also offer ministerial portfolios to the opposition on the basis of equitable and shared representation from time to time.

The practice of referring to members of the cabinet as ministers or secretaries varies in different countries. Cabinet members are given charge of individual portfolios of various ministries or departments of the government and have an experienced team of civil servants at their disposal to give advice and implement government policy. Ministers report to the prime minister on the strategic priorities of their departments. The cabinet is collectively answerable to parliament in respect of policies made on behalf of the government.

In countries where the president is both the head of state and government, the cabinet functions as an unofficial advisory council to the president. This enables the head of state to benefit from a range of views and opinions for taking major policy decisions. Cabinet members do not need to belong to the legislative assembly in countries that follow the presidential system.

In the presidential system, under the doctrine of checks and balances, the cabinet is a part of the executive branch but requires official confirmation of its members by the legislature. In Westminster systems, members of the cabinet are also members of the legislature. As long as the government enjoys the confidence of parliament, members of the cabinet do not require confirmation by legislature.

The cabinet office

The cabinet office, also known as cabinet division in some countries, is headed by a cabinet secretary. It performs three key functions. It supports the executive’s work of defining and delivering the government’s objectives. Secondly, it provides information and advice to the cabinet on coherent, qualitative and deliverable policy and operations across departments. It also strengthens the civil service by ensuring that it is organised effectively and has the capability in terms of skills, values and strategic insight to deliver the government’s stated objectives.

Decentralised cabinets

In some Commonwealth countries, decentralisation and devolution have led to increased federalism, with corresponding adjustments in the cabinet system of governance. In these countries, cabinets operate both at the federal and state levels, and take decisions on matters which are under their agreed purview. It is this flexibility of adaptation that allows large federations, such as Australia, Canada, India, Nigeria, Malaysia and South Africa, to retain the salient features of the cabinet system in their respective governance structures.

Barriers to effectiveness

In recent times, certain practices have come to work against the effective performance of the cabinet. The abuse of the cabinet system includes reducing most meetings of the cabinet to briefings with a view to endorsing decisions which have already been taken by the prime minister in consultation with the concerned minister. Due to the demand of time on ministers, fewer committees of the cabinet are constituted or hold meetings. Ministers also do not raise matters in the cabinet meetings other than what has already been discussed in advance with the prime minister. Sometimes cabinet systems have suffered from the informal decision-making style of prime ministers who rely more on the advice of their private office than that of the cabinet.

Cabinet systems have sometimes suffered from over-centralisation, multiplicity of inputs and pressure from the top. Instead of recommendations coming from cabinet committees and the cabinet office, power is centralised in the office of the prime minister. There may also be conflicting advice coming to the prime minister not just from the cabinet but also from other government agencies and political advisers. In other instances, the quality of a cabinet’s performance may be overshadowed by the pre-eminence of the ruling party’s leadership, thus undermining the principle of collective decision-making.

Sometimes, the prime minister keeps certain important portfolios and exercises these functions himself/herself indefinitely. In practice this overloads the system and deprives the cabinet of independent expert advice other than the views of the prime minister. It also tends to concentrate power in fewer hands.

Lack of coordination within the executive often results in conflicting public statements by ministers on a given issue and can be quite embarrassing for the minister under whose portfolio the matter actually falls. Such discord can also be costly for the government in an election year.

The cabinet has the power to promulgate ordinances during parliamentary recess. This function derives from the power of the executive to execute laws and to ensure that the government continues to function efficiently at all times. However, governments have sometimes found it tempting to implement policy by short-circuiting legislation and using the cabinet to promulgate ordinances. It becomes easier thereafter for the executive to get these approved by parliament following their promulgation as law.

An effective cabinet

A good cabinet system is the opposite of these malpractices. An effective cabinet is one which acts as a collegiate body of the executive that encourages the civil service to be candid in its advice. A successful cabinet engages in open debate and provides alternative policy options to the executive. Sub-committees of the cabinet regularly report to the cabinet on their findings. A prime minister who listens to the cabinet is respected by his or her colleagues and receives their full cooperation.

The shadow cabinet

It has become customary for the official opposition to also name a shadow cabinet among the leading members of the opposition charged with responsibility to ‘shadow’ government ministers in their concerned portfolios. The shadow cabinet questions the direction of the government in the concerned area of government policy and proposes more appealing alternatives with a view to gaining public support for their party in the next election.

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The Commonwealth Consulting and Risk Analysis, Ltd UK provides specialised consultancy services to governments, Commonwealth organisations and donor agencies to promote Harare Commonwealth Principles. Particular focus is on strengthening democratic governance and transforming societies for economic, social and human development in accordance with their cultures and traditions.

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The Commonwealth Ministers Reference Book – 2009
Ensuring Effective Access to Justice in South Africa:

The role of Legal Aid South Africa

South Africa – a Constitutional Democracy

South Africa is a constitutional democracy which guarantees its citizens various basic rights (equality before the law, human dignity, life, freedom and security etc), socio-economic rights (health, housing, education) and other rights which are enshrined in the Bill of Rights section of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996).

The duty on the state under s7(2) of the Constitution to “fulfil” the rights in the Bill of Rights places a positive obligation on the state to take measures to enable people to achieve and enforce their rights. The realisation and protection of these rights is essential to making the Constitution a living document for all the citizens, in particular the poor and vulnerable. Poverty should not be a barrier to the people of South Africa progressively realising all the rights guaranteed in our Constitution nor to their right to access justice.

In the words of former Lord Chief Justice of England, Gordon Hewart, it is of “fundamental importance that justice should not only be done, but should manifestly and undoubtedly be seen to be done”. Without access this cannot be achieved.

What is Access to Justice?

Access to justice in the first instance relates to access to courts or independent tribunals to have all justiciable disputes considered fairly and impartially. It deals with both the right to bring one’s case to court, and the right to be enabled to do so effectively. The right of access requires the provision of legal aid by the state in those cases where the person cannot afford his/her own legal representation.

Access to justice also includes the right to a fair trial as well as the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law. The Constitution of RSA (S34) guarantees that everyone has the right to have any dispute that can be resolved by the application of law decided in “a fair public hearing”. This includes the right to legal representation if the party is not able to participate effectively in the case. It also includes “equality of arms” i.e. conditions that do not place it at a substantial disadvantage vis-a-vis its opponent.

The World Bank has pointed out in its 2006 World Development Report (Chapter 8), that building an equitable justice system is a necessary element of sustainable economic development. This requires effective access to the system. Creating an accessible justice system is therefore not just a matter of providing a social benefit: it is a necessary element of the developmental state. This is so because unless people have confidence in the justice system, and access to it, social conflicts are resolved by “self-help” and action outside the system: instead of being mediated through the courts by the application of legal rules, conflict is resolved on the streets or behind closed doors by the application of force.

The courts thus provide a critical mechanism for resolving conflict at both social and individual level. Effectively functioning courts are not a desirable luxury, they are part of the infrastructure of a country. If the legal system
is able to regulate relationships and resolve conflicts and disputes in an ordered, fair, and predictable way, this encourages both domestic and foreign investment.

The World Bank has given particular attention to the need for legal aid funding: “The poor face multiple obstacles to legal and judicial services. As a basic public service, citizens must have access to conflict resolution and rule enforcement mechanisms. The most common approach to improve access is to introduce subsidized legal services for criminal defendants and for family, land, and civil matters.... The World Bank has targeted legal aid funding specifically at poor women and their children, who face particularly high obstacles to legal and judicial services.”

The role of Legal Aid South Africa

Legal Aid South Africa is an autonomous statutory agency, independent of government and prosecution services, established by the Legal Aid Act 22 of 1969 (as amended). The objective of Legal Aid South Africa is to render or make available legal aid to indigent persons and to provide legal representation at state expense where substantial injustice would otherwise result, as contemplated in the South African Constitution.

The Mission of Legal Aid South Africa is to be a leading provider of quality, professional legal services, ensuring effective access to justice for the poor and vulnerable, in an independent, efficient and caring manner.

Funding for legal aid

Legal Aid South Africa receives funding annually from the national fiscus. It accounts to its Board of Directors who account to the Minister of Justice and ultimately to the Parliament of the Republic of South Africa. For the 2009/10 financial year Legal Aid South Africa’s budget is approximately R950 million (US$90 million).

The Delivery of Access to justice

Currently Legal Aid South Africa provides legal representation in about 400,000 new matters annually. It delivers legal aid services to clients through various delivery mechanisms:

- 87% of services through its own salaried lawyers who assist clients at all the criminal courts in the country and at about 120 offices which form a national footprint across the country. It employs about 3,000 staff, 75% of whom are legal professionals. It also employs paralegals at its Justice Centres, who advise and screen clients including awaiting trial detainees;
- a system of Judicare, whereby lawyers in private practice are instructed to perform work on its behalf in return for a set fee;
- cooperation agreements with a number of partners who deliver services in specialist areas such as Refugee Law, HIV/Aid and Land related matters;
- an Impact Litigation Unit which takes on cases which will affect a large group of people, protect constitutional rights or which will set important legal precedents.

Assisting the poor and vulnerable

Legal Aid South Africa ensures access to justice for the citizens of South Africa, especially the poor and vulnerable by ensuring that all accused persons, who face the possibility of substantial injustice in a criminal trial, are able to access legal representation as shown in the case studies that follow.

In the Eastern Cape, Mr Langbooi, was facing a court application for the removal of his livestock from the farm where he had worked and stayed all his life. Without his livestock he would not be able to support his family. Legal Aid South Africa assisted Mr Langbooi and ensured that

to pay the non-profit company for the services. This case is a good example as to how one can formalise informal trading and how communities, the private sector and the state can work together to create opportunities for poor communities to ensure that they can earn a living.

Continuing to ensure Access to justice

Our Constitution can only be a living document for all citizens if Legal Aid South Africa continues to ensure state funded access to justice for the most vulnerable and the poorest of our society.

The Vision of Legal Aid South Africa is for a South Africa in which the rights enshrined in the Constitution are protected and defended to ensure peace and justice for all.

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Independent and within reach.
Local government in the Commonwealth: diversity at its bloom

By Dr Munawwar Alam, Adviser, Governance and Institutional Development Division, Commonwealth Secretariat

Local government is the lowest tier of government. It is closest to citizens and the community and therefore known as ‘local’. It has an extremely important role to play in a society as an agent of change and development, as it represents the interests of a particular locality at the micro-level, leading to a broader concept of the welfare and happiness of its people. It also fulfils a vital function as a training ground in democracy at grass-roots level, both for voters and those who represent them. This article provides a brief background to decentralisation reforms internationally and then depicts regional variations, in terms of the state and pace of reforms, across an extensive Commonwealth canvas.

The domain of local councils encompasses virtually every aspect of everyday life. This extends from birth to death, from water supply, sanitation and education to marriage, health, disposal of refuse, roads, town planning, etc. In many countries, local councils also serve as conciliatory courts to resolve petty disputes at local level. It is this universality of basic functions performed and responsibilities shouldered by the local bodies that makes local government the most important administrative tier for the common citizen, since in day-to-day life there is seldom contact with higher tiers of government.

The element of popular participation (the electoral process) in local bodies also provides a training ground in democracy at the grass-roots level, both for the representatives and the represented. The councillors find an opportunity, a forum, for their own political training and familiarity with the legislative and administrative aspects for advanced political careers in higher tiers of government. On the other hand, the process infuses political awareness and a sense of responsibility among the people regarding their own rights as electors.

Local governments are specific entities at sub-national level created by national or sub-national statutes. They have political authority, but are not necessarily elected. Different countries have different systems of appointment including direct nomination by central government. Government at local level can also be through agencies of central or sub-national government, as the case may be (e.g. local administration).

In many Commonwealth countries (e.g. Africa and Pacific) there are traditional structures co-existing with elected local governments. The role and extent of authority of these traditional structures – chiefs, paramount chiefs, etc. – vary from country to country. In many countries traditional chiefs are empowered under customary law. Many countries are striving to integrate traditional chiefs into decentralised local government systems and structures.

Local governance

Today, globalisation and the information revolution has brought about a redefinition of the role of the state, and thereby enhanced focus on local governance.

In any country, local governments are part of the overall local governance system. Local governance includes statutory government organisations and any third sector. It includes, besides local governments themselves, a number of societal actors such as citizens, trades and businesses, community organisations, NGOs and media, not forgetting civil society. Their dynamics determines the contours and complexion of any local governance system depending upon interests, the relative power of actors and institutional arrangements (formal and informal) in which they interact. Also, relevant are certain key questions:

- To what extent is participatory democracy being realised at local government level?
- To what extent is local government responsive to the needs and concerns of citizens?
- To what extent are local government politicians and officials held accountable for their decisions and actions?

In nutshell, we can say that local governance is a broader concept that includes the direct as well as the indirect roles of state institutions (including local governments), and informal networks defining citizen-citizen and citizen-state relationships.

Decentralisation

A major part of the current policy debate revolves around decentralisation of power from central to local governments. In a departure from the old policy of state withdrawal from services, the move now is for these to be decentralised. The concept is to pass power downwards to some one more in contact with the public to be served.

Notwithstanding the political or social pressures for decentralisation, the underlying administrative rationale has been to improve efficiency and better service delivery, especially when central planning has not been found to be very efficient.

About 75 national governments have attempted decentralisation over the last three decades. Reasons for making this move vary from country to country, the current pace of reform, likewise, shows significant variations. In some countries, for instance Scotland in the UK, decentralisation has been undertaken to accommodate regional aspirations. In other cases such as Sri Lanka and Nigeria, the rationale has been to avoid secessionist forces. National reconstruction has often been the basis for creating effective local government, for instance in Uganda and South Africa. Decentralisation has also been used in federal countries to deflect power from the central governments and strong provincial governments (e.g. Pakistan, India.) There has been pressure from the World Bank and other donors for decentralisation, especially to bring about better service delivery. Notwithstanding the political or social pressures for decentralisation, the underlying administrative rationale has been to improve efficiency and better service delivery, especially when central planning has not been found to be very efficient.
It is also believed that decentralisation increases accountability and transparency and improves governance, which is not always the case and a view attributable to the low level of awareness of voters of their rights and responsibilities of their elected representatives.

In public administration, ‘decentralisation’ is a generic term that is used in different contexts. However, literature mentions three types of decentralisation:

- **De-concentration** or administrative decentralisation: wherein responsibilities are assigned to agents of the central government
- **Devolution** or political decentralisation: where responsibilities are assigned to elected bodies with some degree of autonomy
- **Delegation**: a government agency or sub-national government carries out a function on behalf of the central government in lieu of monetary compensation.

Table 1 shows levels of decentralisation vis-à-vis reform indicators.

### Local government in different regions of the Commonwealth

This section gives a brief overview of local government across the Commonwealth. The diversity of the Commonwealth family of nations makes the state of local democracy in the Commonwealth extremely varied. The Commonwealth Secretariat supports decentralisation policies through a range of activities. Of 53 member countries, some have no systems of local government. For understandable reasons, that is the case in some of our smaller states in the Pacific and the Caribbean, and in Asia in such places as Brunei and the city-state of Singapore. Many member countries have gone so far as to provide constitutional protection to local governments, and some – for example Cyprus and Australia – have introduced compulsory voting in local government elections, showing just how highly their governments rate ‘grass roots’ democracy.


### Africa

African countries have undergone waves of decentralisation reforms since their independence. There is a long history of local government and decentralisation in different traditions, starting from pre-colonial authorities, colonial administration and post-independence local government reform initiatives. Different factors have motivated the decision by central governments to transfer political, financial and administrative responsibilities to sub-national governments. These factors include securing democratic governance and hence legitimacy at the sub-national level, managing intra-state conflicts, and expediting development. However, the implementation of the decentralisation policies beginning in the late 1980s has been inhibited by inadequate resources and ineffective collaboration. The weakness of the decentralisation reforms in African countries may also be traced to the lack of attention to the process of implementation and management of the reforms.

The past two decades have seen a real trend towards shifting powers to sub-national governments. In many African states, local councils are now elected by popular vote and have the power to pass by-laws with varying degrees of political autonomy. Many have elected councils with legislative powers and executive discretion. In some countries, central governments have delegated their powers to local governments, e.g. in health and education. However, there is a need to create administrative capacity and provide financial resources. Decentralisation reforms are gaining momentum, albeit at a varying pace in different countries. Some of the major African local government issues are:

- Local government capacity
**The Commonwealth Ministers Reference Book – 2009**

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**30**

**Ministerial Briefings – Local Government**

The Pacific Island Countries have peculiar circumstances and Pacific regulation, and marginalisation of disadvantaged groups. The main features of metropolitan local governments is that they have several tiers, as in Karachi, Mumbai, New Delhi and Calcutta. Mega-cities make a substantial contribution towards the GDP of their countries. There are however issues of urban poverty, public health, slums, infrastructure and crime. The main weaknesses in governance are poor co-ordination, ineffective regulation, and marginalisation of disadvantaged groups.

India and Pakistan have made major strides in decentralisation recently. India formalised the hitherto existing traditional local government institution of ‘Panchayati Raj’ by a Constitutional Amendment in 1992. There is a three tier system of village, intermediate and district level local government. Certain service delivery functions such as infrastructure, health and education have been allocated to these bodies. In 2001, Pakistan introduced massive local government reforms.

**Asia**

In Commonwealth Asia, in comparative terms, countries have larger populations, for instance India. A major challenge facing Asian countries is effective governance of mega-cities. Of nineteen of these cities with populations more than 10 million in the world, six are in the Commonwealth, of these five are in Asia (Mumbai, Calcutta, Dhaka, Karachi and Delhi). A common feature of metropolitan local governments is that they have several tiers, as in Karachi, Mumbai, New Delhi and Calcutta.

Mega-cities make a substantial contribution towards the GDP of their countries. There are however issues of urban poverty, public health, slums, infrastructure and crime. The main weaknesses in governance are poor co-ordination, ineffective regulation, and marginalisation of disadvantaged groups.

India and Pakistan have made major strides in decentralisation recently. India formalised the hitherto existing traditional local government institution of ‘Panchayati Raj’ by a Constitutional Amendment in 1992. There is a three tier system of village, intermediate and district level local government. Certain service delivery functions such as infrastructure, health and education have been allocated to these bodies. In 2001, Pakistan introduced massive local government reforms.

**Pacific**

The Pacific Island Countries have peculiar circumstances and vulnerabilities. Most of the countries face a set of particularly demanding development challenges due to limited geographic size, dependence on narrow resource bases, limited international trade opportunities, distance from major capital and goods markets, coupled with their particular exposure to natural and environmental disasters. There have been significant societal

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**Tonga**

Tonga is a small island state with a population of approximately 100,000. The Kingdom is divided into districts and these are further subdivided into towns, but there is no local government system as such. The government seeks to amend the constitution to allow creation of local authorities and establish a town council in the capital city of Nuku’alofa. The government sees the establishment of a first local council in Nuku’alofa as a pilot project for the development of councils and community laws throughout the kingdom.

The rebuilding of the city consequent to the riots in 2006 provides the government with an opportunity to implement one of its long-term development goals of introducing local government, which is a relatively new concept in Tonga.

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**Caribbean**

While the history of local government decentralisation is fairly long, not all countries of the Commonwealth Caribbean have incorporated decentralisation as a part of their development strategy. In seven countries – the Bahamas, Belize, Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago – the existing forms of local government bear some relation to the theoretical constructs of local government, and this is particularly in relation to elected local government. In St Lucia, local government has been administered in the past three decades by interim councils appointed by the Minister for Local Government. The functions and responsibilities of local government have been gradually but consistently transferred to centralised authorities since 1980. In many states, namely Antigua, Barbados, Grenada, St Kitts and Nevis, and St Vincent and the Grenadines, there is no local government system.

**Trinidad and Tobago**

In Trinidad and Tobago, after independence in 1962, there have been increasing attempts to create effective local government. In 2006 the government issued a Draft White Paper on Local Government Reform as part of Vision 2020 – to attain developed country status. The key objectives of envisaged reforms are improvement of infrastructure, delivery of social services, environment, citizen participation, and accountability and good governance.
Based on existing practices, several generalisations can be drawn about the practice of decentralisation in the Caribbean. The electoral element is not working properly, or participation is not encouraged, or the lack of financial autonomy means that local councils have no discretionary powers, and in some instances local government authorities are not empowered to collect taxes.

Issues and challenges

Within the Commonwealth, as in other parts of the globe, several issues and challenges affect sustainability of democratic, responsive and efficient local governments.

Central-local government relations. This issue is at the heart of the debate about decentralisation. There is an obvious tension between these two tiers of government. Though it is the central government’s responsibility to make sure that public resources are properly used at the local level, yet operational interference and micro-management can seriously hamper the spirit of decentralisation.

Staffing. As local governments are chronically deficient in human resources in most Commonwealth countries, central government appoints its own staff especially at senior level, for instance in India, Bangladesh, Malawi, Pakistan and Tanzania. The strong executive power of officials appointed by the centre is also seen in most African countries. In these cases, local staff continue to respond to the incentives provided by upper-tier governments. In Pakistan, for example, the decentralisation to local tiers has been incomplete, with local staff still part of provincial cadres. Many Commonwealth countries have established a local government service commission to appoint staff for local governments (e.g. Uganda, Ghana, Mauritius, Swaziland and Lesotho).

Service delivery. The origin of decentralisation has different compulsions; however, improving service delivery is often a key motive. Delivering quality services to citizens is also a matter of striking a balance between national and local priorities. Local authorities need a supportive environment that should enable them to deliver effective and efficient performance without being restrained by unnecessary regulations and inflexibility.

Another problem is that decentralisation has led to misaligned responsibilities, in many cases because the process is incomplete, perhaps due to political reasons. For example, although Pakistan has devolved responsibility for health to the districts, doctors remain employees of the provincial government. The district Nazim (elected mayor) has little authority over the hiring, firing, evaluation or placement of doctors.

The assignment of responsibilities can affect service delivery by altering the accountability of lower-level to higher-level government. This issue is well exemplified by the way health and education services are funded and delivered in South Africa. Each of these expenditures is constitutionally considered to be the concurrent responsibility of central and provincial governments. But the concept of concurrence – who is responsible for what aspect of the joint responsibility – has not been defined properly. While policy, delivery standards and health and education financing are decided nationally, implementation is decentralised to provinces.

To improve local service delivery, Commonwealth countries are increasingly moving towards non-conventional modes of municipal infrastructure financing through such mechanisms as public-private partnerships (PPPs). For example, Fiji Islands promulgated PPP laws enabling local governments to contract out local services; whereas in the case of Pakistan, PPP is in-built into the existing local government law enacted in 2001.

Urban and rural local governments. Rapid urbanisation is straining the resources of urban areas. There is a greater rate of urbanisation in developing countries compared with the developed world. One problem faced by urban local government is the tendency of politicians to prefer rural areas. Funds are often been diverted to viable projects in rural areas to appeal to large rural vote banks, and therefore urban infrastructure is often neglected, although this could often be self-financing.

Capacity building. Local governments traditionally lack capacity in terms of human and financial resources. But the big question is of sequencing between different aspects of decentralisation: whether to wait to build local capacity before providing local governments the autonomy, or to let local autonomy precede the creation of such capacity.

Local government finance

All public money is “public”, as this is contributed by taxpayers, and it is a matter of administrative convenience which level of government collects which revenues. Finance is a critical determinant of the effective performance of local governments. Briefly, there are three important issues relating to local government finance – inter-governmental transfers, councils’ own ability to mobilise financial resources, and effective and efficient use of those resources. Within the Commonwealth, federal states such as India, Pakistan and South Africa have finance commissions to oversee fiscal transfers from the centre to the sub-national units and from there to the lowest tier of local government. However, the performance of these commissions has been mixed.

In conclusion, it can be said that in the Commonwealth decentralisation has been a major feature of the governance agenda over the past years. Different countries are at different stages of development. What is important is that design of local government reforms should keep service delivery, citizens’ voice and accountability as essential components. The mere fact that the design and implementation of decentralisation is not always systematic suggests that it is not a one-off policy change; it is an ongoing process where the end point of accountable and efficient local government may well take many decades to achieve. While the process is dynamic yet uncertain in many situations, the central government may be best positioned to manage and mitigate the risks of improper sequencing and their impact.

This paper is a revised version of 'Local government in the Commonwealth', published in the Commonwealth Ministers’ Reference Book 2008. For references, please contact the author.

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The Governance and Institutional Development Division (GIDD) of the Commonwealth Secretariat helps Commonwealth developing countries strengthen their structures of governance and administration. GIDD’s work covers the full spectrum of public sector administration and management, as well as working to strengthen civil society and private sector institutions with public responsibilities. GIDD provides a range of technical assistance to help governments improve their public services. Programmes are tailored to country, regional, and pan-Commonwealth needs. GIDD implements some 70 public sector development projects annually.

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The University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, located in the commercial heart of Africa, is an urban university which has the distinctive capacity to contribute to the development of our country and the continent through research and the production of highly skilled, flexible graduates.

Professor Loyiso Nongxa, Vice-Chancellor and Principal, has articulated a vision for Wits University to be “a fully engaged institution in the South African and African context in pursuit of a meaningful place on the global knowledge stage.” He furthermore stated that “Africa needs lasting, focused and value-adding knowledge platforms that bring together continental stakeholders - policy makers, academia, business and civil society - to gain concrete insights into mobilisation and dissemination of knowledge for African development.”

The University of the Witwatersrand has a wealth of researchers engaged in the area broadly defined as Development Orientated Training and Research (DOTR) and has considerably strengthened its competitive advantage in the field in recent years. This is evidenced through the wide spectrum of disparate activities occurring across all faculties such as Knowledge Management Africa, Sustainability Science, Natural Resources in African Ecosystems, Forced Migration, Geosciences, Development Management, Integrated Water Resources Management, Public Health Priorities in Africa and many others.

Wits is committed to position itself in becoming the undisputed leader in the field. As a university, Wits will stand to benefit from research programmes and postgraduate training in collaboration with partner institutions on the continent and abroad. This systemic approach to DOTR for capacity building in Africa as a core competence will ensure that it becomes the institution of choice as a partner by funders and collaborators.

For more details or a copy of the publication outlining all the initiatives contact Adele.Lacob@wits.ac.za
Peace-building and conflict resolution in the Commonwealth

By Amitav Banerji, Director, Political Affairs Division, Commonwealth Secretariat

If there are two issues that account for the Commonwealth’s renaissance as an international organisation in the post-Cold War era, these are its contribution as a force for democracy and good governance, and its largely unsung work to prevent and resolve conflict. These were two areas identified by the high-level appraisal of the Commonwealth in 1990-91, that sought to redefine the association’s role in the new global order. Both of them have since had a dramatic impact in many member countries, transforming the political landscape of the Commonwealth as a whole.

Much of the Commonwealth’s work focuses, directly or indirectly, on fostering the peace and stability of its member states, which is the crucial precondition for the political and socio-economic development of their citizens. Unlike the United Nations (UN) or the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), the Commonwealth does not engage in ‘peace-keeping’ or ‘peace-enforcement’; it has no security responsibilities, no Security Council, and no battalions of soldiers to maintain peace (even if peacekeepers from Commonwealth countries contribute hugely and impressively to peacekeeping duties for the UN). On the other hand, ‘peace-making’ is a major Commonwealth priority; virtually everything the Commonwealth does, across its wide spectrum of activities, contributes to this priority.

Democracy, development, conflict resolution and peace-building are, of course, organically interlinked. A lack of democracy is usually fertile ground for instability and strife, as is a state of underdevelopment and poverty. Peace-building requires that the people enjoy both democracy and development on a sustained basis. Likewise, chronic tension and conflict in a society can put both democracy and development in peril. The Commonwealth therefore believes in a holistic approach to building the foundations of peace – it focuses on giving people the rights and freedoms that go with an open society and accountable government, as well as the fruits of socio-economic growth and prosperity.

Virtually everything the Commonwealth does, across its wide spectrum of activities, contributes to this priority.

The Good Offices programme

While the Commonwealth has a long-standing practice of not getting involved in conflicts or disputes between states (fortunately these are few and far between in the Commonwealth), it has an active ‘Good Offices’ programme that focuses on preventing and resolving situations within countries that could endanger national stability, undermine democracy or deteriorate into violence, while also strengthening the ability of member countries to promote the association’s fundamental values. These values were laid down by Commonwealth Heads of Government in the 1991 Harare Commonwealth Declaration, as well as in other seminal documents. They include democratic processes and institutions, fundamental human rights, independence of the judiciary, the rule of law, freedom of expression, and just and honest government. They also include gender equality, the empowerment of young people and sustainable socio-economic development.

Experience has shown that most conflicts at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the current one are intra-state. They stem from divisions within states – ethnic, religious, cultural, even economic. On the one hand, the world gets increasingly smaller as globalisation proceeds inexorably. On the other, societies become more and more cosmopolitan, generating pressure on resources and bringing latent prejudices and primordial tendencies to the fore.

Conflict is often the result of misunderstanding, perceived historical injustice, or competition for scarce resources and opportunities. Conflict need not always reflect itself in violence, but is often inherent in disagreements and opposing political beliefs and positions. These situations have the potential to be positively channelled and produce constructive reform of governance systems which is especially true in situations where states are emerging from undemocratic traditions. The challenge is to ensure that member countries have the right mechanisms to make certain that disagreements and grievances are channelled through appropriate peaceful processes, and are not expressed through violence.

Fundamental preconditions

There are obviously some fundamental conditions that must exist for the prevention and resolution of conflict. There must be a willingness on the part of the protagonists to engage in dialogue, to publicly reject violence, and to compromise. The parties must have clearly identified leaders who enjoy legitimacy as representatives of their constituencies. Any exercise must be inclusive, drawing in all the key players. There must be an agreed agenda and ground rules for any negotiation process, to which all parties subscribe. Confidentiality and discretion are important to maintain – which is why the excellent work that goes on behind the scenes goes largely unnoticed.

When a mediator or facilitator is involved – a role in which the Commonwealth frequently finds itself – the key principle is that this third party must enjoy the trust of all protagonists as an impartial and objective arbiter that has no agenda of its own. It is this trusted partner status that has become one of the hallmarks of the Commonwealth, explaining why more and more countries invite its good offices to resolve sensitive domestic issues, and why such engagement is welcomed and not considered to be interference in the internal affairs of sovereign states.
Unique, trusted status

The ability of parties to talk to each other and address issues in a constructive manner can be a powerful tool in defusing tensions and preventing violence. The Commonwealth Secretariat can provide support through direct engagement with the parties involved, or through behind-the-scenes support to an existing initiative. Good Offices activities are often led by a Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, who is an experienced Commonwealth person of stature, with the support of advisers from the Commonwealth Secretariat. Good Offices work is an iterative process, often one small step at a time, building delicate relationships and rebuilding bruised ones. Durable peace cannot be made in haste. And no two situations are ever the same – there is no set template, even if there are abiding principles that underpin peace-making.

The Commonwealth’s unique blend of strengths, experience and expertise enables it to carry out this form of preventive and post-conflict diplomacy. Apart from the trusted partner status mentioned above, it brings other strengths that support such engagements and help to promote dialogue and conflict resolution – consensus decision-making; a common working language and shared traditions, administrative systems and institutions; informality of style; flexibility of approach; a core commitment to promote unity while respecting diversity, drawing from a wide experience of multi-cultural and diverse societies; and a shared commitment at the highest political level to fundamental political values.

The challenge is to ensure that member countries have the right mechanisms to make certain that disagreements and grievances are channelled through appropriate peaceful processes, and are not expressed through violence.

All Good Offices work respects member states’ sovereignty and rests on the basic principle that intervention in a member state can take place only at the request or with the concurrence of the government in question. Such activities must also enjoy broad political support in the association as a whole.

Over the longer term

While short-term measures focus on dialogue, negotiation and problem-solving, the long-term approach is more strategic and structural in character. Over the longer term, the Commonwealth seeks to address on a continuous basis the root causes of conflict within its member states through its political, economic, social and technical assistance programmes. Building the institutions of governance is fundamental to the health of a nation. Generating economic growth and employment is key to reducing feelings of marginalisation. So is the full and equal involvement of women in society, and giving young people a sense of direction, empowerment and productive employment. These are all Commonwealth priorities. And in all these areas the Commonwealth Secretariat is able to draw upon its experience and skills to provide assistance on each of these issues, which in turn serves the larger objective of eliminating friction and reducing the potential for conflict.

In carrying out its work, the Commonwealth strives to work in synergy with local, regional and international initiatives to prevent or resolve conflict, and strengthen the ability of member states to uphold our values. Such coordination helps prevent one organisation being played off against another. And even though the Commonwealth enjoys excellent access to stakeholders in member countries, national and regional stakeholders often have even better local knowledge and networks to rely upon.

The Secretariat’s small size has its drawbacks as the resources available to carry out Good Offices engagements and provide supporting assistance are limited. We therefore seek to ensure that our programme activities remain flexible and responsive to changing circumstances in countries of engagement. Where appropriate, they can include collaborative activities with bilateral and multilateral organisations such as the African Union (AU), European Union (EU) and the UN, as well as regional groups like the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF).

Building the institutions of governance is fundamental to the health of a nation. Generating economic growth and employment is key to reducing feelings of marginalisation.

Good Offices in action

So what are some of the examples of Commonwealth Good Offices successfully at work? As long ago as in 1991, the Commonwealth brokered an agreement whereby the then military government in Lesotho allowed the exiled King of Lesotho back into the country, triggering a chain of events that eventually led to Lesotho becoming a multi-party democracy. In 1994, the efforts of a Commonwealth Special Envoy led to the development of a formula that allowed Bangladesh to establish a ‘Mwafaka’, or agreement, between the main political parties which helped to restore stability in the wake of disputed and violent elections. Likewise, in Guyana, the efforts of another Commonwealth envoy assisted in the country having its most peaceful and non-contentious election for decades in 2006.

Today, Commonwealth good offices are quietly at work in several countries, a muted testimony to its relevance and credibility in a troubled world.

Amitav Banerji is Director of Political Affairs at the Commonwealth Secretariat. His responsibilities include the biennial Commonwealth Heads of Government Meetings, the promotion of democracy in member countries, and discreet conflict prevention and resolution work. His Division also supports the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG), which addresses serious and persistent violations of Commonwealth principles.

The Political Affairs Division is responsible for nurturing the Commonwealth’s political relations with its 53 member countries, as well as with partner international organisations and agencies. It promotes democratic processes and institutions in member countries, through the observation of elections, capacity building and sharing of experience and good practice. It also supports ‘Good Offices’ activities, to help prevent or resolve conflict situations in member states at their request. It organises the biennial Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting every two years. It also supports the CMAG, which deals with violations of the Commonwealth’s fundamental political values.

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Ensuring a sustainable and relevant savings and investment industry in South Africa

The Association for Savings and Investment South Africa (ASISA) was launched in October 2008 with the aim of playing an integral part in achieving a greater savings culture in South Africa by working as a united body towards making financial services more relevant to the consumer.

Through ASISA, the SA savings and investment industry also aims to actively work with Government on the SA incorporated strategy, aimed at promoting the country as the economic gateway to Africa. ASISA represents the majority of SA’s asset managers, collective investment scheme management companies, linked investment service providers, multi-managers, and life insurance companies.

Leon Campher, CEO of ASISA, says united by one representative body for the first time, the members of ASISA have mandated this new association to pro-actively engage with the SA policymaker and regulator. “ASISA will be an active participant in creating an environment that promotes equal opportunities for its members through holistic legislation, while at the same time considering the interests of consumers and ensuring the sustainability of the industries we represent and the intermediaries who promote us,” Campher says. The formation of ASISA was guided by the experiences of similar integrated trade associations in Australia and the United Kingdom (UK). ASISA maintains close relationships with the Investment and Financial Services Association (IFSA) in Australia and with the Investment Management Association (IMA) in the UK. ASISA also sustains ties with the Association of the Luxembourg Fund Industry (ALFI).

In summary, therefore, the aim of this new single association is to:

... Work towards greater level playing fields.
... Create an environment enabling of more holistic regulation.
... Collectively engage with the SA Government on policy issues and actively partner on the SA Incorporated strategy.

Why a Single Association?

Campher explains that in the past South Africa had four associations representing industries that all share one common goal: to provide consumers with savings and investment options. He says the result was that regulators and policy makers had to engage with four different lobby groups, often on issues of common interest. "With ASISA we have created the single body Government was looking for to engage with on policy issues," says Campher.

ASISA’s Approach

Campher says the future of the SA savings, investment and long-term insurance industries must be driven strategically at the highest level and without any bias. Therefore, ASISA’s key approach is about achieving balance and democracy within its structures.

BALANCE. ASISA membership can only be attained at corporate level, never at a subsidiary company level. In addition, members can only be represented on the ASISA Board by their most senior representative. The aim is to ensure that high level strategic thinking shapes the future of the financial services industry, and not product aligned agendas.

All ASISA members are required to subscribe to a Code of Conduct.

DEMOCRACY. ASISA applies the principle where a full member can vote only once, and not per collective investment scheme or life license held. This means that the big conglomerates will have the same vote as a small independent company, introducing a new form of governance into the SA financial services industry. The ASISA founding statement commits ASISA and its members to the principle that the consumer’s best interest will govern all decision making. At the same time, however, the importance of minority views will be recognized, processed and presented together with the majority view.

ASISA in Numbers

MEMBERS: 185 in total
MEMBER ASSETS: R2.6-trillion

QUICK STATS:
... R124-billion of investment and premium income
... 684 Collective Investment Schemes (CIS) with assets of R61-billion
... Over 30-million individual in force life policies
... Over 55 000 group scheme policies
Environmental responsibility and stewardship

By Vasant K Jogoo, Adviser & Head, Small States, Economic Affairs Division, Commonwealth Secretariat

Concern over environmental issues has definitely reached new heights, if judged by the headlines in the press and the number of international meetings devoted to the debate. The natural resource base of most countries continues to be degraded at an alarming rate. While the state has a major role to play in the arbitration of conflicts that arise between environmental and developmental goals, it is becoming obvious that the stewardship of the natural environment has to be the responsibility of everyone. In fact, many of the environmental challenges could be resolved if all societies, individuals or organisations accepted greater environmental responsibility by changing their habits and practices slightly.

The primary goal of all governments is to foster economic growth, create wealth, improve human welfare, and satisfy the material wants of their citizens. The environment is viewed as a storehouse of minerals and raw materials that are essential to the production of goods and services for decent standards of living. We often fail to realise that it also supports plant and animal life, and provides the means of growing food. It is, furthermore, a source of aesthetic experience and recreation. With increasing rates of economic growth, however, the environment has become a sink for all the waste that is generated by modern activities, giving rise to numerous environmental problems. As more and more countries are racing towards greater industrialisation and economic growth, transformation of the ecological capital is now outstripping the natural processes by which the resources replenish themselves, a fact that severely compromises the ability of future generations to sustain a decent livelihood.

As more and more countries are racing towards greater industrialisation and economic growth, transformation of the ecological capital is now outstripping the natural processes by which the resources replenish themselves.

Traditional responses to environmental threats

The state, conscious of the fact that neither businesses nor personal interests can on their own effectively ensure the sustainable use of resources, has traditionally played a prominent role in the arbitration of conflicts that arise between environmental and developmental goals, and the preservation and enhancement of the existing stock of ecological capital. It has done so by putting in place an armada of legislative texts and a multitude of bodies entrusted with a wide variety of tasks ranging from pollution control to coastal zone management. However, the lack of co-ordination among the different agencies involved in environmental protection and management, and the perception by economic planners that environmental legislation is anti-development, means that the environment has continued to be under increasing threat. The failure to halt environmental degradation has prompted the global community to take a closer examination of past responses to serious environmental threats. This comes with the realisation that many of these environmental problems, if unresolved, will jeopardise the economic development efforts of many countries, which find themselves ill-equipped to deal with the impacts. In fact, the complex relationship between environmental degradation, population increase, poverty and other development issues has provided enough evidence that sustainable development and conservation of the environment cannot be achieved through legislation and regulation alone.

Redefining environmental stewardship

Many of these environmental problems, if unresolved, will jeopardise the economic development efforts of many countries, which find themselves ill-equipped to deal with the impacts.

Environmental protection has to be addressed in a more open and inclusive manner, relying more on effective partnerships, networking, awareness-building, and institutional development. Hence, every individual, organisation or community needs to feel responsible towards the environment, and bring those little changes to the way one travels, uses energy, or shops. All
Removing the barriers

For environmental responsibility to be effective, whether at individual or corporate level, the government needs to remove all the barriers to its advancement by:

- Reinforcing environmental regulation rather than encouraging deregulation
- Promoting voluntary environmental initiatives (like use of green technologies, renewable energy, waste reduction, and water and energy conservation) through subsidies, grants, loans, tax rebates, and so forth
- Eliminating subsidies of businesses causing environmental damage
- Implementing market-based mechanisms (like emissions trading), and
- Building the capacity of organisations and communities to help them implement sound environmental management systems.

A combination of regulation, awareness-raising and self-discipline has shown that society can adopt environment-friendly habits. Waste recycling, for example, has in a decade become second nature to many urban dwellers across the globe.

These little initiatives will eventually reduce the pressure on environmental resources quite significantly. At the level of organisations, corporate environmental responsibility will require that initiatives encompass:

- Material and energy management
- A fully transparent stakeholder engagement, and
- A commitment to achieve environmental performance levels beyond the minimum set by environmental regulations.

Governments account for a very significant proportion of total economic activity in many countries, and thus they assume a far bigger share of environmental responsibility.

How governments can promote environmental responsibility

As well as removing barriers to environmental responsibility (see box above), the government has most importantly the obligation to lead by example. In fact, governments account for a very significant proportion of total economic activity in many countries, and thus they assume a far bigger share of environmental responsibility. They can leverage their considerable purchasing power by implementing a strong green procurement policy and, thus encourage businesses to adopt environment-friendly practices and become more competitive.

Many governments are actively promoting environmental responsibility schemes with some success. The United Kingdom, for example, is currently implementing a policy tool based on a combination of corporate responsibility and the ‘polluter pays’ principle. Such ‘producer responsibility’ ensures that businesses who place products on the market take responsibility for them once they have reached the end of their useful life.

This policy aims to achieve a more sustainable approach to resource use and a reduction in the quantity of waste, thereby eliminating the need for more landfills, and by encouraging re-use, recycling or other forms of recovery. Such a policy has added the advantage of inciting the businesses to design products that use fewer resources, eliminate the use of hazardous substances, and generate lower quantities of waste.

Everyone’s responsibility

The continued deterioration of the environment poses a serious threat to the well-being and survival of many communities and countries, especially small island states. Traditional approaches to dealing with such threats have failed in halting the continued degradation of the world’s natural resources. It is now clear that the protection of the environment has to be the responsibility of everyone. Such environmental responsibility has to be exercised at all levels, be it by the individual (by changing some daily habits) or the corporation (by adopting green technologies).

Environmental responsibility has to be exercised at all levels, be it by the individual (by changing some daily habits) or the corporation (by adopting green technologies). But, above all, the government, through its enormous purchasing power, can lead the way.

But, above all, the government, through its enormous purchasing power, can lead the way, not only by enforcing adequate legislation and providing a combination of regulatory and financial incentives, but also by implementing a strong green procurement policy. The UK, through its ‘producer responsibility’ policy, has shown that businesses can be encouraged to design greener products and remain competitive, while reducing the volume of waste that goes to landfills.

Dr Vasant Jago, whose professional experience spans more than 29 years, currently holds the position of Adviser and Head in the Small States, Environment and Economic Management Section the Commonwealth Secretariat, London. Prior to this, he served the African Development Bank as its Lead Environmentalist, working on policy issues and helping to establish the Bank’s procedures in matters relating to environmental impact assessments and auditing. He has degrees in geography, urban planning and environmental management obtained in India, France, and the USA, respectively. He has a keen interest in modelling the development-environment interface.

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The African Economic Research Consortium (AERC), established in 1988, is a public not-for-profit organization devoted to the advancement of economic policy research and training. AERC’s mission is to strengthen local capacity for conducting independent, rigorous inquiry into problems facing the management of economies in sub-Saharan Africa. There are two principal approaches to this: learning by doing research in thematic, collaborative and other modalities, and support for postgraduate training through collaborative master’s and PhD programmes. AERC enjoys and appreciates the support of donor governments, private foundations, and African and international organizations.

Mission
AERC’s mission rests on two basic premises. The first is that development is more likely to occur where there is sustained sound management of the economy. The second is that such management is more likely to happen where there is an active, well-informed group of locally based professional economists to conduct policy-relevant research.

Objectives
Specifically, AERC intends to:
- Enhance the capacity of locally based researchers to conduct policy-relevant economic inquiry,
- Promote the retention of such capacity within Africa, and
- Encourage the application of the capacity in the policy context.

The intention is that people who come through the AERC system will either work within the economic policy context or train other economists to do so.

Research Programme
The key components of the Research Programme are thematic and collaborative research projects, complemented by a variety of other capacity building initiatives. The programme approach aims to improve the technical skills of local researchers, allow for regional determination of research priorities and strengthen national economic policy research institutions.

Communications and Outreach
Print, electronic and event-based communication and dissemination techniques convey the products of AERC research and training to key target audiences. Outreach activities include events such as regional level Senior Policy Seminars, a web-linked information service, and a variety of publications.

AERC GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES
- The Board of Directors, appointed or elected by members of the Consortium, sets broad policy, approves annual work programmes and budgets, and appoints international staff.
- The Programme Committee sets the research agenda, oversees the research and training programmes, and reviews and approves proposals for research and training grants.
- The Secretariat, based in Nairobi, Kenya, manages the programme and provides technical support to researchers, students and participating institutions.

Training Programme
The AERC Training Programme supports postgraduate studies in economics and enhances the capacities of departments of economics in African public universities. The key components of the training programme are the Collaborative Master’s Programme (CMAP) and the Collaborative PhD Programme. In both cases the collaboration features joint enforcement of standards through annual evaluation and assessment by external examiners, a common curriculum and its development, a joint facility for teaching electives, and joint development of teaching materials. Each programme has its own Academic Board to ensure quality.

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Managing human resources in the public sector

By Joan Imhoff-Nwasike, Adviser, Governance and Institutional Development Division, Commonwealth Secretariat

The focus on the management of human resources has become very pronounced over the last decade. It was realised that for the reforms of the public service to succeed, there must be greater emphasis placed on the management and development of human resources. Newly-appointed ministers will find that there are several challenges at the global (globalisation, ICT and the current global financial crisis), regional and local levels. At the local level, which is the focus of this article, the challenges posed for the newly-appointed minister include: the relationship and interface with the permanent secretary of the ministry, structural issues (coordination and integration at the ministry/agency level), budgetary and financial issues, and human resources issues. This article will concentrate on discussing the critical human resource challenges of change management, talent management and performance management.

On the assumption of office, a minister is expected to create and sustain momentum. According to Samuel Bacharach in ‘Beyond the Big Mo’, momentum has four dimensions: structural momentum (maintaining resources and capacity), performance momentum (evaluating performance and giving feedback), cultural momentum (integration and cohesiveness), and political momentum (dealing with conflicts and opposition). Therefore, the first challenge for a new minister is to ‘put the house in order’, that is, to ensure that he/she has a strong working relationship with the permanent secretary of the ministry. This is very important as changes will take place and the need for a shared vision, setting of priorities in line with the political direction and building and sustaining momentum are crucial and pertinent.

Change management

Change is a permanent factor in our lives and yet it is often not well accepted or managed. The move from human resources planning to human resources strategy is a change that has become a prominent feature today in the execution of government business. The human resources strategy must be aligned to the goals and objectives of the government and the ministry in particular, and is therefore a management strategy which should be executed like all other management strategies, but this is not always the case. Implementation of the human resources strategy is an ongoing process of activities which include organisation design, identifying staffing needs, talent management, enabling, evaluating and recognising performance.

Instituting changes into the public service is often met with resistance. When perceived in the context of reform and global initiatives, this reluctance could be interpreted as fear of job insecurity by the employees, as they are now forced to change their behaviour and mode of working. This calls for identification of training needs, and continuous training and learning. The question and challenge is: are the employees at the helm who should lead this process re-trainable, and do they have the capacity for new skills acquisition? This is a challenge in most ministries as transfers and termination of public service employees take a very long time. Most governments have tried to encourage voluntary retirement by offering super separation packages at a very high cost, but in reality, the employees with the requisite skills are the first to take up the voluntary package of separation. This is because most public services do not have a performance-management process to assist in identifying strong and talented employees. The meritocratic system of assessment of performance and potential is now being developed in some countries; when implemented, it would be a major contribution to the challenges of performance management and retention of talented employees.

Talent management

Talent management is defined by the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) as a complex amalgam of employees’ skills, knowledge, cognitive ability and potential [‘Talent Management: Understanding the Dimensions’. www.cipd.co.uk]. The issue of managing talent in the public service has arisen from the fact that there is competition for people with professional skills all across the world. There are increased opportunities to recruit talented employees during this economic downturn and recession, since much talent has become available locally and globally. The ‘diaspora’ offers more opportunities now than ever before, and we should seek to tap into this huge market of talent.

But are we really ready to manage talented employees? How are talented employees recruited? Are salaries competitive or are they linked to performance? Is mentoring and coaching available? Should the talented employee operate in a team or be left to work independently? These are some of the questions that need to be answered when we are considering recruitment and retention of talent.

We must find ways to retain employees with professional skills. Some governments have implemented sweeping reforms including abolishing the Public Service Commission and General Orders, and put strategies in place to institute merit rewards in the public service. Others have taken a more conservative approach by devolving the powers of recruitment and selection for certain levels in the public service to ministries and agencies, using the Public Service Commission for recruitment of senior officers and as an appellate body.

Actual formulation and execution of a talent management strategy will be influenced by several factors, not the least of which are cultural, economic, social and, more commonly now, religious influences. Whatever may be the choice or approach taken by organisation leaders for managing talent, three dimensions must be incorporated into the plan:

- Firstly, employees have to be engaged at a personal level. i.e. their personal interests must be recognised, and provision must be made to develop these interests;
- Secondly, the employee’s development needs within the work group or team must be captured, and;
- Thirdly, the employee’s role at the organisational level must also be leveraged.
Performance management

The old adage, “What gets measured gets done, and what gets rewarded gets done repeatedly”, can be aptly applied to the challenge of performance management. The measurement of performance is important to the transformation of the public service into an effective and efficient organisation with improved functioning and service delivery. The performance appraisal is done in every government ministry and agency, most of it being a routine exercise.

Some governments are in the process of putting performance management systems in place but face several challenges – including lack of support from the top and the political will to ensure that these systems work. All employees at the lower levels are evaluated, but there are inherent challenges with how this is performed. Most employees also see performance appraisal as a routine exercise since there is no difference in outcome for those who perform well and those who do not. In effect, the preferred behaviour that supports organisational strategy is not transparently measured and rewarded, and is therefore not guaranteed to be consistent. Performance has to be recognised and rewarded at every level. At the senior level the challenge is to design an appropriate performance measurement system for permanent secretaries and ministers.

Due to a lack of professional skills, some countries have increased the age of retirement from 55 years to 60 and 62 years. This is a short-term solution; similarly, hiring senior officials on contract is equally short-term. What needs to be done is to encourage the building of capacity and succession planning. One suggestion for the appraisal of permanent secretaries’ performance is to measure the number of middle and senior personnel within the ministry who are developed and promoted. This will certainly assist with retaining employees who have potential, and at the same time prevents the permanent secretary feeling threatened by younger and talented employees.


In conclusion, there are many challenges for a new minister; however, these can be minimised if there is an open and honest relationship with the permanent secretary who is responsible for the operations of the ministry. In order to sustain momentum, the minister relies on the permanent secretary for complete information, operationalisation of plans and policies and for the effective and efficient functioning of the ministry.

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The Governance and Institutional Development’s work in Public Sector Development aims to help governments improve their ability to run public services and to strengthen public institutions so that they can deliver on their key responsibilities. Many of the Commonwealth member countries face human resources and knowledge constraints limiting their capacity to sustain development, reduce poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

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Public sector accountability

By Dr Munawwar Alam, Adviser, Governance and Institutional Development Division, Commonwealth Secretariat

Accountability is an essential element of any governance or politico-administrative system. It is deeply rooted in any system of morality or religion. According to the revealed religions, men and women, individually and collectively, are accountable to God and to their fellow humans. In the public sector accountability’s significance has a further ‘dimension as public servants are custodians of citizens’ or taxpayers’ money. The proper and effective stewardship of public money is vital for good governance in the public services. According to informal estimates, illicit income could amount to a sizeable share of GDP in many countries. Appropriate governance arrangements should be a hallmark of change agendas. International organisations are therefore putting a heavy emphasis on public sector accountability.

In the public sector, lack of accountability is an important causative and precipitating factor for widespread corruption. It has often been a decisive factor in the dissolution of regimes. Corruption is like a parasite that withers away the vitality and damages the growth of public administration as a means of social progress, economic development and service provision. Public servants and organisations do not exist in a vacuum. If government officials are exposed to opportunities, they may engage in corruption unless they are closely supervised and controlled.

The term public sector accountability includes a wide range of approaches and practices. According to Montesquieu’s doctrine of separation of powers, political liberty is possible only when checks and balances restrain the government. Table 1 illustrates some of the public accountability mechanisms available in different countries and assesses their individual and overall efficacy. For the sake of brevity, description of the mechanism [in the left-hand column] is avoided, as they are similar in most countries.

Table 1. Public accountability mechanisms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mechanism</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internal controls</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Service Commission</td>
<td>In many countries of the world, including the Commonwealth, this is an important institution that exercises financial and administrative autonomy. In some countries (e.g. Pakistan) it also advises the government on promotions to very senior positions, providing for accountability and the impartial evaluation of civil servants. The Commission can play a notable role in screening out candidates on the basis of psychological testing, to bring in honest, devoted and conscientious officers at entry level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service rules</td>
<td>There are plenty of rules, such as ‘conduct’ and ‘efficiency and discipline’ rules for public servants. These deal with various aspects of misconduct, but their efficacy in exercising accountability depends on whether the administrative system of the country is politicised or merit-based.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-corruption organisations</td>
<td>In most countries there are dedicated anti-corruption departments with a wide organisational network including special anti-corruption courts. Although published data regarding their efficacy and effectiveness is scanty, the general opinion seems to be that, overall, their performances have not been satisfactory. Experience shows that in many countries anti-corruption departments serve mainly as an arm-twisting tool by the government, or an instrument of exploitation for low-paid government employees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislative control</td>
<td>Quite an effective method, often used by opposition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parliamentary questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual budget</td>
<td>Discussion on budget, when intelligently conducted, provide effective checks and control by the legislature over the activities of the administration. The Standing Finance Committee is also an effective agency, as it requires justification of demands for grants.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Accounts Committee</td>
<td>This institution has proved to be very effective. Since this comprises elected parliamentarians, it is necessary that members are above board and enjoy a reputation of impartiality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assembly motions</td>
<td>This is a useful tool to deal with a problem of emergent nature. (The effectiveness of the legislative control largely depends upon the extent and quality of public representation in the assemblies. The intellectual and moral calibre of the members of the legislature can make this controlling device genuine and effective or a complete farce.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External control</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public opinion</td>
<td>Media, civil society and NGOs are extremely effective at mobilising public opinion to uncover information. Legislation that promotes access to information can further strengthen this mechanism.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The judiciary</td>
<td>Apart from regular adjudication against administrative actions, the superior courts exercise powers of judicial review by issuing writs such as Habeas Corpus (against illegal detention) etc. However, in many countries the judiciary is not completely independent. There is executive control over judicial appointments. Also, there are cases of judges implicated in corruption and political manoeuvrings. There have been instances of judges being overlooked for elevation due to political factors. Therefore, their appointment should be made without political interference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ombudsman</td>
<td>An effective institution in attending to common grievances against government departments and utility agencies.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Improving accountability

Corruption flourishes by the influence of a host of factors in society. The effectiveness of public accountability is determined by the political culture within which systems of accountability operate. This applies to society in general, but of particular importance are the sub-cultures (in terms of behavioural norms) of politicians, ministers, political parties and bureaucrats. Therefore, an appreciation of cultural dimensions is essential for understanding the nature of accountability in any country. It may be pointed out that one of the reasons inhibiting accountability taking roots is the conservative approach to public administration, that the public interest is best served in an environment of openness and secrecy, while in actual practice this generates corruption and blocks attempts at detection.

Pay revision. At present, salaries in the public sector in most developing countries in the Commonwealth are extremely low compared with the private sector. By a conservative estimate, the present pay structure of higher grades in civil bureaucracy is not sufficient even for a decent living in some cases. This compels civil servants to look for other illegal avenues of income. Therefore, the pay scales of civil servants should be revised keeping in view inflation, the salary structure in the private sector and similar factors. It seems very likely that this measure alone could reduce corruption by half.

Accountability at local level. Accountability lies at the heart of any improvements in local government delivery of local services. At local level, there are three dimensions of accountability:
1. Downward accountability of local governments to citizens
2. Horizontal accountability within local governments and administration
3. Upward accountability of local governments to central government.

Samuel Paul proposes a balance mix of exit and voice tools to improve accountability in urban and rural settings, an adapted version of which is shown in Table 2. In this context, the public can force an ‘exit’, i.e. find another source of supply, or make effective use of its ‘voice’ to reduce the power of an entrenched administration.

Deregulation and privatisation. Deregulation is a viable option as monopolies in certain areas (e.g. utilities) discourage the private sector from entering the field, especially when the public generally belongs to a low socio-economic class. If local governments outsource services such as garbage collection, this is likely to impact accountability and performance as the potential entry of private sector is perceived as a threat by inefficient and shirking public servants, and sometimes by the trade unions. When it is felt that market competition can enhance accountability, privatisation is clearly the first option. However, the government may like to retain a regulatory role in certain areas (the telecommunication and energy sectors, for example) and promote a flourishing competitive environment by simultaneously encouraging the private sector to compete with the public sector for some time, to ensure that there is no gap in quality and coverage of services during the process.

Broad-based participation. The participation of the public and stakeholders in decision making bodies, for instance representation of professionals from medical associations, engineering councils, associations of chartered accountants, etc, on committees and boards can efficiently increase accountability in public sector. In case of public corporations, participation can be institutionalised by incorporating adequate provision in the Memorandum of Articles assigning stakeholders as directors on boards. For instance, an export promotion bureau or a fisherman’s co-operative society might make use of ex-officio directors from respective trade communities or chambers of commerce.

Accountability of rulers. The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) has identified benchmarks by which legislators determine their annual financial requirements. Then there must be a mechanism to prevent corrupt practices by legislators and the staff of legislatures. In Australia, any wrongdoing in financial and administrative matters by anyone in parliament has to face action by the Australian federal police under criminal law. While, on the other hand, the legislative assembly for the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) has authorised the ACT auditor general and ACT ombudsman to investigate reports of wrongdoing by the members of ACT. Similarly, the parliamentarians’ complete record of assets, business interests and other financial holdings can be made available to the public and media upon request. Similarly, in the UK, parliamentary standards and the register of ‘members’ interests’ are built into the system of the House of Commons and the House of Lords.

The Centre for Legislative Development has formulated various recommendations to enhance or build the institutional capacity of parliament. Among other things, these include enabling laws for the authorisation of projects by the legislature, review and approval of financial conditionality in donor-assisted programmes, and augmenting parliament and civil society interaction. Another aspect of minimising corruption is the necessity of checking the ruler–public servant nexus. However, civil servants need certain institutionalised protection against illegal directives of the political leadership.

Accountability and information technology (IT). Availability of IT is important, though not essential for creating accountability platforms. Richard Heeks, in ‘Information Systems and Public Sector Accountability’ (University of Manchester, 1998), wrote: “Essential to effective accountability for results (as well as good management) is credible, timely and relevant information on the performance of services and programmes … whenever a

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Table 2. Potential effectiveness of ‘exit’ and ‘voice’ sanctions</th>
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<tr>
<td>Service type</td>
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<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural primary education, rural health, law and order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban low cost housing, urban primary education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban water supply, electricity, irrigation, etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban transport, higher education, secondary tertiary medical care</td>
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</table>

decision is taken, its information should be shared with all concerned to whom the decision-maker is accountable.” He also pointed out that, centuries ago, Aristotle said: “To protect the Treasury from being defrauded, let all money be issued openly in front of the whole city; let copies of accounts be deposited in various wards.”

IT can not only create new accountability mechanisms but can also improve existing systems through timely and often more reliable information. Most of the public sector ministries and organisations in many Commonwealth countries can now be accessed through the internet. However, it will take some time and require conscious and planned efforts and capacity to evolve public information systems to expand the scope of accountability. To begin with, ministries in the central government can take a lead as they have better resources and can introduce reform measures easily.

**Accountability by conviction (self-accountability)**

In a society devoid of accountability, social relations are dominated by self-interest, and civic virtues and religious and ethical responsibilities are often discarded. No law, organisation or punishment can ensure the accountability of the public sector unless the people in authority judge their own acts and conduct on the basis of morals, ethics and self-accountability. But the question is how to promote this spirit.

Public accountability cannot be instilled overnight, as this is a social problem that takes decades to develop. There have to be planned, conscious and phased efforts. Creation of ‘deterrence’ can be an effective tool. Bringing private beneficiaries into the fold, recovery of revenue and relatively even-handed application of laws have also yielded results. The first step could be to be contented with a ‘less corrupt system’. This does not necessarily require new laws or new organisations – but strengthening of the existing institutions can augment internal, in-built accountability, which will take care of most of the corruption. The role of the media and civil society has to be redefined. Donors also need to re-evaluate if their assistance is going to increase accountability or otherwise, as the recipient country might indulge in impressive accounts for the donors while remaining less accountable within the country.

This paper is a revised version of a previous paper with same title published in the ‘Commonwealth Ministers’ Reference Book 2008’.

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The Governance and Institutional Development Division (GIDD) helps Commonwealth developing countries strengthen their structures of governance and administration. GIDD’s work covers the full spectrum of public sector administration and management, as well as working to strengthen civil society and private sector institutions with public responsibilities. GIDD provides a range of technical assistance to help governments improve their public services. Programmes are tailored to country, regional, and pan-Commonwealth needs. GIDD implements some 70 public sector development projects annually.

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**“One nation many languages”**

Did you know that South Africa has 11 official languages?
In order to ensure their equal use the South African government established the Pan South African Language Board (PanSALB).

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PanSALB
PAN SOUTH AFRICAN LANGUAGE BOARD

We are embracing our identity
Never shall our languages be oppressed
We are speaking our mother tongues
It’s our right!
A lifestyle of business, sports and pleasure together

Durban, KZN, South Africa, seamlessly combining a world-class business environment with an out-of-this-world lifestyle, as the sporting and events capital.

But it is so much more....Durban is the global business gateway to South Africa, Africa and the world.

Here is Africa’s busiest port, the continent’s top conferencing city and South Africa’s leading sports and tourist destination. This is a ‘smart’ city, maximising fibre-optics and broadband. This is a city which boasts a world-class manufacturing sector and the second largest industrial concentration in South Africa.

This is an African city with a competitive edge seldom found anywhere in the world today.

In Durban we have a city rich in investment opportunities. In Durban you have an investment location to access those opportunities...

.... we can help you make it happen, now.
Live, work and invest in Durban, KZN South Africa

Durban’s Business Profile

Durban’s Super 7 are the seven key reasons Durban is attractive to Business and Leisure visitors. The acronym, ‘ALL HITS’ has been coined for easy recall.

1. Award-winning Municipality. We have the best run and financially strongest local government on the continent. Awards are bestowed through the likes of the Vuma awards – recognising Durban as being the best-run city in South Africa, with 18 500 employees. International credit rating agencies have given us investment grade credit ratings of AA+ off a budget of over R238bn ($2.5Bn) per annum. We have a huge, expanding fibre-optic system to really make Durban THE Smart City. We also have one of the lower cost/higher benefit baskets of rates and services levies across the major centres in South Africa.

2. Infrastructure Leader. We have the continent’s leading infrastructure base. This includes virtual infrastructure like globalised financial services, plus the physical infrastructure base. We have the best electricity distribution on the continent, a vast roads network, the best and biggest water treatment and supply base, telecommunications via expanding City fibre-optics, and land. We have reasonable amounts of available vacant land at realistic prices across our 2 300 square kilometre city. At our infrastructure heart, Durban leads the continent in terms of port infrastructure, with Africa’s busiest harbour, plus the massive new international airport nearing completion for 2010.

3. Lifestyle of business, sports and event pleasure together. This is a place to live, work and play. You might have other centres that are dominated by business, but perhaps not as blessed as we are with a sustainable lifestyle, sporting events and sense of pleasure. You might have other places that dominate on lifestyle and pleasure, but don’t have a huge business side to them in terms of manufacturing or infrastructure profile. The emphasis for us is on the word ‘together’, it’s the two complementary halves, the business or career half and the social, sporting and lifestyle-family side.

4. Largest Human Resources base. At the heart of one of SA’s most populous Provinces (KwaZulu-Natal), we have large pools of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled labour, plus some of the best and fastest Skills Development taking place amongst our 3.5 million metropolitan population. We have Africa’s second largest direct contact University based in Durban, the University of KwaZulu-Natal, with more than 45 000 direct contact tertiary students of Black African, Asian and European descent.

5. Highest growth rates. Our economic growth rates are higher than the country’s average, and that of the other major centres, historically being in the region of 4%-5%. We’re targeting in the range of 7.5%- 9%. This impacts positively on business confidence levels, fixed capital formation, etc. As most analysts would observe, “the trend is our friend” in Durban.

For more Information contact: Durban Investment Promotion Agency, 26th Floor, Old Mutual Centre, 303 West Street, Durban, 4001, PO Box 1203, Durban, 4000, South Africa, Tel: +27 (0)31 336 2540, Fax: +27 (0)31 336 2511, Email: info@dipa.co.za, Website: www.dipa.co.za
Public-private partnerships as a driver of growth

By Hee Kong Yong, Adviser (PPP & Corporate Governance), Governance & Institutional Development Division, Commonwealth Secretariat

In the last two decades, public-private partnerships (PPPs) have gained popularity with governments as a means of procurement of public sector infrastructure, in sectors such as water, electricity, roads, airports, railways, hospitals, schools and social housing. Once rare, PPPs are now used as an important tool to improve economic competitiveness and infrastructure services.

Though there is no widely accepted definition of a PPP, it is generally considered as an arrangement between public and private sectors to deliver infrastructure that is normally provided by the public sector. There is usually a clear agreement of shared objectives for the delivery of these infrastructures.

The PPP Unit of Mauritius has provided a comprehensive definition of PPP:

“It is a contractual agreement between a public entity and private entity, whereby the private entity performs part of a government organisation’s service delivery functions, and assumes the associated risks for a significant period of time. In return, the private entity receives a benefit/financial remuneration according to predefined performance criteria, which may be derived:

• Entirely from service tariffs or user charges
• Entirely from government budgets
• From a combination of the above.”

It is generally accepted that PPPs would embody the following principles:

• **Value-for-money and whole-life costing.** The principle is that the government should seek the best value, and not necessarily the lowest initial price. Bid-comparison is carried out on whole-life costs (including maintenance costs). The bidders must ensure that their costs are the lowest for the whole life of the concession, and not just initial construction costs.

Defining PPPs in policy and law

The Government of India defines PPPs as:

“A partnership between a public sector entity (sponsoring authority) and a private sector entity (a legal entity in which 51% or more of equity is with the private partner/s) for the creation and/or management of infrastructure for public purpose for a specified period of time (concession period) on commercial terms and in which the private partner has been procured through a transparent and open procurement system”. (Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Government of India, 2007a.)

Other commonly cited definitions of PPPs include:

• The International Monetary Fund (IMF): “Public-private partnerships (PPPs) refer to arrangements where the private sector supplies infrastructure assets and services that traditionally have been provided by the government.” (IMF 2004, p4)

• The World Bank: “PPP programs are projects that are for services traditionally provided by the public sector, combine investment and service provision, see significant risks being borne by the private sector, and also see a major role for the public sector in either purchasing services or bearing substantial risks under the project.” (World Bank 2006, p13.)

• The Asian Development Bank (ADB): “PPPs broadly refer to long-term, contractual partnerships between the public and private sector agencies, specifically targeted towards financing, designing, implementing, and operating infrastructure facilities and services that were traditionally provided by the public sector.” (ADB 2006, p15.)

• The European Union: “A PPP is the transfer to the private sector of investment projects that traditionally have been executed or financed by the public sector.” (European Commission 2003, p96.)

Many other countries have legally defined PPPs in order to be clear which projects should fall under contractual relations established through PPP arrangement. Examples of countries that have sought to define PPP arrangements in law include:

• Brazil, where the PPP law defines that public private partnership contracts are agreements entered into between government or public entities and private entities that establish a legally binding obligation to manage (in whole or part) services, undertakings and activities in the public interest where the private sector is responsible for financing, investment and management.

• Ireland legally defines PPPs as any arrangement made between a state authority and a private partner to perform functions within the mandate of the state authority, and involving different combinations of design, construction, operations and finance.

• In South Africa, a PPP is defined in law as a contract between a government institution and a private party where the latter performs an institutional function and/or uses state property, and where substantial project risks are passed to the third party. (World Bank, 2006.)

• **Risk transfer.** Risks inherent in the project should be borne by the party best capable of managing the risks. For example, the party that designed and constructed the facilities is made responsible for maintaining the facilities, while the government bears the risks of land acquisition and prices. A good example of how the government can be protected from the risks of cost-overruns is the Spencer Street Re-development project in Australia, in which the private company ended up bearing the huge cost-overruns without significant consequences to the government.

• **Output or performance specifications.** These performance criteria have to be spelt out clearly, and once agreed, the private sector should be made responsible for delivering them. Penalties are imposed for non-performance. Fines could also be exacted from toll road operators for congestions, water operators for poor quality of potable water, and IPPs (power plants) for blackouts.

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**Figure 1. Investment commitments and projects undertaken, 1990-2007.**


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**Figure 2. Possible reasons for governments using PPPs**

1. Bridging government’s funding gap (e.g. UK in initial years)
2. Capacity constraints (e.g. Ireland, Middle East)
3. Benchmarking public sector to the private sector (Singapore)
4. PPP also ensures that cost and time overruns are not borne by the government – value for money (e.g. UK, Australia)
5. Off balance sheet

**Figure 3. Public infrastructure as a percentage of total investment.**

*Estimated value of required private investment in publicly owned infrastructure.*

• Competition. PPP projects are for open competition from all bidders. The procedures and bidding processes are transparent and clearly spelt out. Short-listed candidates are given invitations to negotiate and a case of ‘best man or best value’ wins. Competition is meant to induce efficiencies. In some cases where it is not practicable to have open competition, artificial competition can be induced through an independent and strong regulator. This has been used successfully in some countries – though finding a strong independent regulator can pose a real challenge.

PPP is about the mobilisation of private sector funds and liquidity for public projects. In order for a PPP programme to really take off, there must be a mechanism for the private sector to leverage its equity investment to mobilise more funds for these projects. Ideally, it is the local bond market that provides the debt financing, and the stock exchange that provides the channel for fresh equities for these projects either through IPOs, rights issues or ‘infrastructure listings’. Without a developed local capital market, the rapid progress of any PPP programme will be hampered. Generally, it is not prudent to borrow in foreign currency to finance projects that give revenues in local currencies, unless this foreign currency risk is borne by someone else without recourse to the government. It is also risky to borrow short (5-7 years) for long-term infrastructure projects. Until these issues are addressed satisfactorily, we will continue to see the dearth of financial closures on many PPP projects. Whether Islamic or conventional financing is used, the projects must still be viable.

Global experiences of PPPs

PPP is a growing trend in the world. Countries have adopted it for various and usually unique reasons. There were US$160 billion of PPP projects for the first nine months in 2008, reaching the highest level in real terms since 1997, with more projects in developing economies.

There is a huge demand for funding for public transport infrastructure projects around the world. It is estimated that the demand is in the region of US$3 trillion, with the bulk of it in roads and rails which make up about 90 per cent of the total. Even if the governments were to outsource 11 per cent of this requirement (in line with some of the developed countries), the total amount from the private sector would amount to some US$330 billion. Most if not all of this will be sourced via PPP.

As an example, East Asia alone requires some US$200 billion annually over the next five years, of which 65 per cent will be for new investments while the balance will be for maintaining existing assets to extend their useful lives. Many East Asian countries lack the public funds to implement many of these projects and hence have to rely on funds from the private sector. To facilitate this, these countries must have in place well-structured and robust private financing frameworks and guidelines. Without these, countries will not be able to attract much private sector financing for most of their badly-needed infrastructure projects.

Prerequisites of a PPP framework

The following prerequisites are required for a PPP programme in a country to succeed:

• Political support
• Enabling environment (legislation and champions)
• Centralised expertise, e.g. PPP Unit
• Project prioritisation and preparation (central planning)
• Deal flow and standardisation of agreements.

The PPP programme needs to incorporate at least the following actions:

• Improving the general skills of the public sector in identifying, evaluating and monitoring PFI projects. This is done mainly through systematic capacity-building processes that include formal classroom lectures plus site visits to foreign countries that have successfully implemented sectoral projects. The Commonwealth Secretariat has been conducting a series of 10-day PPP Leadership workshops for member countries, in addition to in-country ministerial briefings.
• Standardising, as much as possible, the contracts to reduce bid costs and to ensure consistent approach to risks sharing between the public and private sectors. There are already
many examples of model concession agreements that can be modified to suit local conditions.

- Empowering the regulators who should be given the power to check and follow through on abuses. The Secretariat’s work in member countries has shown that any regulatory framework must also take into consideration national interests, while having the flexibility to be fair to the private sector to enable them to earn a reasonable rate of return for their investments.

- Setting up a Centre of Support (or PPP Unit) to provide technical and non-technical support to the various stakeholders involved in PPPs. This is to pool resources. The Centre must be able to correlate the expertise of not only financial and legal experts, but also the procurement specialists including designers, engineers, quantity surveyors and buyers. These procurement specialists should preferably include some ‘thinking-out-of-the-box’ types.

With the fundamentals in place, it is just a matter of creating awareness among the public and private sectors on what can be done through PPP. Both the public and private sectors must be allowed to exercise creativity within a broader framework, to propose practicable solutions to some of the infrastructure needs of the country. There are already many good case-examples in the world.

**Support by the Commonwealth Secretariat**

It is recognised that since the political, constitutional, legal, economic and social circumstances of every country differ, there can never be a single blueprint of how to make a PPP programme work. Each government has to devise their own to suit local conditions. The Secretariat has been very active in providing advisory and capacity-building support to member countries, covering the five phases of PPP implementation, namely:

- Policy development
- Capacity building
- Development of enabling environment
- Identification of partners, and
- Evaluation and selection of partners.

The Secretariat has also helped to establish linkages between PPP units in member countries, PPP-knowledge organisations and private-sector investors.

HK Yong holds a B.Eng (Hons) in Civil and Structural Engineering (UK), an MBA (UK), a Diploma in Corporate Treasury (UK), and a PostGrad Diploma in Islamic Studies from the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation (IIUM, KL). He also qualified as a Chartered Accountant [England and Wales]. HK Yong has more than 20 years experience in PPPs, advising both public and private sectors.

The Governance and Institutional Development Division (GIDD) helps Commonwealth developing countries strengthen their structures of governance and administration. GIDD’s work covers the full spectrum of public sector administration and management, as well as working to strengthen civil society and private sector institutions with public responsibilities. GIDD provides a range of technical assistance to help governments improve their public services. Programmes are tailored to country, regional, and pan-Commonwealth needs. GIDD implements some 70 public sector development projects annually.

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The Botswana Innovation Hub (BIH) will offer a safe and secure home for your business and data in a world class business environment. Located at the heart of Southern Africa, BIH offers an ideal location from which to run your operations into Sub-Saharan Africa.

BIH welcomes technology-driven and knowledge-intensive businesses in the areas of ICT-enabled services, including Business Process Outsourcing, call centres and data centres, but also mining technologies, sustainable energy and biotechnology. The invitation extends to research institutes and laboratories, as well as specialised post graduate training institutes. Botswana is a country rich in minerals and sunshine, offering opportunity for research and technology development, especially within the mining and energy sectors. The country’s greatest resource is the sun and this is an opportunity that could be leveraged for a cleaner environment.

Botswana is a cosmopolitan and peaceful democracy, boasting a stable macro-economic environment conducive to growth, diversification and foreign investment. Its impressive economic growth is largely due to the country’s exploitation of its vast mineral resources, notably diamonds, combined with far-sighted government policies, including liberalization policies, heavy investment in education and training, private sector development and concerted efforts to diversify the economy. The country enjoys high global rankings in a number of areas such as democracy, stability and low business risks, ease to start and operate a business, competitiveness, transparency, disciplined fiscal and monetary policies, and the independence of its judiciary.

The BIH premises under development and due for completion by Jan 2011 will consist of land for lease, world-class facilities for rent, including state-of-the-art telecommunications infrastructure with high capacity international connectivity, high standards of security and data connections, and secured power.

The facilities will be oriented to high-tech customers, with flexibility, access to shared facilities and use of environmentally-friendly technologies. Conference facilities, meeting rooms, recreational facilities and restaurants will offer opportunity for networking. The BIH is located in Gaborone, the capital of Botswana, close to the international airport.

The concept also includes professional business services and business development services. The concept has been developed based on best practices from science and technology parks from all over the world, and in particular, from Finland, a leading European country in innovation support.

Botswana Innovation Hub is already registering expressions of interest and formal registration has also started. The facilities, offices and laboratories, will be offered on a first-come-first-served basis and interested parties are advised to contact Botswana Innovation Hub Office in Gaborone as soon as possible. Although the physical facilities are not yet ready for occupation, companies that register get immediate access to the BIH incentive scheme. This includes exemption from work and residence permits for all management and professional staff, a training grant, a reduced tax rate, and the opportunity to negotiate a competitive telecommunications package. In addition, there are no foreign exchange controls in Botswana and profits can be repatriated without any restrictions. BIH wants to make your entry into Africa as easy as possible.

To further promote innovation and technology development, an Innovation Fund has been created which will offer grants to businesses registered with the Botswana Innovation Hub.

Interested companies and organisations are invited to explore the Botswana Innovation Hub website or to contact the Coordinator for more information:

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Integrated Service Delivery: the way forward

By John Wilkins and Munawwar Alam, Governance and Institutional Development Division, Commonwealth Secretariat

Since the inception of the Millennium Development Goals, public sector development has focused on good governance, with a view to improving public service delivery. In the search for better strategies and models, governments have reinvented relationships and shared governance in innovative ways. ‘Networked government’ has succeeded the New Public Management, ushering in a more integrated approach to service delivery. The expectations are of governments acting as many agencies but one government, engaging citizens, and networking beyond borders. Commonwealth governments are being challenged to collaborate on imperatives like poverty reduction and sustainable development. The public good is at stake, and Ministers are leaders at the centre of the transformation.

There is often confusion as to what is included within ‘service delivery’. The fact remains that almost all government activities are concerned ultimately with service delivery, irrespective of whether the level of interface with citizens is with the central or local government. Many policy decisions can have long-term implications for the quality of service delivery. A careful balance needs to be maintained between strategic (policy) and operational (frontline) service improvements. Many governments codify this integration in the form of ‘service charters’ or ‘citizens’ charters’.

Trends and challenges

Governments are on a perpetual quest for delivery mechanisms that sustain high quality public services. Quality is broadly linked to public consultation and efforts to build integrated networks, and improved accountability and trust. The trend is towards establishing high national standards that are independently audited, devolving responsibility to the front lines, encouraging contestability and choice, and fostering creativity and continuous improvement. In the United Kingdom, the government publishes Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) that enable local authorities to benchmark their services against other local councils and also allows central government to monitor the standard and quality of services provided by local governments. The BVPIs form an integral part of local government’s performance management framework. All local authorities are required to have their BVPIs audited by the UK Audit Commission and to publish it for the information of the general public.

Governments are becoming more networked within, as well as across other governments, sectors and nations. Service delivery improvements increasingly emphasise decentralising capacity to local governments and overseeing the capacities of private and civil society service providers. Some reform agendas also seek to integrate shared services across boundaries. Managing these relationships requires different skill sets from those for traditional public service delivery.

‘Joined-up government’ is a key modern theme. In the United Kingdom, the Labour government elected in 1997 thought that problems such as social exclusion, drug addiction and crime could not be resolved by any single ministry or agency of government. Instead, such problems had to be tackled by central and local governments in cooperation with the private and voluntary sectors. Today, many practitioners question whether joined-up government is a new idea, or merely a new label for a very old idea.

Governments continue to deploy information and communication technologies to improve service delivery. This involves simplifying delivery to citizens, increasing access to information and services, eliminating management layers, streamlining operations to guarantee responsiveness, and re-engineering business processes to reduce costs and integrate systems.

In today’s globalised world the credibility of government depends upon the standard of service delivery available to citizens. Therefore, any reform effort aimed at improving service delivery should be perceived as a vital part of the overall improvement of governance and the performance of government. “Citizens don’t have a choice of whether they ‘buy’ government programmes from us or not.” (Peter Shergold)

An ongoing challenge is the need to achieve citizen-focused service delivery. Service improvements require a holistic approach and systematic process. Both developed and developing countries are considering alternative forms of service delivery. Governments are experimenting with organisational design because hierarchical, vertically integrated ministries are too rigid and unresponsive in a public sector environment that is increasingly complex, turbulent, and demanding. Unbundling bureaucracy is an innovative response to the need to modernise, to the pressures of scarce resources, and to the public’s insistence on improved service.

The Commonwealth has a rich, long-standing record of public sector reform. Economic growth and widespread technologies have accelerated citizen demands of government and expectations for quality services. There has been a shift towards seamless service delivery and away from a one-size-fits-all approach. A well educated public service has been entrusted with managing complex service relationships with the private and civil sectors. Many indigenous communities have tried innovative arrangements where conventional services failed aboriginal peoples. Countries are relying increasingly on integrated service delivery, featuring citizen engagement, e-government, and multi-stakeholder partnerships.

A good governance standard for public services

In UK, the Independent Commission on Good Governance in Public Services published a standard for governance in the public service (2005). Six core principles of good governance were identified:

- Focusing on the organisation’s purpose and on outcomes for citizens and service users
- Performing effectively in clearly defined functions and roles
- Promoting values for the whole organisation and demonstrating the values of good governance through behaviour
- Taking informed, transparent decisions and managing risk
- Developing the capacity and capability of the governing body to be effective
- Engaging stakeholders and making accountability real.
Commonwealth innovations

At the inaugural Commonwealth Ministers Forum on Public Sector Development in Sydney, Australia on 26-27 October 2006, Ministers shared many examples of innovation.

- Botswana – re-examination and re-engineering of the Public Sector Reform Unit
- Kenya – use of performance contracting in service delivery
- Malaysia – establishment of Malaysia Inc. as a regulated service
delivery
- Maldives – modernisation of governance and institutional development
- Mauritius – putting people first initiative
- Mozambique – one-stop shop for service delivery to citizens
- Namibia / The Gambia – decentralisation to local governments
- Pakistan – deployment of e-government to facilitate citizen payments
- Samoa – consolidation of ministries to create efficiencies
- Sri Lanka – integration of knowledge on the global economy in education
- St Vincent and the Grenadines – training in micro-enterprise development
- Swaziland – introduction of public service charters.

Integrated service delivery is often wanted but not easy to attain. For a long time now, Commonwealth countries have known that government cannot do it all by itself when it comes to fulfilling its mandate and achieving national development aims. The Kampala Declaration on Transforming Societies called for renewing national infrastructure. The focus is on public-private partnership (PPP) policies that strengthen the private sector and the delivery of valued public services to all.

During the 2008 Ministers’ Forum, ministers discussed PPPs as a contentious form of alternative service delivery for government. There are many risks inherent in sharing governance, responsibility and financing with private partners who are typically more focused on the bottom line than public policy. There is always a suspicion that private partners will want to ‘privatise the revenues and nationalise the costs’. This places an onus on government to develop a robust PPP framework, raise public awareness of projects, hone public servants’ negotiation and evaluation skills, standardise legal technical, empower regulators to monitor performance, establish a sustainable capital market, and create a centre of technical expertise. A government’s lever is its ability to ‘change the rules’.

Case studies

Across the Commonwealth, governments are converting to one-stop shops, multiple-channel networks, and strategic alliances to integrate service delivery. Australia’s Centrelink and Mauritius’ one-stop-shop illustrate that innovation is possible. Service centres are managed differently and with enthusiasm under a service culture embedded in the organisation and its people.

**Australia’s Centrelink.** The Job Network in Australia is a world class public-private innovation aimed at providing better service delivery. Centrelink brought together employment income support and a host of federal and state agencies (e.g. disaster relief, income support, pensions and benefits, assistance payments) under the umbrella of a single delivery mechanism. The Minister responsible set standards through a process of face-to-face consultation and negotiation with small job providers. Customers and stakeholders were consulted and surveyed, helping to build public confidence. Leadership of people was paramount to the success of the service centres. Evaluations show that both job recruitment and job placement have improved over the past decade.

What Ministers say they need (2006 Ministers’ Forum)

- To understand the basic rationale for integrated service delivery and when to use it
- To differentiate quality from quantity issues in service delivery
- To know about the different mechanisms for service delivery
- To appreciate the relative capacities of developed and developing countries
- To be kept informed of Commonwealth work on service delivery and partnerships.

One-stop shopping in Mauritius. Local councils in Mauritius are encouraged to set up local business councils. The initiative is designed to give a new and broader dimension to the public-private sector dialogue. Under local government legislation, councils have to establish one-stop shops for granting permits and licences to businesses. Recently, in order to facilitate investments, the principle of silent agreement has been introduced, especially for building and development permits. The applicants have to receive an answer within the prescribed period or could presume that their applications have been approved.

A continuing challenge

Effective public service delivery remains a challenge throughout the Commonwealth. The concept and practice of integrated service delivery holds promise as a way forward. Member countries are demanding still more in-depth practical support through advisory services and technical assistance. This suggests room to respond to the expressed service delivery interests of countries by capitalising on existing experience and knowledge. There is an immediate need to build capacity to respond to demands emerging for national and international cooperation.

This is a revised article based on prior GIDD work; an earlier version was published in the Commonwealth Ministers’ Reference Book 2008.

John Wilkins became the Adviser (Public Sector Management) with the Governance and Institutional Development Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat in October 2005. He served 32 years in the Canadian public service, the last four years in Ottawa advising Treasury Board on service delivery innovations. He managed in the Province of Manitoba’s health, government services, culture, and finance portfolios and taught business and public management at The University of Manitoba.

Munawwar Alam is an international civil servant currently working for the Governance and Institutional Development Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat as Adviser at its headquarters in London. During his journey from conventional to international technical bureaucracy, Munawwar has written on contemporary governance issues for the Commonwealth Secretariat and international peer-reviewed journals, and is also editor of many books.

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Education for a Changing World

IDS is renowned for its academic excellence in teaching and research on global poverty and inequality. The institute hosts the largest development studies library in Europe as well as a range of first rate knowledge services. Our student body reflects a diversity of academic, cultural and professional backgrounds. With this combined development expertise, we aim to challenge convention and generate fresh ideas for a more just world.

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Public administration: why records management is important

By Dr Anne Thurston, Founder, the International Records Management Trust

Well-managed records are the foundation for good governance. They document policies, transactions and activities and provide a trusted source of information to support decision-making and accountability. Managing official records is a key aspect of effective public administration, the rule of law and public sector integrity. This is a fundamental cross-cutting issue, which, if ignored, can jeopardise reform and development aims, particularly in the electronic environment.

In many countries, paper-based records systems have decayed into informality. At the same time, as governments make the transition to electronic business processes, there is often little infrastructure or expertise for managing fragile digital records. When records systems, paper or electronic, are weak, information cannot be shared or utilised because it is difficult to access and susceptible to loss or manipulation.

Weak records systems, in any country or any sector, open the door to fraud, corruption in procurement and misuse of resources and services. When record-keeping is poor, delivery of justice is impaired; human rights cannot be protected; freedom of information cannot be implemented; services such as healthcare are compromised; and civil society cannot hold the government to account. National and international efforts to reduce poverty are undermined. Ordinary citizens are the losers.

Paper and electronic records

A high percentage of records are still in paper form in most countries and will be for some time to come. Often this information is poorly managed and incomplete. Governments are introducing electronic systems to replace paper-based systems, but the objectives of better control, increased efficiency and improved accountability cannot be achieved by automating incomplete records and inadequate record-keeping systems. Paper records need to be in good order before information is transferred to electronic systems. Furthermore, paper and electronic records that support the same business function need to be linked to provide complete information and a reliable audit trail.

As information and communications technology (ICT) becomes more widely available, governments become increasingly dependent on information in electronic systems to carry out their functions and make decisions. However, although some countries are making significant progress in defining solutions, in general, the speed with which information technologies are being adopted around the world is not being matched by the capacity to manage the electronic records that they create and hold.

Just like paper records, electronic records must remain accessible and reliable as long as they are needed for business or legal purposes; some, such as land records, need to be preserved for long periods or even permanently. In many cases, ICT systems are introduced without the processes and controls needed to capture and safeguard the electronic information they hold. If computerisation is to provide the basis for informed decision-making, improved accountability and effective service delivery, the information generated must be reliable and trustworthy over time.

Until systems, standards and skills are in place to manage electronic records, there are high risks involved in abandoning paper records. Electronic records are entirely dependent upon technology. Electronic media deteriorate, software changes and hardware becomes obsolete. Essential data can be difficult and costly to retrieve even after a few years unless it is managed professionally. Business system planners need to incorporate requirements for capturing and preserving reliable electronic records when ICT systems are developed or upgraded. Failure to tackle these issues contributes to the high number of systems failures, which are reported to be as high as 85 per cent across the developing world.

Financial and human resource records

Record-keeping issues can be illustrated in relation to two essential government functions:

Financial management: Reliable, up-to-date and accessible financial records should provide evidence that resources have been received, committed or spent, so that accountants can prepare financial reports for public scrutiny, and auditors can ensure the reports are credible. Typically, vast quantities of financial records are kept longer than necessary, often in poorly managed systems, while essential records needed by finance staff and auditors cannot be found. Without access to the records, it is difficult to substantiate the authenticity of expenditure, audit queries remain unresolved, and opportunities are created for fraud and corruption. This undermines the integrity of financial information and management systems, no matter how well the systems are designed technically.

Human resource management: The management of personnel information has significant consequences for human resource management and for efforts to establish pay and establishment controls. Inadequate record-keeping systems, at both central and local government levels, hinder efficient personnel administration and long-term staff development, and create insecurity in claiming pensions. They make it difficult to establish reliable payroll information and to introduce retrenchment and pay and grading reform; they contribute to the existence of ghost workers and the unnecessary retention of employees past statutory retirement age. Inadequate systems undermine the integrity of human resource information systems.
A recent study of ICT and records management

A recent study of ICT and records management, ‘Fostering Trust and Transparency in Governance: investigating and addressing the requirements for building integrity in public sector information systems in the ICT environment’, was completed in November 2008 by the International Records Management Trust, funded by the UK Department for International Development. Case studies were carried out in Botswana, Ghana, Lesotho, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Zambia and Karnataka State in India, and consultations were carried out with stakeholders from across the east and southern African region. The stakeholders consulted were in no doubt about the substantial potential of technology to improve the business of government, but they did not realise the importance of managing both paper and electronic records professionally. There was little or no professional records management input to systems design or any real involvement by records staff in the professional management of electronic information.

The study identified a series of problem areas. The legal and organisational structures needed for managing records had not been developed and there was a lack of policies and procedures. Records in paper and electronic format had not been linked. There were gaps in procedures for ensuring data integrity and completeness, including security and access to records. New skills were needed urgently. Finally, the budgets for records management tended to be inadequate.

Challenges for Commonwealth governments

If Commonwealth governments are to achieve the full benefits of their investment in ICT, they will need to address a series of issues:

- Records management policies and control systems need to be strengthened before ICT systems are introduced. Otherwise, time and money will be wasted as efforts to establish data integrity and accuracy after implementation produce less than optimum results or have to be repeated. Laws and organisational structures for managing records as evidence need to be developed.
- The requirements for managing electronic records generated by or associated with computerised systems need to be defined as part of the systems planning process and should take account of international records management standards.
- Integrating record-keeping in ICT systems requires a team approach involving specialists from IT, records management, audit, legal affairs and security, as well as the managers of the government business processes that are, or will be, supported by ICT systems.
- Records staff should be recognised for their essential contribution to data integrity; they need to be equipped with the new skills for managing paper and electronic records systems to provide complete information.

Information technology can make a significant contribution to improving government programmes and services, achieving development goals and advancing e-government strategies. However, in many countries, records management is not yet receiving adequate attention in the transition to the electronic environment. In too many cases, technology solutions are introduced without essential processes and controls for the capture, long-term safeguarding and accessibility of electronic records. This undermines the ability of civil servants and citizens alike to trust the information on which governments depend. Solutions are emerging in a number of wealthier countries and need to be shared internationally.

Dr Anne Thurston established the International Records Management Trust in 1989. Drawing on experience of working with and studying public records administration throughout the Commonwealth, she developed an international teaching programme at University College London in the 1980s and 1990s. She was awarded an OBE for services to public administration in Africa in 2000.

The International Records Management Trust (IRMT) was established in 1989 to develop strategies for managing records and information. It is unique internationally in terms of the nature of its mandate, its broad international network, the breadth and length of its experience across different sectors, and its track record of successful project delivery and technical assistance. The IRMT’s work has always emphasised the significance of managing records as a basis for improving operational efficiency and services, enhancing access to information and providing a continuous institutional record over time.

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The National Science and Technology Forum (NSTF) South Africa

The NSTF is a stakeholder body for all science, engineering, technology and innovation (SETI) organisations in South Africa. Its mission is to promote SETI and influence related policy in the interests of socio-economic growth. Its vision is a South African SETI system that is responsive to the needs of the nation.

As a not-for-profit Company, the NSTF has a membership of more than 100 South African institutions, associations, companies and research councils, varying in size from large corporations to small and micro enterprises.

The Forum evolved out of the National Science and Technology Initiative which participated in South Africa’s landmark CODESA Convention in 1994. The NSTF was founded by government in 1995 to oversee implementation of the findings and recommendations of the Initiative and to act as the sounding board, communication channel and constructive watchdog of science and technology in South Africa.

Integral to this mandate is the quest to establish and maintain norms of best practice and to integrate and share the good and positive advancements currently being made in the fields of science and technology, both in South Africa and throughout the world.

Playing a powerful consultative and lobbying role in science policy matters ...

Through the medium of workshops, addressed by experts, the opportunity is provided for members to gain clarity, voice their concerns or provide input into policy and other matters. Feedback is given directly to the authority concerned.

Implementing the National Youth Service Programme on behalf of the South African Government’s Department of Science and Technology ...

As part of government’s broader Youth into Science Strategy, young graduates in the sciences and engineering are given the opportunity to gain practical experience by working in science centres across the country, raising science awareness among the public and school learners. They are offered training to enhance organisational skills, and guidance in seeking further employment and study opportunities. In this manner the skills of unemployed science graduates are put to good use, at the same time assisting graduates to remain in science and engineering study fields and careers.

The Youth Incentive Scheme, a bursary programme, is offered to support undergraduate science and engineering students so that they are enabled and motivated to remain in the science and engineering fields of study and careers.

Hosting the Federation of Engineering, Science and Technology Olympiads and Competitions (FESTOC) ...

FESTOC is an umbrella body of leading, national, science and technology Olympiad and Competition organisers. Its role is to co-ordinate and assist the operations of these Olympiads and Competitions, including co-ordination of participation in international events.

Organising South Africa’s prestigious NSTF Awards ...

The Awards recognise the most outstanding researchers, leaders and innovators in science and technology in South Africa. The Awards also acknowledge the achievements of black and female researchers and mentors of young scientists.

The NSTF is indeed a superb example of democracy in action – civil society working together with government for the greater good of the SETI community – and the Forum looks forward to establishing collaborations with similar organisations throughout the world.

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Public diplomacy in the age of virtual networks

By Eduardo del Buey, Director of Communications and Public Affairs, Commonwealth Secretariat

The 21st century is one of interaction between people and institutions. It is an era of virtual networks. Traditional diplomacy has relied on a very limited and select number of state actors; 21st century diplomacy relies in good measure on a wide variety of non-state actors – academics, non-governmental organisations and cyber publics. These players have far more access to information and to each other today than ever before. They are quickly developing their own networks that are often more open and dynamic than those pursued by governments.

Writing in the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office’s website, Evan H Potter of the University of Ottawa notes that “…the future of public diplomacy lies in collaboration, whereby governments and ‘global citizens’ build relationships and use them to develop cross-national initiatives to address policy challenges. A growing proportion of such collaborative activity will be online in virtual worlds” (www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-the-fco/publications/publications/pd-publication/web-2).

This calls for a tectonic shift in how diplomacy is approached. The esoteric levels at which traditional diplomacy have been practised to date are becoming increasingly limited in their scope, as non-state players assume a broader and deeper role in international relationships.

Trans-national civil society groups, on the whole unencumbered by traditional concepts of sovereignty or national borders, have created strong and effective networks that are challenging nation states on a variety of key national and international issues.

The interactive phenomenon of the internet and 24/7 news coverage are affecting deeply how decisions are taken and how they are implemented. Using inexpensive and ubiquitous Web 2.0 technology, people are making effective use of mobile phones, blogs, collaborative ‘wiki’ sites and social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace.

The esoteric levels at which traditional diplomacy have been practised to date are becoming increasingly limited in their scope, as non-state players assume a broader and deeper role in international relationships.

The public is relying more and more on online social networks for information and views. They also have access to myriad founts of knowledge and information hitherto beyond belief through free encyclopaedia websites such as Wikipedia and others. According to Potter, these technologies “…can reinforce existing relationships and build new ones by educating and mobilizing citizens, and encouraging the co-creation of policy…”

The US Center on Public Diplomacy at the Annenberg School, University of Southern California, says: “Advocates of the new public diplomacy point to the democratization of information through new media and communication technology as a new force that has greatly empowered non-state actors and elevated their role and legitimacy in international politics. As a result, a new public diplomacy is seen as taking place in a system of mutually beneficial relations that is no longer state-centric but composed of multiple actors and networks, operating in a fluid global environment of new issues and contexts” (http://uscpublicdiplomacy.com/).

Symmetrical dialogue

Government-run websites are limited since the government controls the content, and the conversation is one-way – the result is asymmetrical communication. However, in today’s world, and especially among youth, it is the non-governmental sites that have more credibility because of the open, interactive approach they often adopt. This militates for government spokespersons to be far less reserved in using non-governmental websites to engage in dialogue and debate with constituents on-line.

If governments are to get their messages across to opinion makers, they should adopt new ways of communicating their policies. A good starting point is collecting and collating views from informed members of the public, especially those who are themselves networked, to benefit from the potential domino effects.

This requires listening as well as speaking, and digesting the range of views available in the public domain and distilling them into holistic policies that address challenges.

New technologies allow governments to engage in a symmetrical dialogue with both individuals and networks involved in foreign policy issues to ensure that policy formulation is inclusive and represents the views of a broad swathe of society. Creating allies in the early stages of policy formulation can go a long way towards getting major buy-in later on.

The new technologies provide mechanisms through which governments can tap the knowledge and experience of a wide array of experts far beyond the walls of national chancelleries. Governments would be wise to engage with these networks in new and innovative ways if they are to benefit from the knowledge and experience that exists outside their comfort zones, and create and participate in effective and efficient networks that can help them meet both national and international objectives.

Soft power

Traditional diplomacy can be undertaken in a number of forms – bilaterally, multilaterally, but on the whole, between nation states. However, it is not always the most effective way to conduct diplomacy.

For many, Joseph Nye has become a core thinker in public diplomacy studies. Nye defines ‘soft power’ as “the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments”. In other words, soft power is the degree to which a political actor’s cultural assets, political ideals and policies inspire respect or have an affinity on the part of others. Thus, soft power has come to be seen as a resource, with public diplomacy
a mechanism that seeks to leverage soft power resources. So how do governments inspire this affinity on the part of others? By encouraging different actors in any given society to participate fully in policy formulation and implementation writ large – by both establishing mechanisms for a two way dialogue with the public as well as encouraging different groups in society to communicate with each other to enrich the conversation.

**Connection infrastructure and mobile phones**

Communication is about exchanges of information and perceptions. Governments must ensure that citizens have access to the best and most relevant information if society is to be an active and positive player in the process of policy formulation.

On the one hand, this means encouraging the development of a vibrant, open and unbiased media – print and electronic, broadcast and web-based.

On the other hand, it means encouraging private and public sector investment in infrastructure required to connect people – introducing and enhancing the access to appropriate technologies so that people can communicate, gain access to information, and network. This is not limited to broadband internet access, but includes modern mobile phone technologies increasingly prevalent in many developing societies, such as the 3G phones that offer internet access.

At the Commonwealth, we have incorporated collaborative software at the heart of our intranet, and will soon be using this platform to create CommPedia.

Writing in The Guardian on 2nd March, 2009, journalist Chris Tryhorn reported that “more than half the world’s population now pay to use a mobile phone and nearly a quarter uses the internet, as developing countries rapidly adopt new communications technologies. By the end of last year [2008] there were an estimated 4.1bn mobile subscriptions, up from 1bn in 2002, according to a report published today by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), an agency of the UN.” From Vanuatu to Sierra Leone, the world is now connected as it has never been before; be it money transfers in Africa or mobile twitting in London, the mobile phone has become the remote control of life.

The phrase ‘a computer in your pocket’ has become a reality, and we can expect a whole raft of new powerful mobile devices to come to the market over the next few years that will push the boundaries of communication even further. Ten years ago the mobile was only a device to make calls. Now it is also a music device, a gaming platform, an audiovisual tool, an instant messenger – the list goes on.

Mainstream news media are using reports by everyday citizens – who usually depend on their mobile phones for audiovisual coverage – in their newscasts, complementing the work of traditional journalists. The citizen journalist, blogger, wiki user, is becoming the opinion-maker of today, influencing the many that are online, searching for new ways of obtaining their news and information, almost instantaneously.

What once seemed to be an annoying brick in our pockets, the mobile phone is now an indispensable part of our lives.

Effective use of new technologies to generate a two-way flow of ideas is today’s reality – one with which governments must become fully conversant. Efficient ways of sharing information, especially by government officials who are usually reticent about sharing ideas, are vital for useful and productive communication.

In their book ‘Wikinomics’, Don Tapscott and Anthony D Williams argue that “billions of connected individuals can now actively participate in innovation, wealth creation, and social development in ways we once only dreamed of. And when these masses of people collaborate they collectively can advance the arts, culture, science, education, government, and the economy in surprising but ultimately profitable ways”.

**Practical collaboration**

At the Commonwealth, we are developing our own ability to communicate interactively both internally and externally. We have incorporated collaborative software at the heart of our intranet, and will soon be using this platform to create CommPedia – an encyclopaedia of Commonwealth information aimed at encouraging the free flow of ideas into and out of participating organisations.

We envisage exchanges that include knowledgeable members of the public interacting with Commonwealth intergovernmental organisations (the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Commonwealth Foundation, and the Commonwealth of Learning), together with the Friends of the Commonwealth (an independent charity that supports good causes around the Commonwealth) and the 90-odd other affiliated associations and organisations from the Commonwealth Games Federation to the Commonwealth Journalists Association.

We are aiming to close the gap between those with access to both digital and information technology and those without through our Commonwealth Connects programme. This programme works to enable the effective use of information and communication technology strategies, e-governance, and the management of resources. Working together with Commonwealth partner agencies and member countries, it aims to tap into available resources to fast-track positive change. It is a unique initiative that enables the transfer of technology and expertise across the whole Commonwealth. We are also exploring new ways to use mobile phone networks to get our corporate messages to decision-makers and opinion-shapers everywhere. Moreover, with a conceptual Partnership Platform Portal (P3) in the pipeline, we envisage developing the ability to reach people everywhere and provide them with mechanisms to connect with each other, using available and future technologies to facilitate people-to-people contact and development.

The objective is to create synergies in ideas that will enrich dialogue among interested parties, and to create policies that address the challenges faced in this century. Bringing together state and non-state players in international diplomacy can help solve the intricate, myriad, and highly interrelated challenges we face globally, regionally, nationally, and as members of our local communities. We have to start from the role of the individual as the key actor on the multimedia stage. It is by truly embracing this era of networks and becoming inclusive and interactive that public diplomacy will remain both vibrant and active throughout the 21st century.
Areas of Focus

New Development Paradigms
New Economic Systems
New Financial Architectures
New Monetary Sciences
Public Finance Innovations
Non-Monetary Exchange Networks
Collaborative Enterprise Networks
Urban/Rural Redevelopment Strategies
Sustainable Technology Design
Future Studies Foundations
System Science Foundations

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The South African New Economics Network (SANE) is a network of organisations and individuals involved in developing new economic and financial models designed to promote poverty alleviation, community self-reliance, civic redevelopment, ecological sustainability, social equity, and economic justice for all South Africans.

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Respect and understanding: taking the civil path to peace

By Steve Cutts, Director of Strategic Planning and Evaluation, Commonwealth Secretariat

The Commonwealth is committed to countering the growth of a culture of violence, and to building civil paths to peace. This article sets out some of the key elements of this practical approach, and makes a number of recommendations for action that are aimed at engaging ministers of youth, women’s affairs, education, media and culture.

At their meeting in Munyonyo, Uganda, in November 2007, the leaders of the 53 countries of the Commonwealth declared that “The Commonwealth ... is a body well placed to affirm the fundamental truth that diversity is one of humanity’s greatest strengths”. They went on to note that “Accepting diversity, respecting the dignity of all human beings, and understanding the richness of our multiple identities have always been fundamental to the Commonwealth principles and approach, and will also contribute to resisting the cultivation of a culture of violence.”

It was this culture of violence, and the attendant atrocities committed by terrorists and fanatics, that had prompted Commonwealth leaders back in 2005 to “explore initiatives to promote mutual understanding and respect among all faiths and communities in the Commonwealth”.

Building on the Commonwealth’s fundamental values of human rights, democratic societies, rule of law, accountability and economic development, a Commonwealth Commission on Respect and Understanding, comprising a diverse group of 11 eminent persons chaired by Nobel Laureate Professor Amartya Sen, produced the Report ‘Civil Paths to Peace’.

The Commonwealth Approach

Commonwealth leaders endorsed the key concepts underpinning Civil Paths to Peace:

1. Cosmopolitan or multiple identities

Commonwealth leaders recognised the importance of human beings’ rich identities formed by multiple membership of different groups. As Professor Sen notes in his book ‘Identity and Violence’, a person can be “without any contradiction, an American citizen, of Caribbean origin, with African ancestry, a Christian, a liberal, a woman, a vegetarian, a long-distance runner, a historian, a schoolteacher, a novelist, a feminist, a heterosexual, a believer in gay and lesbian rights, a theatre lover, an environmental activist, a tennis fan, a jazz musician, and someone who is deeply committed to the view that there are intelligent beings in outer space with whom it is extremely urgent to talk (preferably in English)”.

Problems arise, as Sen argues, when an individual is assumed to have a singular and bivalent identity, based on an exclusive membership of one particular identity group: this provides the conditions for conflict and violence. The Commission concluded that the tendency to ascribe the causes of conflict or terrorism as rooted in some ‘clash of civilisations’ is conceptually flawed and divisive in practice. The world cannot be divided into discrete civilisations; the assumed homogeneity within each identified ‘civilisation’ or group simply does not exist. The Commission further noted that attempts to combat terrorism by engaging through the medium of faith and religion can end up emphasising the voice of religious extremists. This can be dangerously counterproductive at a time when governments should be recognising and supporting the role that many Muslims for example (cited here as the group that is often identified as the target of efforts to overcome extremism) play in civil society, including the promotion of democracy. A faith-based focus can make it more difficult for ‘politically secular’ Muslims to speak out against violence.

2. Addressing humiliation and grievance

The root causes of violence can often be traced back to feelings of resentment caused by past maltreatment and humiliation (whether perceived or real). Such feelings can last a long time, and even span generations. Accordingly, civil paths to peace must address past as well as present grievances. By providing space for airing grievances, individuals and groups who feel they have been wronged in the past can be heard.

Learning to listen and also to respect others’ views is not just a technique. Consultation must be meaningful; listening means being prepared to change your own mind or planned course of action. The aim is to build constructive dialogue and real relationships. On the other hand, it is important to recognise that dialogue does not always lead to agreement. There must always be room for differences. We must find ways of ‘disagreeing agreeably’, and respecting beliefs, ideas and views that do not accord with our own.

From theory to practical action

There are many ways of pursuing civil, as opposed to military, paths to peace. And it should be remembered that, in the long run, these are the only paths that can offer sustainable stability and harmony within and between societies.

In their Munyonyo Statement, Heads of Governments acknowledged the Commission’s argument that Commonwealth countries have very different starting points, and called for practical steps that take into account “the particular needs and situation of Commonwealth countries”. Indeed, actions must be tailored to individual underlying problems in countries and communities.

By endorsing Civil Paths to Peace, Heads of Governments committed themselves to build on and extend existing Commonwealth programmes, and to focus on four areas – young people, women, education and the media – as priority areas of action. Heads recognised that much that happens in communities is beyond the control of governments. While programmes need to engage partners from civil society and other sectors, governments continue to have a unique role to play. Accordingly, at their meeting in September 2008, Commonwealth Foreign Ministers noted a report by the Secretary-General that – in addition to suggesting what the
Commonwealth Secretariat could do – proposed action for ministers across a range of areas:

**Political participation, dialogue and inclusion**

1. Ensure the participation and representation of marginalised groups, including minority communities, women and young people, in political processes as a means of bringing their often neglected concerns to public attention.
2. Strengthen political institutions so that they are conducive to achieving inclusive debate, recognising that the representative duties of parliamentarians are of great importance for the functioning of a civil approach to peace and the avoidance of extremism.

**Media**

1. Encourage the media in their constructive efforts from the operation of training institutions to the actual day-to-day practice of responsible journalism to:
   - Tackle the causes of grievance and humiliation that underlie the appeal of extremist and instigating messages
   - Help transcend warring boundaries and promote understanding
   - Develop a fuller understanding of international issues.
2. Strengthen the capacity of media workers to report accurately on inter-cultural and identity-based issues, and to support co-operation and understanding between communities and the media at a local level.

**Education and young people**

1. Provide well-grounded basic education for all; and ensure high quality, relevant education, regardless of whether that education is provided by the state or not.
2. Increase educational participation, the lack of which can be an important symptom of embedded inequality and lack of opportunity; and ‘determine’ how to extend the age ‘reach’ of the compulsory schooling system upwards and downwards and implement this effectively.
3. Develop educational content that is linked with the promotion of respect and understanding.
4. Support cross-cultural exchanges and educational activities for young people as a way of forging cosmopolitan identities necessary in a global world, and to promote successful young people who embrace their many identities as role models, and
5. Support, including through increased financial support, the work of Commonwealth organisations that are already active in supporting young people through for example cross-cultural exchanges and educational activities.

**Diverse communities**

1. Build common purpose and shared space within diverse communities for people to explore their common and multiple identities as a means of re-establishing respect and understanding. All measures should embody the Commonwealth principles of democracy, development, human rights and the rule of law. The process itself would bring together people of different identities as a way of fostering dialogue and common purpose.

**Civil society**

1. Encourage and support a variety of civil society groupings, based on different affiliations as the diversity of associations helps to bring neglected concerns to public attention and can lead to better policy making. Ministers may consider how, in partnership with civil society organisations (CSOs), they can make efforts to ensure that the CSOs consulted truly articulate the views of those they claim to represent.
2. Support the development of meaningful government and non-faith civil society relationships with faith-based organisations, particularly involving women’s and youth networks, and the strengthening of existing relationships.
3. Encourage the private sector to recognise the benefits of working in a secure, harmonious environment and understanding better the faiths and cultures of the communities in which they work, and seek corresponding private sector partnership.
4. Support the Commonwealth Foundation, and the non-governmental Commonwealth organisations to enable them to play their full part in promoting these objectives, in a spirit of co-operation and mutual support.

As Director of Strategic Planning and Evaluation, Steve Cutts is Programme Co-ordinator for the ‘Respect and Understanding’ initiative. Before joining the Commonwealth Secretariat, Steve was Director and Head of the Office of the OECD Secretary-General (Donald Johnston). Steve holds a First Class Honours Degree (Keele) and an Executive MBA (INSEAD).

Strategic Planning and Evaluation Division, Commonwealth Secretariat (SPED)
provides capacity and technical leadership to support the Secretariat’s strategic and operational planning and manages the performance monitoring and evaluation of the organisation’s work. It is responsible for servicing the Secretariat’s governing bodies (Board of Governors and Executive Committee). It promotes internal coordination and facilitates consideration of the future role of the Commonwealth, at various levels. It also facilitates coordination between the Secretariat and other Commonwealth organisations and civil society. The division reports directly to the Secretary-General and works with all divisions.

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The Banking Association South Africa is the mandated representative of all licensed banks operating in South Africa. The membership of The Banking Association South Africa consists of 18 South African banks and 17 International banks.

The vision of The Banking Association South Africa is:

- As the mandated representative of the banking sector, to aspire to a progressive, sustainable and globally competitive sector that is respected by, and relevant to, the broad spectrum of stakeholders in South Africa.

The Mission of The Banking Association South Africa is:

- To be the only mandated representative of the banking sector in South Africa
- To contribute to the socio-economic growth and development of our country through facilitating and encouraging our members to deliver financial services to a broad spectrum of the population
- To continually catalyze transformation and innovation in the sector and enable the consolidation of the outcome of such transformational and innovative initiatives into the business of banks
- To encourage and facilitate the sustainability of the banking sector through profitable, responsible and environmentally sensitive business by our members
- To undertake the necessary research and development to inform international best practice in the business of our members
- To forge dynamic partnerships with relevant stakeholders to influence an environment in which banks can do profitable business in a way that promotes international best practice and sustainable socio-economic growth and development
- To continually explore a role for The Banking Association SA in the southern-African region and the African continent, as our members extend their footprints into these areas

The Banking Association South Africa fulfills numerous roles. The most critical of these are:

- Lobbying and advocacy towards policy and legislative influence
- Engaging various stakeholders, including government, community groups, regulators and labour on all matters pertinent to the banking industry
- Research into matters relevant to the banking industry, and utilization of such research to inform industry platforms in various areas
- Driving the transformational imperatives of the banking industry and its role in the broader transformation agenda espoused by government. This includes the industry’s role in the promotion of Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment as encapsulated in relevant legislation.
- Promoting best practice in banking amongst our members

The Banking Association South Africa also undertakes the following international activities:

- We are the Secretariat for the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Banking Association, and are involved in various capacity building and policy influence initiatives in that region
- We are members of the African Union for Housing Finance and our Managing Director is the current First Deputy-President of this body
- We are working with the United Nations Environment Development Programme in the promotion of sustainable finance in Africa.
- Our Managing Director is co-Chairman of an African Task Force under this initiative.
- We are members of the International Banking Federation

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Governmental Priorities

This section outlines the key priorities facing governments throughout the Commonwealth. The 40 articles cover a range of topics with opinion pieces, case studies and transferable solutions written by multi-sectoral authors from across the globe.

- Economic Growth & Investment
- Natural Resources & the Environment
- Infrastructure & Energy
- Education & Training
- Health and Welfare
- Information Communication Technologies
- Youth, Sport & Culture
The idea that ‘partnership’ at the national or international level is central to development has gained ground, especially over the past two decades. This is now a fundamental tenet of contemporary thinking on development and the operational approach to development. This was not always the case. Development theory in its post-war guise tended to look to either the state or the private sector as the driver of development. The fact that both common sense and the successful track record of a number of countries in East Asia seemed to give the lie to an either/or bifurcation led to increasing recognition of the state and the private sector as dual, collaborative drivers of development. But this, until about the 1990s, was as far as the concept of partnership went. We now interpret partnership in a much wider sense to encompass players, stakeholders and structures at the national, regional and international levels.

At the international level, the concept of partnership for development is a quite recent phenomenon. Both bilaterally and through multilateral institutions the approach to development assistance was ‘top down’ and prescriptive, with the unhappy consequence that ‘conditionality’ became the technical term most widely recognised and understood by ordinary citizens throughout the developing world. The history and the practice of development assistance was thus for decades the antithesis of partnership. Indeed, it was not until 1985 that bilateral and multilateral organisations met – together with stakeholders – and began the dialogue that eventually culminated in the endorsement in 2005 of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.

As is often the case, change was rooted in the recognition that old approaches were not succeeding and a new paradigm was needed. But it would be myopic to attribute the emerging emphasis on partnership solely to the failure of old paradigms. Change is usually more complex than that. At the national level, in a process that is continuing, we also saw the emergence in the developing world of plural societies of growing self-confidence and vitality – societies whose citizens are becoming more and better informed and in which participation and accountability both include and transcend formal electoral processes. In these circumstances partnership becomes both necessary and viable. Partnership as a developmental paradigm can thus be usefully situated in the democratisation of processes and structures within countries, as well as between ‘recipients’ and ‘donors’. It should be viewed not solely and clinically within the context of the rejection of a top-down approach, but more broadly as embracing, among other elements, fundamental values such as transparency, accountability, and participation that are essential to the promotion of people-centred development. In this important sense partnership, as a modality, reflects fundamentally the Commonwealth approach to development.

The emphasis on targets, monitoring and reporting is not incidental, but central to partnership, making possible through measurement and feedback a degree of transparency and objectivity which can serve to strengthen and enhance relationships.

**Defining the goals**

Except for the ODA target established in 1974 (0.7 per cent of GDP), which remains more honoured in the breach than through adherence, surprisingly little in terms of specific and monitorable targets were set in the development field in the first four decades of existence of the United Nations – this
Development policy ownership
The Global Economic Governance Programme at Oxford University has, through several case studies, identified some factors which in practice appear to have contributed either to the strengthening or to the weakening of policy ‘ownership’ by governments in their relationship with development partners. Among the factors that facilitate ownership were:

- A history of good macro-economic management, which strengthens a country’s negotiating hand with the Bretton Woods Institutions
- Strong state institutions, which enhance capacity to set the policy agenda and to maintain control of its direction
- A clear development vision about where the country is going and, importantly, the contribution of public policy in taking it there, and
- Confidence that the relationship with the donor is a strong one and that it is on a firm footing.

This last increases the willingness to be pro-active in the relationship and to take risks. It might be noted in this context that a public sector capable of sound financial management is important not only to manage effectively the relationship with donors, and to oversee programme and project implementation but, especially in the case of ‘donor darlings’ also to ‘policy proof’ against the unwelcome macro-economic side-effects of sudden surges in aid and other inflows. These side-effects may include currency appreciation, spikes in inflation, and declining export competitiveness.

Among primary factors cited as undermining ownership are:

- Donor proliferation, which has led to fragmented aid management structures at the national level, and to weakened domestic policy-making and budget processes, and
- Excessive dependence on aid to deliver goods and services, and to shore up political support, which weakens the incentive for aid receiving governments to establish ownership and control over policies and processes.

notwithstanding the Charter’s key mandate “to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples”. From the 1990s onward, however, the global dialogue and policy debates have tended on the whole to be more pointed – one might even dare to say more action-oriented – as a culture of targets, goals, and monitoring has emerged. It was of course no accident that these were also elements of a parallel process focusing on results that had been initiated within the public sectors of a number of developed countries, and which then came to inform developments at the global level. Be that as it may, it is important to note that the emphasis on targets, monitoring and reporting is not incidental, but central to partnership, making possible through measurement and feedback, even if in some cases imperfectly so, a degree of transparency and objectivity which can serve to strengthen and enhance relationships.


The global economic crisis has deepened concern that progress towards the MDGs will be retarded and vulnerable Commonwealth members will be among the most seriously affected.

The breadth and scope of these conferences reflect the fact that their focus has not been narrowly on growth but on development that improves the quality of life of individuals and societies. A common thread has run through their outcomes – they have set international goals and benchmarks, recommended national and international policies, and agreed on commitments within their respective areas of focus and competence. But the undoubted apogee because of their sweep, scope and political profile must be the two Millennium Conferences – the 2000 Millennium Assembly and the 2005 World Summit – which gave rise to the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and their related targets. As is universally known, the MDGs encompass the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, achieving of universal primary education, promotion of gender equality and empowering of women, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, ensuring environmental sustainability and developing a global partnership for development – all of this within a framework of mutual accountability among developed and developing countries, the full engagement of development partners – multilateral and bilateral, civil society and the private sector. Much of this
was truly ground-breaking for the global community. MDG 8 – Develop a Global Partnership for Development – and its eight targets, was, for example, possibly the first explicit recognition at the summit level of the need to tackle in an integrated and concerted manner the debt problems of developing countries, development of an open, rules-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading system, and the special needs of Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States.

**Reaching for the goals**

The MDGs have become an anchoring framework for development co-operation, underpinning the United Nations Development Agenda, and the core of the strategic plans of many multilateral organisations and bilateral donors. This is the case as well at the Commonwealth. It is often recounted that more than 600 million Commonwealth citizens live in absolute poverty. Commonwealth members bear a disproportionate share of the burden of disease, of maternal and child mortality, and children out of school. With 32 small states and a significant number of Least Developed Countries among its members, the global economic crisis has deepened concern that progress towards the MDGs will be retarded and vulnerable Commonwealth members will be among the most seriously affected. In fact, a number of studies (OECD, ADB etc.) had concluded some time ago that many countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, will fail to meet the MDGs target by 2015. Significantly, this was before the economic crisis which has since seen growth projections reduced by more than half.

It needs to be emphasised that partners who receive assistance also have obligations, not only those who provide it. This is the essence of partnership.

If anything, this underscores the importance of building successful global partnerships for development. It draws attention to the challenge as well of doing so in a context where the provision of external resources, regrettably, may not achieve even levels previously agreed to, and thus effective and optimal utilisation of the resources provided becomes paramount. Last year’s review in Ghana of the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness showed that the international community – especially donors – have found some difficulty in adhering in practice to the enunciated principles of ownership, alignment, harmonisation, managing for results and mutual accountability. The Accra Agenda for Action calls for building more effective and inclusive partnerships and noted that without robust capacity – strong institutions, systems, and local expertise – developing countries cannot fully own and manage their development processes. The hope is that through its specific and time-bound targets the trend towards true partnership in aid provision will be strengthened. Notwithstanding this, divergent views on what country ownership actually means, insufficient aid harmonisation and alignment among donors, and prescribed and inflexible administrative and other procedures are elements of ongoing concern.

**Confusing numbers**

The OECD itself found two years ago that there are more than 200 bilateral and multilateral organisations providing ODA; and that some receiving countries deal with more than 40 official donors on more than 600 projects each year. Also noteworthy was the fact that less than 40 per cent of aid flow was channelled through the budget management and procurement systems of receiving countries, the remainder being processed on the basis of the varying administrative procedures of numerous donors. Others have found that “more than 280 bilateral donor agencies, 242 multilateral programmes, 24 development banks, and about 40 UN agencies are working in the development business” – which includes but goes beyond the provision of ODA – and have identified as many as an estimated 340,000 development projects around the world (Finance and Development, 2008). The resulting pressure on the scarce institutional and managerial resources of receiving countries, and the high transaction costs, are profoundly worrying elements.

But it needs to be emphasised that partners who receive assistance also have obligations, not only those who provide it. This is the essence of partnership. A number of economic, social, political and other conditions have been identified as providing a conducive or enabling environment for development. For example, the 2005 World Summit emphasised the need for countries to promote good governance and the rule of law in order to achieve sustained economic growth, sustainable development and the eradication of poverty. This entails, among other critical factors, transparency and accountability in the management of public affairs and participation of ordinary citizens in issues affecting their lives. This illustrates the multidimensional and interlocking nature of partnership and its attendant accountability: governments with citizens; developing countries with development partners. When these accountability mechanisms are strong the results are likely to be equally strong.
It should be evident from this that a very important factor in building effective partnership, both externally and with domestic interests and groupings, such as the private sector and civil society, is the development of the public sector. This is a high priority of the Commonwealth Secretariat – one which pre-dates the recent resurgence of interest in the role of the state in development. A recent World Bank report entitled ‘Public Sector Reform: What Works and Why?’ underscores that the effectiveness and efficiency of a country’s public sector are vital to the success of development activities. It found that sound financial management, an efficient civil service and administrative policy, efficient and fair collection of taxes, and transparent operations that are relatively free from corruption, all facilitate the efficient delivery of public services. Beyond this, these characteristics also serve to create the trust, confidence and predictability that are important to partnership with both domestic and external partners.

**New challenges and opportunities**

Let me refer briefly to two changes in the landscape of development co-operation that have a bearing on the building of partnerships. Firstly, there is a widening range of potential partners, with significant aid donors now emerging among developing countries, as well as from the ranks of resource-rich private foundations. Secondly, the role of non-governmental organisations and of civil society generally has become much more pervasive both within countries and globally. Their activism, allied with modern technology, has created networks with the capacity to influence the attitudes and approaches of aid-giving governments and institutions, and to influence as well domestic attitudes towards policies and projects both within aid giving and receiving countries.

The first of these – i.e. new partners – poses challenges and opportunities. The challenge is that already heavily burdened governmental machinery must accommodate less familiar partners and proceed on a learning curve towards a mature and comfortable relationship. But on the other hand, new resources are potentially available and the template for the new relationship can draw upon recently evolved best practices and the lessons learnt from other long-standing relationships as well as, importantly, on the empathy of new partners who in some cases are still, or were until recently, aid receivers themselves.

In regard to civil society, it is in the interest of governments who value openness, dialogue and engagement, to build effective partnerships with civil society. This can be invaluable in enhancing the legitimacy of policy and in further empowering governments in their interface with external partners. At the same time it is incumbent on civil society organisations to strive for representativeness and to recognise the diversity of interests that often must be reconciled in a plural society. This will be facilitated by direct engagement with government to build relations of trust and confidence and to promote political accountability.

**The partnership ethos**

Let me conclude by recalling that the Commonwealth Secretariat is a signatory to the Paris Declaration on Aid effectiveness. A recent review of the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Co-operation – the CFTC – concluded that it was its partnership ethos which differentiated it from traditional donor-driven development programming and that this was also an element of its comparative advantage. The review concluded that the CFTC generally exemplified the Aid Effectiveness principles, and in fact has had some of them as characteristics since its inception.

While the partnership concept provides a framework within which to co-ordinate development assistance, it is the practical lessons and experiences of development assistance co-ordination and delivery that gives partnerships their content and value. I will end by citing some of these lessons. The more important would include:

- Using country development plans as the general framework for development co-operation
- Clarifying at the outset the respective role and responsibilities of the different partners (government, bilateral agencies, international and regional financial institutions, civil society, labour and the private sector)
- Establishing communication and co-ordination mechanisms to resolve differences and to enable informed choices
- Sharing information (data, analysis, policy and programming intentions)
- Promoting and consolidating joint work (data collection, analyses, missions, evaluations, management and accountability)
- Simplifying and rationalising administrative and financial requirements (for example, financial management and accountability, preparatory phases of the project cycle, and reporting and monitoring), and
- Promoting local mobilisation, participation, monitoring and assessment.

The first of these – i.e. new partners – poses challenges and opportunities. The challenge is that already heavily burdened governmental machinery must accommodate less familiar partners and proceed on a learning curve towards a mature and comfortable relationship. But on the other hand, new resources are potentially available and the template for the new relationship can draw upon recently evolved best practices and the lessons learnt from other long-standing relationships as well as, importantly, on the empathy of new partners who in some cases are still, or were until recently, aid receivers themselves.
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The Commonwealth’s response to the economic crisis

By Cyrus Rustomjee, Director, Economic Affairs Division, Commonwealth Secretariat

The scale and depth of the global economic crisis is unprecedented. According to the World Bank, global GDP is expected to contract by about 2 per cent in 2009. Twenty-six Commonwealth members will experience either negative or zero growth in 2009. The Commonwealth has responded through escalated work in member countries, focusing on assistance in mitigating the impacts of the crisis. This article illustrates some of the work that is under way. The author first traces the impact of the crisis, both globally and within the Commonwealth; and then briefly outlines some of the specific Commonwealth responses. These include initiatives in member countries, focused on research, advocacy, consensus-building, implementation and delivery of projects, as well as a number of internal responses as the organisation adjusts to the deteriorating external environment.

The global economic and financial crisis has had a very substantial adverse impact on Commonwealth member countries. All 53 members have been affected, with significant reductions in GDP, exports, employment, access to international capital and to trade finance. There have been steep declines in remittances, on which many of the smallest Commonwealth members rely; and substantial reductions in fiscal revenues, as economic activity declines and with hard-earned fiscal space evaporating as governments have been called on to address escalating demands for social safety net provision and for essential social services.

Almost all of the Commonwealth’s high- and middle-income member countries are projected to have negative growth rates in 2009, together with several countries in the Caribbean, Africa and Asia. The World Trade Organization (WTO) has estimated that world trade in goods and services will fall by 9 per cent in 2009, constituting the largest decline in trade since the Second World War. The International Labour Organization estimates that about 30 million more people worldwide will be unemployed in 2009, of which 23 million will be in developing countries.

Declining exports and falling export prices have constituted a devastating double blow to the smaller, poorer economies in the Commonwealth.

The World Bank estimates that the slowdown in growth will result in an increase in the number of extreme poor by between 55 million and 90 million people in 2009.

In addition, there have been severe medium and longer term effects. Extreme poverty has increased since the commencement of the crisis. The World Bank estimates that the slowdown in growth will result in an increase in the number of extreme poor by between 55 million and 90 million people in 2009. A substantial number of these are in the poorest and most vulnerable countries, including many of the Commonwealth. The Bank notes that these numbers will rise if the crisis deepens and if developing country growth declines further.

Progress towards the Millennium Development Goals has been retarded in most cases – and in some instances, particularly in respect of the human development goals, gains in recent years are being substantially reversed. Public institutions in the poorer member countries have come under increased strain. The economic crisis comes in the immediate aftermath of the food and fuel crises of 2007 and 2008 and has compounded the challenges confronting the smaller, poorer and more vulnerable Commonwealth member countries, which comprise the bulk of the membership and which are the focus of the large concentration of the Commonwealth’s work.

In addition, there have been severe medium and longer term effects. Extreme poverty has increased since the commencement of the crisis. The World Bank estimates that the slowdown in growth will result in an increase in the number of extreme poor by between 55 million and 90 million people in 2009. A substantial number of these are in the poorest and most vulnerable countries, including many of the Commonwealth. The Bank notes that these numbers will rise if the crisis deepens and if developing country growth declines further.

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Declining exports and falling export prices have constituted a devastating double blow to the smaller, poorer economies in the Commonwealth.

The impact of the crisis in the Commonwealth

The current global economic crisis originated in the US housing market and spread through the financial systems of the US and Western Europe. There was initial concern that the crisis would be transmitted from the advanced countries through the financial sectors of developing countries. But while developing countries’ financial sectors have indeed weakened, the strongest transmission channels for the crisis have in fact been through the real sectors of these economies.

In Commonwealth developing countries, the crisis has transmitted through several channels. Declining global demand has severely curtailed global trade volumes and has brought to a close several years of consistent increases in commodity prices. Declining exports and falling export prices have constituted a devastating double blow to the smaller, poorer economies in the Commonwealth. The combined impact on developing countries has been severe, with export revenues sharply contracting, employment in export sectors declining substantially and government fiscal revenues, an important part of which is sourced from trade-related excise duties, reducing significantly.

Declining global output has also impacted the level of workers’ remittances from abroad, on which households in many developing countries are reliant. In many countries remittances have sharply deteriorated, reducing household income and contributing further to the reduction in aggregate foreign exchange inflows. In many instances, particularly for unskilled workers, declining remittances have been accompanied by rising unemployment, when workers abroad have been retrenched and have returned to their home countries to seek new employment.

The global crisis has also reduced access to finance across all Commonwealth developing countries. Official development...
Economic Growth & Investment

The Commonwealth's Response

The Commonwealth works in its poorest and least-resourced member countries through a combination of high-quality research, advocacy, consensus-building, implementation and delivery of projects and technical advice to member countries. In previous periods of crisis, as in the case of the current global economic downturn, the Commonwealth's primary response has been to escalate this work, working through the institutions' four-yearly Strategic Plan, currently for 2008-2012.

There have been several immediate and direct responses to the crisis. These include intensified work on small states, to help address the challenges posed by their particular vulnerabilities during periods of acute crisis. To advance this work further the Secretariat is convening a meeting of small state members and experts, as well as donors, to deepen existing work and to identify emerging new needs to which the Commonwealth can respond. New partnerships are being forged to maximise development impact.

The Secretariat is also working with its members to help address weaknesses in financial sector regulatory systems; assessing the impact of the crisis on progress with the Millennium Development Goals; and focusing attention particularly on measures to help members strengthen capacity to address the human development MDGs. The Commonwealth is also building on existing and previous comparative advantages to address the challenges posed by their particular vulnerabilities during periods of acute crisis.

The duration of the crisis is expected to be far more pronounced in developing countries, which have had no fiscal space to stave off the first round effects of the crisis.

The implications are particularly significant and adverse for small and vulnerable countries in the Commonwealth, and for whom recovery will take far longer in comparison with larger, more resourced economies.

The crisis has become unprecedented in its scale and its reach, both at a global level and indeed across all Commonwealth member countries. The implications are particularly significant and adverse for small and vulnerable countries, which comprise 32 of the 53 Commonwealth members, and for whom recovery will take far longer in comparison with larger, more resourced economies with greater access to sources of capital and greater and easier access to the global trading system. For the substantial majority of these smaller countries, this is a profound economic and social crisis, more than simply a crisis either emanating in or impacting upon the financial sectors.

A further challenge is the unknown duration of the crisis. Both investor and consumer confidence have become depressed, in both advanced industrial and developing countries. Some signs of a recovery may be emerging in mid-2009 in certain variables reflecting improving confidence in the advanced economies most affected by the crisis. But it is not clear whether these signal a sustained recovery in these countries. Moreover, the duration of the crisis is expected to be far more pronounced in developing countries, which have had no fiscal space to stave off the first round effects of the crisis; and in which countries, the crisis has undermined institutional resilience and capacity and significantly increased poverty.

Growth consequences for small and vulnerable economies (SVEs)

The members of the Commonwealth are highly diverse. The membership contains 17 of the 30 smallest economies in the world. A further 15 countries are officially classified as small states. Given their high degree of openness and dependence on international trade for growth, the global economic slowdown is proving to have very significantly adverse consequences for these countries.

These countries’ dependence on exports to OECD member countries represents a particularly acute challenge. It is estimated, for example, that a fall in OECD import growth by 9 percentage points over a year, which is comparable to WTO predictions for the extent of decline in global trade in 2009, leads to a fall in average GDP growth in SVEs by 2.43 percentage points. With the long-term annual average growth in small states approximating 3 per cent, a sustained decline in global trade of the magnitude experienced in 2009 threatens to effectively eliminate these countries’ long-term growth prospects. Consequently, and aside from the additional challenges brought about by the economic crisis, for the smallest and most vulnerable economies, recovery will be premised on an early and very substantial resumption in their exports to their OECD and other trading partners.

The Commonwealth's Response

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The Secretariat is also working with its members to help address weaknesses in financial sector regulatory systems; assessing the impact of the crisis on progress with the Millennium Development Goals; and focusing attention particularly on measures to help members strengthen capacity to address the human development MDGs. The Commonwealth is also building on existing and previous comparative advantages in public debt management, to assist member countries in developing and maintaining prudent debt management institutions, policies and practices. The value of this work has been starkly revealed in the context of shifting patterns of external financial flows to and from developing countries, brought on both by the crisis and with the advent of new forms of financing. A new initiative will analyse and document new sources of financing which may be of particular benefit to Commonwealth developing countries, and will integrate any relevant findings into the Secretariat's ongoing work in member countries, on accessing new finance and in prudent debt assumption and debt management.

Additional new initiatives are under way on public sector development, including:

- strengthening member countries' systematic programme review capabilities
- Building capacity in macroeconomic risk modelling and risk management
Developing a Commonwealth points of contact framework, initiated by a survey across public sectors in Commonwealth member countries, in order to help the Secretariat prioritise requests for member country assistance, and

- Actively helping member countries which are embarking on a down-sizing in their public services as a result of the fiscal constraints imposed by the economic crisis. Collectively, these interventions are helping member countries during the economic crisis by supporting continued political stability, strengthened democratic and institutional practices and good social and economic governance.

Initiatives are also being pursued in sectors most acutely impacted by the crisis, including the youth. The Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP) is deepening the reach of the Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative in Asia, the Caribbean and the Pacific, through an innovative blend of training, credit and business support. Interventions are focusing on facilitating opportunities for young people to share their perspectives on emerging economic crisis, recovery and development strategies, a review of existing youth entrepreneurship to improve accessibility and impact and the provision of opportunities for young people to more effectively respond to the challenges posed by reduced employment opportunities and to actively participate in the repositioning of development strategies in response to the crisis. These initiatives are taking place in all four regions in which the CYP operates.

The Secretariat is intervening in several other areas, including in trade, in social sector development and social safety net protection.

In conclusion, the Commonwealth Secretariat is responding robustly and within its core areas of comparative advantage, to the unprecedented global economic crisis; and in doing so has deepened its collaboration with member countries in contributing to addressing the acute challenges confronted by the membership.

Dr Cyrus Rustomjee assumed his post as Director, Economic Affairs Division, in January 2009. Previously he was Chairperson of South Africa’s non-bank financial sector regulatory authority and of the Minister of Finance’s advisory board on financial policy and regulation. In 2007 Cyrus headed the G20 Secretariat during South Africa’s term as G20 Chair.

The Economic Affairs Division is responsible for the Commonwealth Secretariat’s work in economic and financial sector development, trade, small states and the environment.

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Democracy building
In its work on building democracy, the Secretariat is continuing its efforts in supporting credible elections to promote good governance, and in partnership with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association to continue supporting government and opposition workshops. Work continues in building the capacity of election commissions through the provision of technical support; and in actively monitoring situations that may be exacerbated by the economic crisis. Collectively, these interventions are helping member countries during the economic crisis by supporting continued political stability, strengthened democratic and institutional practices and good social and economic governance.

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Innovation and belt tightening – survival instincts in the face of the financial and economic crises

By Kaifala Marah, Advisor, Governance and Institutional Development Division, Commonwealth Secretariat

The ongoing financial crisis – which is no fault of the developing economies – has dealt a devastating blow to their stability, now teetering on the brink of the worst economic crisis ever recorded. The magnitude of the downturn has led the World Bank to estimate that about 4 million people will go hungry in the developing world. The Jubilee Debt Campaign has warned that there will be another round of debt crisis as witnessed in the 1980s – perhaps with unprecedented proportions – such that 38 of the 43 most vulnerable countries require debt cancellation even before the crisis is fully felt.

For developing Commonwealth countries, the economic picture is as grim as ever; for example, Zambia, which has received a debt cancellation package, is on the brink of facing a debt-to-export ratio of 300 per cent, while a similar unprecedented fall is imminent for Bangladesh, as the country relies heavily on the dwindling export of garments to Europe and North America.

Amid the heat of the simmering meltdown has come a call for the reform of the international financial institutions; but even this will not provide sufficient response energy to fire up trends in low-income economies; similarly the level of suggested financial bailout, being only one-tenth of what has been pumped into the financial markets of the developed world, is simply inadequate to cushion the effects of the crisis in poor and ailing economies. The G20 spoke of stringent regulatory reforms to be supported by a watching initiative for regional and global economies, but there was no clear statement proposing a remedy for the impact on the economies of the South. These challenges, among others, have meant that the future of nations is apparently dependent on rethinking fiscal and monetary policies; of robust innovations structured on discipline; and a requirement that calls for the political and bureaucratic class to move out of their comfort zones into new areas that push the traditional boundaries of planning, management and evaluation.

These challenges have meant that the future of nations is apparently dependent on rethinking fiscal and monetary policies.

Just as the September 11 carnage has left an indelible imprint on international security policies, so the financial crisis has engendered a new economic era that must be met with humility through collaboration among nations. In regard to the unsettling economic scenario, this paper suggests innovative actions at country level to mitigate the impact of the crises – financial as well as economic. These remedies can be summarised under three interrelated propositions:

• First, that developing economies need to review their macroeconomic models. Those currently in use are inflexible and lack sufficient manipulative capacity to provide an appropriate picture of the economic climate as well as reliable forecasts in a crisis period.
• Second, that treasury controls and effective oversight are instituted to cut waste in the public sector, and
• That risk management be mainstreamed in the financial markets and budget execution backed by strong regulations and oversight.

Review macroeconomic models – adopt flexible complementary tools

National development is contingent on proper planning and budgeting, and keeping alert to evolving local and global economic conditions. However, there is a capacity gap identified in about two-thirds of Commonwealth developing countries, where there is a lack of a reliable short-term business cycle, making it difficult to forecast the relationships between the key domestic and foreign macroeconomic variables – interest rates, foreign exchange, inflation and related dynamics.

One fundamental challenge the crisis has brought for many developing countries is the lack of information with regard to the actual impact of the crisis in terms of trade, external financing and economic growth and, in turn, how these may affect individual countries’ socio-economic objectives such as poverty reduction and achieving the other Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Although the World Bank and IMF, using their large-scale economic models, do come up with projections on aggregate economic impacts (such as growth) for certain regions and countries, these are still subject to significant revisions, and policy makers in most low-income Commonwealth nations may be unable either to validate these forecasts or to translate their implications in terms of the effects on growth and development.

Also, these projections are not much help to planners in comparing the effects of available policy options. For instance, if tariff revenues are projected to fall because of falling import prices, it is not known if additional resource mobilisation from domestic sources (e.g. increasing the income tax or value added tax rate) would have mitigating effects on poverty. Countries are heterogeneous, and thus growth and other aggregate macroeconomic effects will be likely to differ between countries. Hence, reduced foreign assistance or remittances in the backdrop of the global economic crisis may not have similar poverty and welfare implications for all developing countries.

Thus the adoption of complementary models such as being mainstreamed in the Bangladesh Ministry of Finance with the inherent capacity to leverage appropriate and immediate response to short- or long-term shocks and volatilities – whether internally or external generated – is more than ever
Overseas travel claims can mount up to a considerable resource drain. Perhaps the following deliberate measures may be imposed by a cabinet in the future:

- 50 per cent cut on overseas travel across government – even if for a year (this strategy can be reviewed at the end of the financial year to learn lessons)
- Where travel is unavoidable (remaining 50 per cent) official travels are restricted to economy class except in rare cases
- Engage development partners to hold in-country training programmes, which are cost-effective with no travel requirement
- Where the above suggestions sound unconvincing, then a government might consider conducting a review of overseas travel across government – the results will be interesting and may provide reasons for policy review.

It goes without saying that this period demands innovative strategies to cut waste in public expenditures. One of the notable strategies is for developing economies to consider aggregate procurement as a device to manage bulk purchase within the public sector. In addition, adopting stringent measures for such expenses claims as overseas travel (see box above) is required more than ever before.

One of the notable strategies is for developing economies to consider aggregate procurement as a device to manage bulk purchase within the public sector.

In a number of developing economies there appears to be a gap in internal audit functions which are a vital component of expenditure management. At best, some jurisdictions have established internal audit units but with no committee structures to respond to audit reports; while others have institutionalised tools as an inherent instinct to respond to fluctuations when flexible tools are institutionalised – with a little recourse to external assistance for explanations.

Cut wastes – institute stringent expenditure controls and oversight

Risk management and strengthened regulatory frameworks

The failure of institutions responsible for risk assessment to provide analysis and forewarn financial markets of the impending crisis – because of indiscipline or deregulation policies – provides unmistakable lessons to be learnt by public services. In particular, the most vital step would be for officials responsible for managing the public purse to harness resources to introduce risk management in public finance. There is abundant evidence in developing countries, including those within the Commonwealth, that risk management has not been given the attention it deserves in budget planning, execution and procurement, as well as in issues such as human resources. As a result, budget performance is characterised by limited outcomes with service delivery always on the low side.

Support for future progress

Noting the above inherent weaknesses, the Commonwealth Secretariat is providing support to enhance technical and human resource capacity in adopting flexible, complimentary macroeconomic tools, as well as strengthening audit and risk management functions in public finances.

The implications of the financial crisis in developing economies have engendered the need for policy makers and bureaucrats to internalise and rethink public finance processes. The revitalisation process requires decision makers to move out of their comfort zones to push the traditional boundaries in tandem with the changing international environment. The present situation demands that conventions are challenged with avid determination, sustained by the desire to achieve public objectives.

Kaiifala Marah is Adviser, Public Expenditure Management in the Governance and Institutional Development Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat. He is responsible for operationalising the Commonwealth Heads of Governments Mandate on public expenditure management through the provision of advisory services, training and policy development. Kaiifala has recently developed a government self-assessment toolkit on financial management for member countries. Kaiifala Marah is also a public sector expert on change management, local government administration as well as legislative development. He was previously local government administrator in Sierra Leone, a budget analyst at the State Senate of New York, and a Graduate Fellow at the Center for International Development (CID), State University of New York at Albany. His expertise in the public sector spans thirteen years on development across Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Pacific.

The Governance and Institutional Development Division (GIDD) helps Commonwealth developing countries strengthen their structures of governance and administration. GIDD’s work covers the full spectrum of public sector administration and management, as well as working to strengthen civil society and private sector institutions with public responsibilities. GIDD provides a range of technical assistance to help governments improve their public services. Programmes are tailored to country, regional, and pan-Commonwealth needs. GIDD implements some 70 public sector development projects annually.

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The European Free Trade Association

By Kåre Bryn, Secretary-General of EFTA

The European Free Trade Association (EFTA) is an intergovernmental organisation set up for the promotion of free trade and economic integration to the benefit of its members. EFTA was established by a Convention signed in Stockholm on 4 January 1960. The signing represented the establishment of the largest free trade area of its time, comprising Austria, Denmark, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom (UK). Today, EFTA has four members: Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

EFTA currently performs three tasks for its member states, the first of which is to provide for free trade among the states, which was the rationale for the creation of EFTA almost 50 years ago. In the last 20 years, two new tasks have been added: administering the Agreement on the European Economic Area (EEA) for three EFTA states (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway), and to negotiate free trade agreements with countries all over the world.

Free trade among the EFTA states

The main objective of the Stockholm Convention was to provide a framework for the liberalisation of trade in goods among its member states. The original convention thus contained basic rules regarding free trade in goods and related disciplines.

Free trade in industrial products was achieved among the EFTA states by 1966. While the organisation is primarily focused on the abolition of tariffs and quotas, the removal of non-tariff barriers to trade has taken place within EFTA since the 1960s. A revised EFTA Convention was signed in Vaduz in 2001, to take account of developments in the states’ trade policy as well as developments in the international trading system.

EFTA and its European partners

When two of the EFTA member states, Denmark and the UK, decided to leave the organisation and join the European Economic Community (EEC), free trade agreements were negotiated between the remaining states and the EEC in order to maintain the free trade already achieved within the EFTA framework. On the basis of these bilateral (yet very similar) agreements, free trade for most industrial products was accomplished in 1977 and finally for the remaining industrial products in 1984.

Relations between EFTA and the EEC (renamed at the time as the European Communities or EC, and later as the European Union or EU) received a fresh impetus with the first EFTA-EC ministerial meeting in Luxembourg in 1984, when it was agreed that the two organisations would intensify their cooperation in order to create a dynamic economic space in Western Europe. Under the so-called Luxembourg Process, cooperation was strengthened on a sector-by-sector basis.

In 1989, European Commission President Jacques Delors proposed the creation of a new and much closer relationship between EFTA and the EC. This led to the negotiation of what eventually became the Agreement on the European Economic Area (EEA), which was signed on 2nd May, 1992. A Swiss referendum held in December 1992 (which became operational on 1st January, 1994) rejected Swiss participation in the EEA. The following year three EFTA member states, Austria, Finland and Sweden, joined the EU, leaving Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway as the remaining EFTA states in the EEA.

Today, the EEA Agreement brings together the 27 EU member states and three EFTA countries – Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway – in a single market. It provides for the inclusion of EU legislation that covers the ‘four freedoms’ – the free movement of goods, services, persons and capital throughout the 30 EEA states. In addition, the agreement covers cooperation in flanking and horizontal areas such as research and development, education, social policy, the environment, consumer protection, tourism and culture. The Agreement guarantees equal rights and obligations within the internal market for citizens and economic operators in the EEA.

The EEA Agreement is not a customs union, nor does it cover either the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) or the EU’s common agricultural and fisheries policies, although it does contain provisions on some aspects of trade in agricultural and fish products.

The EEA EFTA states do not have the right to vote in the political decision-making processes within the EU institutions. However, the Agreement provides the EEA EFTA states with the opportunity to participate in the development of EEA-relevant legislation at the preparatory stage. This is done through European Commission expert groups, by providing written comments to legislative proposals and through participation in more than a dozen EU programmes, as well as in many of the EU’s specialised agencies.

An elaborate institutional structure known as the two-pillar system (see Figure 1) has been established to ensure that the EEA constitutes a homogeneous legal area. A separate surveillance authority (ESA) and court have been established on the EFTA side, to mirror the supranational institutions – the Commission and the Court of Justice – on the EU side.

However, the EEA EFTA states have not transferred any legislative competences to the EEA institutions and all decisions are therefore taken by unanimity. This takes place in the EEA Joint Committee, consisting of members of the contracting...
EFTA policy on free trade agreements

In 1990, the EFTA states agreed to negotiate free trade agreements (FTAs) with the former Communist states of Central and Eastern Europe, which had started talks on such agreements with the EC. In the mid-1990s, the EU launched the so-called Barcelona Process, which aimed at closer cooperation, including on trade liberalisation, with the countries across the Mediterranean. The EFTA states followed up by jointly negotiating free trade agreements with the states covered by that process. A third stage in EFTA policy on free trade agreements was initiated in the late 1990s, with the launch of negotiations with various countries and trading blocs outside Europe and the Mediterranean region, including agreements with several Commonwealth nations.

EFTA is continuing to build a network of FTAs with partners in all parts of the world. In addition to our links with the EU, we have concluded agreements with countries in North and South America, Asia, the Middle East and Africa. Thus EFTA, with a membership of four small European countries, has established one of the world’s largest free trade networks covering more than 50 countries. Among these we find the Commonwealth countries of the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), Canada and Singapore. Negotiations are ongoing with India, and a dialogue has been opened with Malaysia.

To some extent, the limited population size of the EFTA countries is compensated for by a considerable economic strength. Counting the EU as one: EFTA has the world’s 11th largest foreign trade in goods and the fifth in services. The EFTA states are highly competitive, and with their open economies represent a sizeable market with strong per capita purchasing power.

Almost 80 per cent of EFTA’s foreign trade is now covered by preferential trade arrangements. It would be a misconception, however, to conclude that the EFTA states have abandoned the multilateral framework. There must be no doubt that their trade policy is based on the World Trade Organization (WTO) and that EFTA’s bilateral agreements must be compatible with multilateral rules. Therefore, we see our FTAs as complementary to the WTO – not as an alternative. We also believe that bilateral agreements, designed in accordance with WTO disciplines, can serve as building blocks for future multilateral negotiations.

Traditionally, a strong incentive for EFTA’s trade agreements has been the need to avoid less favourable market access conditions than those of our competitors, in particular the EU. This is still very important, but in recent years EFTA has in some instances moved ahead of the EU in negotiating and concluding such agreements. For instance, this is the case for our FTAs with Singapore, Republic of Korea, Canada, and most recently Colombia.

While volumes and structures of trade are naturally essential criteria for finding common ground in FTA negotiations, throughout its decades of experience EFTA has also been sensitive to the interests of developing countries. The organisation has set up FTAs with the Southern African Customs Union (SACU) comprising Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa and Swaziland, as well as with Morocco, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority. Technical assistance is a component of these agreements, notably for enhancing our partners’ capacity to benefit from preferential access to EFTA markets. Development needs are also being taken into account by means of asymmetric tariff reduction schedules for certain products.

Over the years, our FTAs have developed in scope and coverage. We now have five so-called second-generation agreements which, in addition to the traditional areas of trade in industrial goods (including fish) and agriculture, cover areas like services, investment, government procurement, competition rules and intellectual property rights (FTAs with Chile, Colombia, Korea, Mexico and Singapore).

2009 and beyond

In spring 2009, EFTA negotiators will be busy conducting talks with new partners in different parts of the world. FTAs are being finalised with Peru and the Gulf Cooperation Council (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates), and negotiations with Algeria are at a very advanced stage.

The Asian region is of strong interest to EFTA, as is the case for most countries engaged in free trade negotiations. Last autumn, EFTA and India started negotiations for a broad trade and investment agreement. Furthermore, negotiations were commenced with Thailand, but are not active for the time being. Close contacts also exist with other countries in the Asian region which we hope will soon lead to negotiations of FTAs.

New partnerships are also being developed in Europe. On the basis of the positive outcome of a joint feasibility study with Russia to examine the possibilities for closer trade and investment relations, the aim is to start negotiations on an FTA in the near future. Negotiating processes are also scheduled with Ukraine, Serbia and Albania.

Kåre Bryn was appointed Secretary-General of EFTA in 2006, following a distinguished career in the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Diplomatic Service. From 1999 to 2003 he was Norwegian Ambassador and Permanent Representative to EFTA and the WTO, and from 2003 to 2006 Norwegian Ambassador to the Netherlands.

The European Free Trade Association (EFTA) is an intergovernmental organisation set up for the promotion of free trade and economic integration to the benefit of its four member states: Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. The Association manages the EFTA Convention, EFTA’s worldwide network of free trade and partnership agreements; and the European Economic Area (EEA) Agreement.

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The Commonwealth Ministers Reference Book – 2009
Caribbean Export Development Agency
The Trade and Investment Promotion Agency of CARIFORUM

BACKGROUND
Caribbean Export Development Agency (Caribbean Export) was established in 1996 by an Inter-Governmental Agreement as the regional trade and investment promotion Agency of the 15 Member States of CARIFORUM. At the 14th CARIFORUM Council of Ministers meeting in July 2005, Ministers agreed to the amendment of the Inter-Governmental Agreement to include an investment promotion function in the mandate of Caribbean Export. As the only operational arm of CARIFORUM, Caribbean Export occupies a unique position in the regional integration process.

The Mission of the Agency is to increase the competitiveness of Member States by providing quality trade and investment development and promotion services through effective programme execution and strategic partnerships.

Caribbean Export’s vision is to be recognised as the premier regional organisation for trade and investment development and promotion.

CURRENT OBJECTIVES
The Agency is currently focussed on four specific objectives:

- Better integration of CARIFORUM countries into the multilateral, regional and bilateral trade and investment arrangements, particularly through ensuring the private sector is aware of the opportunities existing within each of these agreements, e.g. the newly signed Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA).
- Enhanced competitiveness of firms
- Strengthened institutional capacities of Business Support Organisations, particularly of national trade and investment promotion agencies.
- Coordination and strengthening of regional networks, particularly of sector associations, like the Caribbean Fashion Industry Forum (CAIFIF) and functional groups, like the Caribbean Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (CAIPA).

FINANCING
Caribbean Export is financed by the annual contributions from Member States. Caribbean Export is also a beneficiary of funding assistance from the 9th European Development Fund, under which the Agency is responsible for implementing the Caribbean Trade and Private Sector Development Project (CTPSDP).

MAJOR CURRENT ACTIVITIES
Trade Policy:
In cooperation, variously with the Caribbean Regional Negotiating Machinery (CRNM) and the CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality (CROSQ), Caribbean Export has hosted seminars in four member states on the implications of the EPA for regional firms and plans to hold similar events in several other states within the next few months.

In keeping with its commitment under the EU project to strengthen relations with the French and Dutch territories in the Caribbean, the Agency heads the OCT/FCOR/CARIFORUM Task Force. Caribbean Export has partnered with the Regional Councils of Martinique and Guadeloupe to organize EPA workshops and business missions, focused on renewable energy and creative industries respectively, in those markets, during May.
2009. An EPA Seminar and a business mission in the sector of water are planned for Curacao during the second half of 2009.

As a member of the CARICOM-DR Business Forum, the Agency’s efforts to strengthen business relations between the DR and the rest of the region are ongoing.

**Competitiveness:**

Following a planning meeting on Caribbean design in February 2009, a Caribbean Design Network has been established. It is expected that this will be replicated by the formation of Design Networks at national level and a programme is being developed to strengthen design capacity in the Caribbean. Initial activities include the creation of a web presence; development of a database of trained designers in the region; collection of case studies; and linking design training institutions.

On the recommendation of the Caribbean Design Network, after 15 years of continuous shows, the annual Caribbean Gift and Craft Show (CGCS) will not be held in 2009, but will be rebranded as a ‘by-invitation only’ show for the ‘best of the best’ handicraft products in the region. It is planned that CGCS 2010 should be held in the Bahamas to coincide with CARIFESTA.

Caribbean Export is cooperating with the Organization of American States (OAS) on a project designed to highlight the potential of the region to use intellectual property as a marketing tool. It is planned to share the results of a scoping study, undertaken in Belize, Jamaica and Grenada, with relevant stakeholders in a workshop later this year and to involve WIPO in this activity.

An Export Marketing Training Seminar for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) will be held in Barbados during the week of May 3rd, 2009, using a methodology and trainers from ITM Worldwide, an offshoot of the Swedish Trade Council. The participants will become members of the ITM World network of SMEs and the focus will be on exporting (mainly services) to Europe, particularly to Scandinavian countries.

The second call for proposals under the EC-funded Direct Assistance Scheme has just been concluded. Some 1 million Euros will have been committed to companies across the region during year 1 of its operation. A similar amount will be available for Year 2.

Drawing on research funded by the Commonwealth Secretariat, Caribbean Export has identified some services sectors with export potential for priority treatment. These new sectors include: Health and Wellness tourism, ICT, Creative Industries (Film and Video) and Fashion. Caribbean Export is engaged in efforts to identify the key producers in each of these sectors, facilitate their formation of regional sector associations and support their development and implementation of export marketing strategies.

**Business Support Organisations (BSOs):**

Given its limited resources and the need to reach out to hundreds of regional SMEs, Caribbean Export relies heavily on its partnership with business support organisations (BSOs) at national and regional levels. At national level, its primary partners in the member states are the national trade promotion organisations (TPOs), investment promotion agencies (IPAs) and Coalitions of Services Associations where they exist and/or Ministries of Trade & Industry.

Caribbean Export seeks to strengthen these organisations by the development of a dedicated web portal (CARIBISNET), involving them in all of Caribbean Export’s programmes and by developing some specific training/study tours for senior BSO officials, e.g. a visit to Ireland last November.

**Coordination/Networking:**

Apart from the facilitation of the Design Networks and sector associations, Caribbean Export has also undertaken to be the secretariat for the Caribbean Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (CAIPA). Investment is a relatively new activity for Caribbean Export, but a programme of research, training, advocacy and targeted assistance will be developed to meet the needs of regional IPAs.

Through the establishment of Caribbean Export councils with selected stakeholders in member states, Caribbean Export is seeking to deepen the level of its engagement with member States. These councils have so far been established in Haiti, Suriname, Bahamas, Dominica, Guyana, Trinidad & Tobago and the Dominican Republic. Desk officers have been appointed for each country to work closely with our Board members and the councils to ensure that the interests of each member state are constantly being considered.

**LOOKING AHEAD**

In all of this work the Agency benefits from the support of international technical assistance and funding agencies, including the EU, TFO Canada, PROINVEST, BizClim, and the Commonwealth Secretariat. It is anticipated that this support and partnership will be continued and further enhanced as the Agency provides much needed trade and investment promotion services to CARIFORUM firms and BSOs in an ever-changing trading environment increasingly characterised by reciprocal trade policies.
Foreign investment and development: the role of domestic policy and international investment agreements

By J. Anthony VanDuzer, Associate Professor and Vice Dean of Research, Faculty of Law, University of Ottawa

All developing countries participate, to greater or lesser degrees, in the global competition for foreign investment. But attracting investment is not the only challenge. Harnessing foreign investment to achieve sustainable development is often even more difficult. What is needed to address these twin challenges varies from one country to the next. This article argues that for most developing countries creating the right domestic policy environment is necessary but, for some countries at least, will not be sufficient to attract investment or ensure that it contributes to development. New kinds of international investment agreements (IIAs) that do a better job of promoting more stable investment flows and supporting sustainable development are needed.

Foreign direct investment (FDI) flows into developing countries increased significantly in 2006, reaching US$379.1 billion, their highest ever levels. The percentage of global investment inflows going to developing countries in 2006 exceeded their average annual percentage share from 1995-2000, though their share declined slightly to 29 per cent, down from 33.2 per cent in 2005, due to even faster rates of increase in investment flows into developed countries.

FDI inflows are critically important for growth. Since 1994, FDI has represented the largest component of total resource flows into developing countries exceeding inflows from other private sources, such as loans and portfolio investment, and public sources, such as overseas development assistance (ODA). FDI exceeded 51 per cent of total resource flows to developing countries in 2006. Unfortunately, this apparently rosy global picture masks significant challenges for developing countries seeking to realise the benefits of FDI.

FDI flows to developing countries are unstable and unevenly distributed

FDI has been concentrated in a relatively small number of countries, mostly in Asia, including Singapore, India and Malaysia. In many African countries and less developed countries (LDCs) around the world, ODA remains the largest source of external finance. Recent investment activity, driven by the search for new resource wealth, has passed some countries by entirely.

A closer look at the major regional groupings of developing countries confirms the uneven distribution of foreign investment activity. For example, FDI inflows increased in 2006 in 33 African countries, but fell in 21. Inflows increased in all regions on the continent except southern Africa, where inflows declined, including in Commonwealth members Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, Zambia and South Africa. Over the past decade the stock of foreign investment, a much more stable measure than investment flows, at least doubled in 3/4 of African Commonwealth countries, but some countries have seen their stocks of foreign investment decline, including Botswana and Zambia.

Looking across the globe, similar diversity exists. Some developing countries experienced substantial increases in investment inflows in 2006 and an increase in investment stocks over time. But investment inflows into Oceania declined by 11 per cent in 2006 and the stocks of FDI in the small states in this region have fluctuated widely. The stock of FDI in Fiji has shrunk since 1997, while Tuvalu has experienced a massive increase.

As well as being unevenly distributed, FDI flows to developing countries have been highly variable, with significant declines in 1985, 1998 and 2002 following years of growth. Thus, while increased investment is flowing to developing countries overall, many countries have not been successful in attracting consistent inflows of FDI.

Developing country FDI is concentrated in extractive industries

While two-thirds of FDI worldwide is in services, investment flows into many African countries, including Commonwealth LDCs such as Tanzania, Uganda and Gambia, are largely concentrated in extractive industries. In some African countries, including Nigeria, three-quarters or more of the stock of FDI is in extractive industries. Despite the service sector orientation of many Caribbean economies, a significant share of inward FDI stock in the region is also in extractive industries. Investment inflows in Oceania are concentrated in the mining sector.

In some African countries, including Nigeria, three-quarters or more of the stock of FDI is in extractive industries.

Investment in extractive industries tends to be particularly unstable compared with other FDI because it is affected by volatile global commodity prices. As well, UNCTAD has found that investment in extractive industries is more difficult for host countries to regulate to ensure compatibility with domestic standards and development goals (‘World Investment Report 2007’). Sometimes, foreign investment in extractive industries, which is dominated by transnational corporations (TNCs), produces few new jobs and results in environmental degradation and social dislocation while most of the financial returns are captured off-shore.
FDI’s unrealised contribution to development

In July 2008 the Secretary-General of the United Nations released a report that reviewed the implementation of the 2002 UN Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development. It concluded that action is needed to encourage larger and more consistent FDI flows to a broader group of developing countries and to ensure that investment activity leads to development. The need is particularly pressing for small economies which have seen growth rates decline compared to larger low- and middle-income states.

Addressing this need means making developing countries more attractive to investors. All investors make decisions about where and when to invest based on their expectations about the future in light of their specific business strategy. Some of the factors relevant to investor decision-making are outside the control of governments. A country’s natural resource endowment is an obvious example. Nevertheless, domestic policies in a host country can both improve investors’ expectations regarding the likely returns associated with their investments and enhance the prospect that their expectations will be realised making the country more appealing as an investment destination. In countries as diverse as India, China, Turkey and Indonesia, investment has been facilitated through domestic policy reform to protect property rights, improve transparency of government operations and reduce distortions associated with administrative practices. In Africa, a few countries, including Tanzania and Ghana, have taken similar steps. Developing a strategy for achieving a domestic policy environment that contributes to development as well as attracting investment, however, requires understanding the linkages between investment and development.

Factors affecting the development impact of FDI

Attracting investment is not an end in itself. To be desirable, investment must contribute positively to development. Studies that have attempted to find a clear link between FDI and development, however, have been inconclusive. There is no doubt that FDI can contribute to economic growth and poverty reduction by supplementing local sources of investment capital and increasing employment and local tax revenues. As well, FDI can have a variety of positive spillovers in terms of improved local productivity and innovation and the transfer of new technologies and production and management techniques.

There can also be costs. Domestic investment may be crowded out and domestic competition and entrepreneurship may be suppressed. FDI may worsen income inequality and encourage reliance on the exploitation of local natural resources at the expense of the development of other productive sectors of the economy. In some cases, the activities of foreign investors have had a negative impact on human rights and the environment. As noted, the risk of negative effects may be greatest in relation to FDI in extractive industries, the most important sector for foreign investment in many developing countries.

One of the benefits associated with economic activity generated by FDI is that income from that activity may produce tax revenues that can be applied to fund social and other programmes designed to achieve development goals. In many developing countries, however, weak taxation regimes mean that governments do not succeed in capturing an adequate share of the income resulting from FDI. Income that is captured is sometimes squandered rather than reinvested to support long-term growth, including future foreign investment.

Whether FDI will contribute to sustainable development will depend on a host of local factors including the nature and abilities of its human capital, the effectiveness of its environmental, labour and human rights standards and its tax system, its regulatory capacity and its capacity to absorb technology, which, in turn, is a function of its human resources and its technological infrastructure. How domestic policy can affect these factors to enhance FDI’s development impact is discussed in the next section.

FDI may worsen income inequality and encourage reliance on the exploitation of local natural resources at the expense of the development of other productive sectors of the economy.

Investment-led development through domestic policy reform

Reform of the international financial architecture and a successful conclusion to the Doha Round of WTO negotiations would both contribute to a stronger and more stable basis for continuing investment in developing countries. But the ongoing failure of the international community to deliver results in either of these areas means that renewed focus must be placed on other strategies, including domestic reform in developing countries.

In general terms, the elements of a domestic environment that encourage development through foreign investment are well understood, having been mapped out by, for example, the OECD in its ‘Framework for Investment’ (2006) based on the 10 areas identified by the 2002 UN Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development and the World Bank in its ‘World Development Report 2005’. A comprehensive but not exhaustive list of policy areas include those that have direct effects on investment, like investment policy and investment promotion programmes, as well as those that have indirect effects, such as trade policy, competition policy, tax policy, corporate governance standards, policies for promoting responsible business conduct, human resource development and labour market policy, infrastructure development, and financial and public sector governance.

The particular policy mix appropriate for a specific country will depend on its individual circumstances. Attempts to transfer regulatory structures from other countries, especially developed countries, with little or no adaptation to local conditions have not proved to be successful. As well, creating the right investment environment is not a one-time policy shift but rather a complex, multifaceted and long-term process (see box above).

Recent research shows that investment promotion programmes can have a positive effect on the attractiveness of a particular jurisdiction. On the other hand, trying to ‘pick winners’ has not been successful and the World Bank, among others, advocates moving away from specific incentives to domestic policy measures that improve the general climate for investment in host countries (‘World Development Report 2005’).

An important benefit of such an approach is that reforming the domestic policy environment will promote investment and growth generally, not just FDI. Improved transparency, for
Domestic reforms to attract investment

While more work needs to be done to develop operational benchmarks for good policy practices, the overall goals for domestic reforms that will create an attractive environment for investment are clear. States need to reduce unnecessary costs and risks of doing business and eliminate barriers to competition. States must provide a secure and stable environment that recognises property rights, enforces contracts and avoids expropriation without compensation. Mitigating regulatory risk through transparency regarding how governments implement and change rules on investment must be at the core of how governments operate. The World Bank has found that policy uncertainty is the single most significant deterrent to investors (World Development Report 2005).

example, is likely to be disproportionately advantageous to small and medium local firms with few resources to devote to compliance with government requirements. Transparency, improved efficiency in government administration and more secure property rights may also contribute to moving small businesses from the informal economy to the formal, with positive effects on tax revenues.

Developing countries seeking the right domestic policy mix must confront a tension between attracting investment and achieving development objectives. States must balance social needs and investor preferences. For example, regulators must develop and enforce standards, including those related to health and safety, labour, the environment and human rights, even if doing so will impose costs on investors. Disincentives to invest, however, can be minimised to the extent that such regulation is transparent, efficient, predictable and free of corruption. Similarly, an effective tax system will be needed to capture value create through FDI, but if the tax system is fairly administered investment disincentives associated with the tax burden will be reduced.

Domestic reforms can be complemented with IIAs

In many cases, a domestic reform strategy is unlikely to be sufficient to attract stable long-term investment flows. Some states simply lack capacity to achieve domestic reforms, or suffer from rent-seeking behaviour on the part of government officials and others who benefit from the existing regime. Also, some states that have reformed their domestic regimes have experienced little increase in FDI inflows. This may reflect foreign investors’ concerns regarding the credibility of host state commitments to maintain pro-investment reforms. International investment agreements (IIAs) provide credible commitments, though, as discussed in the next section, existing forms of agreement are not well adapted to encouraging investment flows that contribute to development.

Existing IIAs protect investors but do not promote development effectively

The Monterrey Consensus calls for a ‘new partnership’ between developed and developing countries in relation to development finance, including increased FDI. Existing forms of IIA do not represent such a partnership. Their provisions are designed primarily to protect foreign investors against discriminatory or unfair treatment by host governments. Developing countries enter IIAs with the hope that investment will be encouraged because investor protection provisions guarantee certainty and predictability in domestic regimes, especially when backed up by the right of investors to seek relief through investor-state dispute arbitration if the host state fails to provide the mandated protection. The prospect of increased FDI inflows, however, is only an incidental and uncertain result of protecting investors. The few empirical studies that have been done to date have come to varying conclusions regarding the actual effects of IIAs on investment flows. Proponents of IIAs have had to confront the brute fact that many developing countries, of which China and Brazil are the best examples, have been extremely successful in attracting FDI from countries with which they do not have IIAs. Other countries have signed IIAs and attracted little investment.

Increased investment itself is no guarantee of positive development outcomes. With few exceptions, existing IIAs are not designed to achieve development outcomes. In any case, increased investment itself is no guarantee of positive development outcomes. With few exceptions, existing IIAs are not designed to achieve development outcomes. It is possible, however, to imagine new forms of IIA that do a better job of attracting investment and promoting sustainable development.

A greater contribution to development for IIAs

A number of changes could be made to IIAs to ensure that they promote investment and sustainable development more effectively.

Modify core investor protections

There is an emerging consensus in IIA practice on many of the core obligations that are needed to provide adequate protection to investors, including most favoured nation treatment, national treatment and protection against expropriation without compensation. These substantive obligations provide strong evidence of host state commitment to a pro-investment environment. But these provisions may be drafted to provide greater flexibility to regulate to achieve sustainable development and may be supported by appropriate exceptions and reservations in order to ensure that legitimate state measures intended to promote development are insulated from challenge by investors through investor-state arbitration claims. Concerns about investor challenges to public interest measures have led some countries, including the US and Canada, to revise the content of substantive standards for investor protection in their model agreements. These innovations provide a useful starting point for modifications to core investor protections.

Impose obligations on investors’ home states to promote investment in host states directly, and to support the development of robust, transparent and effective regulatory schemes in host states

The need for investors’ home countries to provide support of this kind was recognised in the Monterrey Consensus, and a patchwork of programmes already exists. Greater technical assistance commitments are needed to respond to chronic undercapacity in some countries if they are to develop regulatory schemes characterised by transparency, predictability and freedom from corruption. Domestic regimes, with these characteristics, will encourage investment and, at the same time, are more likely to be effective instruments to achieve development objectives. Stronger home state commitments to investment promotion are also needed. These might include
providing information about investment opportunities and investment rules in host states, and financial support to their investors in connection with investing in host states.

Greater technical assistance commitments are needed to respond to chronic undercapacity in some countries if they are to develop regulatory schemes characterised by transparency, predictability and freedom from corruption.

Impose obligations on foreign investors to respect the environment, human rights, labour rights and rights of indigenous peoples and, more generally, to act in a socially responsible manner.

The need for greater responsibility to be taken by corporations to complement and support domestic regulation of their activities has been recognised for a long time. There are still a relatively small number of TNCs that have committed to the various international initiatives in this area. New thinking is needed regarding how the benefits of investment agreements may be tied to compliance with widely accepted norms for all aspects of corporate social responsibility. For example, it may be desirable to condition investors’ access to investor-state arbitration on such compliance.

Incorporating these kinds of changes into IIAs would represent a sharp break with existing practice. As well, work needs to be done to develop these suggested changes into operational treaty provisions. Nevertheless, doing so would convert IIAs from a blunt instrument with a single-minded fixation on protecting foreign investors – with unclear effects on investment flows – into a more balanced agreement. The result would be an instrument that would lay the foundation for bilateral cooperation directed to producing long-term improvements in the investment climate in developing countries, attracting more stable flows of both foreign and domestic investment and contributing to host country development in a meaningful way.

J. Anthony VanDuzer is an Associate Professor and the Vice Dean of Research with the Faculty of Law at the University of Ottawa. He has written widely on trade and investment issues and participated in technical assistance projects in transition and developing economies around the world. He is currently developing a new template for bilateral investment agreements for the Commonwealth Secretariat.

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Kenya’s tourism is the second largest foreign exchange earner after Agriculture contributing to 10% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). It is also a major employer, giving jobs to about 9% of wage earners and generates about 11 percent of government revenue.

The community benefits the most in tourism investment. Initiative such as training, lodges ranches and reserves managed by the local authorities have contributed immensely in empowering the locals.

Opportunities abound for investment in hospitality industry in many areas including Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu and also have other game parks and reserves that offer unique niche and ecotourism engagement.
Getting to Kenya has become easier than before thanks to the country being the economic powerhouse of Eastern Africa and a hub for transportation. Other than our national carrier Kenya Airways, Nairobi is accessed by many international airlines including Virgin, Emirates, British Airways, Brussels Airlines, Swis Airlines and KLM.

Airlines also have access to our National Parks and Reserves which are connected through airstrips within the country. All game parks as well as towns and reserves are easily accessible by small aircraft from Wilson airport in Nairobi. Connectivity is also enhanced by a good road network. Online travel bookings has also greatly increased inbound tourists to the country.

**INCENTIVES**

The Kenya Government is intent on spurring the recovery and further growth of the tourism sector through offering incentives besides increasing its marketing drives.

**Visa fees slashed**

Effective from April 1st, 2009, visa fees were slashed by 50 percent. And in a move aimed at stimulating demand for family travel, the Kenya government further scrapped visa fees for children less than 16 years coming to Kenya as tourists.

**TAX waiver on transportation**

The Kenya government has waived the 16 percent Value Added Tax (VAT) to make it easier for hoteliers to do business.

**Calling on investors**

International chains have shown interest in Kenya. Hotels such as Norfolk in Nairobi and the Mt. Kenya Safari Club at the foot of snowcapped Mt. Kenya on the Equator are to be refurbished.

Potential investors can take full advantage of the existing opportunities in Kenya through direct investment, joint ventures with Kenya entrepreneurs and public-private sector partnership. There are a number of investment opportunities in tourism sector. For information on specific investment area visit [www.ktdc.co.ke](http://www.ktdc.co.ke) or [www.kws.org](http://www.kws.org)

**WHAT KENYA HAS FOR YOU**

Kenya boasts a wonderful tropical climate throughout the year, making it a perfect all-year round destination, with temperatures averaging 26 degrees Celsius in most areas except the arid North and the Coast with highs of 32 degrees.

Kenya is the home of Safari, a Swahili word that simply means; ‘journey’. Our immensely diverse range of safaris or journeys, begin with the amazingly abundant concentration of wildlife with different and unique species in almost all of our 59 game parks and reserves around the country, including marine reserves.

The star of our wildlife safaris is the must witness annual phenomenon of migration of over a million wildebeest which stampede across the plains of the Maasai Mara game reserve every July to October.

The migration was named the New Seventh wonder of the world. Other unique safaris are beach (pristine, warm and white, sandy beaches). The Kenyan Coast is a rich mosaic of cultures from Arabic, to Spanish through Chinese, Portuguese, former European and of course, the culture of the indigenous Swahili people. Kenya’s scenic safaris are spectacular; from snow capped Mt. Kenya on the equator, to expansive savannah’s, rivers and lakes and of course, the Great Rift Valley running through the country from North to South.

Lovers of specialist products like big game fishing, birding, water sports, sky diving, ornithology, entomology and horse racing to name only a few; will all find their place in Kenya.

Kenya also exports some of the finest coffee and tea in the world beating marathoners, to the first African woman Nobel peace laureate, to being the world's biggest exporter of cut flowers. Kenya exports some of the finest coffee and tea in the world.

**EASY ACCESS**

Delta Airlines inaugural flight is planned for June this year, which is a major boost to tourists from the US. With the direct flight, the distance between Kenya and US will be reduced by less than 10 hours.
Tourism as a poverty reduction tool: strategies for small island states

By Dr Regina Scheyvens, Head of the Institute of Development Studies, Massey University

Tourism is a major contributor to economic development in many small island developing states (SIDS) and often it has been the only industry in these countries to consistently demonstrate growth in recent years. However, growth of tourism in SIDS is by no means synonymous with poverty reduction. If tourism is to contribute significantly to the reduction of poverty, governments of SIDS will need to establish an effective policy environment, play a stronger regulatory role, and develop plans both to encourage private sector actors to support poverty reduction and facilitate the involvement of wider sectors of society in tourism development.

Tourism is the world’s largest industry and has been an integral component of economic development strategies in developing nations for over half a century. Torres and Momsen, in ‘Progress in Development Studies’ (2004 p.294-5), pointed out that “The industry’s potential to generate foreign exchange earnings, attract international investment, increase tax revenues and create new jobs has served as an incentive for developing countries to promote tourism as an engine for macro-economic growth.”

In many small island developing states (SIDS), tourism is the only sector to have seen growth over recent years as the real value of traditional primary export products has been declining or they are losing their preferential markets, as for example among the banana and sugar exporters of the Caribbean. A number of researchers thus identify tourism as being the industry offering greatest potential to SIDS, and this seems to be supported by the World Bank 2005 figures, which show that nine of the top 10 performers measured by international tourism receipts per capita in 2002 were SIDS.

In many SIDS, tourism is the only sector to have seen growth over recent years as the real value of traditional primary export products has been declining or they are losing their preferential markets.

The growth of interest in pro-poor tourism (PPT) is likely to offer a number of benefits to SIDS, but they also face a range of constraints. Overcoming these will require clear policies and plans by island governments. The final section of this article discusses a number of strategies which could assist in ensuring that tourism contributes to poverty reduction.

The pro-poor tourism approach

The term ‘pro-poor tourism’ [PPT] was coined in 1999 and in the short period since then it has been rapidly adopted by a wide range of development agencies. PPT is an enticing concept as it promises that tourism can play a significant role in reducing poverty. PPT emerged out of UK-sponsored research on sustainable livelihoods conducted in southern Africa, and further work was carried out through the Pro-Poor Tourism Partnership (see www.propoortourism.org.uk).

The PPT Partnership stresses that PPT is not a product or a niche sector of tourism but is an approach to tourism which seeks to bring a wide range of benefits to the poor, including social, environmental and cultural benefits in addition to economic benefits. PPT does not aim to expand the size of the sector but, in the words of Caroline Ashley and her colleagues in ‘Pro-Poor Tourism Strategies’ (ODI 2001 p.13), to “unlock opportunities for the poor within tourism, at all levels and scales of operation”. Thus, it extends beyond community-based tourism where, for example, villagers might be encouraged to establish cultural tourism home stay or craft ventures, to an approach suggesting that a wide range of stakeholders, from local entrepreneurs to government officials, hotel and resort managers, and international tour companies, will need to make concerted efforts if poverty reduction is to occur.

Interest in tourism as a mechanism for poverty reduction has since been taken up by a wide range of interest groups from the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), which initiated the ST-EP Project: ‘Sustainable Tourism – Eliminating Poverty’, to donors (such as the Dutch bilateral aid agency SNV, and the German agency GTZ), multilateral organisations (e.g. the Asian Development Bank, World Bank, and World Trade Organization), and tourism organisations (e.g. the Pacific and Asia Travel Association).

PPT is not a product or a niche sector of tourism but is an approach to tourism which seeks to bring a wide range of benefits to the poor.

Proponents of PPT argue that there is significant potential to deliver more benefits from tourism to the poor, as tourism is a significant or growing economic sector in most developing countries with high levels of poverty. For 50 of the world’s poorest countries tourism is one of the top three contributors to economic development (UNWTO 2000). In 1998 UNCTAD referred to tourism as the “only major sector in international trade in services in which developing countries have consistently had surpluses”. It is argued that tourism as a sector ‘fits’ nicely with pro-poor growth because “it can be labour-intensive, inclusive of women and the informal sector; based on natural and cultural assets of the poor; and suitable for poor rural areas with few other growth options” (Caroline Ashley and Dilyns Roe, Development Southern Africa 19, 2002 p.61).
Supporting small-scale entrepreneurs

of inadequate linkages between them, agricultural extension economic opportunities for small farmers are being lost because local supplies and ensuring provision of training and credit to all agriculture, fisheries and transport. For example, in many cases between tourism and other economic sectors such as tourism, the needs of the poor are not overlooked. For example, from the exclusive Turtle Island Resort in Fiji have mentored scholarships for local students, provides seeds and technical support for local farmers, and purchases their produce at guaranteed market-value prices. Meanwhile, management staff from the exclusive Turtle Island Resort in Fiji have mentored local entrepreneurs by assisting an association of backpacker tourism providers with marketing, administration, service, and quality control.

Tourism businesses can contribute significantly to local livelihoods by establishing procurement practices that prioritise use of local goods and services, such as produce supplied by this Samoan farmer.

Constraints facing SIDS

While PPT offers a great deal of promise, SIDS offer a unique context which presents some challenges to achieving pro-poor outcomes and overcoming inequality. Broad contextual challenges may include the colonial heritage of most SIDS, economic dominance of foreign tourism multinational corporations, ethnic diversity, and low levels of education. There are also a number of constraints specifically related to tourism development, including economic and environmental challenges, which are outlined in Table 1.

Strategies to reduce poverty through tourism in SIDS

If tourism is to be considered a legitimate avenue for reducing poverty in SIDS, specific strategies will need to be put in place. Governments will need to play a guiding role if PPT is to offer more than simply another way of expanding tourism with benefits for the major players in this sector. Too often governments of SIDS focus narrowly on earning more tourism revenues and increasing tourist arrivals, rather than being concerned with the impacts of tourism, socially, environmentally, and economically. In his chapter in 'The Development Process in Small Island States' (1993 p.103), Robert Potter argued that ‘externally-oriented, growth-maximising’ paths to development have resulted in increasing levels of inequality among local populations in many Eastern Caribbean states. He asserts that in fact ‘the needs of the poor should be met in priority to externally-oriented growth imperatives’ (p.97).

The onus is thus on the governments of SIDS to step forward and develop appropriate pro-poor policies and plans for tourism development. Some useful strategies for governments which could help reduce poverty include:

**Pro-poor infrastructure.** Ensuring that when costly infrastructural projects are undertaken to support growth in tourism, the needs of the poor are not overlooked. For example if new roads or water systems are to be built, the former should provide local access to markets as well as tourist access to resorts and both local residents and hotels should be connected to the latter.

**Reducing leakages and maximising multiplier effects** by ensuring that national development plans highlight linkages between tourism and other economic sectors such as agriculture, fisheries and transport. For example, in many cases economic opportunities for small farmers are being lost because of inadequate linkages between them, agricultural extension officers and hoteliers.

**Supporting small-scale entrepreneurs** by encouraging the use of local supplies and ensuring provision of training and credit to all tourism businesses, such as producers of souvenirs. For example, MacNaulty explained in a 2002 WTO report on The Economic Impact of Tourism in the Islands of Asia and the Pacific, that in some cases governments have provided 100 per cent tax relief schemes for families who wish to upgrade their bed and breakfast style accommodation, and a 50 per cent subsidy for training costs.

**Providing incentives to private sector stakeholders to promote PPT**, for example, tax breaks or awards for tourism businesses that do some of the following: provide in-house training to people from poorer backgrounds; implement procurement practices which prioritise locally-produced goods and services, as shown in the photo of the Samoan farmer; encourage the philanthropy of guests and establishing a community development fund in conjunction with local actors. As an instance of this, in Negril, Sandals resort operates a local elementary school, provides scholarships for local students, provides seeds and technical support for local farmers, and purchases their produce at guaranteed market-value prices. Meanwhile, management staff from the exclusive Turtle Island Resort in Fiji have mentored local entrepreneurs by assisting an association of backpacker tourism providers with marketing, administration, service, and quality control.

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**Table 1: Constraints facing SIDS involved in tourism**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key constraints</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carrying capacity</td>
<td>Small land size of SIDS intensifies the impacts of tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small economies</td>
<td>Diseconomies of scale, limited resources, narrow economic base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small populations</td>
<td>Small domestic market, lack of appropriate skills, difficult to generate local capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remoteness</td>
<td>Isolation from major markets, inadequate transport links</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low resistance to external shocks</td>
<td>Natural disasters, political upheavals, terrorist threats and health scares (e.g. SARS, swine flu) can lead to a significant downturn in tourist numbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrow economic base</td>
<td>Heavy dependence on tourism revenues leads to vulnerability in the face of shocks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scarce resources</td>
<td>Competition for resources (e.g. beach space and fresh water) can undermine local livelihoods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliance on external investors</td>
<td>Foreigners can gain increasing control over the tourism industry; profits repatriated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental hazards</td>
<td>Sea level rise; salt water intrusion; natural hazards; beach erosion.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Facilitating a stronger role for communities in planning for tourism development by actively seeking out their voices on tourism planning matters and responding to their concerns through appropriate processes. As Maurizio Carbone argues, “tourism planning should be based on ‘bottom-up globalisation’, which engages in distributive justice by entrusting more decision-making power to local communities” (European Journal of Development Research, 17(3), 2005). There are some very good examples of local communities exerting considerable power over the tourism development process and consequently gaining a number of benefits, for instance the traditional landowners living near to Mana Island resort, Fiji.

Raising awareness among the local population in tourism destination areas, both about the benefits of tourism as well as potential problems that they may need to anticipate and seek to control. Residents cannot go on to contribute to community tourism monitoring forums, planning committees or the like without such information.

An effective policy environment

Small island states are a highly sought-after tourism destination, and many commentators argue that the tourism industry provides an excellent avenue for driving poverty alleviation in SIDS. However, there are a number of challenges to realisation of the pro-poor tourism ideal in small island states: the growth of tourism in SIDS is by no means synonymous with poverty reduction. Nevertheless, if governments are willing to direct tourism development in ways that reflect both local and national interests, there can be a genuine improvement in the spread of benefits from tourism development.

If tourism is to contribute significantly to the reduction of poverty, governments of SIDS will need to establish an effective policy environment, play a stronger regulatory role, and facilitate the involvement of wider sectors of society in tourism development. Appropriate roles of governments can include establishing effective policies and legislation (e.g., to protect local rights to land and to encourage joint venture arrangements, as well as ensuring adequate environmental standards are adhered to), and supporting local entrepreneurs by providing information, credit facilities, and training. They can also provide incentives for the private sector to adopt strategies that contribute to poverty reduction, including procurement of local goods and services, in-house training schemes, and mentoring of owners of small-scale tourism enterprises. Such strategies need to be given serious consideration if sustainable, equity-enhancing tourism is to emerge in SIDS.
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Commonwealth countries are littered with well-intentioned community-based tourism projects delivering limited benefits to few people. Developed in isolation from commercial distribution channels, they lack the client volumes needed for commercial sustainability. In contrast, ministries of tourism and mainstream businesses often simply see increased arrival numbers as the barometer of success. Research by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), the UK’s leading development policy ‘think tank’, suggests neither approach is right. Nevertheless, tourism markets can, in some cases, be exploited for the benefit of the poor.

The ‘pro-poor value chain’ approach to tourism has been developed by ODI, the World Bank Group (including the International Finance Corporation), and the Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV) as a way to shift thinking from projects, to interventions that harness markets and deliver impact at scale. By ‘value chain’ we mean all the services enjoyed by a segment of the tourist market, the international and national businesses that serve them, to suppliers and workers – as well as support institutions.

The approach ‘follows the dollar’ – focusing on key points along the chain where interventions could expand income...
opportunities for the poor, within a commercial service sector. ‘Pro-poor income’ (PPI) are the wages and profits earned by poor households across all the inter-related strands of the value chain. The aim is to support market-based interventions by analysing how poor target groups currently engage, how their positions can be upgraded, and how changes in value chain performance can affect them.

From diagnosis to intervention

Differences between mainstream and community tourism are marked. First, many of our assumptions that some types of tourism (e.g. backpackers) or product (e.g. cultural tours) are inherently pro-poor should be questioned. Analysis often yields surprises and assessment must replace assumption.

Second, the type of intervention needs to be rethought. Government bodies influence a value chain but usually cannot reshape a product or market by decree. Lateral thinking is needed to identify market-based interventions that engage with the private sector and enable the market to work more effectively, particularly for the poor.

The three phases are: a situational diagnostic; scoping and prioritisation of opportunities; and project planning, as outlined in Figure 1.

How value chains work for the poor

Value chain diagnostics in a variety of tourist destinations yield rich comparative findings. They show clearly that the impact of this sector on the poor varies considerably. It is, therefore, meaningless to use development funds to support tourism just because of its ‘inherent’ characteristics (i.e. labour intensity, gender profile or growth potential). Sometimes international tourism is an effective way to transfer funds from rich tourists to poor people at destinations where, for every $4 spent by a tourist, $1 reaches the poor. Sometimes it is not (see Figure 2).

A comparison of results tells us about the pro-poor relevance of different market segments, direct employment in the sector, and about inter-sectoral linkages.

Market segments. Similar types of tourism perform differently in different contexts. In Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia, cultural tourism dominates. In Laos and Vietnam tourism is pro-poor, but in Cambodia, only 7 per cent of tourist spending reaches poor households.

Direct employment in tourism. The pro-poor impact of people working in the tourist sector is often surprisingly muted, given that tourism is proportionately more labour intensive than other non-agricultural sectors, and many of those in tourism jobs are from poor backgrounds. As wages are generally low, wage income to non-managerial staff is often only 10 per cent of hotel turnover, sometimes less. However, direct employment can be significant when the wages of tourist workers are relatively high (as in Cape Verde and South Africa) or the impact of low wages is counteracted by high labour intensity and generous tipping (e.g. climbing Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, where four staff accompany each tourist).

Indirect links are links between tourism and the non-tourism economy. Indirect effects through supply chains help to explain why some destinations transfer 25 per cent of tourist spending to the poor and others less than 10 per cent. Farmers, artisans and construction workers in the tourist supply chain are, in general, poorer and more numerous than those working in hotels and restaurants. Tourism in Cambodia is not very pro-poor because the links with the non-tourist economy are weak, leaving it reliant on direct effects to transfer resources from tourists to the poor. Other destinations demonstrate strong linkages via food or craft spending.

Indirect effects through supply chains help to explain why some destinations transfer 25 per cent of tourist spending to the poor and others less than 10 per cent.

The food supply chain to the tourist sector may be an important source of pro-poor impact. Such potential is realised in countries like Ethiopia, with few imports and a diversified agricultural sector dominated by smallholders who receive a high percentage of the prices hotels pay for food. As Figure 3 shows, over $7 million, or around 13 per cent, of the $55 million spent by tourists on food and beverages reaches resource-poor food producers. This derives from hotel food purchases of $16 million, which come from around 6,300 domestic producers – estimated to support an additional 25,000 farm jobs. In many other developing countries, food imports and purchases from commercial farms in the food supply chain result in a less effective transfer mechanism.

The craft chain is a major beneficiary of tourists’ out-of-pocket spending, which is generally more pro-poor than the large ticket items (such as hotels). Luang Prabang in Laos is a good example. Craft spending per tourist is high ($33 per visitor) because quality is high. Over 50 per cent of this reaches the poor, because crafts are traditionally made by ethnic minority women, often sold by producers or small traders, and draw heavily on local raw materials (silk, cloth, paper, and silver). In contrast, craft spending in Siem Reap [Cambodia] is a less effective channel for PPI. Spending per tourist is lower and only 5 per cent reaches the poor, due to imports, and kickbacks demanded by tour operators from retailers.

![Figure 2. Pro-poor income for a variety of destinations.](image-url)
From description to prescription

Shifting from diagnostic analysis to prescription of interventions is an art, not a science. Opportunities cannot be generated mechanically. Solutions need to be realistic, but identifying what might work cannot always be deduced from simply looking at what currently is.

For instance, just because the craft supply chain in Luang Prabang is pro-poor does not mean that simply expanding craft sales is a viable strategy. Craft spending is high by international standards and may be near saturation level. The food supply chain in the Gambia is not particularly pro-poor but this does not imply opportunity. The agricultural potential of the country is weak and it is next door to competitive producers in Senegal.

Identifying interventions requires assessment of governance structures and markets within the destination, complemented by insights from elsewhere, and data that can be used to interrogate proposals. The value chain focus, on boosting direct impacts on poverty, needs then to be combined with other objectives, such macro-economic goals.

There is a spectrum. At one end, destinations with already high linkages between tourism and the rest of the economy may simply prioritise expanding the tourist spending. At the other end, destinations with low linkages may prioritise improving linkages, rather than just expanding the sector.

The choice of ‘entry point’ of interventions is critical. Past projects focused on specific production sectors, such as supporting craft workers or farmers, while our research has recommended action in:

- The retail end of the chain: e.g. making it easier for tourists in Ethiopia to change foreign currency to increase spending on cultural goods.
- The labour market: skills development may help the poor enter formal employment (e.g. language training in Rwanda), but collective action (among Kilimanjaro porters in Tanzania) or diffusing ‘best practice’ among hotel employers on minimum wages can have direct and significant impact.
- The regulatory and enabling environment: in Cambodia ending lucrative exclusivity agreements, reducing corruption and lawlessness, and investing in human capital would increase the impact of tourism on the poor.

This approach facilitates ‘what-if’ analysis. In Da Nang, in Central Vietnam, flows of income to the poor were calculated for various policy options. This showed that strengthening linkages alone would have a relatively small impact on PPI. The main recommendation was for local government to make a small regulatory change to stop property developers hoarding beach-front land. Within a year, 5,000 upmarket hotel rooms were under construction, thus substantially developing both the tourism sector and its impacts on the poor in Central Vietnam.

Implications for practitioners

Work on tourism value chains so far has three clear implications for practitioners who aim to intervene to boost impacts on poverty in this sector.

First, detailed analysis helps to challenge the assumptions that often underpin development interventions. Assumptions like ‘tourism is inherently pro-poor’ or ‘direct effects are smaller than indirect effects’ or ‘craft and food supplies have great potential’ are true in some cases and not in others. Of course detailed description alone does not provide answers, but it is an important first step.

Second, if interventions aim to reduce poverty, the scale of pro-poor income generation must be a key criterion in project selection, together with the likelihood of success and the sustainability of the impact on the poor. Using the framework above, it is possible to assess the impact of very different
interventions, such as increasing craft expenditure by 10 per cent, or marketing the destination more effectively to bring in 1,000 additional tourists. This is rarely done in the tourism sector. Imposing this rigour could help weed out interventions that have a plethora of desirable-sounding objectives but end up focusing on small-scale, and often temporary, pro-poor benefits.

Third, benefiting the poor does not necessarily mean working directly with them. The lead firms in the tourism value chain are almost always well-established private sector organisations. The value chain approach highlights how engagement with them can deliver important change, while working with the poor in isolation from commercial networks is unlikely to do so. Furthermore, while tourism is mainly a private sector activity, the external governance of the value chain (the regulatory and enabling environment) that is the domain of the public sector often has a critical impact on pro-poor outcomes.

This value chain approach to tourism is part of a wider shift in thinking. It shares objectives for sustainable poverty reduction at scale with those who use other approaches, such as Making Markets Work for the Poor. It goes beyond conventional supply chain analysis (of a single firm and its relationships) by taking an entire sector as the unit of analysis, including external institutions and a diversity of firms and strands.

The approach has its gaps: social impacts on the poor; dynamic impacts and macro contributions to poverty reduction. And it poses challenges: international organisations adopting a value chain development approach in tourism find it requires a set of skills from number crunching, to lateral thinking on market-based solutions, that are not always found among traditional partners and consultants.

The value of the approach lies first in challenging assumptions and generating an empirical basis to assess options, particularly concerning scale of impact on the poor. Second, the approach generates benchmarks through comparable analysis in contrasting destinations. Explaining how and why a destination differs from others helps to explain the key factors differentiating tourism-poverty linkages. Third, combining a wide perspective of the multiple strands and actors in the chain with a specific focus on barriers to entry and terms of engagement of the poor target group, helps inform the design of market-based interventions. The diversity of recommended market interventions is a breakthrough, but this needs to be developed still further, drawing on the toolboxes used by other practitioners who share the objective of reducing poverty at scale.

Jonathan Mitchell is the Programme Leader and a Research Fellow with the Overseas Development Institute’s Tourism Programme, where he has developed the Institute’s approach to pro-poor tourism value chain analysis and completed reviews of tourism value chains in a range of destinations across Africa and South East Asia.

Caroline Ashley has worked for the Overseas Development Institute for sixteen years and pioneered the notion of ‘pro-poor tourism’ – an approach to tourism which focuses on benefit flows to the poor – in 1999.

The Overseas Development Institute is the UK’s leading independent think tank on international development and humanitarian issues. Its mission is to inspire and inform policy and practice which lead to the reduction of poverty, the alleviation of suffering and the achievement of sustainable livelihoods in developing countries. For the past decade, the Tourism Programme has been seeking answers to two questions:

- How does tourism affect the poor?
- How can tourism development be changed to increase net benefits to the poor?

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INNOLINK
Legal, institutional and financial reforms following debt relief and lawsuits in HIPC countries

By Devi Sookun, Resident Legal Adviser, Legal and Constitutional Affairs Division, Commonwealth Secretariat

The call for debt relief was made with the aim of promoting growth in poor countries and to allow them to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In 1996, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank launched the HIPC Initiative with the aim of helping countries that were facing unsustainable debt, defined as the debt to export ratio being over 150 per cent, or the debt to government revenue level being over 250 per cent. All Commonwealth countries have now come out of the unsustainable debt situation, and there are no Commonwealth countries in the HIPC category. While great progress has been made by these countries in restoring their economic development, the impact of the financial crisis is causing concern. There is inevitably a decline in trade, investment and aid, on one side; and on the other, a need to borrow more to offset the impact of reduction in government revenue. The cost of new finance and the deterioration of the financing conditions may lead the countries into deeper debt.

The Commonwealth Secretariat set up a ministerial forum to deal with the debt issues of the Commonwealth countries. The forum is today known as the Commonwealth Ministerial Debt Sustainability Forum (known before 2008 as the Commonwealth HIPC Ministerial Forum or CHMF). This forum looks into matters regarding debt management, debt sustainability analysis and legal aspects of debt. Many Commonwealth countries, when faced with unsustainable debt, have also faced lawsuits from their creditors, and have been sued in international courts. There have been many instances of lawsuits against countries, and several default judgments (given in the absence of one of the parties) have been granted. The reasons for creditors to resort to court to recover their investments will be considered below.

The effects of a lawsuit can be damaging to the economic function of a country and can also be a difficult experience. Usually the amount of the claim for which the country is sued is 10 times more than the loan amount that was originally contracted. The most recent case with a Commonwealth country was against the Republic of Zambia. Zambia had originally contracted a loan for nearly US$15m from Romania. The debt was bought by Donegal International Co for US$3.2m, when negotiation was ongoing with Zambia to buy back the debt for US$4m. Donegal International sued Zambia for US$55m. The court gave a judgment that Zambia had to settle US$15m. Some lessons learnt from the litigation will be considered later.

Many Commonwealth countries, when faced with unsustainable debt, have also faced lawsuits from their creditors, and have been sued in international courts.

While it is a fact that countries will not be able to control when they are taken to court, or have any knowledge of how a creditor will react, they can nevertheless strengthen their position through better negotiation of the terms and conditions of any future loan agreement. What a country can do to protect itself in terms of policy, legal and institutional reforms will be dealt with in the concluding part of this article.

Why lawsuits?

This section will discuss the reasons why the claims lodged by the creditors against the sovereign debtors have become a matter of great importance. Under the HIPC Initiative of 1996, the creditors were called upon to write off the debts of the poor nations on a voluntary basis. Many commercial creditors who were not willing to write off their debts, or regulated financial institutions that could not sue to recover their investment, traded the debts on the secondary market. The debts were bought at hugely discounted rates and the new creditors then sued the debtor government to obtain nearly 10 times the amount paid. The commercial creditors have been dubbed as ‘vulture funds’.

Valid lawsuits

The actions of the vulture fund creditors have been based on two important legal criteria:

- The debt obligations were capable of being traded and sold as a property and therefore the new buyer stepped into the rights of the previous owner of debt; and
- The courts were bound to pronounce judgment in favour of the creditors as the sovereign debtor had already defaulted and was liable under the contract.

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- The courts were bound to pronounce judgment in favour of the creditors as the sovereign debtor had already defaulted and was liable under the contract.
It is a well-established rule under many jurisdictions that debt obligations are a form of property that can be bought, sold or assigned. The sale is valid even if the debt was sold at hugely discounted rate, or the buyer was aware that he could only recover the money through a claim in court. The fact that the debtor is a sovereign government is not a defence, because the loan agreement is categorised as a commercial transaction and the sovereign party becomes liable upon default of payment.

Both the English and US courts have pronounced judgments in favour of the vulture fund creditors. The reasoning on which the cases have been decided is that the creditor is always entitled to judgment regardless of the financial position of the sovereign debtor.

Execution proceedings against sovereign debtors
The issue of sanctioning execution proceedings against the assets of the sovereign debtor, however, have been approached softly by the courts but more aggressively by the vulture funds. In the case of Pravin Banker Associates v Banco Popular del Peru, the court had deferred the judgment by eight months to allow for the orderly winding up of Banco Popular. In the case of Camdex International Ltd v Bank of Zambia, the UK courts declined to allow execution against a stock of Zambian banknotes which had been printed in England and were needed in Zambia to help counter the effects of inflation.

It should be noted that a court cannot decline to give judgment once the debt has become due and payable.

The fact that the debtor is a sovereign government is not a defence, because the loan agreement is categorised as a commercial transaction and the sovereign party becomes liable upon default of payment.

Lessons learnt
There have been many lessons learnt from the lawsuits over the years. The jurisprudence has seen an evolution in the way courts have been interpreting and making decisions in cases before them.

The courts have been reluctant to grant injunction orders against the debtor government or allow the seizure of assets as the sovereign is in pari passu obligations with other creditors. The sensitivity shown reflects how such drastic measures can paralyse the normal functions of the government.

The following are some practical guidelines to countries when they are in litigation:
- Government officials should be able to protect all the information regarding the court case from being leaked to the other party or the media. Leaks of information can jeopardise the success of the case before judgment.
- Legal advice from experts in the matter is essential. The Commonwealth Secretariat has set up a Legal Clinic. It is advisable to seek legal advice from the Clinic or any law firm.
- Never concede on any matter such as jurisdiction or waiving of immunity before seeking legal advice.
- A country’s officials should avoid neglecting court notices. Appearing in court even if it is to say that you are seeking legal advice will avoid a default judgment.

Some important reforms
The strategic solutions discussed in this article have to be limited to two points: firstly, looking into the process through which debt is contracted, and secondly, analysing ways to limit the risk that inherently follows borrowing.

Responsibility of contracting the loan
Many changes have been brought in so far in response to experience of the loans contracted in the 1980s. The implication of who has signed the loan on behalf of the government becomes important as it binds the government to the act/process.

The government that has contracted a loan is responsible for its repayment and will be liable to be sued. It does not matter whether the loan was contracted by one particular minister or person in the department, provided the loan was signed on behalf of the government. In order to bring regularity and consistency, in many countries the laws have now been amended to allow only the Minister of Finance to sign on behalf of the country. In the event that the appropriate authority has not signed, the validity of the loan agreement and its performance can be successfully challenged in court by the government.

A country’s officials should avoid neglecting court notices. Appearing in court even if it is to say that you are seeking legal advice will avoid a default judgment.

There are different types of loans which can be taken on behalf of the government. The decision of which loan to go for is often not clearly defined. The motive for the loan is also insufficiently gauged most of the time. Nowadays the government is advised which loan to take and to verify the terms and conditions in a loan agreement. Only recently, since the countries have emerged from their HIPC status, many are rigorously confining themselves to non-concessional loans.

Capacity-building
Capacity-building in the ministries has become essential, particularly for the debt managers working in the Ministry of Finance, in order to make sure that the loan process and cycle has been well managed. However, the high rate of staff turnover makes capacity-building fall short of ideal, as there are always new people to be trained. Qualified staff are essential for success, and in allowing the pursuit of broader and more complex objectives. Investing in building capacity within the ministries is essential, since staff rotation can pose a risk for many countries in the absence of capacity-building. Most capacity-building programmes are offered by international organisations.

Fiscal institutions
Financial irregularities continue to be a major concern and the way public finance is managed is becoming the focus of reform in many countries. The Ministry of Finance has to address operational and strategic issues in a coherent way – and with the collaboration of the treasury and budget departments – to make balanced progress. The institutions will have to work together in order to introduce internal control. However, financial procedures are often quite complex and enforcement capacity may be insufficient, while the institutions continue to include many administrative, non-core functions.

The best way to proceed may be to identify the different phases of a public finance management reform program, but these platforms should not be over-designed or rigid. The reform
process should be a continuous and learning-by-doing process. Measures to be implemented in the first phase of a reform programme need to be precisely identified and should be relevant to the country context. Broad orientations for the medium or long term and the identification of the different phases of a reform programme are desirable. The most important objective to attain in the process of reform is to achieve an accountable and transparent mode of public financing.

While different countries, be they developing or small, are at different stages in the process of reform, yet in many countries the basics are also not yet in place. Building the legal, economic and institutional infrastructure in order to bring the fiscal measures into place remains the vital next step forward. The existing institutions have either to be reformatted or broadened, and the legal reforms in debt management laws or fiscal responsibility laws are essential.

**Conclusion**

Given the above scenarios and the circumstances in which most of the poor countries have been operating, one can only hope that with the increase in borrowing and spending coupled with low revenue due to the financial crisis, the former HIPC economies do not fall into unsustainable debt again. The effective operation and collaboration of all institutions, both nationally and internationally, is particularly needed at present in order to respond to the financial emergency in a way that does not undo the good of the debt relief and the help given by many creditors and the international financial institutions. A transparent and accountable mechanism within the government’s institutions is a necessary reform.

Devi Sookun works as the Legal Adviser in the Legal Debt Clinic set up by the Commonwealth Secretariat since September 2006. She advises sovereign HIPC countries on lawsuits brought against them by their commercial creditors, and conducts training programmes for officers of the Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Finance. She is qualified as a Barrister at Law, and started her career at the Bar of Mauritius as a defence lawyer, and also worked as a prosecution lawyer at the Office of the Attorney General and Ministry of Justice for five years. She has a Master’s degree from King’s College London, with specialisation in Information Technology and Computer Studies.

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Making money: the printer’s art

By Manfred Goretzki, Freelance Journalist, on behalf of Intergraf

Although cash is no longer the only and not even the most important medium holding monetary value, it has dramatically shown its strength in the midst of an economic crisis. Compared with coins, paper banknotes are not that old, but in comparison with, say, a banknote from before the First World War, modern banknotes are prime examples of the heights modern printing technology can reach. In this article the author leads us on an up-to-the-minute tour of banknote printing technology, and shows how new security devices are continually being developed.

While in general printing the aim is to achieve the best possible results in the most efficient and cost-effective manner, banknote printing, almost perversely, tries to reach superior quality in the most complicated and costly way possible. The reason is of course, that the aim of banknote printing is not only to produce paper money that reflects the prestige of the country that issues it and the value of its economy, and is durable enough to be passed from hand to hand for a considerable length of time, but that it is so complicated, difficult and expensive to reproduce that it deters any counterfeiter. However, in banknote circles there is a saying that anything produced by humans can be counterfeit by humans. So to be on the safe side, banknotes are loaded with sophisticated security features.

Banknotes are made – and made safe – through special substrates, either paper or polymer, inks, security features and, not least, a special printing process. Each of those has made great advances in the last decade or two and none of them can be found in a conventional print shop, however sophisticated.

Worth the paper it is printed on

Banknote paper is made from cotton fibres. It is uncoated and feels slightly rough before printing. The paper is produced in a number of accredited high security paper mills, either state-owned or private, such as Louisenthal in Germany, Portals in the UK or Crane in the US and Sweden. It is delivered in reams, and less commonly in reels, and already contains the mould made, multi-tone watermark and the security thread. Most European currencies, including the euro, use only paper for their banknotes, but several countries, among them Romania, are using a polymer substrate called Guardian, made by Securency, a joint venture between the polymer substrate maker Innovia and the Reserve Bank of Australia. Banknote paper and polymer are in competition with each other. Polymer claims to be much longer lasting, especially in difficult conditions, such as in humid, tropical countries, and to be very counterfeit resistant. The notes are indeed very tough and much more difficult to tear than paper, but if there is a small nick or tear at the edge, they tear very easily. Security is working to eliminate the problem.

Paper, on the other hand, can claim to be strong and to have a stronger emotional bond with users. The public knows the right feel of a banknote and knows how to look for watermarks and other security features. But paper and polymer also influence each other. One of the most obvious security features in polymer is a clear window of any shape on the note. As the polymer banknote substrate starts off as a clear plastic foil of biaxially-oriented polypropylene (BOPP) to which several coatings are added to make it opaque and printable, a certain space can be left blank to provide the clear security window. About two years ago, to provide a similar effect with paper, banknote paper maker Louisenthal developed its security feature VariEye, which is a deckle edge or laser cut opening in the paper covered by a plastic foil that can be overprinted in intaglio, an inspiration clearly taken from the polymer substrate.

Polymer can be printed on the same machines as paper. Both paper and polymer can have security threads, but – taking the Romanian notes as an example – they are less striking than those on paper notes. Security, however, says that optical machine-readable security threads can be incorporated into the material. Threads can contain metallic, magnetic, phosphorescent and fluorescent pigments and they can be printed and windowed, all features that are very familiar from paper banknotes. Guardian’s version of the paper watermark is the shadow image, which cannot be seen in reflected light but is easily visible when the note is held up to the light. It is produced by altering the opacity and sometimes the colour of the opacifying layers, and it can be either a portrait or a text.

The need to win the race against counterfeiters constantly prompts the development of new security features. The most commonly known ones that are added to the substrates are hologram stripes or patches, so called Optical Variable Devices (OVDs) and Diffractive Optical Variable Devices (DOVIDs) which in the case of the euro and of about 70 other currencies are Kinepatch and Kinestripe, produced by OVD Kinegram in Switzerland. Production and distribution of these stripes and patches is highly regulated, accredited and controlled by the European Central Bank (ECB) and other national central banks that use these security features. In contrast to the devices themselves, their application is very simple; they are added to the banknotes by commercial hot-stamping presses. Sometimes the patches are further secured by adding micro-perforation – on the €50 note it is the € sign, which becomes visible when seen against the light.

Printing

Most of the remaining security features are added in the printing stage of the notes. The euro is a useful currency to explain the process, although it is by no means the most complex or the most beautiful of currencies. However, because the first issue was produced in so many different countries absolute conformity in all materials and production stages had to be guaranteed – a problem the Danish and Swedish kronas or the Polish zloty do not have. Most currencies, including the euro, are printed in offset and in intaglio, a special process related to gravure printing and to the artistic printing processes of dry point and...
etching. Some of the security features are added in screen printing and hot stamping. Finally the numbering is done with letterpress numbering. For the offset part, modern banknote printing uses special CTP imagesetters for platemaking, with a resolution of up to 8,000 dpi and an accuracy of 0.05 micron, to reproduce even the finest details. While the majority of European currencies are printed on sheet-fed machines, mostly complete lines made by KBA Giori, some countries, such as Denmark (and Alagria) are using web presses built by Brent Goebel.

Although plates for the offset printing part look conventional enough, any commercial offset printer would get a little confused. Banknotes are not printed with process inks, but with special colours akin to Pantone colours, and there are no half tones and no halftone dots in this kind of printing. It is strictly a line-printing job. Consequently, it is not familiar things such as dot gain that are important, but the thickness of very fine and often very pale lines, the clarity of microprint and most of all the register of colours to each other and from the front of the note to the back. In contrast to conventional offset, the sheet with the notes does not run through four printing units for the front and a further four for the back, but each plate deposits its image onto one blanket cylinder – one colour on top of the other – to have a complete image for the front on one blanket cylinder and one for the back on the other. Both blanket cylinders then deposit the image simultaneously onto the sheet, which passes between them. The press that achieves this is called a Super Simultan press, developed by KBA Giori, which only bona fide banknote printers can buy. This very delicate process allows absolute perfect register between colours and from front to back, as can be seen in the see-through register feature – an incomplete 50 for the €50 note in the top corner of the euro notes or a 100 for the 100 Swedish Kronor note – which becomes complete when viewed against the light. The printing also involves iris printing, whereby the ink fount is split between two colours, which merge in the middle in a zone of controlled width, giving a gradual change from one colour to the other. On the back of the €50 note there is for example a change from orange to yellow.

After the offset stage, usually the hologram patch or stripe is added and in many currencies a further security feature is added, a design such as a number, using optically variable ink which is applied by a standard commercial screen-printing machine. This ink changes colour when the note is tilted, as in the large figure on the back of the notes for the €50 and higher denominations – or it may be a pearlescent stripe, as in the Swedish 100 Kronor showing the denomination and three crowns, which only becomes fully visible when the note is tilted.

The following step is intaglio printing, the printing process most typical for banknote printing. The process uses engraved, chromed, nickel plates with the printing parts recessed into the plates. The inks used are very viscous and have to be forced into the engraved parts by the inking roller, while the non-printing parts of the cylinder are cleaned by a wiping cylinder. The paper that runs between the printing cylinder and the counter pressure cylinder is subjected to several hundred kg of pressure per square centimetre in order to enable it to lift the thick ink out of the engraved printing image. The pressure not only 'calenders' the normally quite rough paper and makes it smooth and shiny, it also spreads the rectangular sheet into a slightly trapezoid shape. This would make the register between the pre-printed offset part and the intaglio part of the note difficult, and banknote designers are therefore careful to avoid close register at that part of the process. The high ink deposit gives the print a tactile feeling, which is easily recognised when handling the note, but this creates a problem of drying. After intaglio printing, the sheets are usually put into a vault for a day before they can advance to the last stage in the production process, the numbering. The serial numbers of the notes are printed with letterpress numbering boxes in a special numbering machine.

### Keeping ahead of the counterfeiter

In the past couple of years, specialist security suppliers have been developing new features in the hope of being selected for one of the really big currencies, such as the euro or the US dollar. The security features for the next issue of the euro have already been selected, but are kept secret by the European Central Bank. One feature, however, is certain to have made it onto the US dollar. The sole paper maker for the US currency, Crane, some years ago bought the Swedish security printer Tumba Bruck from the Swedish Central Bank, modernized the plant totally and invested heavily in the development of security features. The result was ‘Motion’, a windowed security thread that employs microscopically small lenses to create an image of a tinted transparent liquid on which there are floating images [icons] which move when the note is tilted. Motion can be seen on the Swedish 100 Kronor note and it will be on the next generation of the US$100 note. The use of extremely sophisticated science and high technology that Motion employs is typical for modern security features, which may use liquid crystal technologies, optical technologies or complicated chemical properties. And that is only in the security features that are seen by the user. There is a set of covert security features, which are kept strictly secret by the issuing central banks, which may be even more complicated.

Banknotes today are among the most sophisticated and impressive printed products on the market. It is also the only printed product that is universally desired, although that has little to do with the quality of the print!

Manfred Goretzki is a freelance journalist, specialising in the printing, paper and media industries. He writes for trade journals in several countries, and writes and edits InfoSecura, published by Intergraf for the security printing industry worldwide. Born in Poland, he is a German citizen, living in Luxembourg and Brussels.

Intergraf is the European Association of the Printing Industries, representing its 25 national member associations in 22 countries by lobbying and maintaining permanent contacts with international bodies, such as the European Commission. It has a special section for Security Printing matters, publishes the newsletter InfoSecura and organises the International Security Printers’ Conference, which takes place every 18 months, and its associated exhibition. Another important task of Intergraf is the coordination of the Certification of Security Printers and High Security Printers.

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Concern Universal (CU) partners with local organisations in South America, Asia and Africa to challenge poverty and inequality by supporting practical actions that enable communities improve their lives and shape their own future. CU’s vision is “a World where justice, dignity and respect prevail for all”. Concern Universal benefits 1.5 million people directly and several million indirectly. In Kenya CU works in the Arid and Semi-Arid Lands in North Eastern, Eastern and Rift Valley Provinces. Water is a major community need in the harsh arid lands. People walk long distances for water and, for the most part, use unsafe water points exposing them to severe health risks and disease such as diarrhea, cholera, typhoid, etc. Instead of water being the basis for a healthy life, dirty water is often the cause of severe illness and death. CU provides communities with clean drinking water that directly and indirectly impacts on other essential services and sectors such as health, food security, hygiene, livestock production, small-scale irrigation etc. that are led and managed by communities … it is a simple positive model that adds to the work of local government extension service provision.

Abdullahi who had been drinking unsafe water from a river for over 30 years and had this to say a year and half down the line, “I feel dignified that my family drinks clean water and are able to wash and wear clean clothes and be healthy”.

The majority of target beneficiaries in Kenya are poor pastoralists who depend on their cattle, sheep, goats and camels for their livelihoods. Access to sparse water points is often a cause of conflict in these remote places. In this regard, the focus on local ownership of both the problem and solution with emphasis on capacity and peace building has a positive and lasting impact.

Providing safe water is an entry point for building sustainable livelihoods in these communities with more and more pastoralists choosing to diversify their livelihoods to agro-pastoralism especially in response to the changing environment due to global warming. Pastoral communities of Maasai & Somali origin are now practicing horticulture through small-scale irrigation from water points provided by CU. Positive change is visible as CU strives to improve the lives of very poor but very resilient communities. They produce their own food, have improved milk producing livestock (milk is a staple food) and improved family income through the sale of farm surplus and cash products e.g. honey and sunflower oil. Over 500,000 people benefit from our work in Kenya.

You can make difference by supporting Concern Universal as a vessel for change. Please visit our website, www.concern-universal.org to learn more about Concern Universal’s work.

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Green jobs: now is the time

By Juan Somavia, Director-General, International Labour Organization

The global financial and economic crisis is prompting us to rethink values, policies and business practices that have led to millions of unemployed worldwide, increasing poverty and inequalities, and the constant disregard of the environment. This is the time to move towards a more sustainable development path in which the regulatory role of the state, the creativity of the market and the dignity of persons find a new balance.

Green jobs – that is, jobs that contribute to preserving or restoring the environment – are an important element in the design of a fairer and more sustainable world. In times when the mounting costs of energy-intensive production and consumption patterns are widely recognised, it is timely to move towards a high-employment low-carbon economy. Green jobs hold the promise of a triple dividend: sustainable enterprises; poverty reduction; and a job-centered economic recovery.

This emphasis comes at a time when the world is beset with vast job losses and major questions are raised as to the sustainability of past policies berating regulation and overrating the market. International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates suggest that unemployment could rise by more than 50 million in 2009 compared with 2007, with a particularly worrying rise in joblessness for youth and women (www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_103456.pdf). The number of working poor is expected to rise dramatically.

Decisive and urgent action is required if we are to avoid a prolonged and severe global jobs crisis.

The ILO recently examined the fiscal stimulus policies being implemented in some 40 countries, including all members of the G20. The study notes that the stimulus packages lean heavily toward financial bailouts and tax cuts instead of job creation and social protection (www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/inst/toward-financial-bailouts-and-tax-cuts-instead-of-job-creation-and-social-protection---dgreports/---dcomm/documents/publication/wcms_103456.pdf). It also found that fiscal stimulus packages for the real economy are five times smaller than financial bailout packages. However, it is encouraging to see that an increasing number of economic stimulus packages include the greening of economies and the creation of ‘green’ jobs. There is reason to believe that they can and should be a vital and crucial element of any recovery plan.

Green jobs hold the promise of a triple dividend:
- sustainable enterprises
- poverty reduction
- and a job-centered economic recovery

Already in November 2008, the ILO’s Governing Body – the executive body of the organisation – identified six key priority policy actions that governments and employers’ and workers’ organisations should focus on to address the crisis, including supporting productive sustainable enterprises, particularly small enterprises and cooperatives, employment-intensive investment and green jobs. The global jobs crisis is expected to dominate discussions during the International Labour Conference in June 2009, which will consider an ILO proposal for a Global Jobs Pact.

The Green Jobs report

Evidence of how green jobs can help stimulate an economy is provided in the recent ILO report, ‘Green Jobs: Towards Decent Work in a Sustainable, Low-Carbon World’ (www.unep.org/pdf/A_Global_Green_New_Dead_Policy_Brief.pdf). Published under the Green Jobs Initiative sponsored jointly by UNEP, the ILO, the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the International Organization of Employers (IOE), the report examines green jobs in a global context for the first time. It represents the best available knowledge and forward-looking thinking on how to bolster green job creation in the global economy.

Energy efficiency in buildings and construction, in transport and in industry, and clean energy supply, in particular from renewable sources, as well as agriculture and forestry, will all be important in terms of their environmental, economic and employment impact. Clean technologies are already attracting increasing amounts of venture capital: this has more than doubled in recent years.

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Millions of green jobs already exist: millions more are in the making. They contribute to preserving or restoring the quality of the environment; help cut consumption of energy, raw materials and water; de-carbonise the economy and reduce greenhouse gas emissions; minimise waste and water pollution; and protect and restore ecosystems and biodiversity.

Albeit only a nascent sector, renewable energy already generates more jobs than oil production and refining worldwide. Half of these new jobs are in developing countries and projected investment could create at least another 20 million more by 2030. Even bigger potential for job creation is found in energy efficiency, in public transport, in recycling and waste management and in the restoration of environmental capital such as productive agricultural soils, watersheds and forests.

Green jobs: a hope for a better future

Adjusting production and consumption patterns will be a major challenge in all countries. This is a global challenge that will affect enterprises and work places all over the world.

Meeting the challenge will hinge on adjusting existing jobs and workplaces, and on investing in new technologies generating new sources of growth, enterprise creation and jobs. To lift millions of workers surviving on less than US$2 per day out of poverty, we need green jobs that are also what we, in the ILO, call decent work: jobs that provide adequate incomes, social protection, respect workers’ rights and give workers a say in decisions that will affect their lives.
A shift to sustainable economies needs political will and public support. That means helping to diversify economies, assisting enterprises and workers to adapt, ensuring social protection is in place, and that there are training programmes to dispense the new skills needed. The best way to make a just transition is by ensuring that those who are most directly involved, employers and workers, have a say in it. We need effective social dialogue to help us grow into a greener economy.

Are green jobs a viable hope for the world’s environmental and economic future in times of sharply lower growth and social recession? The answer is decidedly yes. Huge opportunities exist to create them through energy, industrialisation, transport and agricultural policies that reduce environmental footprints. They can provide decent work and incomes that will contribute to sustainable economic growth and help lift people out of poverty. They are central to the policy link that needs to be established between climate change and development. The million solar panels being installed in rural villages in Bangladesh, the energy efficient social housing in the United Kingdom and in South Africa and the highly effective recycling systems in Brazil are examples of this. There are many more.

Crucially important, green jobs are a practicable and effective option for reviving economies and for quickly creating large numbers of jobs. A growing number of countries have already adopted economic packages that promote green job growth as a short-term way of rebuilding and renewing infrastructure and facilities to make them more energy efficient, and as a long term solution to unemployment. These measures can generate jobs in urban as well as in rural areas and across the spectrum from manual to highly skilled occupations. Similarly, the major investments to adapt to climate change could provide many new and better jobs for low income people. For a more detailed discussion, see for example: ILO, ‘The financial and economic crisis: a decent work response’ and UNEP, ‘The Green New Deal, a policy brief’.

If invested wisely, the resources to overcome the economic crisis could leave a legacy of energy efficient infrastructure, rehabilitated ecosystems, renewable energy sources, and enterprises and workplaces more resilient to climate change. And they could lay the foundation for a greener economic future that is environmentally sound, economically productive and socially sustainable. If ever there was a time for the Green Jobs Initiative to take hold, this is it.

Juan Somavia is the Director-General of the International Labour Organization, first elected in 1999. A Chilean national, Mr Somavia has worked in public life as a diplomat, an academic and within the United Nations. He has chaired the UN Security Council and the UN Economic and Social Council. He organised the UN Summit for Social Development in 1995. Through his involvement in social development, business and civil organisations, Mr Somavia has forged a vision of the need to secure decent work for women and men throughout the world.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is devoted to advancing opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. Its main aims are to promote rights at work, encourage decent employment opportunities, enhance social protection and strengthen dialogue in handling work-related issues.

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In 1994 AWP began producing wind turbines in Harare, Zimbabwe and gained valuable experience in rural community based projects such as the Temaru Community Power Project (PICS 1&2) where Electrical power is provided for a rural business centre and school, and the Masamba Fishing Co-Operative on the shores of Lake Kariba (PICS) where power was provided for the village and a Battery Charging Station which serves people within a 15 Km radius. These projects, assisted by Donor Funds and NGO involvement developed a model and proved that using the correct approach, fairly sophisticated power generation and distribution systems could be built and handed over to the community for sustainable operation. Unfortunately the situation in Zimbabwe has in the last few years made it difficult to keep the systems running effectively and showcase AWP’s products and project capabilities.

Electrical water pumps can also be run directly from the turbines, the AWP3.7 can produce up to 20,000 litres a day in good winds.

AWP has moved the manufacture of its machines to Johannesburg & is seeking new partners to:
> carry out projects internationally
> expand its production capabilities
> finance R&D projects to increase its range of turbines
> finance product certification programs such as CE, RHoS, ISO9001, IEC61400-2

The AWP3.6 is certified in the UK BRE program enabling purchasers to receive rebates of up to 60% on installations in the UK. It is also listed in similar programmes in the USA. AWP has an expanding network of dealers worldwide and has even supplied three orders for turbines to power meteorology stations in Antarctica. (Pic 4) AWP has the capability to manage turn key projects for multiple installations in many regions.

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International Labour Organization (ILO) is devoted to advancing opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. Its main aims are to promote rights at work, encourage decent employment opportunities, enhance social protection and strengthen dialogue in handling work-related issues.

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Building the Capacity of Civil Society Organisations to Empower Citizens in Tanzania – The Case of the Foundation for Civil Society

The Foundation for Civil Society in Tanzania presents a new model of partnership between donors and developing countries in building the capacity of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and empowering citizens to effectively participate in development processes. The Foundation for Civil Society provides grants and other capacity building interventions to Tanzanian Civil Society Organisations aiming at empowering citizens to participate in development processes in order to reduce social poverty amongst Tanzanians. It is a Tanzanian led and run institution governed by an independent Board of Directors appointment by a group of Members of the Foundation. The Foundation for Civil Society now stands as a unique and sustainable model of supporting civil society organizations in developing countries.

The establishment of the Foundation was a result of discussions amongst bilateral donor organizations in Tanzania seeing the importance of having a Tanzanian institution to support the efforts of civil society organisations. They therefore facilitated the establishment of the Foundation as an independent Tanzanian institution with a broad mandate of building the capacity of civil society organisations in Tanzania. The Foundation for Civil Society was established in late 2002 and became operational in January 2003. Since then, it has taken great strides in transforming the Civil Society Sector in Tanzania to make it more vibrant, dynamic and effective. It has been and continues to be a trendsetter in developing effective support mechanisms and capacity building initiatives in an effort to promote and support poverty reduction activities undertaken by Civil Society Organisations.

Since its establishment, the Foundation has provided grants to over 1200 civil society projects worth over USD 20 million in the areas of enhancing good governance, policy engagement, safety nets and strengthening CSOs advocacy skills and networks. Projects funded by the Foundation have empowered citizens, especially the most vulnerable groups within the society namely people with disabilities, women (especially widows), children (especially orphans and vulnerable children), youth, old aged people, to access their rights in areas such as land ownership rights, education, health and other human rights. Citizens have also been empowered to hold the Government at various levels more accountable through the support to CSOs by informing people on various policies relevant to their social and economic well being. Through its Advocacy and Networking Strengthening Programme it has managed not only to strengthen the technical, managerial and financial capacities of civil society organisations but to facilitate stronger networking within the sector and between the sector and other sectors. The Foundation has proved to be a pioneer in adopting innovative measures to enhance partnerships between various development actors and the Civil Society Sector through supporting and organizing platforms that bring together representatives from CSOs, local government, and Members of Parliament to deliberate on national and local development strategies. The annual consultations between Members of Parliament and Civil Society Representatives initiated and facilitated by the Foundation have proved to be one of the most respected and effective mechanisms for bringing together Legislators and the people to discuss on critical development issues. Recently, the Foundation has embarked on the creation of a unique CSO directory helping CSOs and other stakeholders in networking and knowing who does what in the sector. The directory is also available online at www.csodirectory.org.

The Foundation also organises Annual Civil Society Forums which provide unique opportunity for civil society organisations and other key stakeholders to deliberate on development policies and share experiences amongst themselves. During these events, best performing civil society organisations are awarded to encourage, acknowledge and recognise excellence in the sector. The awards have managed to challenge CSOs in Tanzania to strive to deliver best services to their beneficiaries and improve management practices.

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Ecological creditors and debtors: a new context for international cooperation

By Dr Mathis Wackernagel, Founder and Executive Director, Global Footprint Network

Ecological debtor countries are those which use more resources and ecological services than the ecosystems within their borders produce. They now house 80 per cent of the world’s population. But much of Latin America, as well as New Zealand, Canada, Gabon, Finland, Botswana, Australia and others, are still in an ecological creditor situation, which might significantly – and positively – affect their future economic standing and competitiveness, if managed well. Inversely, those ecological debtor countries who are preparing themselves for resource constraints will be far better equipped to navigate the future. Recognising this new geopolitical shift can help put the climate negotiations on a much more productive path.

This is why: ecological debtor countries depend on the health of ecological assets in creditor countries. They have it keenly in their interest both to become less dependent on such assets, and to support creditor countries in managing those assets carefully.

Through our Ecological Creditor and Debtor Initiative, Global Footprint Network is convening key policy experts and decision-makers to initiate a dialogue on the growing significance of biocapacity for economic prosperity and stability. If we succeed, policy-makers will start to recognise both the tangible benefits of maintaining ecological assets and the risk that liquidating these assets poses to their nations’ long-term interests.

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Avoiding the impending resource crunch

Forty years ago, most of the world had biocapacity well in excess of what their populations and economies demanded. But the

Percentage of Earth’s Biocapacity consumed (1961): 54%
picture has since changed dramatically. Today, only about one-third of the world’s countries use less ecological services than what the ecosystems within their borders can renewably provide. This shift is part of a larger trend. In the early 1960s, humanity consumed only about half of what planet Earth could provide. In the mid-1980s, humanity began to demand resources and ecological services faster than earth could renew them, a condition known as ecological overshoot. Since then, growing human population and per capita resource consumption have caused overshoot to escalate. Our accounts, which most likely underestimate overshoot, conclude that in 2005, the most recent year for which data are available, human demand exceeded by 30 per cent what earth could renew.

The symptoms of overshoot are clear and pressing: rapid climate change, crop shortages, biodiversity loss, freshwater stress, shrinking forests and depleted fisheries.

Recognising that humanity is moving at great speed into resource constraints, and that reinventing our urban infrastructure so it can cope with these constraints takes time – possibly several decades – it becomes clear that there is no advantage in waiting. While collective agreements will certainly accelerate action, delaying action becomes a growing cost and risk.

As ecological reserves become increasingly rare, it will become critical for creditor and debtor nations to forge new relationships and move toward policies that protect natural assets while improving health and well-being. In this game, all can win. Every single one will benefit from early action.

**The challenge for creditors and debtors**

Unlike with trade deficits, where a growing imbalance is understood to carry some risk, the same has not been true with ecological deficits. Consider the United Kingdom. In 1961, it was one of only a handful of countries in the world where the population’s demand on nature exceeded the country’s biocapacity. At that time, it used nearly twice what its ecosystems could renew. In the last four and a half decades, however, that spread has nearly doubled. The UK now demands resources of more than three times its biocapacity – and at the same time, the number of countries with ecological reserves able to provide the ecological services it needs is shrinking rapidly.

As for ecological creditors, the future doesn’t give them an advantage if they don’t prepare well and avoid the pitfalls. Australia, for example, currently has an ecological reserve – but it is losing biocapacity very quickly, because of both climate change and rising human demand. Canada is another region with vast natural wealth and low population. It is among the countries with the greatest ecological reserves, in spite of its high per capita consumption. Yet, looking at the US and Canada together since they are tightly linked through trade agreements, the ecological reserve vanishes and becomes an ecological deficit of nearly half the size of those countries’ joint biocapacity.
Tanzania and Botswana are still creditors, but their ecological remainder is shrinking rapidly. Without such a remainder, it will be more difficult for those countries to succeed in the global economy, particularly as it will become increasingly difficult in a world with global overshoot to access ecological services from abroad.

The Ecological Creditor Initiative

The Ecological Creditor Initiative, a partnership of the Global Footprint Network with the Community of Andean Nations (CAN), aims to foster an understanding among Ecological Creditor countries that their ecological assets will strengthen their future world economic standing and competitiveness. Therefore it is in the interest of all countries – both those with ecological remainders and those with deficits – to begin a dialogue about how to negotiate resources, and find ways to effectively value and preserve these assets. The Ecological Creditor Initiative proposes to convene creditor nations (with more ecological capacity than they consume) to initiate a dialogue on the implications of their resource trends on their economic competitiveness, as well as the resulting human impacts, including greenhouse gas emissions. Our goal is to encourage these countries to reveal their development strategies and natural resource management practices, and work together to find solutions that meet the increasing resource demands of our global society.

Without a remainder, it will be more difficult for those countries to succeed in the global economy, particularly as it will become increasingly difficult in a world with global overshoot to access ecological services from abroad.

The Ecological Creditor Initiative will help countries think through these various challenges and develop strategies that recognise nature as a core asset. In the long term, these discussions could shift the way we value and negotiate resources in the 21st century, providing clear strategic and economic advantages for nations to become more resource-efficient and bolster their ecological reserves.

Once leaders begin to understand the inherent value of ecological assets, the perspective shifts from, “the more we reduce resource consumption and waste emission, the more difficult it is for us to be competitive,” to “the more we reduce resource consumption, the greater our well-being and the less our risk.”

It changes the equation from a negative sum game, where financial wealth is generated at the expense of the environment, to a positive sum game, where the economic objective becomes securing the best lives using the fewest resources.

Mathis Wackernagel, Ph.D, founder and Executive Director of Global Footprint Network, has worked on sustainability issues for organisations on all continents except Antarctica. Along with Professor William Rees, he created the Ecological Footprint measure, now a sustainability tool in wide use around the world. Mathis’s awards include an honorary doctorate from the University of Berne, a 2007 Skoll Award for Social Entrepreneurship, a 2006 WWF Award for Conservation Merit, and the 2005 Herman Daly Award of US Society for Ecological Economics.

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At Global Footprint Network our programmes are designed to influence decision-makers at all levels of society and to create a critical mass of powerful institutions using the Footprint to put an end to ecological overshoot and get our economies back into balance. Our intent is to bring about new solutions and spark a global dialogue about ecological limits and overshoot. The results we expect will redirect billions of dollars of investment flows toward making sustainable human development a reality.

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South Africa’s Wildland Fire Management Legislation: A mechanism for poverty eradication and wildland fire fighting

South Africa, like many countries is prone to disastrous wildland fires and most regions of the country are situated in naturally fire-prone ecosystems with nearly 70% falling within the high fire danger zone category.

Studies carried out in South Africa point to the fact that substantial unwarranted and uncontrolled burning does occur throughout the country and that this is exacerbated by factors such as: (a) an increase in the extent of urban development interface with naturally fire-prone systems, (b) the escalating occurrence of extensive infestations of invasive alien plants, (c) fire risks associated with forestry and agriculture and (d) the build-up of excessive fuel loads.

Wildland fires are disastrous and destroy property and livelihoods of people, particularly the rural poor communities already trapped by high unemployment. The Government of South Africa, through introduction of the National Veld and Forest Fire Act (Act 101 of 1998) intended to mitigate the risks of wildland fires while promoting the concept of integrated wildland fire management. Integrated wildland fire management refers to an all-inclusive approach in fire management and incorporates aspects such as awareness raising and advocacy, institutional arrangements, fire protection and prevention among others.

The national veldfire fire legislation, further seeks to prevent and combat veld (wildland), forest and mountain fires throughout the Republic. It provides for a variety of institutions, methods and practices, such as the formation of Fire Protection Associations (FPAs), preparation and maintenance of a National Fire Danger Rating System, veldfire prevention through firebreaks and the need for landowners to meet readiness standards for fire fighting; all these components of integrated wildland fire management. Fire Protection Associations are voluntary organizations formed by landowners for the purpose of cooperating on issues pertaining to wildland fire management.

The Working on Fire (WoF) is a South African Government-funded, multipartner organization focused on integrated fire management and wildland fire fighting. WoF was established as a dedicated poverty relief programme through job creation and wildland fire fighting and it is now an integral part of the government’s Expanded Public Works Programme. The programme currently employs more than 1000 firefighters deployed in 47 bases as 22-person hot shot crews and 100 crew leaders. Apart from the ground crews, WoF utilizes a team of aerial fire fighting professionals. The aerial fire fighting resources are coordinated locally, provincially and nationally.

In compliance with the fire legislation, South Africa endeavors to use three systems to support and promote integrated fire management, namely, National Fire Danger Rating System (NFDRS), the Fire Protection Associations Registration Management System (FPARMS) and the National Veldfire Information System (NVIS).

The NFDRS is an early warning system for probabilities of wildland fire occurrence and the regions in which the fire is likely to occur at a particular period. The system will become handy in supporting rural growth and development as it will issue warnings in advance and by so doing, assisting the relevant authorities and communities to plan timeously for the eventualities and also increase fire readiness and the level of vigilance.

Coupled with NFDRS is the Fire Protection Associations Registration Management System, a national web-based technology for registration of fire protection associations. To date one hundred and fifty (150) associations are registered with the system.

There is also a National Veldfire Information System which is web-based and used to capture wildland fire incidents. It is a central portal for reporting on wildland fires throughout the country.

The South African Government is optimistic that these institutions and systems deployed in accordance with the fire legislation will go a long way in mitigating the negative impacts of wildland fires on socio-economic front of rural communities. It is also anticipated that systems and resources so amassed will in the near future be shared with other countries in the region, particularly the SADC region whereby a number of Memorandums of Understanding have been negotiated and concluded.
Conserving the rainforests – the world’s citizens are ready to act

By the Hon Prof Wangari Maathai, Nobel Peace Laureate and Founder of the Green Belt Movement

In some ways, the environmental challenge facing the world is simple: to develop concrete and visionary strategies to address the massive ecological and economic challenges climate change will bring – and is already bringing – to the earth and its inhabitants, as well as slowing and ultimately reversing the growth in greenhouse gas emissions. But it is also complex, in that what we agree to do must be comprehensive, effective, and equitable. In this article, adapted from a speech to the Poznan Environmental Conference of December 2008, the author emphasises the cogent reasons for taking a longer-term perspective view of rainforest conservation, so that the world’s political leaders can see the whole picture of the forest, not simply a succession of individual trees.

Some have urged caution in environmental planning decisions, calling bold action either unwise or simply beyond the world’s means in a time of financial uncertainty. But the facts on the ground demand anything but caution. For those of us who live in the global South, and especially in Africa, the urgency of confronting the realities of climate change is all the greater. In its report on the likely effects of global warming on Africa, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) predicted large changes in rainfall patterns, river volume, forest resilience, the viability of agriculture, and the expansion of malarial zones. Although some shifts in climate may make possible the cultivation of new crop varieties in some parts of Africa, the overall direction is dire: the IPCC estimates that, as rainfall patterns shift, revenues from crops across Africa could fall by 90 per cent by 2100. Africa’s small-scale peasant farmers, a majority of the continent’s population, will be the most affected.

The climate and prospects for peace are closely linked. According to a recent study, when shortfalls in seasonal rains brought drought and economic distress to 40 sub-Saharan African countries, the likelihood of civil war rose by 50 per cent. Throughout Africa and much of the global south, environmental issues are not a luxury. Protecting and restoring our ecosystems, and arresting global warming, are matters of life and death.

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**Forests hold the key**

While some of the specific ways the changing climate will affect the world’s peoples, species, and ecosystems are still being studied, about some facts there can be no dispute. Approximately 20 per cent of total emissions of carbon dioxide (CO₂) result from the relentless clearing of the world’s forests, including the largest areas still intact, in Amazonia, South-east Asia, the Congo Basin of central Africa, and the boreal regions of northern Canada and Siberia.

These standing forests act as the world’s ‘lungs’, absorbing enormous quantities of CO₂ in addition to retaining significant stores of carbon in their soils, and thereby preventing its release into the atmosphere. Indeed in Bali both governments and non-governmental groups signed on to a declaration in support of forests that declared, “If we lose forests, we lose the fight against climate change.” As forests fall to logging and mining concerns, for agriculture and human settlements, or commercial development, a vital element is lost for slowing and ultimately reversing global warming.

Forests also provide many other benefits, without which our very existence – as well as those of countless other species – would be at risk. These include rainfall, clean water, soil health, habitat for mammals, birds and insects, as well as food, fuel, fodder and building materials. But on forests and climate, we have been moving in the wrong direction. Rates of deforestation remain high. And each year, deforestation in the tropics alone releases 1.5 billion tons of CO₂, equivalent to what’s emitted by all the world’s automobiles.

Sir Nicolas Stern reported that forests offer the single largest opportunity for cost-effective, immediate reductions of CO₂ emissions, along with a host of other benefits for the planet and us. Stern has estimated that a US$30 billion-a-year gap exists between what is being spent now to protect standing tropical forests and the economic benefits – primarily short-term – of deforestation.

US President Barack Obama told a recent climate change meeting, “Now is the time to confront this challenge once and for all. Delay is no longer an option. Denial is no longer an acceptable response.” This message must be heeded by all government negotiators. Indeed, a scientific and political consensus has now emerged that is demanding urgent, large-scale, and visionary commitments and the action and funds to back them up.

**Formal mechanisms for conservation**

One area where improvement is imperative over the Kyoto Agreement is in establishing mechanisms to protect our standing forests and set a clear, bold path for the centrality of forests to any climate mitigation or adaptation action for years to come. We have a global obligation, indeed a mandate from our peoples, to safeguard the great forests that remain, and reforest where the earth has been stripped bare.

To this end, new incentive mechanisms should be developed, including ‘REDD’, or Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation, along with the emergence of new carbon markets – if, that is, they operate in a manner that is fair and transparent, if the voices of the people who rely directly on forests or dwell in them are heard and included, if the interests of the forests’ biodiversity, fauna and flora, are given the weight they deserve, and if the approach, whether policy, programme or market, is rights-based and community-centered.

We cannot allow such factors to be defined as outside the bounds of or irrelevant to a technical discussion. They must be central, and...
The Congo Basin – an important example

The Congo Basin Rainforest Ecosystem has great importance, not only to Africa, but the world. It is the world’s ‘second lung’ (after the Amazon). It extends for 700,000 square miles (1.8 million sq km), encompassing 10 countries, and contains about 25 per cent of the world’s intact rainforest. Thirty million people live within the basin ecosystem, including hunter-gatherers, and more than 50 million people depend directly on the forests to meet their daily survival needs. The forests affect the climate not only in the region, but also around Africa, and indeed influence weather patterns across the world.

If the Congo Basin Forest Ecosystems are not protected from the many threats they face, specifically logging, mining, exploitative plunder, hunting and the bushmeat trade, slash and burn agriculture, and persistent conflict, not only will millions of people be impoverished, but the world will lose a central feature of its climate-regulating mechanism. Every time a forest area is cleared or degraded, carbon stored in the trees and the soil is released into the atmosphere. Scientists now estimate that between 24 and 34 billion tons of carbon is held within the forests of the Congo Basin. But a vicious cycle is in motion: as the earth continues to warm, soils may dry up and trees die off on a vast scale. The Congo Basin will not be unaffected.

It is essential that all stakeholders no longer see intact forests such as the Congo as vast and inexhaustible sources of commodities that have more value harvested than protected. But it will also be critical for nations in the Congo Basin, many struggling to meet their people’s basic needs, to have the commitments they have made – to protect the forests not only for their own use but on behalf of the world and its climate – matched. Matched means supported, politically and financially, to increase the capacity of the government agencies and institutions to participate effectively in international negotiations, and to present to the world their analyses and action plans to slow global warming. It also means compensating nations, like those in the Congo Basin, that protect their forests – and in so doing reducing greenhouse gas emissions, which benefits us all.

there is substantial agreement on this among government delegates, scientists, technical experts, and civil society representatives. Forests have to be viewed, and acted on behalf of, within the broader ecological, social, economic and cultural contexts in which they exist. Otherwise, we risk missing the forests for the trees. As such, new carbon markets, as they develop, must serve the forests – not vice versa.

Innovative, large and small-scale, truly participatory afforestation programmes should be supported to restore what has been lost already from the world’s forests. Such efforts must be based on sound science, good development practice and commitments to protecting human rights and ensuring equity and gender equality.

Seeing both the forest and the trees

Of course, even as progress is made towards creating a fair system for compensating developing countries that slow down or reverse the rate at which their forests are cleared, we must not lose sight of the bigger picture. Reducing and reversing forest loss and degradation cannot offer an excuse to industrialised countries and others to continue polluting at the levels they have been. To do so would make a mockery of the work of all those seeking an equitable solution to the climate crisis. Matters of environmental justice, such as this, must remain central to all deliberations about and agreements on global warming.

Africa’s greenhouse gas emissions are negligible compared with those of the industrialised world and the emerging economic giants China and India. Even as we work as a global community to protect standing forests, we must also challenge leaders and citizens of industrialised countries – and indeed of all nations – to cut greenhouse gas emissions from all sources; to reduce their energy consumption and move beyond fossil fuels; to adopt policies so that both the public and private sectors operate more responsibly wherever they are; and to share technologies that can allow developing nations to avoid the pitfalls of heavy reliance on polluting and climate-destroying fossil fuels.

Even as we work as a global community to protect standing forests, we must also challenge leaders and citizens of industrialised countries – and indeed of all nations – to cut greenhouse gas emissions from all sources.

As the world struggles with significant economic challenges, it must not cast aside the opportunities this moment presents to reorganise financial systems so they enrich, not destroy, the earth’s natural resources. It offers a chance to ‘green’ global and national economies by stimulating the development of green energy and deep green businesses, large and small, that can employ or offer opportunities to millions of people who need employment and income.

In this context, the developed world has a special responsibility. After all, it is the greenhouse gases they have emitted over the centuries that are the main culprit in global warming. As such, they have a moral duty to help Africa and other poor regions find alternative and renewable sources of energy as well as to share the technology they have developed. In this way, countries in the global South can develop their economies and industries based on renewable sources of energy. In the process, our countries can reduce our vulnerability to the effects of global warming as well as expand our capacity to adapt to the changes that we know are ahead.

The world’s citizens are ready. If they are asked to join the fight against climate change and for protecting and rehabilitating the world’s standing forests, they will. Let us agree to act together for the good of the planet. Let us see both the forests and the trees.

The Hon. Professor Wangari Maathai is the founder of the Green Belt Movement. In 2004 she became the first African woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize for “her contribution to sustainable development, democracy and peace”. Maathai was an elected member of the Kenyan Parliament and served as Assistant Minister for Environment and Natural Resources in the government of President Mwai Kibaki between January 2003 and November 2005. Wangari Maathai is also an environmentalist, a civil society and women’s rights activist, and a parliamentarian. She is Goodwill Ambassador for the Congo Basin Forest Ecosystem and co-chair of the Congo Basin Trust Fund.

The mission of the Green Belt Movement (GBM) is to empower individuals worldwide to protect the environment and to promote good governance and cultures of peace. Through its holistic approach to development, the GBM addresses the underlying social, political, and economic causes of poverty and environmental degradation at the grassroots level. The GBM started by addressing a serious problem with a simple solution: getting communities to plant trees as a symbol of their commitment. Today, this approach is taking root worldwide.

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Created in 1993 by Presidential Decree, the University of Dschang (UDs) is one of the seven state Universities in Cameroon. It inherited the sites, resources, facilities and liabilities of the former Dschang University Centre.

Situated in the heart of the Western Highlands of Cameroon, the UDS has an essentially agricultural vocation. One of the major challenges state universities in Cameroon are confronted with today is the need to give the ever increasing student population a high quality training that guarantees the acquisition of knowledge and its full use for national development. Apart from the classic missions of teaching, research and outreach, the UDs has as its specific mission to conduct agricultural training and research, promote and boost agriculture in Cameroon, and Africa.

This is to ensure a dynamic and efficient agriculture capable of sustaining an economic and social development that is endogenous and long lasting. That explains why it is resolutely committed to the pursuit of excellence in its teaching and research activities.

In building up its identity, the University uses its enormous endowments viz:
- a natural environment particularly suitable for intellectual development.
- The creation and management of field stations (antennae) in the five main agro-ecological zones of Cameroon
- A diversified social milieu which is the foundation for well-managed development
- An institution that is situated between two linguistic regions of the nation, thus placing it at the centre of national options in terms of bilingualism and multiculturalism.

Research in the UDs, among other things, is focused on finding solutions to development problems hence the major fields include:
- Water Management
- Identification and study of bioactive substances of agricultural and medical interest.
- Structural adjustment, performance of the agricultural sector and poverty alleviation
- Fundamental and comparative rights of regional institutions.

With close to 16000 students, the UDs offers studies towards degrees or diplomas and in professional specialisation in certain fields in five faculties and two University Institutes of Technology and Fine Arts. These faculties and specialisations include:
- Faculty of Agronomy & Agricultural Sciences (Agriculture, Forestry, Agribusiness)
- Faculty of Economics & Management (Banking & Finance)
- Faculty of Law & Political Science (Human Rights)
- Faculty of Letters & Social Sciences (Tourism & Cartography)
- Faculty of Science (Bio-medical Sciences & Pharmacy)
- Higher Institute of Technology (Civil Engineering, Computer Science)
- Higher Institute of Fine Arts (in preparation)

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After a century of declining prices, the surge in food costs in the last few years has had a most extreme effect all over the world. The ensuing crisis has resulted in a 50–200 per cent increase in selected commodity prices, driven 110 million people into poverty, and added 44 million more to the undernourished on a worldwide basis. Elevated food prices have had dramatic impacts on the lives and livelihoods, including increased infant and child mortality, of those already undernourished, or living in poverty and spending 70–80 per cent of their daily income on food. Key causes of the current food crisis are the combined effects of speculation in food stocks, extreme weather events, low cereal stocks, growth in biofuels competing for cropland, and high oil prices. Although prices have fallen since the peak in July 2008, they are still a long way above those in 2004 for many key commodities. The underlying supply and demand tensions are little changed from those that existed just a year ago when these prices were close to all-time highs.

Feeding 200,000 more people every day

The demand for food will continue to increase towards 2050 as a result of population growth, increased incomes and growing consumption of meat. The population of the Commonwealth is expected to grow by an additional 800-900 million to over 3 billion by 2050, out of a world total projected to be 9.2 billion. This means nearly 200,000 more people per day, of which some 60,000 are Commonwealth citizens. By 2050, meat consumption per head will have doubled, and over half of the world’s cereals will be used to feed livestock, up from one-third today. Indeed, this cereal alone could have fed the entire projected population growth.

World food production has grown substantially in the past century, primarily as a result of increasing yields from irrigation and fertiliser use, as well as agricultural expansion into new lands. The rise continues, but at a slower pace. In the past decade, yields have nearly stabilised for cereals, and declined for fisheries. Aquaculture production to just maintain the current dietary proportion of fish by 2050 will require an additional 30 million tonnes of fish or a quarter of the world’s landings. The impacts of reduced food availability, higher food prices and thus lower access to food by many people have been dramatic. It is estimated that in 2008 at least 110 million people have been driven into poverty and 44 million more became undernourished (World Bank, 2008).

Lack of investments in agricultural development has played a crucial role in this levelling of yield increase. Indeed, it is uncertain whether yield increases can be achieved to keep pace with the growing food demand. The current projections in increased food production needed to sustain the rising demand have not taken into account the erosion of the environmental resources and the subsequent losses in yield and land area as...
As a result of climate change, land degradation and water scarcity, including the lack of agricultural investments, food production could potentially become up to 25 per cent short of demand by 2050.

Eastern, Southern and Western Africa are regions that are currently experiencing rapid population growth, low farm productivity, rising land degradation and invasive pests. These are the regions that will absorb the most severe impact from climate change. The combined effect of rising demand with the lack of a similar rise in economic and agricultural productivity may seriously endanger stability and sustainable development – and the lives of hundreds of millions. Lack of development and even instability as a result of the rising food crisis in these regions of Africa will also impact other parts of the Commonwealth through lost trade, lost tourism and increasing instability. The riots experienced with the current food crisis provide an indication. Another one billion people in sub-Saharan Africa alone by 2050 would require a greater green revolution and economic boom than the one seen in Asia to feed the rising population – providing the entire Commonwealth, as well as the world community, with a huge responsibility.

Greater price volatility ahead unless challenged

Depressed agricultural productivity and high demand could result in increased prices, create price volatility and subsequently hunger. A long-term stable price increase could lead to increased incentive for increasing productivity, but high price volatility influenced by extreme weather and an insufficient supply is de-motivating for producers and consumers alike. There is only limited scope for expansion of the cropland area in many parts of Asia, hence yield increases are crucial. Conventional compensation by simple expansion of croplands into low-productive rain-fed lands would result in accelerated loss of forests, steppe or other natural ecosystems, with subsequent costs to biodiversity and further loss of ecosystem services and accelerated climate change.

Large numbers of the world’s small-scale farmers are constrained by lack of access to markets and the high price of inputs such as fertilisers and seed.

Indeed, based on estimates from the World Bank, UN Food and Agriculture Organization and the UN Environment Programme, coupled with scenarios of the environmental food crisis, prices may increase between 30 and 50 per cent on average – in addition to greater volatility. Large numbers of the world’s small-scale farmers, particularly in the Commonwealth countries in Africa, and in India, Pakistan and Papua New Guinea, are constrained by lack of access to markets and the high price of inputs such as fertilisers and seed. With lack of infrastructure, investments, reliable institutions (e.g. for water provision) and low availability of micro-finance, it will become difficult to increase crop production in those regions where it is needed the most, unless this is given major priority. Moreover, trade and urbanisation also change the food habits of consumers, and the supply from the hinterland of many

Over half of Asia’s cereal production depends on the melting Himalayas

Climate change will increasingly take effect by 2050, and may cause large portions of the Himalayan glaciers to melt, disturb monsoon patterns, and result in increased floods and seasonal drought on irrigated croplands in Asia, which account for 25 per cent of the world cereal production. Pakistan depends upon the glacier-fed Indus river for large parts of its electricity supply, and a large share of its irrigated lands. Many rivers in Northern India provide a similar service and are similarly vulnerable.
Seven options for improving food security
Increasing food energy efficiency provides a critical path for significant growth in food supply without compromising environmental sustainability. Seven options are proposed for the short, medium and long term:

**Options with short-term effects**
1. To decrease the risk of highly volatile prices, temporary short-term price regulation on critical commodities in the most severely impacted countries could be implemented as an emergency measure, along with development of larger cereal stocks to buffer the tight markets of food commodities and the subsequent risks of market speculation. This includes reorganising the food market infrastructure and institutions to regulate food prices and provide food safety nets aimed at alleviating the impacts of rising food prices and shortage, including both direct and indirect transfers.
2. Encourage removal of subsidies and blending ratios of first generation biofuels, which would promote a shift to higher generation biofuels based on waste (if this does not compete with animal feed), thereby avoiding the capture of cropland by biofuels. This includes removal of subsidies on agricultural commodities and inputs that are exacerbating the developing food crisis, and investing in shifting to sustainable food systems and food energy efficiency.

**Options with mid-term effects**
3. Reduce the use of cereals and food fish in animal feed and develop alternatives to animal and fish feed. This can be done in a green economy by increasing food energy efficiency using fish discards, capture and recycling of post-harvest losses and waste and development of new technology, thereby increasing food energy efficiency by 30–50 per cent at current production levels. It also involves re-allocating fish currently used for aquaculture feed directly to human consumption, where feasible.
4. Support farmers in developing diversified and resilient eco-agriculture systems that provide critical ecosystem services (water supply and regulation, habitat for wild plants and animals, genetic diversity, pollination, pest control, climate regulation), as well as adequate food to meet local as well as consumer needs. This includes managing extreme rainfall and using inter-cropping to minimise dependency on external inputs like artificial fertilisers, pesticides and blue irrigation water and the development, implementation and support of green technology for small-scale farmers. This could be done by the development of a global fund to support micro-finance to boost small-scale farmer productivity.
5. Increased trade and improved market access can be achieved by improving infrastructure and reducing trade barriers. However, this does not imply a completely free market approach, as price regulation and government subsidies are crucial safety nets and investments in production. Increased market access must also incorporate a reduction of armed conflict and corruption, which has a major impact on trade and food security.

**Options with long-term effects**
6. Limit global warming, including the promotion of climate-friendly agricultural production systems and land-use policies at a scale to help mitigate climate change.
7. Raise awareness of the pressures of increasing population growth and consumption patterns on sustainable ecosystem functioning.

Many face a surge in hunger in decades
Wider regional differences in production and demand may lead to greater reliance on imports for many countries. At the same time, climate change could increase the variability in annual production, further exacerbating price volatility and encouraging speculation in food markets. Without policy intervention, the combined effects of a shortfall in production – greater price volatility and high vulnerability to climate change, particularly in Africa – could result in a substantial increase in the number of people suffering from undernutrition. It could even bring about a doubling of the current one billion undernourished, within three or four decades. While the current food crisis may thus come to an end within the foreseeable future, the effects of environmental degradation are likely to become far more severe in the next couple of decades, and produce even more pronounced effects than the current problems. The timescale for increasing productivity in a sustainable manner is therefore very short indeed.

Identifying means of how a ‘green economy’ may actually generate business opportunities and jobs may provide a key path out of both a financial and a food crisis.

It is also important to note the vicious cycle that countries may enter in terms of lowered labour productivity, health reduction and financial setbacks, unless development includes a sustainable rise in food production. Here, identifying means of how a ‘green economy’ may actually generate business opportunities and jobs may provide a key path out of both a financial and a food crisis – and prevent a much larger one looming ahead.

Half of the world’s food is wasted
In addition to increasing production, we can also learn from experience in the conventional energy sector. In the 1970s the high oil prices led to increased research into more energy efficiency houses, cars and industry. Hence, rather than focusing solely on increasing production, there is a huge potential for improving food security by enhancing supply through optimising food energy efficiency. Food energy efficiency is our ability to minimise the loss of energy in food from harvest through processing to actual consumption and recycling. Today, near half of the world’s food is wasted in some form. In the UK, nearly one-third of the food purchased is not eaten, and in Australia it has been estimated that over A$10.5 billion are spent in households on items that were never used or simply discarded.

Temporary short-term price regulation on critical commodities in the most severely impacted countries could be implemented as an emergency measure.
A green economy may feed the world

Firstly, developing alternatives to the use of cereal in animal feed, such as by recycling waste and using fish discards, and a 50 per cent increase in aquaculture could sustain the energy demand for the entire projected population growth of nearly one billion people in the Commonwealth. Secondly, in addition to slowing climate change and environmental degradation, boosting of small-scale farmer productivity could both improve food security and generate small-scale business opportunities. Furthermore, a major shift to more eco-based production and reversing land degradation would help limit the spread of invasive species, conserve biodiversity and ecosystem services and protect the food production platform of the planet. Thirdly, investments in green small-scale technology and development of new ways to produce animal feed from waste, utilising the research from the biofuel sector, could provide major business opportunities in the industrialised world as well. With a rising global population, we need to consider the potential in more small-scale business and in particular in a green sustainable small-business food sector.

We cannot afford simply to waste, feed to animals or discard more than half of the food we produce, losing both resources and opportunities. To lose near half of the oil we drill would be folly – why permit it for food, so precious to sustainable development?

A green economy in the Commonwealth can provide the full range of member states, society, business and policy-makers the room to provide innovative and progress-oriented ideas.

A green economy avenue out of the financial crisis

Recycling of waste, research in food energy efficiency and support to small-scale farmers through micro-finance and green technology could generate business, jobs, new technology and export articles; and provide a long-term sustainable avenue for progress and development. The range of opportunities, pathways and potential development in a green economy are huge. A green economy in the Commonwealth can provide the full range of member states, society, business and policy-makers the room to provide innovative and progress-oriented ideas that may combine to help provide the basis of a much more sustainable future for generations to come – and bring us out of perhaps the greatest looming crisis that ever faced humankind.

Christian Nellemann, PhD, was in charge of the UN Environment Programme report ‘The Environmental Food Crisis’, launched in support of the United Nations Secretary-General’s High-Level Taskforce on the world food crisis. He has been responsible for a broad range of global and regional assessments produced for the United Nations. The report can be found at www.grida.no or www.unep.org.

The United Nations Environment Programme’s mission is to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations. The headquarters are in Nairobi, Kenya.

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AGRICULTURE IN THE NORTH WEST PROVINCE OF SOUTH AFRICA

North West is sometimes referred to as the Texas of South Africa, with some of the largest cattle herds in the world found at Stellaland near Vryburg. The Marico region is also cattle country, while the areas around Rustenburg and Brits are fertile, mixed-crop farming land.

The province is an important food basket in South Africa. Maize and sunflowers are the most important crops and the North West is the major producer of white maize in the country.

The eastern part of the province has a rainfall of 600mm and produces vegetables, flowers and poultry. Horticulture and aquaculture show particular promise for expansion and the North West Province already has several aquaculture initiatives underway. The Eastern part of the province is arid with a rainfall of less than 300mm a year. The central part is typically semi-arid receiving 500mm a year.

In terms of the land use pattern in the North West Province, 58% is grazing and 28% is arable, of which only 3% is under irrigation. Furthermore 6% is used for nature conservation and 8% is for other uses. Agriculture has transformed approximately 50% of the total surface of the province.

The Province has considerable potential in terms of comparative and competitive advantages in livestock production, especially in the western areas of the province. It appears that the western area contains approximately 39% of the goats; 38% of the sheep flock and 29% of the cattle in the North West Province. Sheep and goat numbers are exactly proportional to the size of the province.

Oranges; pecans; pomegranates; prickly pears olives and table grapes are produced in Ngaka Modiri Molema; Bojanala and Dr. Ruth Segomotsi Mompati Districts while the latter has very limited citrus production. Dr. Kenneth Kaunda District is mainly suited for pecan and table grape production.

There is also a large number of vegetable farmers farming mainly with onions; spinach; cabbage; green beans; pumpkin; carrots; tomatoes; sweet potatoes and potatoes. Grain farmers produce maize; sunflower; sorghum and wheat in all four districts with barley only being produced in the Dr. Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District under contract. Soya beans are mainly produced in the Dr. Kenneth Kaunda and Bojanala Districts.

Livestock farmers consist of cattle, sheep; goats, pigs and broiler producers with the number of dairy farmers on the decline in all four districts.

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Natural resources management for sustainable agriculture in Commonwealth developing countries

By Timothy O Williams, Adviser and Head, Enterprise and Agriculture Section, Commonwealth Secretariat

Agriculture and natural resources are intrinsically linked. The quality of soils, water, plant and animal genetic resources together with climate (temperature and rainfall) all have a major influence on agriculture which, in turn, is a major user of natural resources. Historically, human activity in agriculture was geared towards satisfying the need for food. Today, there is a recognition that agriculture needs to play much broader roles than ever before. In addition to meeting the growing demand for food and other agricultural products, agriculture must also serve as a source of livelihood for billions of poor people and provide environmental services such as sequestering carbon, fixing nitrogen, maintaining watersheds and preserving biodiversity. Degradation of natural resources undermines the ability of agriculture to perform these functions. But inappropriate agricultural practices can also contribute to soil nutrient mining, agrochemical pollution, underground water depletion and global climate change.

The economic, social and environmental problems arising from poor natural resources management and unsustainable agricultural practices differ across CDCs and the solution to these problems will also vary depending on particular country circumstances. Nonetheless, the heavy dependence of CDCs on natural resources and their collective need to use agriculture as an engine for development means that more productive and efficient use of natural resources must be encouraged in order to attain long-term sustainable agricultural growth.

In addition to meeting the growing demand for food and other agricultural products, agriculture must also serve as a source of livelihood for billions of poor people and provide environmental services.

Nature and causes of natural resources degradation in CDCs

Natural resources degradation takes many forms. In Africa, it is manifested mainly in soil degradation caused by soil nutrient depletion and wind and water erosion. According to the International Centre for Soil Fertility and Agricultural Development (IFDC), Africa loses about 8 million tonnes of soil nutrients a year, and more than 95 million hectares of land have been degraded to the point where productivity is greatly reduced. Although Africa’s soils suffer from being geologically old, thin, and lacking the structure necessary to hold water and nutrients, these disadvantages are compounded by poor agricultural practices and government policies. Poor farmers driven by food and income needs are mining their own soils, i.e. removing more nutrients than are replaced, leading to negative balance of nutrients, reduced soil fertility and damaged soil structure.

Traditional strategies (e.g. fallowing and opening up of new lands) used in the past to restore soil fertility are no longer feasible due to increasing population pressure on land. Such strategies have not been replaced by the use of inorganic fertilisers. African farmers are among the lowest users of inorganic fertilisers in the world. IFDC estimates showed that in 2007, average fertiliser use in sub-Saharan Africa was 9 kg/ha, compared with 115 kg/ha in South Asia, 163 kg/ha in Western Europe and 118 kg/ha in North America. Lack of investment in rural infrastructure and in the supply and distribution of fertiliser coupled with poor price incentives have all contributed to the low level of fertiliser use in Africa.

The Green Revolution in Asia relied on high-input farming to achieve the remarkable success of doubling cereal production between 1970 and 1995, with only 4 per cent increase in total
The revolution helped to reduce poverty and hunger and slowed down the expansion of cultivated area. But the agricultural intensification generated natural resources degradation problems including groundwater depletion, mismanagement of irrigation water, soil salinisation, declining soil organic matter, agrochemical pollution and loss of local biodiversity. Government input subsidies and inappropriate output pricing policies contributed to the misallocation and misuse of natural resources.

In the Caribbean, the steep topography in many islands coupled with high rainfall and inappropriate cultivation and tillage practices on sloping lands lead to severe soil erosion and landslides. Land shortage and lack of tenure security and access to suitable lands compound the problem as poor farmers are forced to cultivate steep mountain sides. The eroded topsoil ends up in the sea, affecting the coral reef which, in turn, impacts negatively on fishery resources. Compared to Africa, there is a significant use of fertilisers and pesticides in the Caribbean. But agrochemicals are often applied without firm soil tests and agronomic recommendations, leading to excessive use and pollution of streams and watercourses. In other areas, soil salinity arising from irrigation and salt water intrusion into groundwater sources is common. Similarly, in the Pacific region, salinisation and erosion as a consequence of inundation and flooding hamper agricultural production.

Traditional strategies (e.g. fallowing and opening up of new lands) used in the past to restore soil fertility are no longer feasible due to increasing population pressure on land.

The natural resources degradation challenges facing CDCs will be exacerbated by the impacts of climate change. Indeed, many agricultural lands are already being affected by climate change through the increased occurrence and severity of droughts and flash floods. Furthermore, lower precipitation will reduce the availability of water for irrigation. Agriculture will also be negatively affected by salinisation of surface water and groundwater aquifers as the sea level rises.

Managing natural resources for sustainable agriculture

Addressing the challenges described above calls for adoption of innovative agricultural and natural resources management practices that will generate socioeconomic benefits while also contributing to a healthy environment and climate change mitigation. Strategies to achieve these objectives must be based on three key interventions:

- Adoption and adaptation of technologies for efficient management of natural resources
- Strengthening institutions and institutional capacity to encourage long-term investment in improvement and sustainable utilisation of natural resources
- Creation of a supportive policy environment.

Investing in technologies

Technological solutions exist to address natural resources degradation problems. These innovations can also make agriculture more sustainable. Examples include integrated nutrient management approaches that combine organic and inorganic fertilisers to replenish soil fertility, crop rotations that include legumes that can biologically fix atmospheric nitrogen, agroforestry that incorporates ‘fertiliser’ trees into farming systems, conservation agriculture and soil conservation measures such as terracing and contour farming to ensure that replenished soils are not eroded. These technologies have been around for a while and are well understood. They are, however, quite location specific. Participatory research (involving farmers, scientists and extension agents) to adapt them to specific farming systems should be a high priority.

Other technologies and tools such as remote sensing, geographic information system (GIS) and new laboratory analytical techniques can be used, for example, to analyse soils, regulate surface and groundwater withdrawals and generally provide site-specific management as well as monitoring of trends in the use of natural resources.

Many agricultural lands are already being affected by climate change through the increased occurrence and severity of droughts and flash floods.

Once soil fertility is restored, improved high-yielding crop varieties and those that have greater pest and disease resistance and are more tolerant of drought conditions should be planted. Apart from producing significant gains in productivity, such plant varieties will be equally important as farmers try to adapt to climate change. Other promising approaches that can lead to win-win outcomes in better management of natural resources and climate change mitigation include conservation agriculture, agroforestry, storage and capture technologies for manure and technologies that will reduce emissions from rice paddy fields and livestock. Advantage should also be taken of other sound practices such as integrated plant and pest management (IPPM) and soil and water conservation (SWC).

Strengthening institutions and institutional capacity

Adoption of technologies depends on the existence of institutional advantages such as clearly defined and secure property rights and well functioning markets. The lack or poor definition of property rights to land prevents farmers from undertaking the necessary long-term investments for sustainable resource management. Similarly, absence of well functioning input and output markets hinders adoption of new technologies and puts a question mark on the profitability of any investment made. Technical assistance to CDCs will be required to strengthen these institutions where they are weak, or to build new ones where they are absent.
Creating a supportive policy environment

Widespread adoption of natural resource management technologies will be greatly facilitated by a supportive policy environment. In such an environment, policy distortions will be removed and sufficient incentives will be introduced to enable farmers choose appropriate technologies to effectively manage natural resources and to move towards sustainable agriculture. Improved rural infrastructure, timely availability of inputs such as fertilisers, planting materials and other agrochemicals at reasonable prices, availability of good agricultural extension services, access to credit, tax rebates for investment in new technologies, and greater access to markets particularly for smallholder farmers, are all elements of an enabling environment that will encourage better natural resources management and sustainable agriculture.

At the international level, credits for sequestration of carbon in agricultural lands (for example through conservation agriculture and agroforestry) in developing countries should be explored as part of the negotiations for the post-Kyoto climate agreement. International support and incentives will also be required to promote investment in research and extension of low greenhouse gas emission technologies, such as low emission rice varieties and livestock breeds.

What can the Commonwealth Secretariat do to help?

The Commonwealth Secretariat will continue to provide CDCs with technical assistance in policy analysis, strategy formulation and capacity building to support effective natural resources management and the attainment of sustainable agricultural and rural development.

Tim Williams currently heads the Enterprise and Agriculture Section (EAS) at the Commonwealth Secretariat, and is an agricultural economist with over 25 years experience in small and medium enterprise (SME) development, policy analysis and policy advisory work. His professional work has focused on assisting governments in developing countries to develop policies to make markets work better for smallholder farmers and to address the challenges that SMEs face in setting up competitive farm and non-farm businesses. Prior to joining the Commonwealth Secretariat, he was Research Team Leader and Regional Representative (West Africa) of the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), one of the 15 centres of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). He earned a doctorate degree in agricultural economics from Oxford University, UK, and was a past recipient of the Rockefeller Foundation Social Science Research Fellowship and Robert S McNamara Fellowship.

Enterprise and Agriculture – This programme assists member countries to strengthen the competitiveness of micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs). Emphasis is on MSMEs in the agricultural, fisheries, manufacturing and services sectors. Key areas of support include strategy and policy formulation for sustainable development of MSMEs as well as capacity building to enhance their competitive advantage. Technical assistance is also provided on effective application and use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) by MSMEs and on reform of national regulatory frameworks and institutions to ensure MSMEs’ compliance with national and international food safety and quality control regulations.

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CIRRA - an application to manage risk through Constituent Ingestion Rate Risk Assessment

CIRRA is a computer simulation model that provides an assessment of the quality of water for people and animals.

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CIRRA is the result of intensive research at the University of Pretoria, South Africa, with the support and assistance of the Water Research Commission of South Africa, and national and international research institutions.

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Economic development, population growth, climate change and shifts in the geopolitical balance of power are putting enormous pressure on the earth’s water resources. Physical and economic water scarcity can be addressed through eight practical policy actions that contribute to the triple bottom line of food security, reducing poverty and sustaining productive ecosystems.

**Physical and economic challenges**

There has of course been a price to pay for these advances. As water extraction tripled in irrigated areas, there was a corresponding loss in ecological services such as fisheries, pollination, biological pest control, flood retention capacity, changes in micro-climate regulation and loss of critical habitats and biodiversity. Nearly 1 billion people are undernourished, and 60 per cent of them live in water-scarce areas in rural South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. Whereas in the past the goal was simply to grow more food, we now confront two very different sets of challenges: physical water scarcity and economic water scarcity.

**Water, not oil, may well be the main constraint on economic growth in this century**

Will there be enough water to grow the food we need? There are some troubling signs: the decline of groundwater, polluted rivers, rivers that run dry some months of the year, and growing competition for scarce water resources with cities. Climate change and rising demand on food crops for biofuels are adding to the pressure. Given our current mindset, it is doubtful that we can double food production and meet the growing demand for better diets.

Given our current mindset, it is doubtful that we can double food production and meet the growing demand for better diets.

Even if we can grow enough food – and there is ample evidence that we can – the more challenging questions are, "Can we do it equitably to benefit the poor and hungry?", and "Can we do it sustainably?" The good news is that these ‘doom and gloom’ scenarios are avoidable – if we change the way we think about and use our water resources.

Water, not oil, may well be a major constraint on economic growth in this century. The last half of the 20th century was a period of massive investment in water infrastructure. Agriculture productivity more than outstripped population growth thanks to new crop varieties, fertilisers and irrigation. Food prices in the late 1990s were a fraction of what they were in the 1970s. Irrigated agriculture powered economies, improved diets and lifted millions out of poverty in many parts of the developing world.

Over a billion people live in regions characterised by physical water scarcity. Physical water scarcity is the lack of sufficient water to satisfy demand, including enough water to sustain a minimum level of environmental health. We find water scarcity in deserts and arid zones with little or no rainfall. We also find physical water scarcity in areas with lots of water, but where supply is strained by overdevelopment of water infrastructure and where demand is approaching or exceeding the limit of what is physically available. The symptoms of physical water scarcity are easy to spot: heavy investment in water infrastructure, dried up rivers, pollution and poor water quality, declining groundwater supplies and conflict over control of water resources.

Economic water scarcity is less about the amount of water available and more about access and investment. There may be an adequate water supply, but people lack the human or financial resources needed to dig the wells, build the pipelines or manage effective irrigation schemes. Economic water scarcity is often the result of the way local institutions function – or rather don’t function. These institutions are unable to develop the necessary infrastructure or fail to deliver equitable water services to poor and marginalised peoples. More than 1.5 billion people live in areas characterised by economic water scarcity, which also happen to be some of the poorest regions in the world, mainly sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

**At the crossroads**

While each course of action poses particular problems, the aim in meeting physical and economic scarcity challenges is the same: to produce enough food for the 9 billion people who will...
inhabit our planet by 2050 without breaching the environmental limits that ensure a sustainable supply of water. More food needs more water. With our present policies and water practices, we will need double the amount of water we are now using for rain-fed and irrigated agriculture, and more if we continue to expand production for biofuels. Double the amount of water is simply not an option. The choice is between a world of haves and have-nots or a world of equitable, sustainable water use.

The aim in meeting physical and economic scarcity challenges is to produce enough food for the 9 billion people who will inhabit our planet by 2050.

Getting from here to there: eight policy actions

Technical solutions to water scarcity abound. What limits our capacity to apply those solutions is the way we think about water. In 2001, the International Water Management Institute convened a broad partnership of over 700 water management practitioners, researchers and policymakers to review the past 50 years of data, information and knowledge on water management and agriculture. This five-year global effort identified both promising and disturbing trends; cause for optimism and alarm. More importantly, the Comprehensive Assessment resulted in eight clearly defined policy actions that point the way to a triple bottom line of ensuring food security, reducing poverty and sustaining productive ecosystems (www.iwmi.cgiar.org/assessment).

Policy action 1. Change the way we think about water and agriculture. The new paradigm shifts our focus from rivers and groundwater to rain as the ultimate source of supply. One-size-fits-all solutions give way to locally crafted policy formulation that is seen as a social and political process much in need of good science to inform policy makers. Instead of treating agriculture as an isolated production system, we treat it as an integrated ‘agroecosystem’ interacting with other physical and biological systems to provide a range of environmental and productive services.

Policy action 2. Fight poverty by improving access to agricultural water and its use. The greatest gains in agricultural productivity and poverty alleviation are to be made by working with smallholder farmers in the poorest regions of the world. Livelihood gains will come from ensuring access through legal water rights, investments in village level water storage and delivery infrastructure, pro-poor technologies, and better roads and markets. Some of the largest gains will come from multiple use systems: systems that use the same water for crop production, drinking water, aquaculture, agroforestry and livestock.

Policy action 3. Manage agriculture to enhance ecosystem services. Modern agriculture tends to use water at the expense of other ecosystem services provided by river and wetland ecosystems. Greater food production has come at the expense of biodiversity and ecosystem services that support millions of poor people in rural areas. We can reverse the damage by changing agricultural practices and enabling managers to manage for biodiversity and engineers to engineer for biodiversity.

Policy action 4. Increase productivity of water resources. Using the practices available today, we have the capacity to produce more food and higher value per unit of water in almost all types of farming systems, but uptake is not happening fast enough. We have proven technologies we know will work: alternating wet and dry irrigation of rice, precise irrigation practices such as drip and sprinkler, improved livestock feeding and grazing practices, and multiple-use systems to support drinking water, crops, fish and livestock. It is no coincidence that areas with the highest level of poverty have the highest potential for water productivity gains. For donors and governments, this means ‘more crop per drop’ and greater return on investment of development dollars. Effective uptake needs policies that reduce risk and offer incentives for gains in water productivity – and it needs to start happening much faster.

Policy action 5. Upgrade rain-fed agricultural systems using a range of agricultural water management techniques. Unpredictable and irregular rainfall make farming a risky business for poor smallholder farmers. We need to give more attention to the full range of agricultural water management techniques we have at hand, some new and some old: rainwater harvesting, conservation tillage, better drainage, and low-cost pumps, to name a few. Employing these agricultural water management practices where they make sense would give poor farmers the security they need to risk investing in fertilisers and higher value market crops they can sell for cash. To realise large-scale gains, rainwater management must be included in the management plans of the relevant institutions. Here is an instance where a simple shift in perspective from the traditional sectoral focus on irrigation can open up new opportunities and improve livelihoods and the quality of life for millions.

Policy action 6. Adapt yesterday’s irrigation to tomorrow’s needs. The era of rapid expansion of large-scale public irrigation agriculture is over. The challenge for irrigated agriculture in the 21st century is to improve equity, reduce or reverse environmental damage, increase ecosystem services, improve land and water productivity, and adapt to climate change. National policy makers need to tailor irrigation investments to local circumstances that reflect their state of national development and any comparative advantages they have in local, regional, and world markets. Among the potential benefits are higher farm incomes, employment for the landless, reduced staple food prices and growth in agroindustries.

Areas with the highest level of poverty have the highest potential for water productivity gains.
Policy action 7. Reform the reform process. Many attempted reforms have failed because they did not take into account the history, culture, environment and vested interests that ultimately shape institutional change. The classic stumbling blocks have been inadequate support for reforms at the appropriate level, insufficient incentives for change, and unrealistic estimates of the time required to effect change. Empowering women, and building coalitions among government, civil society and the private sector are two of several approaches that have proved particularly effective.

Policy action 8. Deal with tradeoffs and make difficult choices. Making tradeoffs means that not everyone gets everything they want, but most people get enough of what they need. The big tradeoffs will be: water storage for agriculture versus water for the environment; reallocation versus overallocation; upstream versus downstream; equity versus productivity; and this generation versus the next. History shows us balanced outcomes are more likely when states allow civil society groups some measure of control in the management of local water resources. The increasing number of low-intensity ethnic and regional conflicts throughout the developing world are clear signs that people want this and they want it now.

Signposts to the future

There are reasons for optimism. People are reaching for tools, new and old, to produce more food with less water. Many farmers in Nepal and India, for example, now regularly use low-cost drip irrigation to grow vegetables. In sub-Saharan Africa just a little water, combined with improved varieties, fertiliser and soil management, is changing the face of the landscape. Farmers can double the yield per hectare they currently harvest, and double the amount of food produced per unit of water.

Making tradeoffs means that not everyone gets everything they want, but most people get enough of what they need.

Over the last two decades in Asia, sales of pumps have skyrocketed. This ‘pump revolution’ allows farmers to apply water more reliably and precisely to their crops when and where it is needed. Rice farmers in parts of Asia are now saving water by a practice known as ‘wet and dry’ irrigation, rather than following the traditional practice of keeping paddies constantly flooded. Most importantly, people in farming communities are organising for better water access and more effective irrigation management.

Equally encouraging is the rising interest among multinational companies to reduce their water footprint along the entire supply chain from farm to market. In fact, there is something each and every one of us can do by looking at our own water footprint and realising the huge volume of water we consume with our food and the equally huge volume we waste in the food we don’t consume.

It costs nothing to change the way we think

The policy actions outlined here do not require huge inputs of funding. It costs nothing to change the way we think. But we know it is a notoriously difficult thing to do. Commonwealth Ministers are in positions of considerable influence. Which road we take from here, the road to water crisis or the road to equitable, sustainable water use, will depend in no small part on how ministers use their influence to help us bring about a renaissance in thinking about water.

David Molden is Deputy Director General for Research at the International Water Management Institute (IWMI). His passion for water grew from his experience helping villagers organise a drinking water well in Lesotho. He has a Ph.D from Colorado State University with special emphasis on groundwater hydrology and irrigation, and has since developed broader interests in integrating social and technical aspects of water management with work across Asia and Africa. Now in Sri Lanka with IWMI, he enjoys interdisciplinary and cross-cultural teamwork with IWMI and partners to solve local water problems. Recently David coordinated a global programme involving over 700 participants to produce a Comprehensive Assessment of Water Management in Agriculture, with results documented in the publication ‘Water for Food, Water for Life’. The assessment examines trends, conditions, challenges and responses in water management for agriculture to enable effective investments and management decisions for enhancing food and environmental security.

The International Water Management Institute (IWMI) is one of 15 international research centres supported by the network of 60 governments, private foundations, and international organisations collectively known as the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). IWMI has a staff of about 350 and offices in 12 countries across Asia and Africa. IWMI has pioneered techniques to improve water productivity such as supplemental irrigation and the use of low cost technologies like drip and sprinkler irrigation. Well-designed water allocation practices together with water saving practices can ensure an adequate water supply to both cities and the environment, as well as sufficient water for growing food.

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Areas with the highest level of poverty have the highest potential for water productivity gains.
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Integrated Food Security

KZN Department of Agriculture in partnership with AGT focuses on improving the food security conditions of historically disadvantaged people by:
- Identifying Beneficiaries and Stakeholders
- Distribution of Seeds

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AGT in partnership with KZN Department of Agriculture identified historically disadvantaged communities and distributed seeds.
From conflict to peacebuilding: the role of natural resources and the environment

By Achim Steiner, UN Under-Secretary General and Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme

Peacebuilding is perhaps the most important task entrusted to the United Nations. Enshrined in the first line of the first article of the UN Charter, peacebuilding is a shared responsibility, one that demands cooperation, considerable human and financial resources, and political bravery on the part of national and international actors.

Unfortunately, peace is elusive and conflict continues to plague communities and countries around the world today. Although the occurrence of conventional interstate warfare has fallen significantly in recent years, civil wars are an enduring and devastating problem: more than half of all intrastate conflicts relapse, all too often generating inextricable cycles of renewed fighting, tyranny, military coups and lawlessness.

A changing security landscape

While environmental factors are rarely, if ever, the sole cause of violent conflict, recent research suggests that over the last sixty years, at least 40 per cent of all intrastate conflicts have had a link to natural resources. Indeed, civil wars such as those in Liberia, Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo have centred on high-value resources like timber, diamonds, gold, minerals and oil. Other conflicts, including those in Darfur and the Middle East, have involved control of scarce resources such as fertile land and water.

Only a quarter of peace agreements settling resource-linked conflicts have actually included clauses on resource issues.

Furthermore, a link to natural resources and environment has been found to double the chance for conflict relapse within the first five years of a peace agreement. To date, however, only a quarter of peace agreements settling resource-linked conflicts have actually included clauses on resource issues. Even as other social and economic divisions are addressed, failing to consider natural resources and environmental factors as an integral part of the peace process from the outset risks undermining the fragile foundations of stability and long-term development.

In addition, ignoring the environment as a peacebuilding tool misses an important opportunity for dialogue and confidence-building between former or potential conflicting parties: some of the world’s greatest potential tensions over water resources, for example – including those over the Indus River system and Nile Basin – have been addressed through cooperation rather than violent conflict.

As the global population continues to rise, and the demand for resources continues to grow, there is significant potential for conflicts over natural resources to intensify in the coming decades. In addition, the potential consequences of climate change for water availability, food security, prevalence of disease, coastal boundaries and population distribution may aggravate existing tensions and generate new conflicts. Integrating environmental management into conflict prevention and peacebuilding is therefore no longer an option – it is a security imperative.

The role of natural resources and the environment in conflict

Since 1990, at least eighteen violent conflicts have been fuelled by the exploitation of natural resources. These can contribute to the outbreak of conflict in three main ways. First, conflict can occur over access to or ownership of export-oriented resources like minerals, metals, stones, hydrocarbons and...
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Natural Resources & the Environment

The role of natural resources and the environment in peacebuilding

We have shown above that natural resources can be an important contributing factor in the outbreak of conflict, in financing and sustaining conflict, and in spoiling peacemaking prospects. Increasing demand for resources, population growth and environmental stresses including climate change, will be likely to compound these problems. At the same time, conflicts cause serious environmental impacts, which need to be addressed to protect human health and livelihoods.

In peacebuilding, it is therefore critical that the environmental drivers and impacts of conflict are managed, that tensions are defused, and that natural assets are used sustainably to support stability and development in the longer term. Indeed, there can be no durable peace if the natural resources that sustain livelihoods and ecosystem services are damaged, degraded or destroyed.

Lasting peace fundamentally hinges on the development of sustainable livelihoods, the provision of basic services, and the recovery and sound management of natural resources and the environment. Beyond mitigating the risks of conflict outbreak and relapse, natural resources and the environment can also serve as an effective platform or catalyst for enhancing dialogue, building confidence, exploiting shared interests and broadening cooperation between divided groups as well as within and between states. The premise lies in the notion that cooperative efforts to plan and manage natural resources can promote communication and interaction between adversaries, transforming insecurities and establishing mutually recognised rights and expectations.

It is critical, however, that the potential role of natural resources and the environment in building lasting peace and stability be taken into consideration at the outset. Deferred action or poor choices made early on are easily ‘locked in’, establishing unsustainable trajectories of recovery that can undermine the fragile foundations of stability and long-term development.

Recommendations for the international community

In cases where natural resources and the environment pose serious risks of conflict outbreak or relapse, or where environmental cooperation can deliver peace benefits, improved resource management should be viewed as an essential peacebuilding tool. In this context, UNEP recommends that the UN Peacebuilding Commission, the UN Security Council and the wider international community of peacebuilding practitioners consider the following six key priorities for integrating environment and natural resource issues into peacebuilding interventions and conflict prevention:

1. Further develop UN capacities for early warning and early action. The UN system needs to strengthen its capacity to deliver early warning and early action in countries that are vulnerable to conflicts over natural resources and environmental issues. At the same time, the effective governance of natural resources and the environment should be viewed as an investment in conflict prevention.

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The majority of the environmental damage that occurs in times of conflict is collateral, however, or related to the preparation and execution phases of wars and to the coping strategies of local populations. Indeed, environmental destruction disrupts normal socio-economic patterns, and forces populations to adopt unsustainable coping strategies, often leading to internal displacement or migration to neighbouring countries. Conflict also erodes or destroys state institutions and civil society, exacerbating grievances (or creating new ones) and impeding the sound management of the resources involved in the conflict.

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The environment is not only a silent casualty of war – it can also be transformed into a weapon that endangers human health and destroys livelihoods. To secure a strategic advantage, armed forces and the acquisition of weapons. Capturing such resources becomes a strategic objective for military campaigns, thus extending their duration.

Finally, economic incentives related to the presence of valuable natural resources can hinder the resolution of conflict and complicate peace efforts. As the prospect of a peace agreement appears closer, individuals or splinter groups who stand to lose access to the revenues gained from resource exploitation can act to undermine peacemaking efforts. These ‘spoilers’ play a significant role in the high relapse rate of resource-linked conflict.

The impact of conflict on natural resources and the environment

The environment is not only a silent casualty of war – it can also be transformed into a weapon that endangers human health and destroys livelihoods. To secure a strategic advantage, demoralise local populations or subdue resistance, water wells have been polluted, crops torched, forests cut down, soils poisoned, and animals killed. In some cases, ecosystems have also been deliberately targeted to achieve political and military goals.

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2. Improve oversight and protection of natural resources during conflicts. The international community needs to increase oversight of export-oriented resources in international trade in order to minimise the potential for these resources to finance conflict. International sanctions should be the primary instrument dedicated to stopping the trade in conflict resources and the UN should require member states to act against sanctions violators. At the same time, new legal instruments are required to protect natural resources and environmental services during violent conflict.

3. Address natural resources and the environment as part of the peacemaking and peacekeeping process. During peace mediation processes, wealth-sharing is one of the fundamental issues that can make or break a peace agreement. In most cases, this includes the sharing of natural resources, including minerals, timber, land and water. It is therefore critical that parties to a peace mediation process are given sufficient technical information and training to make informed decisions on the sustainable use of natural resources. Subsequent peacekeeping operations need to be aligned with national efforts to improve natural resource and environmental governance.

4. Include natural resources and environmental issues into integrated peacebuilding strategies. The UN often undertakes post-conflict operations with little or no prior knowledge of what natural resources exist in the affected country, or of what role they may have played in fuelling conflict. In many cases it is years into an intervention before the management of natural resources receives sufficient attention. A failure to respond to the environmental and natural resource needs of the population can complicate the task of fostering peace and even contribute to conflict relapse.

5. Carefully harness natural resources for economic recovery. Natural resources can only help strengthen the post-war economy and contribute to economic recovery if they are managed well. The international community should be prepared to help national authorities manage the extraction process and revenues in ways that do not increase risk of further conflict, or are unsustainable in the longer term. This go hand in hand with ensuring accountability, transparency, and environmental sustainability in their management.

6. Capitalise on the potential for environmental cooperation to contribute to peacebuilding. Every state needs to use and protect vital natural resources such as forests, water, fertile land, energy and biodiversity. Environmental issues can thus serve as an effective platform or catalyst for enhancing dialogue, building confidence, exploiting shared interests and broadening cooperation between divided groups, as well as between states.

It is critical that parties to a peace mediation process are given sufficient technical information and training to make informed decisions on the sustainable use of natural resources.

In supporting the implementation of these recommendations, UNEP seeks to partner with UN agencies, member states and other stakeholders to address the environmental needs of war-torn societies and provide the technical expertise necessary to integrate those needs into peacebuilding interventions and conflict prevention.

Based on its expertise in more than 25 crisis-affected countries since 1999, UNEP is providing technical assistance to the UN Peacebuilding Commission in assessing the role of natural resources and the environment in conflict and peacebuilding. Experts are currently working to mainstream natural resource considerations into the development plans and peace frameworks of several Peacebuilding Commission agenda countries, including Sierra Leone and the Central African Republic.

In addition, UNEP is joining forces with the European Commission, the UN Development Programme, the UN Department of Political Affairs, the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the UN Peacebuilding Support Office and UN-Habitat to develop guidance and training to address resource-based conflicts at the field level. A collection of 60 case studies on best practices of natural resource management for peacebuilding will also be published by UNEP in 2010. Finally, a new collaboration between UNEP and the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations proposes to bring environmental expertise to the ground, with ‘green advisers’ working alongside peacekeepers to integrate natural resource and environmental issues into peacekeeping practices.

The international community should be prepared to help national authorities manage the extraction process and revenues in ways that do not increase risk of further conflict, or are unsustainable in the longer term.

As we move forward with this important agenda, we invite the international community to engage with us to transform environmental challenges into opportunities and facilitate the transition from conflict to lasting peace and sustainable development.

This article is drawn from a book of the same title co-authored by Richard Matthew and Oli Brown of the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) and David Jensen of UNEP and published by UNEP in February 2009. See www.unep.org/pdf/padm_policy_01.pdf

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The mission of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations. The Disasters and Conflicts Programme extends UNEP’s work in areas of the world where the environment is impacted by conflicts and disasters, or where the environment is a factor contributing to conflicts and disaster impacts.

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Kenya Red Cross Leads In Humanitarian Response

National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies including the Kenya Red Cross embody the work and principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement worldwide.

The Kenya Red Cross Society is a humanitarian relief organisation created through an Act of Parliament, Cap 256 of the Laws of Kenya of 21st December 1965. Previously, the Kenya Red Cross existed as a Branch of the British Red Cross between 1939 and 1965. As a voluntary organisation, the Kenya Red Cross operates through a network of 62 Branches and six Regional offices throughout Kenya.

The Society's activities are classified into six departments namely: Disaster Preparedness and Response, Health and Social Services, Water and Sanitation, Human Capital and Organisational Development, Supply Chain, and Finance and Administration.

Disaster Preparedness and Response: Kenya Red Cross Society (KRCS) main focus is Disaster Risk Reduction, Disaster Preparedness and Response, Restoration of Family Links, Strengthening of the early warning systems, support to community based disaster preparedness initiatives, capacity building among staff, volunteers and communities for effective disaster management.

KRCS coordinates humanitarian response during drought, floods, community conflicts and fire disasters, among other disasters. Some major disaster responses in the recent years include a terrorist attack at the US embassy in Nairobi, massive landslides, fires tragedies and community conflicts.

KRCS is currently responding to prolonged drought that has affected more than 10 million people and fire tragedies that caused deaths of about 200 people.

Health and Social Services cover Blood Donor, First Aid, Disease Prevention and Control, HIV and AIDS, and Social Services programmes. Kenya utilizes over 200,000 units of blood each year with the Kenya Red Cross mobilizing collection of up to 60% of the blood. First Aid training and services are provided by qualified instructors and First Aiders.

The HIV and AIDS Programme's main aim is to increase knowledge on disease transmission and prevention, as well as improve coping mechanisms and quality of life of people living with and affected by the scourge. Social Services Programme places special emphasis on children's homes, homes for the aged, prisons, refugee camps and rehabilitation of people affected by disasters and conflicts, among others.

KRCS works in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation, Ministry of Medical Services, United Nations agencies and other local and international health actors.

Water and Sanitation: KRCS strives to improve communities access to safe and affordable water and sanitation facilities and services. By placing greater emphasis in provision of safe water, hygiene and health and promotion, Kenya Red Cross has instilled among communities by adopting an integrated approach to water and sanitation programming. In the past one year, the Society constructed 12 earth dams, 158 shallow wells and 26 boresholes.

Supply Chain unit supports programme implementation and business development initiatives for income generation with a view of self-sustainability and building capacity for the Kenya Red Cross. The Society has nine (9) warehouses measuring 50,000 sqm. The relief fleet comprises 102 motor bikes, 90 light vehicles, seven (7) heavy commercial 15MT trucks, six (6) heavy commercial 20MT trucks, six (6) heavy commercial 25MT trucks and 44 M621 trucks.

Human Resource: KRCS has 465 staff and 70,000 volunteers.

General Assembly and 2009 Council of Delegates
The 16th Session of the General Assembly of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies took place in Geneva, Switzerland from 20th November to 22nd November 2007. During these meetings, Kenya Red Cross successfully bid to host the meeting in November 2009.

This will be the first time that such meeting is held in Africa. Kenya Red Cross will be honored to host the 17th General Assembly of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Council of Delegates. The Conference is expected to attract over 1,500 delegates from all 186 countries across the world.
Strengthening international disaster response laws: the Commonwealth’s role

By Victoria Bannon, Coordinator, International Disaster Response Law Project, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Commonwealth countries are among the most disaster-prone in the world. The World Disasters Report 2008, published annually by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), listed India, Bangladesh and Zimbabwe among the four countries with the highest number of people affected by natural disaster in 2007. The United Kingdom and Dominica ranked second highest for total economic loss and economic loss per capita respectively. This article explores how the Commonwealth, and indeed the international community as a whole, can make significant progress towards the goal of strengthening international response through the elimination or reduction of the many legal and bureaucratic barriers that continue to plague international relief.

It is predicted that the frequency and scale of natural disasters will continue to increase over the coming years, largely due to the impact of climate change and the increasing vulnerability of populations living in disaster-prone areas. As demonstrated by recent disasters – Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar, Hurricane Katrina in the US, the Sichuan Earthquake in China, bushfires in Australia, L’Aquila earthquake in Italy and flooding across Southern Africa – no country, regardless of size or wealth, can afford to ignore the possibility of a large-scale disaster or discount the need for international cooperation to cope with their effects.

Commonwealth call to action

In 2005, the Commonwealth Heads of Government issued a call to strengthen disaster management and the international humanitarian response system, emphasising “the critical importance of effective, timely and equitable humanitarian action in support of disaster affected populations”.

In the immediate wake of a disaster this is a complicated task, one which is frequently made all the more complicated by cumbersome and inadequate domestic laws and regulations which are not designed to deal with international assistance. These not only create delays for relief efforts, but also waste precious time and money, placing an undue strain on already limited resources. Thus, one important step towards answering the Commonwealth call to action is through the development and strengthening of national laws and regulations to better facilitate international disaster assistance.

Aid plagued by legal bureaucracy

High among the issues to be resolved are overly burdensome customs and tax regulations for relief goods and equipment. Following the Asian tsunami in 2004, tonnes of emergency supplies were left languishing in the warehouses and ports of affected countries awaiting clearance for months or even years. Around the world, emergency food aid and vehicles are frequently held up while relief workers negotiate with authorities to waive the payment of hefty taxes and other fees. Telecommunications equipment such as VHF radios and satellite phones can be confiscated or their use restricted due to complicated import and licensing requirements.

Humanitarian workers also face difficulties at the border as few countries offer appropriate entry visas and work permits. Consequently, relief personnel are often required to enter on tourist visas and leave the country at frequent intervals to renew them, or must undertake lengthy and often costly processes to receive official visas and longer term work permits, all of which delay the start of relief operations. Additionally, many countries do not provide for even temporary recognition of professional qualifications, such as medical licences, leaving humanitarian workers unable to perform their duties or leaving them vulnerable to penalties or prosecution if they do.

Relief organisations themselves must also ensure they have the necessary authorisation to function as a legal entity. This is usually achieved through a registration process for international NGOs or the conclusion of a legal status agreement for international organisations. This can take up to a year to complete, leaving assisting organisations unable to legally enter into contracts, hire local staff or open bank accounts – essential requirements for disaster work.

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Other legal obstacles include delays in the issuing of aircraft landing permits or ‘flag waivers’ for international sea vessels carrying relief supplies, and the imposition of high or even deliberately inflated fees and charges for warehousing and other facilities.

The need for greater accountability in relief

Although by no means widespread, there are nevertheless instances of poor practice by international relief organisations during disaster operations, which may have the effect of encouraging or exacerbating many of the legal and regulatory barriers described above.

The most common, and certainly most visible, of these is the delivery of large quantities of inappropriate, poor quality or unnecessary relief items, occupying valuable space in transport containers and warehouses, clogging logistics pipelines and further delaying the delivery of life-saving assistance. Other issues have included a lack of respect for humanitarian principles, interference in domestic political affairs, the undermining of national and local disaster management and coordination structures, corruption and duplication and/or neglect in the provision of humanitarian services. Cases of proselytising, the deployment of untrained or unqualified personnel and culturally inappropriate conduct have also been noted as significant concerns.
While these issues are not always legal in nature, it is clear that more is needed to ensure that national laws and policies encourage greater compliance with quality and accountability standards by incoming relief providers.

Gaps in the international legal framework

Although not as widely known or understood as international humanitarian or human rights law, there is a large body of international legal instruments and norms which aims to set standards and remove legal and bureaucratic obstacles for international disaster response operations.

A good number of these instruments take the form of multilateral and bilateral treaties for disaster assistance as well as global and regional treaties covering specific topics such as the use of telecommunications for disaster relief, expedited customs clearance and tax exemptions for relief goods, use of civil defence assets, and responding to nuclear or industrial accidents. However, many of these instruments have tended to suffer from limitations of subject matter and/or low ratification.

There is also a plethora of resolutions spanning some 50 years from United Nations, the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the UN and other international organisations, academics and other experts. They were officially adopted by states and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement during the 30th International Conference of the Red Crescent in 2007, and have since been recognised and welcomed in other forums including the UN General Assembly.

The impressive array of treaties, resolutions and standards does not compensate for the fact that the overall international framework still lacks coherence and consistency. A number of gaps exist in the scope of its subject matter and many of these instruments suffer from limited enforceability. Additionally, a general lack of awareness of the area has resulted in the current international legal framework failing to make significant inroads into tackling many of the legal challenges that continue to plague international disaster relief.

The need for coherence at national level

Perhaps unsurprisingly, many of the international rules for facilitating the entry and operation of incoming humanitarian assistance are not finding their way into national laws or disaster management strategies. Indeed, many governments do not even consider, let alone legislate, for the possibility of receiving international assistance. Governments are often caught off-guard and must try to grapple with the application of bureaucratic laws designed for commercial and non-emergency situations or attempt to waive or amend them haphazardly - risking the loss of essential monitoring, coordination and quality control.

New guidelines offer a way forward

In a collaborative effort to improve this situation, the IFRC has been leading a global initiative on International Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles (IDRL). One of the major outcomes of this work has been the development of the ‘Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitations and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance’ (IDRL Guidelines). These guidelines were developed through a consultative process involving government, National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the UN and other international organisations, academics and other experts. They were officially adopted by states and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement during the 30th International Conference of the Red Crescent in 2007, and have since been recognised and welcomed in other forums including the UN General Assembly.

The IDRL Guidelines draw on extensive research into existing laws, policies and practices to offer governments and the humanitarian community a coherent set of recommendations for addressing the legal challenges to international disaster response. They encourage governments to develop or amend their laws and policies in advance of a disaster to grant a number of facilities and exemptions to international relief providers on issues such as tax, visas, transport, customs and legal status. Crucially, they also encourage governments to make access to those facilities dependent upon an organisation’s fulfilment of a number of core responsibilities such as adherence to
humanitarian principles and minimum standards of quality and accountability. In this way the IDRL Guidelines not only seek to fast-track the provision of international assistance but also to improve its overall effectiveness by encouraging better practices.

Gaining traction for legal preparedness

All states have a vested interest in strengthening laws for international disaster response – both as potential recipients of assistance and as donors to other nations and humanitarian relief organisations. The success of the IDRL Guidelines depends largely on the willingness of governments to integrate their recommendations into international and regional agreements, national laws and disaster management plans.

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The IFRC, together with its member National Societies and partners, is taking an active role in providing technical assistance, training and advocacy to encourage governments to take up this challenge. Given the vulnerability of many Commonwealth countries to disaster and the commitment of the Commonwealth to promoting good government, human rights, the rule of law and sustainable economic and social development, this is an issue which should resonate strongly among members.

Engaging Commonwealth support

The Commonwealth can play a key role in furthering this work, not only through the promotion of the IDRL Guidelines and encouraging the implementation of legal preparedness measures but also through the provision of resources and technical expertise for the development of tools, training and technical assistance for member states. In this regard, the Commonwealth Secretariat and its related associations already working on issues such as law development, adaptation to climate change and the use of information and communication technologies for disaster relief, are well placed to provide resources and expertise for initiatives relating to legal preparedness.

Some progress has already been made to introduce the subject of IDRL to the Commonwealth. In 2007, the Second Commonwealth Red Cross and Red Crescent International Humanitarian Law Conference agreed “to encourage Commonwealth States and National Societies to work together in support of further work on International Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles (IDRL)”, and in July 2008 the Commonwealth Law Ministers Meeting received an initial briefing on the issue. In December 2008 a special edition of the Commonwealth Law Bulletin included an article on the IDRL Guidelines, following which the Commonwealth Secretariat issued a commitment to ensure the wider dissemination of the IDRL Guidelines among member states through the Commonwealth Law Bulletin as well as public lectures and forums.

The task is now to build on these initial advances and identify further specific areas of collaboration with the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and other partners. As disasters increase, international cooperation will become even more vital for addressing the needs of vulnerable populations. With so much at stake, the Commonwealth’s call for ‘effective, timely and equitable humanitarian action’ should not go unheeded.

Box 2: Stories from the field

Bureaucratic delays
• A year after the tsunami in Indonesia, over 200 containers of tsunami relief aid were reportedly still held up in customs.
• In Eritrea, hundreds of tonnes of urgent UN food aid were held up for over a month as a result of government tax demands.
• In Sri Lanka, a UK-based NGO was required to pay over US$1 million to import 25 vehicles for use in the tsunami relief effort.
• More than two thirds of international humanitarian organisations surveyed in 2007 reported difficulties in obtaining visas and work permits during relief operations.

Poor practices
• One organisation sent teams to India, Thailand and Indonesia to practice faith healing on people affected by the tsunami.
• In Pakistan donations of unsuitable clothing disrupted relief pipelines and lay rotting in the streets or were burnt for warmth.
• Iranian Red Crescent had to provide food and tents to some international relief personnel who had arrived ill-equipped for the Bam Earthquake relief operation.
• In Indonesia, tonnes of expired medications, donated following the Jogjakarta earthquake, had to be destroyed at great expense.

Ghana: A Case History

In 2008, Stellar was commissioned by Afren plc to assist them in finding a suitable partner to join with them in their activities in the Keta Block, eastern offshore Ghana. Stellar was required to manage the process which involved proposing a suitable list of candidate companies, arrange for all data-viewing, organising a competitive bid process and ensuring the client’s requirements were met throughout. Via its considerable network of Upstream companies and contacts, Stellar was pleased to introduce Mitsui & Co. Ltd., a large Japanese trading house, to the project.

Stellar continues to work with other clients in Ghana as well as the rest of Africa, Europe and the Middle East.

SELECTED MANDATES

Block 16
Republic of Angola

Blocks BM-5 29 & 37
Brazil, Santos Basin

Fyne & Dandy
UK North Sea

Hutton Field
UK North Sea

Canadian Natural

Maersk
Sale of interest to Maersk Oil & Gas

Eni
Sale of interest to Antrim Energy Inc.

MAERSK
Sale to CNR

Veritas Geophysical
Limited
UKCS Assets

CGGVeRTAS
Sale to GDF

Talisman Energy

East Falkland Basin
Falkland Island

Falkland Oil and Gas Limited
Sale of interest to Petro-Summit UK Ltd

Farmout to BHP Billiton

Po Valley & Sicily Assets
Italy

Sale of interest to Petrocetic International Plc

Premier Oil Gabon BV
Dussafu Permit

Premier Oil
Sale of Company to Pan-Petroleum Ltd

NWO Field
Egypt

North Bahariya
Egypt

enapispetrol
Sale of interest to Sahara Oil & Gas SA

Keta Block
Ghana

Afren
Farmout of interest to Mitsui & Co Ltd.

Stellar Energy Advisors Limited is the U.K’s largest independent consultancy, providing Acquisition & Divestment advice to the upstream international oil & gas community. Our head office is conveniently located on London’s Oxford Street, Mayfair.

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Infrastructure & Energy
Electricity Regulation in Namibia
Current Challenges and Achievements

INTRODUCTION
Regulation involves the act of balancing opposing consumer and investor interests. Electricity regulation in Namibia is still in its infancy. Despite the Electricity Control Board (ECB), Namibia’s electricity regulator, posting phenomenal achievements to date there still remains many challenges to overcome.

THE ECB OVERVIEW
The ECB is the electricity regulator of Namibia. It was established in 2000 by the Electricity Act (Act 2 of 2000) that was repealed in 2007 by the Electricity Act (Act 4 of 2007). The objectives of the Act giving the ECB its mandate include: to exercise control over and regulate the provision, use and consumption of electricity in Namibia, to oversee the efficient functioning and development of the Namibian energy market and security of supply, to ensure efficient provision of electricity, to ensure a competitive environment, to promote private sector participation, all in accordance with prevailing Government policies. Thus the ECB activities are also guided by the 1998 White Paper on Energy Policy.

CURRENT CHALLENGES
Currently Namibia, and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region as whole, is facing a shortage of generation capacity. Lack of investment in generation infrastructure over the past years resulted in the erosion of surplus generation capacity. To avert disaster the ECB is assisting with the creation of a conducive environment for investment in the electricity sector. Namibia is undergoing reforms, in line with the Energy White paper policy document mentioned above, that includes establishment of Regional Electricity Distributors (REDS). Finalisation of REDs process stalled due to the need for further consultations with stakeholders. Three out of five have already been established and operationalised, and discussions for the remaining two are ongoing. Namibia is also establishing a single buyer market, as part of the reforms. NamPower, the main utility is a de facto single buyer. The ECB is facilitating discussions to formalise the market. One model being considered is the modified single buyer whereby Independent Power Producers (IPPs) will be allowed to sell to Large Power Users as well as export to neighbouring countries. All the above reforms are hampered by resistance to change amongst the stakeholder. This is further exacerbated by substantial human resources shortage. The ECB has been involved in assisting the industry with capacity building. Although the ECB has successfully developed regulatory tools including Tariff Methodologies, Grid Code, Safety Code, Quality of Supply and Service Standards, their full implementation remains a challenge.

ACHIEVEMENTS
Despite the above challenges the ECB through its strategic plans has achieved notable successes. These include but are not limited to: For effective regulation, the ECB developed a comprehensive licensing regime leading to the licensing of all entities to be licensed in the industry. As mentioned above, it also developed various regulatory tools including the tariff methodology Grid Code, Safety Code, Quality of Supply and Service Standards. Despite the challenges mentioned above, the ECB has as part of the reform process managed to establish three REDs. These have successfully operated and are viable. There is ongoing assistance from the ECB to ensure their success through capacity building and effective regulation. It is thanks to the above achievements that the ECB has come to be a well-respected regulator not only in Namibia but also regionally and internationally.

CONCLUSION
In all of its activities the ECB takes guidance from policies of the Government of the Republic of Namibia, as expressed in the White Paper on Energy Policy, National Development Plan 3(NDP3) and Vision 2030. The ECB will always be there to protect and balance interests of both the consumer and supplier. As a dynamic organisation, we will always strive towards our VISION namely to be recognised as a leading regulator for achieving optimum viability and competition in the Namibian energy industry.

and MISSION namely to regulate and control the Namibian ESI in the interest of all stakeholders with regard to price, quality and reliability.

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Infrastructure for economic growth and development: the financing gap

By Dr Michael Regan, Associate Professor for Infrastructure, Bond University Mirvac School of Sustainable Development

Infrastructure is one of the most important tools for accelerating economic development in developing and transition economies. However, the benefits are not always uniform across nations; the results vary significantly between industries, and improved social returns from additional investment have more to do with the procurement method and operational efficiencies than the amount of money that is employed. This article provides a review of the role that infrastructure plays in strengthening economic development and poverty reduction and reducing trade costs to support improved regional cooperation and integration in Commonwealth countries.

Infrastructure offers important benefits to developing economies and evidence from several recent studies suggests that it is one of the major drivers of economic development, regional trade and poverty reduction. However, it also forms part of complex and regulated networks, investment levels are low or accounted for by depreciation of existing capital stock and, in the absence of private investment and competition, social return is well below that of alternate asset classes. These elements suggest inefficiencies in its operation and create a major challenge for governments in developing countries. How do governments increase the rate of investment and improve asset allocation and operational efficiencies to capture and sustain the wider benefits available from this important group of national assets?

Social infrastructure services are generally measured by the contribution that they make to human capital development using indicators such as educational outcomes, life expectancy, health standards and labour participation rates.

Two forms of infrastructure

Infrastructure has essentially two highly differentiated forms. First, the assets that deliver economic services such as roads, ports, railways, water and energy. These services are generally measured in economic terms such as their contribution to economic growth, increased productivity or reduction in private sector costs. Many of these assets are delivered by government – although in recent years, privatisation of government business enterprises and shortage of state capital has led to greater private participation. Performance is generally measured at two levels. At the macroeconomic level, governments can measure improved productive capacity, growth performance, greater productivity and reduced industry costs. This may involve physical as well as financial measures of investment. At the microeconomic level, the benefits include improved enterprise profitability, short- and long-term growth in employment and incomes, and evidence of improved competitiveness.

A second group of services is described as public goods or social infrastructure and refers to services in health, education and public buildings such as police stations, court buildings and public housing. Social infrastructure services are generally measured by the contribution that they make to human capital development using indicators such as educational outcomes, life expectancy, health standards and labour participation rates. Recent innovations have broadened these measures to include value for money analysis, qualitative measures of public service delivery and public value.

Infrastructure as an asset class

Infrastructure is a capital-intensive asset class, requires long investment horizons and, with limited exception, it is generally a wasting asset. That is, investment economics are determined by the economic life of the underlying asset that produces the service. Infrastructure also exhibits low fixed and variable cost structures and its operational effectiveness is generally measured and financed on a life-cycle basis. Accordingly, infrastructure requires large amounts of capital, involves high sunk costs and there is an inherent mismatch between the financial economics of these services and the political cycles that influence the policy directions of government. Around 90 per cent of infrastructure is provided by the state in developing economies, although innovative procurement methods over the past 20 years have led to greater private investment using the outsourcing of non-core state services, public-private partnerships, and relationship or alliance contracting.

Infrastructure requires large amounts of capital, involves high sunk costs and there is an inherent mismatch between the financial economics of these services and the political cycles that influence the policy directions of government.

Infrastructure is essentially a counter-cyclical asset class. In capital markets, it demonstrates a negative correlation with other asset classes and leading economic indicators. Accordingly, it offers a good hedge for portfolio investors and fund managers. In Australia, fund managers make up around 72 per cent of listed infrastructure investments, well above the average 56 per cent for other asset classes. Infrastructure is an attractive investment for private consortia in unlisted form, which accounts for around 67 per cent of new investment in developed economies. In developing economies, this asset class is attractive to foreign investment and offers geographical and asset-class diversification benefits for mixed asset portfolios.
Infrastructure improves a country’s productive capacity and output. Its role in economic growth is less clear with evidence of reverse causation running between growth and infrastructure investment. Nevertheless, evidence from both developed and emerging economies over the past 20 years suggests that the causation predominantly runs from investment to growth. Economies with good infrastructure will generally grow faster than those without, with medium-term improvement in regional industry and trade specialisation, exports, competitiveness and growth. The evidence from regional economies in developing nations suggests that those possessing better transport, energy and telecommunications infrastructure demonstrate stronger sustained growth performance than regional economies less well endowed. Further, studies of regional economies in Pakistan suggest that those with inferior infrastructure will lose investment and skilled workers to neighbouring economies with good infrastructure, further widening the development gap over time.

Infrastructure has been shown to make a direct and positive contribution to growth, productivity, performance, reduced private sector costs, employment and incomes. The growth effects are also indirect with capital deepening, investment decisions of private companies, and complimentary state policy settings in areas such as regulation and regional trade cooperation.

Economies with good infrastructure will generally grow faster than those without, with medium-term improvement in regional industry and trade specialisation, exports, competitiveness and growth.

The results are highly differentiated between sectors, with the highest social returns generally associated with the telecommunications and transport industries. This suggests that the asset allocation decisions of government and the choice of procurement method will have a significant impact on investment economics and overall national competitiveness. However, there are several additional factors involved here that influence the rate of return including:

- The level of private sector participation in asset provision and its management
- Policy settings that favour private property, a strong domestic banking sector, expedient regulatory oversight and foreign investment
- The capacity and efficiency of networked supply chains.

There remains some uncertainty about the sustainability of infrastructure investment growth rates with evidence of diminishing returns and conditional convergence to regional growth performance averages over the long-term. Nevertheless, sustained growth is evident in regional economies that undertake long-term programs that adopt a supply-led infrastructure investment approach, where there is an integration of urban and infrastructure planning processes, and measures are taken to improve public procurement methods and efficient management of existing supply chains.

### Economic growth and economic development

The international research examining the effects of infrastructure investment employs quantitative performance measures including growth in gross domestic product per capita (economic growth) and productivity. However, economic growth in itself is not always a suitable proxy for economic development and fails to take into account uneven distributional outcomes.

### Value for money evaluation offers both quantitative and qualitative measures of infrastructure investment performance and provides government with direct responses against economic development criteria.

It has been argued that economic development is a wider concept embracing self-sustaining growth, structural changes in patterns of production, technological improvements, social, political and institutional modernisation and widespread improvement in human conditions. These results are only captured in data over long time intervals, thereby limiting short-term policy feedback and delaying timely responses. In recent years, alternate measurement mechanisms have become available through a more scientific approach to infrastructure procurement. These include value for money tests in place of lowest procurement cost, the use of output in place of input specifications, the integration of design, construct and management processes, and the life-cycle costing of infrastructure services. Value for money evaluation offers both quantitative and qualitative measures of infrastructure investment performance and provides government with direct responses against economic development criteria.

### Optimising returns from infrastructure investment

There are a number of ways for developing nations to gain significant returns from infrastructure investment. The majority of improvements will be derived from better institutions, policy initiatives to strengthen regional trade opportunities, local and regional capital markets, foreign investment and entrepreneurship. These are changes that achieve sustainable results if introduced incrementally, and after significant work on adapting organisational culture. Nevertheless, they each assist the creation of an environment conducive to economic growth. There are a number of accompanying initiatives that can produce short-term improvements in economic development, the relief of poverty and fostering of regional trade liberalisation and growth. These concern improved supply chains and infrastructure networks and reforms to infrastructure procurement processes and regulation. Recent evidence reported by the World Economic Forum and the World Bank (2008-9) suggests that these initiatives are improving the economic and social benefits of infrastructure investment in developed and developing nations.

### Table 1. The contribution of infrastructure to growth.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infrastructure investment contribution to growth (% GDP)</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2008 est.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South East Queensland</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trinidad</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiji</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Improved networks
As a highly networked group of assets, infrastructure service delivery is as efficient as the weakest link in the supply chain. This is most evident in the energy, port, and land transport and communications sectors, where there is strong reliance on efficient delivery of services against agreed pricing benchmarks, and on just-in-time distribution networks that minimise production costs and optimise delivery times. There is ample evidence of the high cost resulting from supply chain bottlenecks and poor regulation, and the disincentive that this creates for complimentary investment. Bottlenecks may be created by underinvestment in support services, a mismatch of public and private asset ownership, delayed or restrictive regulatory interventions, and frequently lack of cooperation between government departments, government business enterprises and provincial authorities. A solution to this lies in long-term infrastructure planning and improved procurement methods, both of which can be achieved with the development of local capabilities and industry specialisation.

Private investments in the form of medium-term service concessions are built around incentives for sustainable performance which can be measured against benchmark rate of return criteria.

Regional economy trade agreements and capital markets
Local capital markets offering bond and equity securities provide opportunities for local companies to participate in the infrastructure market, creating access for long-term finance at lower cost, facilitating foreign investment and regional cross-border transactions. This is most effective when coupled with broader regional cooperation to reduce trade barriers and policies favouring industry specialisation, competition policy and foreign investment.

Better regulation
Improved microeconomic performance can be achieved with efficient regulation, policies that favour competition policy and improved planning of future infrastructure services. Alternate procurement methodologies such as alliance contracting and public-private partnerships have shifted away from adversarial traditional contracting to reasonable regulatory frameworks that provide a balance between incentives for above-average performance and abatements and liquidated penalties for performance below agreed benchmarks. Recourse to litigation in the event of disputes has given way to proactive contract management, mediation and arbitration. The change in regulatory approach has made a significant contribution to the improved value for money outcomes being achieved with these methods.

Private sector investment
Evidence from developed and developing economies over the past 30 years confirms that infrastructure investment and operations management undertaken by government agencies and business enterprises generates suboptimal performance outcomes at the enterprise level with flow-on adverse effects for the broader economy. The explanation is well documented in the public choice literature and can be attributed to failure to observe comparative industry performance benchmarks, the lack of incentives, community service obligations and when output pricing is not determined on the basis of costs of production. An additional factor is public sector borrowing in local and international debt markets which crowds out or reduces the pool of capital available to private firms. However, in relation to state infrastructure investment, it has the opposite effect or ‘crowds in’ or stimulates private investment in supporting infrastructures, property development and supporting services.

Private sector investment in infrastructure – in the form of build-operate-transfer (BOT), build-operate-transfer (BOT) and outsourcing contracts – provides lower cost services to government than those generated by traditional procurement or government business enterprises. Alternatively, private investments in the form of medium-term service concessions are built around incentives for sustainable performance which can be measured against benchmark rate of return criteria. Private investment may also be used to encourage skills transfer, vocational training and local employment quotas. Contracts that involve these conditions will assist development of local capabilities and bring important multiplier effects to the local economy in service exports, employment and incomes.

Procurement methods
The poor track record of traditional procurement has been evident for a long time in both developed and developing economies. For infrastructure projects, it is associated with cost overruns, late delivery and poor service delivery outcomes with consequential impacts on supply chains and infrastructure service charges. Traditionally procurement is adversarial in nature and costed around a detailed state input specification in which the agency defines the exact design parameters, the dimensions, plant content and finishes of the asset. Little thought is given to life-cycle costing and qualitative service outcomes. More recent procurement options such as asset franchises (or BOOT contracts), outsourcing, alliance contracting and public-private partnerships adopt a non-adversarial contracting form featuring an output or service specification that leaves the choice of delivery method up to the bidders. A value for money method is used to select a bidder in which life-cycle costing, quantitative and qualitative measures of services delivery are taken into account.

Traditionally procurement is adversarial in nature and costed around a detailed state input specification in which the agency defines the exact design parameters, the dimensions, plant content and finishes of the asset. Little thought is given to life-cycle costing and qualitative service outcomes.

Alliance contracting is a collaborative approach to procurement with a state agency and private firm entering into an agreed price contract with sharing of project risk. This is structured as a combination of incentives and penalties with cost overruns and cost savings shared between the parties. However, unlike public-private partnerships, alliances are asset procurements, and do not always include life-cycle management obligations under the same contract. Internationally, both methods of procurement are widely used to deliver infrastructure in more than 85 countries.

Table 2. Performance of traditional and PFI (PPP) procurement 2002-04.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Traditional</th>
<th>PFI-PPP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost overruns</td>
<td>24-51%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>(a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late delivery</td>
<td>4-39%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-16%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Procurement methodology that brings a rigorous risk-weighted approach to major projects using a competitive bid process, private sector expertise and innovation is achieving qualitative and quantitative benefits to the state not available with traditional procurement. Public-private partnerships in particular are achieving significant improvements in efficiency, lower costs and improved service delivery.

A wide body of evidence supports the following findings:

- Public-private partnerships are bringing forward the delivery of major projects
- The model is achieving value for money, reducing procurement costs and delivering more projects on time and within budget than traditional methods
- Public-private partnerships are improving the science of state procurement and have led to wider application of gateway review and alliance contracting methods with significant user benefits
- There is certainty with life-cycle costing
- Improved quantitative and qualitative user and service outcomes are available
- High levels of construction and design innovation and new technologies can be accessed.

Public-private partnerships also bring opportunity benefits and permit government to increase investment levels as well as improvements in performance at the enterprise level.

The international evidence for developing economies suggests that investment in economic infrastructure has important direct impacts on national and regional economies. Benefits at the macroeconomic level include improved productive capacity, output growth and increases in multi-factor productivity with flow-on effects to higher standards of living. Investment in social infrastructure improves human capital, especially health and educational standards and vocational training. Infrastructure investment brings improvements at the microeconomic and industry levels in the form of better profitability, employment and incomes. Infrastructure investment also generates positive and sustainable externalities including poverty alleviation, specialisation, and regional trade.

The challenge for emerging economies is to identify appropriate programmes to integrate the planning and infrastructure supply activities of government, procurement practices, and creation of a favourable environment.

The evidence suggests that the benefits are greater when accompanied by institutional and policy frameworks that entrench private property rights, regional trade cooperation, the development of local capital markets, and the dismantling of regulatory impediments to private investment and trade. The challenge for emerging economies is to identify appropriate programmes to integrate the planning and infrastructure supply activities of government, procurement practices, and creation of a favourable environment for both local and foreign infrastructure investment and management.

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**Table 3. Procurement performance, 1999-2005.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey of procurement outcomes (a)</th>
<th>On budget</th>
<th>On time</th>
<th>User benefits (b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditional procurement</td>
<td>[a] 25%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[d] 27%</td>
<td>[f] 55%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateway programmes</td>
<td>[d] 69%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alliance contracting</td>
<td>[e] 77%</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>Refer notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PFI (UK)</td>
<td>[f] 78%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPP (Australia)</td>
<td>[g] 79%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK defence contracts</td>
<td>[h] 17% (14%)</td>
<td>8% (24%)</td>
<td>Met requirements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:

(a) Sources as noted. Sample sizes vary. Parenthesis denotes average overruns for sample.
(b) Qualitative assessment from independent NAO 2004, 2006 reports. Defect reporting.
(d) 2000-01 results: NAO 2001 Modernising Construction. Delivered on or under time and price.
(e) 1999 results: NAO 2005 Improving Services Through Construction Part B.
(f) 2004 results: NAO 2005 Improving Services Through Construction Part A.
(g) Fitzgerald 2005; Audit Office Reports Victoria & NSW 2004-08; IPA 2007.
(h) NAO 2004, 2006 MOD Defence Contracts.
NCAA

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1 flight every 2 seconds
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Nigerian Civil Aviation Authority
Ensuring Safety and Efficiency in Air Transport and Navigation
Aviation House Mustafa Mohammed, Airport, Ikeja, Lagos, Nigeria.
Tel: 234-1-4721521, Fax: 234-1-2790421, E-mail: info@ncaa.gov.ng, Website: www.ncaa.gov.ng
Airports: stable community and global contributors

By Angela Gittens, Director General, Airports Council International

Airports are a tangible community asset – gateways that connect local people and businesses to the rest of the world. From the smallest to the largest hubs, they are cornerstones of economic and social development in the localities, regions and nations they serve. Airports, air navigation providers and airlines – the three industry pillars – collectively form a global system that stimulates growth of commercial business activities, global trade, and the immense travel and tourism industry. But of the three, an airport is the most fully integrated with community aspirations for prosperity and future development potential. For this reason, airports must ensure that they remain stable providers over time, espousing a long-term business model that can evolve and survive the swings in economic cycles.

Each airport is unique, by virtue of location, community demographics, business model and size of operations. Yet all share one fundamental characteristic: an airport is closely tied to the economic health of local municipalities and the surrounding area, and, as such, fully integrated in the community it serves.

Residents want good schools, hospitals and roads, and in the same way, they want their airport infrastructure to serve as an efficient gateway that not only connects them to key destinations, but also as an economic dynamo that attracts new business ventures and air services for the area, delivers goods to market in a timely manner, improves national and global market integration, underpins trade and tourism growth, and in distressed areas enables humanitarian aid and relief efforts. That is a tall mandate, but one that many airports serve – day after day.

The facts overwhelmingly demonstrate the positive economic and social impacts of air transport. In 2008, the cross-industry Air Transport Action Group, of which Airports Council International (ACI) is a member, commissioned an independent study by Oxford Economics. Their reports show that the air transport industry as a whole directly contributes some US$408 billion to global GDP, and when taking into consideration indirect and induced impacts, that amount reaches US$1.1 trillion, or the equivalent to 2.3 per cent of world GDP.

From a community perspective, the airport share of that contribution is visible and highly valued. We are the hubs that create a lifeline to other communities and we are also stable employers contributing to local economic stability and well-being. Worldwide, airports directly employ more than 400,000 staff, and the total number of jobs related to airport activity reaches 4.3 million.

In most locations, airports pay for themselves, covering their infrastructure costs, rather than requiring further public taxation, public investment or government subsidies. Rail and road transport modes cannot make that same claim. It is an important distinction of which air transport is proud.

At the same time, each renovation and new building project at an airport generates more jobs and also demonstrates a positive long-term perspective and commitment to the community. In 2008, airports committed a record-breaking US$50 billion in capital expenditure worldwide – a 26 per cent leap from US$40 billion in 2007 and US$39 billion in 2006. This commitment to long-term needs sends a strong message to local communities.

Airports never build just to build. It is to ensure good service in the long term. Despite current economic woes, the ACI long-term forecast tells us that air traffic will approximately double over the next 20 years. We have seen in the past that when the pressure of
external factors curbing growth is alleviated, pent-up demand can spark sudden growth. Our infrastructure investments today will ensure that we are prepared for an upswing, ready to provide a solid pillar for renewed growth and economic vitality.

Where airlines may come and go, shopping for the most lucrative routes and services, airports are built to last. During tough economic times, airport management and staff are called on to provide stability, continuity and the highest standards in the many safety, security and facilitation processes that underpin smooth operations. Building that professional service culture is a top priority for ACI and its members, and to that end we have developed an extensive global training programme to build professional skills.

Airport employees are often our greatest ambassadors in the process of developing strong community relations and trust. Their dedication to safety, security, environmental responsibility and quality customer service builds a high level of appreciation across the community, and a positive perception of the economic benefits of airport infrastructure is equally important.

Understanding airport business imperatives

To maximise the contribution of airports to their communities, it is important to understand the business imperatives they face, both short-term and long-term.

The current contracting business environment, tight financial and investment markets and rising unemployment are factors that have affected many airports worldwide. Many of our airline customers have reacted rapidly by cutting capacity, eliminating routes and services, reducing staff, merging and even closing down. Plans announced yesterday are no longer the plans of yesterday. Business downturns, rising unemployment and consumer down. Plans announced yesterday are no longer the plans of yesterday. Business downturns, rising unemployment and consumer 

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009 (tbc)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Middle East/ Africa**</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>7,500 (+25%)</td>
<td>6,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia/Pacific</td>
<td>11,500</td>
<td>11,500 (+0%)</td>
<td>9,500 (incl. China)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>14,000</td>
<td>17,000 (+21%)</td>
<td>18,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America/ Caribbean</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>2,800 (+82.5%)</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North America</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>10,000 (+18%)</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40,100</td>
<td>50,400 (+25.7%)</td>
<td>50,200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** 2006 figures

Capital expenditure** by region (CAPEX – US$ million).

CAPEX in the Middle East is substantial with major expansions in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Doha and KSA, but also in other GCC states. Estimates amount to an annual CAPEX of US$55 billion in 2008.

CAPEX in Africa is expected to be around US$8 billion in 2008.

Investment in China is expected to rise to US$20 billion, but this under what proportion will be invested in existing airports.

Source: This chart is taken from the ACI Airport Economics Survey 2008.

Numerous factors will continue to drive this growth. Emerging markets with rising GDP, new categories of air travellers, with greater accessibility thanks to ‘low-cost’ fares, are tapping into a broader consumer base. Globalisation and new business development are driving international freight worldwide, notably in developing nations. So the current economic situation must not mask the reality that long-term aviation is set to grow steadily.

At some hubs and in some markets this will mean double-digit figures, with related requirements for expanded capacity and enhanced efficiency. Although capacity expansion requirements do not spike overnight, neither does the building of infrastructure to handle the growth. Given the long airport development cycle, airports always keep their sights fixed on the needs that are five, 10 or even 20 years down the road.

As a result of this time-frame and the size of capital investments, airports have limited flexibility. Even when short-term demand falters, airports have to ensure that they can deliver service in a stable manner, both immediately and in the future. Unlike airlines, airports cannot move to a stronger market location – they have to make their market location stronger. And when the upswing arrives, an airport operating at near capacity levels cannot envision opening new routes and new services. Failure to plan and expand adequately to meet growth imperatives means that a community may miss new business opportunities in today’s competitive marketplace, with another facility seizing the opportunity for growth.

Indeed, bad times put airports into more competition than ever as they vie for a shrinking base of airline routes and frequencies. The wave of traffic rights liberalisations over the past 20 years has meant that airlines increasingly can go ‘airport-shopping’, picking and choosing routes as they please. Airlines have no commitment to an airport but an airport must commit to its community to manage heavy investments in infrastructure projects and inflexible running costs tied to the operation and maintenance of the facilities.

A steady business partner

As a service provider to airline customers, airports have displayed the kind of entrepreneurial acumen that has allowed them to hold their user charges to 3.5 per cent of airline operating costs, which is about the same level it has been for over 30 years. They have done this by using growing non-aeronautical revenues, about 48 per cent on average worldwide, to fund capital investment and to subsidise airfield costs. Given the uniqueness of each airport facility and its local environment,
an airport must develop a business model that is appropriate and make management decisions based on analysis of its specific situation; there is no one-size-fits-all formula nor is a short-term decision on adjusting charges always the right one in dealing with short-term problems. Airports must work with their airline partners to determine the best solutions.

The ACI Airport Economics Survey published in 2008 included input from airports representing 68 per cent of global traffic. The industry-wide ratio between aeronautical and non-aeronautical revenue has remained unchanged, with aeronautical revenue accounting for 52 per cent of overall income. While non-aeronautical revenues increased proportionally to 50 per cent (+4 points) of overall revenue in Asia-Pacific due to strong results from retail concessions, the contribution of non-aeronautical revenues eased slightly (–1 point) in Europe. The proportion of non-aeronautical revenues in Latin America/Caribbean remained low due to the relatively low number of international gateways and a high number of small airports where commercial operations are not viable.

Over the years there has been much discussion about airport and air navigation user charging mechanisms. The process was reviewed by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) in 2008, with the participation of airlines, airports and air navigation service providers. The conference recommendation encourages states to adopt and apply the four guiding principles of the current established policy: non-discrimination, cost-relatedness, transparency and consultation with users. ICAO recommends that states should select the appropriate form of economic oversight according to the specific circumstances, while keeping regulatory interventions at a minimum and only as required. In doing so, ICAO recommends that state considerations should include the degree of competition, the costs and benefits related to alternative forms of economic oversight, as well as the legal, institutional and governance frameworks.

As we know, an airport’s balance sheet is tied to many factors. Depending on each airport’s stage of planning and development, with billions of dollars committed to future infrastructure, it can be at considerable financial risk during a downturn. Aeronautical revenues decline, as do non-aeronautical revenues. Fewer movements mean fewer passengers, which in turn means less passenger spending and lower income for airports. Airports cannot maintain half of a runway. They cannot simply cut off building projects, and may not be able to defer them due to contractual agreements. The bottom line – airports cannot always lower charges to airlines, as airlines request, and the savings to an airline will not save it from financial distress as user charges represent a small proportion (3.5 per cent) of airline costs. That is a message that we need to convey clearly to our airline customers and to the governments, aviation authorities and officials who regulate our industry.

Sustainable aviation

There is a last key consideration that should be factored into understanding the airport’s commitment and contribution to local communities: the environment.

Community demands for airports to join them in their efforts to create environmental sustainability are not new. Long before greenhouse gas emissions became a major issue, airports were addressing many other environmental impacts such as noise, local air quality, water and land use.

We are responsible corporate players in addressing quality of life and reduction of aviation’s carbon footprint.

Although carbon dioxide emissions have been targeted as the key culprit in the current environmental debate, airports promote a broader perspective derived from their very nature, in that they serve a complex set of stakeholders – sometimes with very divergent demands. Passengers, local businesses, regional planning groups, elected officials, regulators, and special interest groups at local, national and international levels each have their own perspective and priorities. But all neighbouring communities care about clean, efficient operations that limit noise and preserve local air quality. To that end, ACI and its members have set priorities and launched new initiatives that include not only energy savings and increased use of alternative fuels, but also noise reduction, recycling, public ground transportation options, wildlife management and compatible land use.
Our concrete actions in the realm of the environment demonstrate that we are responsible corporate players in addressing quality of life and reduction of aviation’s carbon footprint. The current economic downturn will not be allowed to spoil the excellent progress made to date. This is the message that we send to our customers and our many stakeholders.

Ideally, each airport development and procurement choice examines the potential for energy efficiencies, ones that pay for themselves in many cases. Life-cycle cost analyses have shown that many environmentally-sound installations bring notable savings in the long run. This long-term analysis must be considered when we design new facilities or invest in new installations, keeping in mind that wise choices at the outset can ensure lower maintenance and running costs thereafter. Airports may have to spend a bit more up front to reach their environmental objectives, but stand to gain long-term efficiencies.

Airport investments in smarter technologies and new ways of streamlining business processes can further contribute to strengthening the competitive edge that any entrepreneurial activity needs. They can be environmentally friendly as well. We can harness new technologies, new fuels, new construction materials and designs that help us to build well-conceived airports today that will provide sustainable and lasting community infrastructure for economic growth tomorrow.

As supporters of the local community, airports know that even in difficult times we must continue to plan and to invest if we are to ensure our strong social and economic role. Our industry must continue to invest in creative ways to achieve an environmentally sustainable manner. Airports must continue to work closely with their airlines to prepare for the upswing and what that means, in terms of adequate capacity and operational needs. Ongoing diversification, innovation and efficiency gains will ensure that airports remain key facilitators in the re-emergence of global economic growth.

Angela Gittens was appointed Director General of ACI World in April 2008. Prior to ACI, Gittens served as Vice-President, Airport Business Services for HNTB Corporation. Gittens has held top executive positions at three of the largest US airport systems. Before that, as Vice-President of TBI Airport Management, she managed operations contracts at several airports in the US and Canada. She also directed the transition to private concession of the 6 million passenger airport in Luton, UK. As General Manager of Atlanta’s Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, she led the airport’s preparations for the 1996 Olympics, and during her tenure the airport became the busiest airport worldwide. Gittens has served on numerous aviation industry boards and committees including the FAA’s Management Advisory Committee, the Executive Committee of the Transportation Research Board and the Board of Directors of JetBlue Airways.

Airports Council International (ACI) is the only global trade representative of the world’s airports. Established in 1991, ACI represents airports’ interests with governments and international organisations such as ICAO, develops standards, policies and recommended practices for airports and provides information and training opportunities to raise standards around the world. ACI has 597 members operating over 1679 airports in 177 countries and territories. In 2007, ACI members handled 4.8 billion passengers, 88.6 million tonnes of freight, and 76.4 million aircraft movements.

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At our airports, it’s not just the aircraft that take off.

Massive property developments take off too. As do retail businesses, elegant hotels, warehouses, and much more. The reason? At Airports Company South Africa Limited, we develop our airports as both transport hubs and major commercial nodes.

The result is the most successful network of airports and ancillary property developments in Africa. In fact, ACSA’s ten airports are responsible for over 90% of South Africa’s air traffic.

But it’s not just in South Africa that ACSA excels. The company is partnering with the Airports Authority of India to develop and operate Mumbai International Airport, helping it to achieve world-class standards by 2010.

ACSA is also engaged in the multi-billion-rand transformation of its own airports. Highlights include an expanded duty-free mall, a vast new central terminal building and multi-storey car parks at O.R. Tambo International Airport (Africa’s busiest); a new terminal at Cape Town International Airport; and an entirely new international airport at La Mercy near Durban. In all these developments, ACSA works with retailers to create “urban nodes” that rival suburban shopping malls.

DHL and Pick n Pay distribution centres at Cape Town International Airport.

All of these projects are in response to passenger growth – predicted to spike dramatically during the 2010 FIFA Soccer World Cup hosted by South Africa. ACSA’s airports are poised not only to cope with the huge numbers expected, but to offer every visitor a world-class, warmly African welcome.
Marine Mining Corporation is a Canadian mining company dedicated to exploring its principal holding, a marine concession covering 10,000 sq km of the continental shelf of Ghana. To this end, the company has been investigating the continental shelf for the suitability of surficial sediments for aggregate and placer gold extraction.

Gold has been mined in coastal Ghana for centuries. Placer gold has been transported seaward by erosion of gold-bearing rock over millions of years.

Ghana

Ghana is an English-speaking country, recognised as one of the most politically stable countries in Africa. It has a parliamentary democracy, and peaceful transitions of power have occurred, including recently when the office of the President was won by the former opposition party. The government of Ghana is actively encouraging foreign investment in all sectors, particularly mining.

Ghana has long been known to possess tremendous mineral potential, as its geology is very similar to the prolific gold belts of northern Ontario and northeastern Brazil. Ghana, the former Gold Coast, supplied much of the gold of mediaeval Europe. Ghana is one of the world’s leading gold producers and is favoured by mining companies because of its well-established legal system and mining law based upon English common law. Gold is, and expected to remain, the principal mining product in Ghana.

The bedrock in the southern part of Ghana is excellent source material for aggregates, but the local aggregate industry is poorly developed and unable to supply large amounts for construction.

Gravels

Gravels are normally rare in tropical settings due to the heat and humidity. Ghana is no exception, so gravels are currently extracted at high cost from quarries. But gravels will be preserved if they lie below the water level, so gravels may be found on the sea floor even though none are available on land. The availability of large volumes of aggregate has the potential to transform development along the coast of Ghana.
Exploration

The company has mapped approximately 200 sq km of the seafloor within its concession using sidescan sonar, a tool which generates an image of the seafloor akin to an aerial photograph. Even with this limited work, the company has already defined numerous targets which are intended to be tested for aggregate and gold.

Sidescan sonar images show that there are large areas of sands, some of which are coarse enough to be of industrial significance. Sands are recognised as areas of dunes on the seafloor. In order to form dunes, a size range conducive to use as either mortar sand or concrete sand must be present. Some of the dunes are large enough that they may imply the presence of gravels. The variation in size of the dunes observed on the upper surface of the sand bodies is thought to reflect variation in the grain size of the material comprising the dunes. There are also numerous areas of bedrock outcroppings from which gravels may be expected. There are numerous zones of entrapment where we may expect to find higher grades of gold.

Extraction

Mineral extraction on the continental shelf is well understood. There are several operations extracting more than 100 million tonnes of aggregate per year from continental shelves worldwide. There are operations which exploit other minerals as well – diamonds are taken from offshore of Namibia and South Africa. Typical operations are capable of extracting millions of cubic metres annually. The company plans to start with an exploration dredge which will be used to prove the concept, albeit at a very low rate of production, before moving to a larger production model.

Other resources on the continental shelf

The recent discovery of over 3 billion barrels of oil on the continental shelf of Ghana has generated tremendous interest in development of Ghana’s marine resources. There are now three distinct types of resources available from the sea: oil, minerals, and fish. There is no inherent conflict between fishing, oil extraction, and sand/gravel extraction from the seafloor. Fisheries provides the majority of employment along the coast at present, and it does not appear that oil exploration will provide meaningful numbers of jobs. Gravel exploitation and the resulting boom in construction may provide significant business and employment opportunities along the coast of Ghana.

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From 2004 to date, Gauteng Provincial Government has invested just over R23.3 billion for the sole purpose of increasing social and economic growth that will result in a better life for all. This has been done through the mechanisms of provision of transport, implementation of CAPEX, Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) and other infrastructure development programmes. The incremental annual increase in the Department’s budget from R1.7 billion in 2004 to the R7.6 billion for the 2008/9 financial year was to ensure that “together we can and we will do more, better”.

KEY PROJECTS

The Gautrain Rapid Rail Link: The Gautrain will be a modern state-of-the-art rail connection, linking Johannesburg and Tshwane (Pretoria) with the OR Tambo International Airport through Sandton, providing both airport and urban commuter type services in time for the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

Revitalising the Metered Taxi Industry: A metered taxi joint venture has been formed with the South African National Taxi Council, leading to the recent unveiling of new and GP Branded vehicles.

Piloting a single ticketing system: The department will soon be piloting a single ticket for all public transport modes, in certain parts of Gauteng. A single ticketing system will ensure that public transport such as trains, buses and taxis necessarily provide a united public transport service for the community of Gauteng.

Roads infrastructure development: During the 2008/9 financial year, the Department resolved to surface 66kms of roadway, of which 60kms will be in the 20 prioritised townships. A further 15kms of the road network will be widened thus increasing the scope for public transport usage as well as reduce congestion and gridlock on the roads.

Imparting skills and creating jobs through the Expanded Public Works Programme: In the past few years, the department has created over 15,000 jobs through public works, road infrastructure and maintenance, and initiatives under the auspices of the EPWP. Job creation interventions have also been targeted at the marginalised sectors of society, namely women, youth and people with disabilities.

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Public-private partnerships for infrastructure in the Asia and Pacific region: priority issues and challenges

By Elaine Glennie, Senior Capacity Building Specialist, Asian Development Bank Institute

Infrastructure is essential for economic growth and poverty reduction, yet access to basic infrastructure services still remains out of reach for many in the world. In the Asia and Pacific region about 2 billion people do not have access to electricity. In many countries across the region piped water reaches fewer than one in five and in some countries fewer than one in 10 has access to adequate sanitation. Addressing these significant gaps in infrastructure service delivery will be critical to achieving development objectives across the region and globally.

It is estimated that developing economies worldwide need to invest 6-7 per cent of their GDP annually on infrastructure. With current expenditure for infrastructure at about half that level, there are increasing demands on the private sector to address the significant financing gap. In addition, with greater fiscal pressures faced by governments globally, engaging private sector innovation and management expertise is essential to achieving greater value for money.

Regional setbacks

Before the 1997-98 Asian financial crisis, the private sector played an important role in financing infrastructure development in Asia. In the mid-1990s, private investment accounted for as much as 20-25 per cent of total infrastructure financing in the region. With the onset of the 1997 Asian financial crisis and the collapse of a number of domestic financial markets, there was a serious decline in private investment in infrastructure. Strengthening of regional financial institutions and their regulatory oversight, and establishing enabling frameworks for private sector participation contributed to the recovery process. Immediately prior to the current global financial crisis, private sector investment was estimated to have returned to 10-13 per cent of total infrastructure financing in Asia, or about half its peak rate.

With the onset of the 1997 Asian financial crisis and the collapse of a number of domestic financial markets, there was a serious decline in private investment in infrastructure.

The current global economic downturn, driven by shattered confidence initially in the financial market in the United States that then cascaded to Europe and other developed countries worldwide, has again stemmed the flow of investment to the region. With uncertainty and volatile market conditions, private sector investors and lenders are exercising increased caution, retreating to more familiar domestic markets, and requiring higher returns for risk. Raising funds for new projects and for refinancing has become increasingly difficult and the environment for private participation in infrastructure is rapidly becoming even more challenging in developing and developed countries globally.

PPP essential framework

For public-private partnerships [PPPs] in emerging markets, the establishment of an effective PPP institutional framework is even more critical in this difficult climate – a framework that is firmly backed by political support and supported by transparent guidelines and processes for competitive bidding processes. Private sector investors are carefully evaluating their investment choices with even greater emphasis being placed on fundamentals – a welcoming business climate, a fair and consistent legal and regulatory framework, a transparent and predictable procurement process, and attractive, financially viable, long-term investment options.

Setting in place an effective PPP framework is very important to ensuring a strong response from the private sector. The private sector needs to know:

- What are the public sector’s objectives for pursuing PPPs?
- Who in the public sector they are to deal with?
- Who specifically will make the critical approval, selection and contracting decisions, and
- What criteria and evaluation guidelines will be used for assessing project proposals?

The private sector also needs to be able to rely on well-defined procurement guidelines to be able to assess the cost and the time commitments of preparing a proposal. Prior to engaging in a long-term contractual obligation, the private sector will also need to be assured of the effectiveness of legal contractual arrangements and the reliability of contractual dispute processes.

Equally important is the public sector’s ability to effectively manage the PPP process to achieve cost-effective delivery of the services it requires. PPP project procurement, with its output-based contracts, is typically more complex, more resource-intensive, and requires different skill sets than that of traditional procurement, which is typically input focused. Thus there is the institutional challenge of setting up appropriate arrangements and determining the specific roles and responsibilities of dedicated PPP units vis-à-vis the executive and line ministries, and national and subnational agencies. In addition, the public sector will need to address PPP skill and capacity issues, and determine what technical advisory services will need to be commissioned.

India’s PPP lead

Progress in establishing effective PPP frameworks across developing Commonwealth countries in the Asia and Pacific
Infrastructure & Energy

In this challenging environment it is even more important for the programmes in the United Kingdom, Australia and Canada, to lessons learned from mature PPPs worldwide, including leading countries in the region, namely Malaysia, Papua New Guinea and Singapore. Stimulus measures across the region primarily focus on infrastructure, and support the strengthening of social safety nets and increasing job creation in countries where fiscal space allows. In India Rs400 billion has been approved to be raised to support the financing and refinancing of PPP infrastructure projects across the nation. Other Commonwealth countries in the region, notably Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Papua New Guinea, also feature infrastructure as part of their policy response to the crisis.

The Asian Development Bank initiatives

As a committed partner in the concerted global response to the crisis, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) is aggressively supporting its member countries in the region. ADB is actively engaged in the global dialogue, bringing together global experts and policy makers to strengthen its policy guidance, and to extend its regional cooperation support. ADB is tripling its lending programme to assist in the rapid delivery of infrastructure projects that are part of stimulus packages being implemented across the region. An innovative range of credit enhancements and risk mitigation measures will be offered as part of ADB’s Asian Infrastructure Initiative, together with additional financial and technical expertise through partnerships with the Public Private Infrastructure Advisory Facility (PPIAF) and the Private Infrastructure Development Group (PIDG). This will help prepare a pipeline of infrastructure projects to attract private sector involvement across the Asia and Pacific region.

The Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI), with a mandate for development research and capacity-building for the Asia and Pacific region, has also programmed a number of complementary initiatives in response to the crisis. In addition to closely coordinating with ADB on the global dialogue, ADBI is conducting research to study implications for sustaining inclusive growth beyond the crisis. ADB and ADBI’s flagship study on infrastructure and regional cooperation will provide specific policy guidance on infrastructure, which is now an important focus for stimulus programmes across the region. ADBI is also implementing a global PPP for an infrastructure capacity-building program in collaboration with the World Bank Institute and the Multilateral Investment Fund of the Inter-American Development Bank. The Multilateral PPP for Infrastructure Capacity Building initiative seeks to improve PPP policy development and problem-solving skills to address capacity constraints that impact the ability of developing countries to effectively design and execute PPP programmes; and by doing so accelerate PPPs for infrastructure. Through these steps, ADB and ADBI are proactively working to catalyse what is needed to stimulate an early recovery, with a focus on accelerating infrastructure development, to ensure the region remains on its path for sustained growth and poverty reduction.

Elaine Glennie is Senior Capacity Building Specialist, ADBI. She has worked in over 20 countries, strengthening policy environments to improve governance and enable greater private sector participation to ensure cost-effective delivery of government services. She has played a key role in the development of major investment programmes to support private sector and financial market development, fiscal management and public administration reform, and improvement of basic physical and social infrastructure services.

The Asian Development Bank Institute (ADBI) is located in Tokyo and was established to identify effective development strategies, and to improve capacity for sound development management of the agencies and organisations in the Asian Development Bank’s developing member countries. As a provider of knowledge for development, ADBI serves a region stretching from the Caucasus to the Pacific islands.

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Fiscal stimulus plans focus on infrastructure

Fiscal positions strengthened by fiscal prudence over recent years are enabling some Asian economies to respond immediately to the global economic crisis with stimulus plans. Significant programmes of more than 5 per cent of GDP have been announced by three Commonwealth countries in the region, namely Malaysia, Papua New Guinea and Singapore. Stimulus measures across the region primarily focus on infrastructure, and support the strengthening of social safety nets and increasing job creation in countries where fiscal space allows. In India Rs400 billion has been approved to be raised to support the financing and refinancing of PPP infrastructure projects across the nation. Other Commonwealth countries in the region, notably Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Papua New Guinea, also feature infrastructure as part of their policy response to the crisis.
TEVET Malawi 1999-2009

THE JOURNEY TOWARDS A COMPETENT WORKFORCE:

TEVETA'S GOALS
To maintain labour market information for policy and programme planning,
To broaden equitable access to quality technical, entrepreneurial and vocational education and training,
To effectively regulate the training market and to maintain adequate and sustainable funding and financing mechanism for the TEVET system.

TEVETA'S MISSION
To direct sustainable acquisition of internationally competitive and recognisable technical, entrepreneurial and vocational skill by the Malawian workforce.

On May 10, 1997 Cabinet directed that an autonomous and independent institution should be established to coordinate and manage a new system of Technical, Entrepreneurial and Vocational Education and Training in Malawi which would be flexible, demand-driven and modular in nature to focus on skills and competencies needed on the labour market.

Following the Cabinet directive a new policy and a Bill on Technical, Entrepreneurial, Vocational Education and Training (TEVETA) was officially launched in August 1998, and the TEVET Bill was enacted by Parliament on 14th February, 1999.

Over the past 10 years, the Technical, Entrepreneurial and Vocational Education and Training Authority (TEVETA) has made substantial progress in various reform elements to ensure that its goals are in line with the sub-theme two, Education, and theme 3, Social Development of the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (MGDS), where the need for quality tertiary education has been singled out as key to the Malawi’s social development.

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MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

✔ Private Sector Training Programmes – TEVeta has been involved in the implementation of the private sector training programmes and conducting common tailor made courses for the industries. To date, 1,787 employees have since benefited from about 120 training programmes.

✔ Apprenticeship Training Programme – This is a special system where a trainee acquires practical skills and theoretical knowledge in the chosen trade/occupation. Since the programme started in 2000, a total of 3,841 students have been trained in their chosen trades/occupations. TEVETA has also, over the years, responded by assisting selected public and private technical Colleges with equipment, machinery and tools to be used in training.

✔ Quality Assurance Programmes – TEVET has developed a four level TEVET Qualifications Framework (TQF), which provides guidance in TEVET curriculum development and award of qualifications. The TQF has embraced a credit system in its award of qualifications. Competency Based Education and Training (CBET) has been embraced as the methodology for delivery and assessment. So far 17 curricula have been reviewed following credit and standards based approach. The assessment and certification of the reviewed curricula, which are being implemented in all the public and some private technical colleges, are following the CBET methodology. Other developments within the Quality Assurance Programmes include the development of registration of training providers’ rules and the commencement of the actual registration of the TEVET providers.

✔ Informal Sector Skills Development Programmes – This includes Skills Development Initiative Training Programmes; Strategic Skills Development Training Programmes; On-the-job Training Programmes with several Partners, Small Enterprise Development Programmes; and TEVET Induction Training Programmes with a total of 3,095 youths benefiting from such initiatives.

✔ Upgrading of Technical Instructors – These are instructors from both public and private technical colleges who only had the expertise in their technical fields but had no pedagogical skills. A total of 74 college instructors have been upgraded to Diploma qualification in the field of Technical and Vocational Training since 2005.

✔ Establishment of Mechatronics Centre – Daimler Chrysler and the German Government (via GTZ), together with Mercedes-Benz distributor for Malawi and Stansfield Motors Ltd. (SML) agreed to run a training centre to provide a two year training programmes for Grade 1 Motor Vehicle Mechanics where the trainees are trained in repairs of modern cars. This centre is now operational at Stansfield Motors campus in Blantyre.TEVETA was involved in the initial discussions and it plays a pivotal role in providing guidance in matters of programme delivery and assessment and certification.

✔ Support to the Hospitality Industry through Malawi Institute of Tourism – In the past 10 years, TEVETA has contributed to the hospitality industry by facilitating the review of food production curriculum and supporting the implementation of the same following the CBET delivery methodology at the Malawi Institute of Tourism where Food Production trainees are excelling on labour market.
Bioenergy towards a low-carbon future
Meeting the challenges of energy security, food security and sustainable development

By Dr Corrado Clini, Director General, Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea, Italy and Chairman, Global Bioenergy Partnership

The world is firmly engaged on a trajectory of increased greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that, if left unaltered, will trigger massive disruptions to the global climate system. This is confirmed in the ‘Reference Scenario’ depicted in the International Energy Agency’s (IEA) World Energy Outlook 2007. The IEA predicts that global energy demand will increase by 55 per cent in the next quarter of a century, with coal use rising most in absolute terms, followed by the other major fossil fuels. This pattern in demand, according to the IEA, will lead to global GHG emissions climbing to 57 per cent above 2005 levels in 2030. This figure is in line with the worst case scenarios presented in the IPCC Fourth Assessment report on climate change. The scientists who drafted that report said that CO2 emissions would have to fall 50 per cent from current levels by 2030 if we are to protect ourselves from the effects of global warming.

Over the next 20 to 25 years, the IEA estimates there will be global investment of US$20 trillion on oil and gas exploration, the construction of power stations and other energy infrastructure, mostly in emerging economies. By comparison, a small amount will be dedicated to renewables and bioenergy. If we consider that most energy assets are built to last for between three to five decades, the choices we are making now will decide the future for the world’s energy profile and the environment.

Bioenergy fits the bill perfectly, making it a real and practical solution to decarbonise the global economy. Bioenergy is an ancient energy source, considering that firewood and dung have been burnt for heating, cooking and illumination for millennia.

Biofuels have the potential to meet a substantial portion of our energy needs providing a series of challenges and barriers, in particular environmental protection and food security, can be overcome. On the horizon lies a global and sustainable biofuels commodity market that will shift the geography of international energy markets and challenge the petroleum economy.

How can Bioenergy help?

In the coming 10 to 15 years, the carbon intensity of our economies must be lowered by deploying highly efficient technologies and alternatives to fossil fuels. Every effort must be made to get the most out of currently available technologies and to invest in those that can promise results in the near term. Bioenergy fits the bill perfectly, making it a real and practical solution to decarbonise the global economy. Bioenergy is an ancient energy source, considering that firewood and dung have been burnt for heating, cooking and illumination for millennia.

The fruit of the oil palm tree can be used as a source of biodiesel.

The reduction in GHG emissions from well to wheel through biofuel use in place of petroleum gasoline.
Today, it is estimated to provide for about 11 per cent of global energy demand – most of it still in such traditional forms as firewood – and to account for 80 per cent of renewable energy use [IEA Energy Technology Perspectives 2008]. Still, future growth hinges on technologies that have been developed in recent years including liquid biofuels and the co-firing of energy generation plants with biomass.

Bioenergy’s growth prospects are particularly favourable, especially for biofuels. In the IEA’s ‘Alternative Scenario’, which assumes policies and other government action in favour of renewables but with the same amount of overall investment, biofuels are expected to cover about eight per cent of world demand for liquid fuels in 2030 for a total of 36 million metric tons of oil equivalent (compared with eight million tons today). That is twice the growth rate envisioned in the IEA’s business-as-usual scenario.

Furthermore, in its ‘BLUE Map Scenario’ [IEA Energy Technology Perspectives 2008], the IEA estimates that biomass use as a whole could increase nearly four-fold by 2050, accounting for around 23 per cent of total world primary energy, and that 26 per cent of total transport fuel demand may be met by biofuels by 2050.

**Biggest potential in the tropics**

In terms of supply, areas with a tropical climate offer significant potential in terms of the production of bioethanol from sugar cane. Poorer countries with large areas of uncultivated marginal land could follow the Brazilian example and tap a potentially substantial source of wealth and development.

If done correctly, with appropriate policies and investments put in place, bioenergy could be a boon to the world’s poorest countries.

If done correctly, with appropriate policies and investments put in place, bioenergy could be a boon to the world’s poorest countries, providing energy sources for internal use and for export and boosting development in poor, rural areas. On a world scale, the benefits include more diverse energy sources and greater energy security, a decline in the carbon content of our energy use, and a reduction in land degradation thanks to the planting of perennial bioenergy feedstocks.

**The challenges for bioenergy**

These benefits come with some risks attached, and the major challenge now is to ensure the development of bioenergy is compatible with the conservation of natural resources and agricultural food production.

Ensuring the sustainability of bioenergy is a complex task because it is a technology that impacts many different areas – environmental, social and economic. Key factors for the conservation of natural resources include land use (particularly where there are changes in land use from virgin forest, peatland and other high-carbon content ecosystems) as well as production techniques, ranging from fertiliser use, soil erosion and the consumption of surface and ground water. Net carbon dioxide emissions, from the overall impact of bioenergy production and use, are a major environmental factor.

An initial lifecycle analysis for biofuel use in terms of environmental sustainability leads to three main conclusions. Firstly, converting high carbon content land – such as clearing rainforest and peatlands to make way for palm oil cultivation – has a devastating impact in terms of both the release of carbon dioxide and the loss of biodiversity. Secondly, producing bioethanol from maize leads to a net GHG saving of about 13 per cent, which seems hard to recommend in light of the consumption of water and emissions of nitrates that production brings along with it. There’s also a price question here: maize-based ethanol from the US makes sense economically only with crude oil prices above US$80 a barrel. Thirdly, bioethanol produced from sugar cane gives GHG reductions of up to 90 per cent at a cost that is competitive with crude oil as low as US$30 a barrel.

![Figure 2. Energy consumption per capita and bioenergy potential.](image-url)
Bioenergy opportunities

Brazil’s long experience in biofuels from sugar cane shows the great potential of this technology. Second-generation biofuel technologies will become commercially available in the next 10 years, providing large quantities of highly sustainable biofuels. These rely on the conversion of cellulosic biomass, a vastly abundant category that includes wood, tall grasses and forestry and crop residues. A main advantage is that they provide more biomass per hectare than conventional starch and oilseed crops because the entire harvest is available for conversion to fuel, not just one part of the plant.

In addition, these crops don’t need to be grown on prime agricultural land and don’t compete with its use for food production. Often waste biomass can be used as a feedstock, something that is readily available from existing forests and cultivations, meaning that no additional land is taken over for energy-crop production. Brazil’s long experience in biofuels from sugar cane shows the great potential of this technology, even though some questions remain unanswered in terms of the competing demands of energy crops with agricultural land use and forests.

Importantly, this new generation of biofuels offers the greatest potential for reducing GHG emissions. Most studies project they could dramatically cut GHG emissions compared with petroleum fuels. In some cases, more carbon dioxide could be captured during the production process than released during the fuel’s lifecycle, especially when fertiliser inputs are minimised and biomass or other renewable energy sources are used in the conversion processes.

Global and sustainable biofuels commodity market, backed in part by the development of biotechnology for second-generation ethanol and biodiesel, will tend to shift the geography of the global energy market and challenge the petroleum economy.

Ensuring food security

The key social issue for bioenergy is food security, although many others must also be evaluated including labour conditions, rural employment and development, access to land and water as well as the conditions for women and children.

Food security means being aware of the ways that rural and poor populations have access to agricultural products, and making sure this is not compromised by bioenergy production. Energy markets are much larger in value terms than agricultural markets, meaning energy prices will tend to influence the cost of agricultural products that can be used to make energy. Rising prices for bioenergy feedstocks, especially when accompanied by subsidies, benefit producers but have a negative impact on those needing them for food, especially the rural poor.

In the near term, the sale of raw materials for the production of bioenergy on internal or international markets should be allowed only after basic criteria for food security are guaranteed. In the medium-term, the conflict between food security and energy production should be resolved by the use of marginal land that doesn’t compete with food crops, combined with biotechnology solutions and the development of second-generation biofuels.

Trade barriers and subsidies

Economic considerations are critical to the development of bioenergy. There will be a dramatic increase in the international trade of bioenergy products because much of the agricultural potential for energy crops lies in tropical and sub-tropical regions while demand will be focused in temperate areas such as Europe and North America. The EU, for example, won’t be able to meet its 2020 goal of sourcing 10 per cent of transport fuel from renewable sources, principally biofuels, without significant imports.

But this kind of trade is held back by trade barriers and agricultural subsidies, and there are issues that also need to be resolved with the classification of bioenergy in World Trade Organisation rules. A global biofuel commodity market will emerge only once tariff and trade barriers are overcome and potential conflicts with natural resources and food security are correctly managed. This will bring two results: the availability at competitive prices of alternative energy sources to fossil fuels, and the growth of a sustainable, global bioenergy economy benefitting raw material producing countries.

One last aspect must be underlined: a global and sustainable biofuels commodity market, backed in part by the development
of biotechnology for second-generation ethanol and biodiesel, will tend to shift the geography of the global energy market and challenge the petroleum economy. This may turn out to be the biggest challenge for us all.

How GBEP is contributing

GBEP has set up two task forces to deal with the priority issues of sustainability and GHG reduction. Its Task Force on Sustainability was created to develop global science-based criteria and indicators for the sustainability of bioenergy. Coherent international discussion is required that will broaden understanding of sustainable bioenergy and effective ways of achieving it. The task force is aiming to produce a reference work by April 2009 that will provide a useful platform for stakeholders interested in bioenergy sustainability for sharing information, data, experience and best practice. This activity will also enhance understanding of how bioenergy production and use impact upon food prices, taking into consideration different feedstocks, production methods and country specific realities.

Its task force on GHG Methodologies is analysing the full lifecycle of transport biofuels and solid biomass to develop a framework for use by policy makers and stakeholders when assessing GHG impacts. This is essential if lifecycle assessments are to be compared on an equivalent and consistent basis. The main deliverable, expected to be finalised by March 2009, will be a methodological framework for international and domestic policies to help assess the reduction of GHG emissions, contributing both to climate change mitigation and to increased energy security.

Back ing from G8

The importance of GBEP’s programme of work was emphasised by the renewed backing given at the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit in Japan in July 2008. The leaders of the world’s most industrialised countries highlighted how renewable energy will play an important role in tackling climate change and reducing dependency on fossil fuels.

We underscore the importance of sustainable biofuel production and use” the G8’s statement on climate change and the environment said. The G8 leaders affirmed their support for the work of GBEP and invited it to “work with other relevant stakeholders to develop science-based benchmarks and indicators for biofuel production and use.”

The focus on biofuel benchmarks and second-generation technologies reflects the attention that is now being given to sustainability issues and the promotion of “virtuous” bioenergy, with the biggest net benefits in economic, environmental and social terms. The result of the deliberations of GBEP’s task forces, which will feed into a new GBEP report, are scheduled to be ready for presentation to the next G8 Summit, due to be held in mid-2009 in Italy.

Dr Clini, Director General of Italy’s Ministry for the Environment Land and Sea, and Chairman of GBEP, leads cooperation programmes with 240 projects on environment, energy and sustainable development in 45 countries. He is chairman of the National Sustainable Development Strategy and the Task Force implementing the Kyoto Protocol in Italy. He is Senior Research Fellow at the University of Harvard’s Center for International Development, Associate of their Center for the Environment and Visiting Professor at Tsinghua University in Beijing. Dr Clini trained as a medical doctor and holds a PhD in both Hygiene and Public Health and in Occupational Health. GBEP is an international initiative established to implement the commitments made by the G8 in the 2005 Gleneagles Plan of Action. GBEP brings together governments, international and UN organisations, as well as private and civil society stakeholders in a joint commitment to promote bioenergy for sustainable development. Italy is Chair of the Partnership and the co-Chairmanship has been assigned to Brazil. GBEP is supported by the GBEP Secretariat hosted at FAO Headquarters in Rome.

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Providing energy and improving livelihoods through biomass technology

International concerns for the environment call for sustainable use of our resources. Kenya, like the bulk of sub-Saharan Africa, derives about 70 per cent of its total energy from very scarce and fast-diminishing wood resources. This resource base continues to be exploited using inefficient technologies which have carried adverse effects on environment and on the health of the users, mostly women and children. Efficient biomass energy generation would appear to be increasingly economically attractive, but its adoption has remained slow and conservative. However, biomass has the potential to supply a large part of African energy needs if effectively managed.

Biomass energy cogeneration and anaerobic digestion-based biomass energy generation are two of the most promising energy options in Africa. However, despite their proven benefits, the uptake of these technologies has been very poor, largely due to a lack of appropriate exposure to the available opportunities and technologies. Over the past six years, the Institute for Research in Sustainable Energy and Development (IRSEAD) has been working with other key players in Kenya on two projects to popularise these technologies. The aim of the programmes is to stimulate and develop awareness and interest among various players and stakeholders, and encourage investments in order to facilitate, realise and achieve sustainable implementation of small-, medium- and large-scale renewable energy and energy efficiency projects in these key areas.

Bagasse cogeneration

The sugar industry in Kenya processes nearly 5 million tonnes of cane annually, producing some 1.8 million tonnes of bagasse in the process with a net calorific value equivalent to over 300,000 tonnes of oil. This resource is currently largely wasted by inefficient use. In an economy that consumes some 2.5 million tonnes of petroleum products annually, this could generate some 300-500 GWh of electrical energy – nearly 10 per cent of its annual production – and save the country some US$90 million of foreign exchange annually in the process. Policy and regulatory barriers have been cited as the major impediments to efficient exploitation of this resource. IRSEAD aims to influence policy and mobilise resources to build efficient cogeneration plants within the sugar sector to generate at least 10 per cent of the national electricity demand into the national grid, over the next 10 years. The major benefits will be cheaper electricity, improved revenues for sugar factories and sugar farmers, and reduction of carbon dioxide emissions to the atmosphere.

Biogas production

In Kenya, biogas production has not been widely applied and therefore not commonly adapted. Yet biogas has the potential to reduce dependence on wood resources, pre-empting the imminent energy crisis as 80 per cent of rural Kenyans own livestock. More than 600,000 rural households in middle and high agricultural potential areas of Kenya keep between two and six dairy cows under zero grazing. These households are all potential owners of biogas plants. Unfortunately, many biogas projects in Kenya have failed – mostly as a result of design constraints and lack of adequate feedstocks – eventually resulting in abandonment of the projects less than five years after installation.

At the commercial level, biogas adoption has been equally slow. Recent studies indicate that there is potential for 50MW of commercially exploitable electricity from biogas, some of which could be fed into the grid.

Recent studies indicate that there is potential for 50 MW of commercially exploitable electricity from biogas, some of which could be fed into the grid.

Future options

In both areas, the focus has been on identifying cost-effective technologies that can be easily adopted, then selecting partners for high visibility demonstration projects. The bagasse project has benefited from support from the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership (REEEP), and has helped to leverage a 35 MW power plant in one major sugar factory. A second project of 25 MW capacity is currently under consideration. The biogas project has received some support from the office in Kenya of the German Gesellschaft für technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), and is targeting commercial demonstration projects of 2 MW. Focus will be on high and medium potential areas with under-utilised potential and high poverty incidence, and on selected agricultural value chains. Major components include policy advisory services, regulatory framework, value chain development and promoting resource-friendly technologies.

David Ndinya Yuko is the Executive Director of the Institute for Research in Sustainable Energy and Development. He has professional experience in the power sector, especially project engineering management, primarily focusing on sustainable energy infrastructure development. He has experience in research, project development, design, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation in sustainable energy and related projects.

The Institute for Research in Sustainable Energy and Development (IRSEAD) is a non-profit organisation based in Nairobi, Kenya, that works on projects and issues that span the East and Horn of Africa.

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A REEEP CASE STUDY

Promoting city energy strategies in South Africa

A recent project in South Africa exemplifies how actions supported by REEEP (Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership) can have a profound impact at a local level, and show significant potential for replication on a macro scale. It also shows how wider sustainable energy issues can be addressed more effectively when broken down into clear, actionable items at the local level.

PROJECT OUTCOME

Cities were successfully convinced to evaluate new approaches to mitigate their energy footprint.

This project, which an independent agency rated as highly successful, has enabled the development of new climate and energy strategies in five of the top fifteen urban areas in South Africa: Ekurhuleni and Tshwane, Sol Plaatje, Cape Town and Potchefstroom.

The project started by identifying and training sustainable energy champions within the senior staff of each target city, with the aim of getting access to and buy-in from higher level officials and city councillors.

A manual for local government staff was produced, which translated broad sustainable energy issues into actionable items in a city context. The list of concrete steps included improved public lighting, traffic lights and government building lighting which all place a heavy burden on municipal budgets; solar water heaters, which directly relieve peak demand; and public transport diversification, with a positive effect on traffic congestion, equity and pollution.

Cities were also supported in their own local energy diagnostic assessments and in identifying “quick win” changes. The local governments who established strategies to reduce their energy footprint also had a head start in dealing with the national energy shortages.

Perhaps the boldest initiative is the City of Cape Town’s proposed by-law requiring all new buildings to adopt solar water-heating systems; a development being watched closely by other cities with similar plans.

KEY LESSONS LEARNED

• Working with cities requires time. They are large organisations, which change direction slowly and are affected by politics. Extensive capacity building and technical support is required for substantial on-the-ground results to appear.

• Cities have few staff allocated to sustainable energy issues and they are already over-stretched in workload and usually spread across diverse departments (electricity, transport, and environment) that may not connect. The will to tackle issues rises when vague issues are reformulated in a more concrete manner.

• Although cities are at the forefront of many planning and investment decisions, the level of support to decision makers is much lower than at the national level and REEEP can make a major difference by continuing to assist at sub-national levels.

KEY PROJECT FACTS

Project title: Promoting Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency through City Energy Strategies in South Africa

Duration: 2006-2007

Implementing agency: Sustainable Energy Africa

Project purpose: To promote renewable and energy efficiency as a practical way to assist urban social and economic development and restrict growth in CO2 emissions, by making the case for such practices and ensuring related awareness, knowledge and capacity building at local and national government levels.

ABOUT REEEP

The Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency Partnership was established alongside the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development with a mission to accelerate the global market for sustainable energy systems, with particular focus on the developing countries and the emerging markets.

REEEP is comprised of 260 partners including 47 governments as well as a range of private companies and international organisations. The partnership generates synergies through close links with other international organisations such as UNEP, UNDP, UNIDO, the World Bank and the IEA, and is recognised by the G8 and APEC.

REEEP’s ten donor governments view the partnership as a vehicle for tackling both climate change and poverty reduction. Its 100 ongoing and initiated projects aim to address the two main barriers to market development:

• assisting governments in creating stable regulatory environments for renewable energy and energy efficiency

• encouraging private sector entrepreneurs and the finance community to enter the market, with innovative risk mitigation and financing models

A rigorous annual selection process begins in REEEP’s network of Regional Secretariats, and ensures that the resulting projects reconcile donor country priorities with requirements on the ground.

More information on REEEP available at www.reeep.org

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Renewable energy: time to disprove the myths

By Dr Hermann Scheer, General Chairman of the World Council for Renewable Energy

Among the many myths about our energy supplies, one of the most insidious is the high price of renewables. If all energy alternatives are too expensive, the argument runs, then the world should continue on its course of dependence on fossil-based sources. In this article the author debunks this myth and explains why we must keep developing the renewables, describing how each affected industry can make the most of the new opportunities.

When talking about renewable energies, there always follows – like a Pavlovian reflex – the question of costs. The basic assumption still predominates that renewables are not affordable; that they cost too much in comparison with conventional energies. In other words, there is a negative economic myth about renewable energy. This assumption serves as a permanent excuse not to adopt a grand strategy to actively deploy renewable energy. It is argued that the time for renewables has not yet come. Investments in the field of renewable energy are considered an economic burden that no-one is willing to shoulder. Those arguments are short-sighted, superficial and highly misleading.

They are short-sighted because they ignore the fundamentally different economic prospects of conventional energies on the one hand and renewables on the other. It is obvious that conventional energies will become more and more expensive over time, whereas the costs for renewables steadily decrease. Rising fuel costs from depleting resources (oil, natural gas, coal, uranium) inevitably result in increasing costs for the conventional energy supply. Extraction costs will rise because the remaining resources become harder and harder to extract, necessitating complex technical efforts. What is more, due to the depletion of conventional energy resources, the fuel supply is coming from fewer and fewer sources in an decreasing number of countries, which increases the monopolisation of resources. Suppliers of conventional fuels gain control of the world’s energy infrastructure and an increasing share of the energy business.

The inevitable price rises apply to oil, natural gas, coal and uranium. They evolve in escalating wave movements. At present – in the year 2009 – we are once again in a downswing compared with 2008, but this results from the critical global economic situation triggered by the financial crisis. These comparatively low fuel prices are only short-lived and not permanent. The mid-term trend of fuel prices is undoubtedly pointing upwards.

Extra cost factors

Another factor that must be taken into consideration is price increases when erecting new large energy production facilities. Because there only exist a few producers of the necessary materials and holders of the relevant know-how, the large number of developing countries with rising energy consumption rely on these few producers. And last but not least, rising costs associated with climate protection measures resulting from international liabilities (Kyoto I and in the future perhaps Kyoto III) that will be reflected in energy prices.

Many countries are faced with additional costs: investment will be necessary to provide for cooling water in nuclear and fossil power plants in countries that have insufficient water resources. Those countries where the distribution of mains electricity does not cover the whole territory (roughly 2 billion people) are facing high costs associated with the extension of a grid infrastructure.

Seeing the whole picture

Prices for renewable energy are decreasing constantly, on the other hand, because – with the exception of biomass – only costs for technology are relevant. These decline due to mass production of renewable energy installations that comes about by mobilised market introduction and continuous technological improvements. Since installations producing renewable energy (in particular wind and photovoltaics) can be directly set up in those regions that need it, a widespread transmission infrastructure will be superfluous. What is more: wind and solar – except in the case of concentrated solar power (CSP) power plants – do not need water for cooling and produce no emissions. The conclusion is inescapable: investments in renewable energy today are the only chance to reach a cost-effective energy supply for everyone everywhere.

The negative myth of high costs that accompany the use of renewables is superficial and misleading because it does not differentiate between micro- and macroeconomic assumptions – that is between expenses for a single investor on the one hand and for the whole national economy on the other. However, this distinction is crucial for the question of whether governments stick to conventional energies or decide to orient their activities towards renewable energies.

The comprehensive economic benefits accompanying the switch to renewable energy are manifold and evident – especially so if the renewables that are employed are harvested nationally, that is, if they are indigenous resources that do not have to be imported. The magnitude of these social benefits results from the macroeconomic costs of the conventional power supply, which can be avoided by employing renewables.

From a macroeconomic perspective, the step towards indigenous renewable energies boasts advantages. Nevertheless, macroeconomic benefits do not necessarily bring microeconomic benefits for all producers and consumers. This results in the imperative to translate the macroeconomic benefits with the right political instruments into microeconomic incentives for producers. These instruments have to aim at regulating prices to the advantage of renewable energies. The best instruments are:

- Tax-differentiation between renewable and conventional energies. That means a lowering of taxes for renewables, possibly down to complete tax-exemption policies. It would be optimal to this end to generally replace taxation on energy by taxation on pollution. Like this, only polluting energies will be taxed.

- Low or zero interest rates for renewable energy investment credits. The result of this investment will be that the state only covers the difference between normal interest rates and the interest rate reduction. As a result, the investment creates benefits for the whole society and its economy.
Feed-in tariff regulations in grid-connected areas with a priority access for power produced from renewable sources and a guaranteed fee. This results in an ever-increasing contribution of renewable energy, substituting conventional energies.

**Unexpected potential winners**

The spectrum of potential winners from a shift in energy, however, goes well beyond the producers of renewable energy technologies. It also encompasses the vast majority of all other businesses, only a few of whom (admittedly) have recognised that they have a self-interest in achieving independence from the conventional energy business. Many companies would appear to be substantially more fitted for a role of their own as renewable energy technology producers than are the big corporations of the energy business.

Thus, it is in the interest of the car industry to overcome its 100-year alliance with the petroleum industry. Cars and, by extension, their manufacturers are regarded as an environmental danger largely because of the fossil fuels used to drive them.

When it comes to bottlenecks and price explosions as a result of scarce petroleum in the near future, this will affect the car industry immediately – in contrast to the petroleum suppliers, which have profited from every price increase so far. In the interest of securing their long-term existence, therefore, the car companies need to become a driving force pushing for the use of renewable energy. In their hand they hold a trump card they can use to facilitate this reorientation, namely by producing and marketing energy-saving cars that can be driven with biofuels and/or electricity. This trump can help the car companies clear the way for society to undertake the shift to renewable energy.

To do this they need to use their economic weight to create political parameters that will facilitate introducing biofuels into the market. Even more, the car industry might even become a producer of stationary motor power plants, whether we are dealing with communal heating plants, motors operated using fuel cells, or with Stirling or compressed air motors. Not only can it bring in its experience marketing decentralised fuel cells, or with Stirling or compressed air motors. Not only can the design of energy laws exclusively to legislators in the workshops. For this reason too, the car industry should no longer be substantially more fitted for a role of their own as renewable energy business. Many companies would appear to have a self-interest in achieving independence from the conventional energy business. Farming has become the economy’s most important resource base. Farming has become the economy’s most important resource base. Plants will be substantially more fitted for a role of their own as renewable energy business. Many companies would appear to have a self-interest in achieving independence from the conventional energy business. Farming has become the economy’s most important resource base. Farming has become the economy’s most important resource base. Plants will be substantially more fitted for a role of their own as renewable energy business. Many companies would appear to have a self-interest in achieving independence from the conventional energy business. Farming has become the economy’s most important resource base. Plant.
replace petroleum as the diverse basic material of the future. In my book ‘The Solar Economy’ (under the heading ‘Forwards: towards the primary economy’) I described the fundamental importance of this development as a reorientation whereby agriculture’s marginalisation since the industrial revolution will be permanently ended, and a sociological decentralisation (in place of further centralisation) will be introduced into our mega-cities. Opportunities for a natural second line of business and for increased productivity will also open up for the foodstuffs industry if it proceeds systematically and vigorously to commercialise its biological residues and waste – to produce electricity on its own or to produce and market bio-fuels.

Next to agriculture, it is the construction business, including the building materials industry, that will experience the largest upswing if it seizes the opportunities provided by solar construction. Numerous new building materials and construction methods – from glass that insulates as it produces electricity to energy-saving wood constructions – could be employed. If every building is going to be capable of using cost-free solar energy optimally for heating and cooling purposes, it needs to adapt these new materials and methods to the conditions of the local topography and bio-climate – each with its own special solar plan. Solar retrofitting of the existing building stock plus new solar buildings are a goldmine for the construction trades, architecture and building engineers.

And, finally, there is the municipal (or local government) and regional energy business, which is taking electricity production back into its own hands and, as a partner for regional agriculture, is discovering the production and marketing of biofuels as a new line of work. The same holds true for the ‘energetic’ marketing of organic waste in cities and local governments. On the basis of local government marketing of all energetically useful biomass and waste material, as well as on the basis of direct utilisation of the local potential for solar radiation energy, wind, water, terrestrial and atmospheric heat, it is possible to come up with integrated utilisation plans that have short routes from production to consumption, plans with which a centrally organised energy business (with all the expensive outlays for its wide-ranging infrastructure) cannot compete.

In these local schemes, the public’s energy outlays remain in circulation inside municipal and regional economic channels. Even large energy corporations might be able to reconcile themselves with renewable energy by transforming themselves into holding companies for independently operating enterprises at the local and regional level; this way, they would also be able, in the words of Joseph A Schumpeter, “to avoid … coming down with a crash”, and instead “turn a rout … into orderly retreat”. As matters stand, however, they will probably be the last to attempt this.

In short, not only will new industrial enterprises emerge when renewable energy prevails, renewable energy will also open up opportunities for old branches of industry. The more autonomous investments flow into renewable energy, the faster old plant and equipment will be replaced by a new generation of decentralised energy facilities – and the better it will be for the industrial economy. What the energy business experiences as the destruction of capital breathes new life into industry and reinforces the economy at large.

Dr Hermann Scheer, member of the German Parliament, founded the non-profit European Renewable Energy Association EUROSOLAR in 1988, and in 2001 the non-profit World Council for Renewable Energy (WCRE), serving as President and General Chairman, respectively, of the two non-governmental organisations on an honorary basis. Through these institutions Dr Scheer elaborated his original policy concepts for renewable energy disseminations, and initiated legal frameworks in Germany and the European Union. He has done so both in his capacity as a Member of Parliament, and by advising governments and parliamentarians in Europe, Asia and Latin America.

The World Council for Renewable Energy (WCRE) is the global voice for Renewable Energy. It operates independently and free of the vested interests of the present global energy system. As a non-profit and non-governmental globally working organisation it is focused on developing policies and strategies for renewable energy. Its mission is to bring renewable energy into the mainstream of world economy and lifestyle.

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Understanding the recent oil price volatility

By Abdalla Salem El-Badri, Secretary General, Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)

In summer 2008, oil prices rose to almost US$150 a barrel. Since then, prices have dropped by more than 70 per cent, to around US$40 a barrel. This volatility is unprecedented and should concern us all. With this in mind, it is important to put forward a number of pertinent questions. Firstly, what was actually behind the spiralling oil price rises? Secondly, why have prices fallen back so much since the middle of last year? And, finally, is the present oil industry and price environment conducive to making the investments required in the longer term? In this article the author underscores the main drivers of the oil market in recent times, and offers views on how to bring about more market stability.

It is clear that the recent oil price volatility has led to significant uncertainties in market behaviour. The price of West Texas Intermediate (WTI) almost doubled over the year to July 2008, and since the middle of the same month it has dropped by around US$100. In any industry, these rapid price movements would send shivers through investors. And in one which is global, such as the oil industry, where short-term stability is implicitly linked to the medium and long terms, this is especially apparent. It has created a climate of nervousness, and much unease for both producers and consumers. Volatility is not conducive to a well-functioning market, something all stakeholders strive for.

It is difficult to compartmentalise the stories behind the rise and then the fall in the oil price. The two stories overlap, and it is impractical to explain one without touching on the other. It is evident there has been some diversity of views as to the reasons behind such movements. This perhaps comes as no surprise. It reflects the nature of the global body politic and its interaction with the complexities and dynamics of the international oil industry – and all of this set in the context of oil’s ubiquitous role in the global economy. However, it does mean that the facts can sometimes become lost and misconstrued; it is important that these are laid out in detail.

The oil price rise

There is no one who would consider 2008’s high prices to have been reasonable. They were too extreme. It is apparent, however, that these high oil prices were not an indication of a shortage of oil. The results of every study that the OPEC Secretariat and many other energy institutions undertook during this period of rising prices showed that the market was well supplied with crude and stock levels were for the most part above the five-year average.

There is evidence that such issues as geopolitics, the fluctuating value of the US dollar and downstream tightness played various roles. But by far the leading player was the speculative investments flowing in and out of the futures markets. There was a total disconnect between physical and futures markets and between price and fundamentals.

The emergence of oil as an asset class saw the ratio of paper barrels traded on the New York Mercantile Exchange (NYMEX) to the physical barrels actually supplied increase exponentially. In 2003, for each physical barrel, six paper barrels were traded; that ratio in early 2008 had risen to more than 1:18 – three times as high. And these ratios would have been even higher if the London and Singapore futures exchanges, the unregulated Atlanta-based Intercontinental Exchange, as well as over-the-counter transactions, index trading and derivatives products were taken into account.

It is unmistakable that the significant expansion in the trade in paper barrels coincided with the upward price trend. In fact, research carried out by the OPEC Secretariat shows a clear relationship between the increases in money flows into crude oil futures since 2003 and the price. In particular there is evidence that movements and changes in speculative positions led to price movements.

For more than a year, OPEC has recommended greater regulatory oversight of commodity futures trading. This has gained traction in some parts of the world, but it is important that this is not forgotten and pushed to one side because prices have fallen from last summer’s highs. It is vital to learn lessons from what happened during this period.

The oil price fall

In July 2008, no-one could have predicted that oil prices would be below US$40 a barrel at the start of 2009. Predicting a fall of this nature would have been greeted with raised eyebrows and comments that this could never happen. Yet it has. The financial crisis, worsening real economies and the massive redemptions in the speculative funds industry have had a massive impact on the oil price and the industry in general.

This is evident when reviewing at oil demand, with growth turning into negative territory and projections for 2009 almost continuously being revised downwards. In March, OPEC forecasts revised down world oil demand in 2009 by 0.4 million barrels a day (mb/d), to show a decline of 1.0 mb/d from the previous year. From OPEC’s perspective, the demand for OPEC crude in 2009 is expected to average 29.1 mb/d, a drop of 1.8 mb/d from the previous year.

The recent revisions reflect the fact that the financial crisis, which has its roots in the advanced economies, is advancing its footprint to emerging and developing countries including the poorest ones – those who are least responsible for this crisis. OPEC member countries are no exception. The Organisation has had to significantly adjust downward its output to restore market stability, and the upshot is that it has left many OPEC countries with large levels of idle capacity, sometimes only recently put on stream. They also face large losses in their equity markets, lower economic output and dramatic declines in oil export earnings.

Under these exceptional circumstances, OPEC, as an organisation, is still trying to maintain its commitment to ensuring stable supplies of crude to the market at all times, and help escape a repetition of the past, where low oil prices led to low investments and thus to a shortage of capacity when the economy recovered. In the medium term, there are still significant OPEC member country investments committed, both for the upstream and downstream. However, there are
increasing concerns about the impact of the ongoing crisis and the steep decline in oil prices on the longer-term outlook.

The key question is: how will this challenging environment impact the investments in capacity expansion projects? It is a question that concerns us all – not just those involved in the oil industry or from oil-producing countries.

The investment conundrum

When and how the global economy recovers are questions being discussed the world over. It is clear at this time that there are no firm predictions, never mind definitive answers, but all of us know that the economy will return to growth at some point in the future, and this will lead to expanding energy demand.

Yet, at present, current oil prices are not at levels to sustain the industry. They are considerably below the level required to attract industry-wide investments and ensure sufficient production capacity to meet future demand.

For example, current prices are well below the level needed to cover the marginal costs of many projects – effectively stalling the exploration and development of any new frontiers. Several oil sands expansion projects in Canada have recently been delayed or cancelled. And with construction costs relative to oil prices still on the high side, many conventional projects are not proving investment-worthy either.

Thus, current prices threaten the very sustainability of planned investments – by both international and national oil companies – and put future crude production at risk. It is a situation that no-one desires, and is clearly not a position from which the world’s businesses, consumers or economies will benefit.

It is important to find a stable and realistic price – one that takes into account energy supply, demand and investments, including such core issues as costs and the need to find, hire, train and keep talented people in the industry, for the short, medium and long terms. And this is obviously true across the broad spectrum of the energy industry. Each energy source, each technology, and each project, has a price when it is viable – and a price when it is not.

Demand in the longer term

With oil industry investment in mind, it is important to analyse and weigh up expected demand in the longer term. Oil demand levels are expected to drop in the short term, leading to a rise in overall spare capacity; but looking further out, as already underlined, demand will rebound again, particularly as the global economy recovers.

And in today’s environment it is essential that all stakeholders understand the need to maintain current levels, possibly at higher levels, to support the recovery. To do otherwise would be short sighted.

There is clearly enough oil to meet this demand. The world has plenty of resources. The end of oil has been talked about since the very beginning of the oil age more than 100 years ago. However, it has never come to pass, and since the early 1980s, ultimately recoverable reserves of conventional oil worldwide have doubled and the figure continues to rise. So when talk turns to long-term oil demand, the issue is not one of ‘availability’. It is of ‘deliverability’ and ‘sustainability’. And in this context, these two words often seem shrouded in haziness.

The large amount of uncertainty that exists about future oil demand requirements is standing in the way of turning resources into supply and implementing sound investment strategies. This is a major challenge for oil producers in general and OPEC member countries in particular. On the one hand, there is the willingness to invest in sufficient capacity to ensure that future consumers’ needs are met, including the provision of an appropriate level of spare capacity. On the other hand, however, like in any sound business, there is no economic logic in committing vast amounts of capital to develop production capacities that may not be needed.

The need for a clear view of the future

The current financial crisis is obviously impacting demand, but it is important also to look beyond this, to the significance of predictable energy policies, and reliable signals from the market and consuming countries.

OPEC welcomes diversity in the overall energy mix, as well as the push to develop renewables and nuclear, but we need to give careful thought to how we proceed.

For example, ambitious targets for biofuels have sent confused signals concerning oil industry investment needs, and their appeal is also being questioned due to unforeseen impacts in such areas as food prices and the diversion of land use. In addition, US fuel economy standards and the European Union’s climate change and renewable objectives have the potential to further reduce estimates for future global oil demand.

To put the overall demand risks in some context, some figures demonstrate the uncertainty. OPEC scenarios show that demand for OPEC crude by 2020 could be as low as 29 mb/d or as high as 38 mb/d. This is a huge range.

Ways forward

So what can be learnt from all this? Firstly, that extreme oil price volatility is not good. Secondly, that the high prices were caused in the main by speculative investments, not a misalignment of supply and demand fundamentals. Thirdly, that the fall in prices can in general be attributed to the overall impact of the financial crisis, as well as speculators liquidating their positions and fleeing the market. And finally, in an industry with such big, costly and lengthy undertakings, security of demand needs to be clear, and reasonable prices need to prevail.

Pointing a way forward is never an easy task, and this is particularly true at present. Yet it is apparent that there is a need for:

• Market transparency and shared industry data
• Improved regulation of commodity futures trading, and
• Better predictability in energy policies.

So it is important we chart a path, and possibly the key to this is opening our eyes to the opportunities before us, particularly concerning the enhancement of cooperation.

OPEC has long recognised the importance of adopting a multilateral approach to dialogue and cooperation with other influential, interested parties, as it tries to faithfully pursue its mission of ensuring stable, secure and reasonably priced crude.

And in today’s environment it is essential that all stakeholders sit down to look at such issues as the projects on the table, the investments, the costs, the various timeframes, the policy targets, market regulation and demand. The goal is to have a better understanding of each other and to provide a more stable setting in which investments and expansion flourish, economies witness stable growth, and where better access to reliable, affordable, economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally-sound energy services help make energy poverty a thing of the past.

Abdalla Salem El-Badri is Secretary General of OPEC. He was President of the OPEC Conference in 1994 and 1996-97. In his native Libya, he has, among other roles, been Minister of Petroleum, Chairman of the National Oil Company and Deputy Prime Minister. OPEC’s mission is to coordinate and unify the petroleum policies of member countries and ensure the stabilisation of oil markets in order to secure an efficient, economic and regular supply of petroleum to consumers, a steady income to producers and a fair return on capital to those investing in the petroleum industry.

Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries

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New Delhi: It is over two years, Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) has stirred a revolution in the realm of education in India. People have started looking up at a new brave world of real education where skills development, capacity-building, grassroots awareness programmes through open and distance learning modes, application of latest information and communication technologies are the buzzwords.

Enacted by a rule of Indian parliament in 1985, IGNOU is more a social crusader lighting up people's minds with need-based job-oriented education and training of new skills, thereby enhancing the quality of life and life-management systems. It has tied up with industries of various capacities to implement its academic programmes, blended both in distant learning and face-to-face pedagogy.

There are modules, courses, and programmes for almost all imaginable vocations, even those which were seldom thought to be curricula, though are pursued in societies world over, such as security-related training and education, training of top managers of education, high quality research, business process outsourcing, legal process outsourcing, water harvesting and management, poultry farming, retail chain management, sign language learning, gender development, tele-medicine, acupuncture, skills development courses, paramedical and paralegal education. Many of IGNOU programmes are the firsts in the world.

The university is open to all. Through its unique ICTs-driven pedagogy, it strives to develop skills in all kinds and diverse sections of people. It is a house for empowering the untrained and the spurned off. It creates their employability to better lifestyles. The range of programmes it offers vary from certificate to doctoral and post-doctoral programmes.

Today, according to records in the Association of Indian Universities and the University Grant Commission research cells, IGNOU enrols over 15% of India's total higher education students. Education disseminated by IGNOU has drawn attention of the world too, in about last three years. As of now, IGNOU is enrolling the largest number of foreign students, from among the Indian universities. IGNOU carries out its torch of enlightenment to over 33 nations of the world through direct footprint, and in 53 African countries through an Edusat hub at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Fortyseven foreign institutions have signed collaboration with IGNOU, offering Dual Degrees, capacity building and faculty exchange programmes.

Latest move in IGNOU is creation of an Advanced Centre for Informatics and Innovative Learning (ACIIL), which is conceptualised as a new capacity in information and communication technologies (ICTs) within the IGNOU campus.

Innovative approaches to develop real new education and training have put IGNOU in constant developmental news and made it popular world over. Below we mention the milestones IGNOU has already crossed in a nutshell.
Faltering steps on the path to Education for All

By Alex Kent, Campaigns & Communications Coordinator, Global Campaign for Education

Nine years ago participants at the Dakar World Education Forum, from over 164 nations, governments and civil society, wrote a highly ambitious but urgently needed plan to make sure everyone gets an education by 2015. Named the Dakar Framework for Action, this plan outlines the actions and promises to achieve Education for All (EFA) by 2015. With two-thirds of the time used, huge gains have been made in education, but early wins must not lead to complacency. There is still a long journey ahead to reach the full set of EFA goals.

The importance of achieving Education for All has never been greater and the global challenges are more than apparent. In a rapidly changing global climate, financial crisis, food and oil price hikes, the world’s poorest are facing an increasing struggle to survive. In developing countries an estimated 30-50 million more workers face unemployment and 200 million more people looming poverty. Education provides one of the best, most cost-effective and equitable ways out of this crisis:

- Education creates economic security and wealth: a person’s earnings increase by 10 per cent for each year of schooling – translating to a national 1 per cent growth in GDP if everyone receives good quality education.
- Educated people are healthier: HIV/AIDS infection rates are halved among young people who finish school – universal primary school completion could prevent 700,000 new cases of HIV every year.
- Education combats hunger: gains in women’s education made the most significant difference in reducing malnutrition between 1970 and 1995, a more important role than increased food availability.
- Education saves lives: a child born to an educated mother is twice as likely to survive past the age of five.
- Education for all helps support multiparty democracy and challenges autocracy, and equips individuals with the skills to understand complex problems, including climate change and financial constraints.

The six Education for All goals

In April 2000 164 national governments committed to the Education for All goals by the year 2015:

1. Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
2. Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to, and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality.
3. Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes.
4. Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.
5. Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls’ full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.
6. Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

In Africa 14 countries have abolished school fees and enrolment rates have increased by 36 per cent between 2000 and 2006. Tanzania and Ethiopia both reduced the number of out of school children by a significant 3 million. The gender gap in school enrolments is also closing.

Sitting in class

There is little doubt that huge education steps have been made since the Dakar Forum, with 40 million more children now going to primary school. A combination of increased civil society pressure, a stronger political will in developing countries, and aid and debt relief from rich countries has delivered real results. Enrolment rates are six times greater than the decade before Dakar. In Africa 14 countries have abolished school fees and enrolment rates have increased by 36 per cent between 2000 and 2006. These significant gains are often hailed as an international development success story, especially as they reflect progress on two of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The progress demonstrates that success is possible, while the focus on going to school has done little to progress towards meeting the remaining Education for All goals.
Lagging behind

For most children their education fate is set by the age of six. But early childhood care and education has not been prioritised. One of the most worrying findings to come out of the latest UNESCO Global Monitoring Report is that one in three children in developing countries (193 million in total) currently reach primary school age having had their brain development and education prospects impaired by malnutrition.

Despite huge gains in universal primary education, almost half of children in sub-Saharan Africa are still not in school, with children in poor rural areas, slums, areas of conflict and other disadvantage groups missing out the most. Fragile states are home to 40 per cent of the children out of school. UNESCO’s latest GMR project at least 29 million children will still not be in school in 2015, with predicted numbers of out-of-school children as high as 7.6 million in Nigeria and 3.7 million in Pakistan.

Many children are yet to benefit from a secondary education – close to 75 per cent of children in Africa are not in secondary school, and not receiving essential skills to give them a good start in life.

Adult literacy rates have also remained low, with 776 million adults, including as many as one in four women, lacking the most basic reading and writing skills. Literacy rates vary vastly, with as many as 80 per cent of women being unable to read and write in several west African countries. At current rates of progress 700 million adults will remain illiterate in 2015.

While more girls than ever before are going to school, the gender parity goal that was set for 2005 was missed by 113 countries – and current trends predict only 18 more countries will actually meet it at primary and secondary level by 2015.

Education quality has not kept pace with enrolment. Only fourteen nations are in the happy position of graduating 90 per cent or more of all children in primary school; and in over 50 countries, half of all children never complete primary school.

"I'm Raheem but my boss calls me Jerry! I'm 8 and I live in Hyderabad in India. I live with my family in one room. When I was six I had to drop out of school and work in a clothes shop to help pay for the family's food. I felt like I was missing out when I saw all the other kids going to school. Then Mum heard about a local project that helps working children like me get back to school. You get books and uniform, and you go to classes to help you catch up with what you've missed. Now I'm back at school in the mornings!

"It's hard working all afternoon and often get tired, but I earn 5-10 rupees (about 10p) a day which helps my family." Raheem is one of the 250 million children who are having to work through their childhood to support their families, missing out on school and play.

"My name is Nabirye Oliver and I'm around 9 years old. I live with my four sisters and two brothers in a small village in south-east Uganda. I was born blind but every morning I get up and dress without my mother's help. During the day I help her with washing plates and fetching water. When my friends are around we play skipping and hide and seek. But when they go to school I'm alone with my mother.

"When I was six I went to school and learnt to count to one hundred without any mistakes, but my family did not have enough money to keep me at school." A third of all children out of school have a disability. Without education the cycle between disability and poverty will never be broken.

"I used to go to the primary school here in Tudun Kose but now I am too old to go there and there isn't enough money to send me to the secondary school which is far away. I spend my day fetching water and pounding millet to make grain for our meals. They are preparing me to get married soon; there are a few boys who have asked my father if they can marry me.

"When I see the other girls going to the western school I feel happy for them and admire them. One day I followed them to school but the teacher said I was too old for school."
Education gains in Kenya
Following abolition of school fees in Kenya, enrolments surged with over a million more children going to school for the first time in 2003. Using grants from the FTI Catalytic Fund, the World Bank’s IDA and UK’s Department for International Development, Kenya successfully established two schemes which gave direct responsibility to primary school committees for decisions, one on textbook purchasing and the other on general requirements. Over 18,000 primary schools received per capita grants and established committees in charge of operating bank accounts and making real decisions on the disbursement of these funds. The system is transparent, with committees posting the amounts in the fund, and who they have used, on the outside wall of the school. Audits have shown that the schemes are functioning with a high level of probity and there is a real sense of grassroots ownership.

A lack of planning, governance and funding that targets equity has failed to provide the greatest assistance to the poorest and those most in need. Wealth, gender, language and other markers of disadvantage should be taken into account, through financing and governance in education.

The disparities in education access and achievement remain vast and current governance and funding is failing to address equity. Disparities in approaches to government reform have failed to attached sufficient weight to equity.

Taking the fast track?
One of the most significant Dakar promises was the commitment to a ‘global compact’, and that “no countries seriously committed to education for all will be thwarted in their achievement of this goal by a lack of resources.” With this agreement came a major shift in relations between donors and partners, and the initiation of the EFA-Fast Track Initiative (FTI) by the World Bank in 2002. Following a slow start the FTI has achieved significant change – now endorsing 37 developing countries. FTI countries in Africa show considerably higher primary enrolment and completion rates than those outside the initiative.

Available financing is a mere 25 per cent of the estimated US$16 billion needed every year to provide universal primary education for all.

Nevertheless, the lack of major donor support has meant aid flows to education are falling far short of what is required. Aid commitments to basic education climbed steadily from 1999, reaching a high of over US$5 billion in 2005, only to fall back sharply ever since; less than US$4 billion was committed in 2007. This available financing is a mere 25 per cent of the estimated US$16 billion needed every year to provide universal primary education for all, including hard-to-reach children, and make progress in early childhood care and education and adult literacy. Aid to education depends on very few donors, and does not currently include the richest nations. Close to 50 per cent of aid to education is still outside of programme work, meaning countries are unable to allocate funds towards core costs of education such as training, hiring and retaining teachers.

The Global Campaign for Education is now calling for a renewed, revived global effort to really achieve Education for All, and provide the finances in the shape of a new Global Fund for Education for All. Building on the strengths of the FTI, this mechanism would have a wider and larger access to funding sources and aid spends, to cover all the EFA goals, not simply the MDGs.

A new funding mechanism should have participatory governance – crucially involving civil society in the mix of decisions being made by governments and donors. This fund should also have an independent global secretariat, standing alone from any member organisation or financing institution. And it should be able streamline financing where it is most needed – to hardest-to-reach children, responding quickly in such cases as post-conflict need or rebuilding states.

The Global Campaign for Education is now calling for a renewed, revived global effort to really achieve Education for All, and provide the finances in the shape of a new Global Fund for Education for All.

Missing teachers
Teachers are the lifeblood of the education system. No person will receive a good education with school books, blackboards and chairs. Yet teachers remain one of the largest gaps in education – an additional 18 million teachers must be trained and recruited if EFA is to be reached by 2015. Teacher salaries typically account for 70-90 per cent of education expenditure, yet donors’ reluctance to provide long-term predictable aid to the core costs, and IMF wage cap conditionalities have resulted in a mere 17 per cent of total aid to basic education supporting teacher salaries. This has resulted in large class sizes, multi-grade teaching and the recruitment of untrained and contract teachers.

Hands up together!
Another change in the international education arena since Dakar is the growth and strengthening of a joined-up education movement. After such poor gains in education between 1990 and 1999, teacher unions, international NGOs, rights-based groups and others came together to influence the second Education for All agreement, under one name, the Global Campaign for Education (GCE). Since then the education movement, coalitions and GCE have grown and provide consistent pressure and lobbying power on the provision of Education for All.

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The Commonwealth Education Fund was set up in 2002 and supported civil society on education for six years. The Fund helped build board-based national education coalitions involving more than 2,100 organisations, training 430,000 women and men in budget monitoring, tracking and advocacy and providing funding for GCE’s annual Action Week.

Global Action Week takes place every April marking the anniversary of the Education for All framework and ranking progress to date. Since 2005 those who have joined the cry for ‘Education for All’ during this week have grown from 5 million to
The Commonwealth Ministers Reference Book – 2009

Education & Training

10 million. And every year national education policies have been renewed or announced during the public space and dialogue that has been created. As a source of education experience it is vital that national education coalitions are supported and involved in education planning processes at national and international levels.

The harsh reality of today’s world is one where over a third of children in rich countries complete university education, while in much of sub-Saharan Africa, a smaller proportion finish primary school.

While huge gains have been made in getting children into school in some of the poorest countries, much remains to be done to achieve the full Education for All agenda by 2015. The harsh reality of today’s world is one where over a third of children in rich countries complete university education, while in much of sub-Saharan Africa, a smaller proportion finish primary school. There has never been a more urgent requirement for coordinated action from all sides to give everyone a decent start in life and make Education for All a reality by 2015.

Alex Kent is the Campaigns & Communications Coordinator for the Global Campaign for Education. She has taught in the UK and South Africa, and has an MA in International Development and Education from the Institute of Education, University of London. Alex worked for Comic Relief before moving to GCE’s international secretariat in Johannesburg. Since then Alex has worked on GCE’s major campaigns, including Global Action Week, and activities at the G8 and UN Summits.

The Global Campaign for Education, founded in 1999, brings together major non-governmental organisations and teachers’ unions in more than 120 countries. GCE promotes access to education as a basic human right and raises public awareness to create the political will for governments and other leaders in the international community to fulfill their promises to provide at least a free, public basic education for all children. Every April GCE organises a week of campaigning on education called Global Action Week.

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Divine Word University (DWU) is a National University and one of Papua New Guinea's most exciting universities. DWU is equipped with the latest ICT facilities offered at our campuses in Port Moresby, Madang, Wewak, Mt Hagen and Rabaul.

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- Quality academic programs relevant to the needs of students and the society
- Providing an authentic model for national unity

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President
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• Faculty of Arts has three departments:
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Website: www.dwu.ac.pg
Universities: essential for economic and social development

By Prof John Tarrant, Secretary General of the Association of Commonwealth Universities

For much of the 1980s and 1990s, higher education in developing countries was seen as the preserve of high-earning elites. It was allocated a very low priority by agencies and governments providing development assistance. This was justified by the high rate of return to individual investment in higher education. Higher qualifications brought economic opportunities to graduates which greatly outweighed the costs of higher education to those individuals and to their families. This view of higher education was compounded by its high cost relative to other education sectors. From the late 1990s it has become more accepted, however, that higher education is an important public good. The author reviews the current situation and details the progress of some significant initiatives.

In 2005, public expenditure per head on higher education in Ghana was US$5,041, compared with $309 at primary level. Very low enrolment rates – only about 5 per cent of the relevant age cohort enrolled in higher education in sub-Saharan Africa in 2006 – meant that higher education opportunities were very restricted.

It was not therefore surprising that the Millennium Development Goals focused on universal primary education, and that higher education was excluded.

While the formulation of the Millennium Development Goals was important in targeting development efforts onto those areas where need was, and remains, urgent, the low priority given to higher education, or even positive hostility to it, failed to recognise the essential role of higher education in economic and social development. While higher education does provide individual benefits, it is also a vital public good.

A much broader view emerged in the late 1990s and was widely accepted following the publication of ‘Constructing Knowledge Societies: New Challenges for Tertiary Education’ by the World Bank in 2002. Development assistance from most developed economies now includes specific policies for the encouragement of higher education, as do those of the international development banks. The African Development Bank launched a higher education development strategy in 2007. The major Foundations are also playing a significant role.

Why has there been this dramatic change?

It is now widely accepted that higher education is both an important public as well as a private good. Many, if not all, strategies for economic and social development are frustrated by a lack of attention to higher education.

The Partnership for Higher Education in Africa

The Partnership for Higher Education in Africa was launched in May 2000 by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Ford Foundation, the John D and Catherine T MacArthur Foundation, and the Rockefeller Foundation. They were joined in 2005 by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and in 2007 by the Andrew W Mellon Foundation and the Kresge Foundation. While maintaining each foundation’s unique strategic focus, the foundations agreed to work together towards accelerating the processes of comprehensive modernisation and strengthening of universities in Ghana, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda.

Table 1. Foundation grants by the Partnership for Higher Education in Africa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Joint initiatives</th>
<th>Individual foundation grants</th>
<th>Grand totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999-2000</td>
<td>607,272</td>
<td>18,763,526</td>
<td>19,370,798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>3,627,537</td>
<td>32,377,040</td>
<td>36,004,577</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>3,036,574</td>
<td>39,938,176</td>
<td>42,974,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>1,848,932</td>
<td>25,665,092</td>
<td>27,514,024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>1,147,957</td>
<td>27,661,033</td>
<td>28,808,990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>12,218,407</td>
<td>44,223,210</td>
<td>56,441,617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>4,847,662</td>
<td>50,654,809</td>
<td>55,502,471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>6,855,699</td>
<td>44,119,138</td>
<td>50,974,837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>6,193,700</td>
<td>29,031,422</td>
<td>35,225,122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>40,383,940</td>
<td>312,433,446</td>
<td>352,817,386</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The seven Partnership foundations also support higher education activities in non-Partnership countries, thus more support than is shown in the table is being channelled to African higher education.
**Girls into Science and Technology in Rwanda**

In 2006, the Kigali Institute of Education in Rwanda began a partnership with the National University of Rwanda, the Kigali Institute of Science and Technology, and the University of Aberdeen, UK, developing a ‘Girls into Science and Technology in Rwanda’ project. With £60,000 allocated by the UK Department for International Development through the DePHE (Development Partnerships in Higher Education) scheme, the project was designed to encourage greater take-up by female students in science programmes at an advanced level, and to help sensitize teachers, lecturers, seniors and decision-makers in issues of gender equity. To this end, the project has involved research into barriers that girls face in pursuing science courses, and interventions at the primary and secondary school levels to encourage take-up by female students. At the lead institution, the project has also involved the delivery of a master’s degree programme in educational and social research, with 25 participants graduated so far. This enables further research into understanding the factors preventing more girls from pursuing careers related to science and technology.

**An acute shortage of teachers and very limited curriculum development**

The expansion of primary education remains severely constrained by a chronic shortage of qualified teachers and the lack of a modernised curriculum. The situation is critical in sub-Saharan Africa where there is a need for 600,000 additional teachers between 2004 and 2015. In addition, the majority of the existing teachers remain unqualified. Although the development of open learning and open schools will help to better use the scarce resources of qualified teachers, it is in the education departments of universities and teacher training colleges that both the increase in the supply of teachers and the modernised curriculum will be developed.

As the goal of universal primary education is approached, it is leading to an explosive growth in the demand for secondary education. Here, again the shortage of qualified teachers and the need for an appropriate curriculum must be urgently addressed with the help of higher education.

**Making chemical science more responsive to people’s needs in Ethiopia**

Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia, and the University of Nottingham, UK, began work on a DePHE partnership in 2006. Titled ‘Making Chemical Science More Responsive to People’s Needs in Ethiopia’, this project focuses on building capacity for education in sustainable chemistry and developing research to support sub-Saharan Africa’s rapidly growing chemicals sector. The project involves an assessment of indigenous flora, the involvement of traditional medicine and sourcing indigenous knowledge in developing pharmaceutical research, and has also spawned a series of lectures on ‘green chemistry’ and environmentally sustainable chemicals research. The lecture series, a self-standing study module, is now planned to be rolled out to other universities in Ethiopia. Research generated from this project has been disseminated widely, and formed a central plank to the first annual conference of the Federation of African Societies for Chemistry in Addis Ababa in 2007.

**IT for Improving Public Health Systems in Rural Karnataka, India**

In 2007, the DePHE partnership for Improving Public Health Systems in Rural Karnataka began, led by the India Institute of Management Bangalore, with the partnership of the London School of Economics (LSE) and Imperial College London. The overall goal of the project has been to determine the effectiveness of district-level public health management information systems for improving evidence-based decision-making in rural health in the Indian state of Karnataka. This has led to the establishment of a master’s-level module in Health Information Systems in Developing Countries at LSE, workshops on health management information systems at the lead institution in India, and training sessions in health management information software, customised for healthcare professionals, doctors, NGOs, and senior policy makers in Karnataka. Ongoing research initiatives by the project team include developing more effective health information management software suited for primary healthcare needs, and the implementation of information systems to incorporate the software that has been developed.

**A skilled workforce for development**

It is not only in primary and secondary education that higher education helps to create the skilled workforce necessary for the process of development. The delivery of poverty reduction programmes, public health developments, environmental sustainability, programmes for the encouragement of small businesses, agricultural development and all other aspects of economic and social development require an educated cadre of development staff to formulate the programmes, to implement them and to evaluate their success.

**Research, outreach and policy analysis**

Universities are an important potential resource for research and policy analysis. Although government ministries have some research capacity, this is usually very limited and often results in over-reliance on external consultants with little experience of local circumstances. Young academic staff, returning from overseas doctoral training, are a resource that many developing countries could make better use of for research and policy analysis. Universities are also a source of extension workers who can take ideas developed in universities out into the field. This

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*All aspects of economic and social development require an educated cadre of development staff to formulate the programmes, to implement them and to evaluate their success.*
Higher education in India

The Indian government plans to increase the higher education enrolment rate from 11% currently to 21% by the end of 2014. It intends to do this in ways which reduce the existing considerable regional disparities within India and improves quality.

Table 2. Higher education indicators in India – Quality measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures per university</th>
<th>Average of all Indian universities</th>
<th>Benchmark as in A-graded Indian universities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No of departments</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of faculty positions</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of faculty positions vacant</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of faculty with PhD</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Planned new higher education institutions (HEIs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2014 (1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central universities</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Universities</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>380 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deemed universities</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private universities</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEIs of national importance [centre]</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEIs of national importance [state]</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>55 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affiliated colleges of state universities</td>
<td>8,800</td>
<td>9,170 (3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) From the Special Higher Education Plan incorporated into the 11 and to be rolled forward into the 12 National Plan.
(2) 50 new centres for technology training and research in border areas.
(3) Action by central government only – state governments may do more.

A widening gap

All developed nations have encouraged rapid growth in participation in higher education. For example, the Australian government has announced an intention to increase the proportion of population aged 25 to 34 years with a bachelor’s degree from 32 per cent to 40 per cent by 2025. This will require several hundred thousand additional graduates. The fundamental importance of higher education in allowing countries to compete within the world knowledge economy is the cornerstone of a policy of encouraging this sector. Many transition economies are now also rapidly expanding their higher education.

Table 3. Tertiary education: gross enrolment rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1990/91</th>
<th>2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low income countries</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle income countries</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High income countries</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: World Bank Development Reports.

If all developed and most middle income countries regard investment in higher education as essential to the future of their economies and societies, then it should be essential also for the poorer countries.

If similar growth cannot be achieved in the less developed countries then the economic gap between the rich and the poor countries will only get wider. If all developed and most middle-income countries regard investment in higher education as essential to the future of their economies and societies, then it should be essential also for the poorer countries.

Most universities in the less developed countries are in a very poor state. They have suffered from a lack of investment in human and physical capital, partly as a result of being ignored within development funding for so long. Expansion of student numbers, sometimes more than doubling, has been imposed while investment has remained static or declined. In many countries of Africa the HIV/AIDS pandemic has wrought its own devastating havoc on universities. The urgent need for international aid to reconstrucit the once great universities of Africa is now recognised.

Additional investments will be necessary but not sufficient. The expansion of higher education in the less developed countries cannot be achieved by more of the same. We must harness technology to make better use of scarce resources, both through the provision of distance learning and also in the traditional face-to-face universities. We must harness technology to make better use of scarce resources, both through the provision of distance learning and also in the traditional face-to-face universities. We have to enable the adoption of the new pedagogy which puts information and learning materials in the hands of students and frees teachers.

Social and cultural development and civil society

It is important that social and cultural development goes alongside economic development. The contribution of universities in these areas is easily underestimated. It is also in universities that the Commonwealth’s agenda for respect and understanding can be nurtured. The Commonwealth university tradition of academic freedom and enquiry encourages the free expression and sharing of ideas, open access to information, and the development of understanding based on evidence rather than on prejudice and ignorance. These are the underpinnings of democracy. It is no coincidence that, at times of failure in democracy, universities are early targets for restriction and closure.

The fundamental importance of higher education in allowing countries to compete within the world knowledge economy is the cornerstone of a policy of encouraging this sector.
from the passing of more and more information to ever-growing class sizes. We must allow the teachers to act as guides and advisors in the learning experience, rather than as instructors.

The opportunities are there with an explosion of open source learning materials. Reliable and fast connectivity to the World Wide Web, along with reliable electricity supply, are now the largest problems. The use of such material also requires great changes in the way in which we prepare university teachers as well as in what we expect of them. As the need for well-qualified university teachers is so great, we have to re-examine the appropriateness and practicality of continuing to aim for the PhD as the entry-level qualification.

Past neglect has made increasing and widening participation in higher education in the less developed world a Herculean task. It is, however, essential for economic and social development. The improvement of higher education infrastructure and human capital needs investment and aid. The priority must be to invest in new ways of learning because this is the only way in which we can reach the large numbers that are needed. Putting the learning into the hands of the learners will also better prepare those learners to prosper in an information-rich world.


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eLearning for development: using information and communications technologies to bridge the digital divide

By Sir John Daniel, President and CEO, the Commonwealth of Learning

eLearning has the potential to make an important contribution to reducing educational deprivation, which in turn can aid progress in achieving development goals. The major obstacles to eLearning are connectivity, equipment, software and training of people. The Commonwealth of Learning is leading several initiatives to overcome these obstacles and help bridge the digital divide.

The use of eLearning is on the rise with the digital generation growing exponentially. In addition to providing education at the primary, secondary and post-secondary levels, eLearning plays an important role in ongoing professional development for adults in the workforce. As the world strives to meet development goals, there is increasing recognition of the potential of eLearning to meet growing educational challenges.

What is eLearning?

The term ‘eLearning’ came into regular use around 2000. Its precise meaning is not widely understood. The definition of eLearning can be as simple as “the delivery of a learning, training or education programme by electronic means, involving the use of a computer or electronic device”.

The major omission in that definition is the other two ‘Ds’ in addition to ‘delivery’. A more accurate definition is “the design, development and delivery of learning programmes by electronic means”.

Ten years ago, at the height of the ‘dotcom frenzy’, enthusiasts argued that all education would quickly migrate to the computer screen, making traditional methods of education, including traditional methods of distance education, obsolete. However, many of those who tried to create pure eLearning programmes – relying entirely on the computer – either went broke or ended up adopting an approach that blends electronic learning with other forms.

All forms of eLearning bump up against a major obstacle: the ‘digital divide’. This is the lack of access to information and communications technologies (ICTs) by segments of the population. Even if electronic equipment (a CD-ROM or DVD) is only a small part of the course, the student who cannot access appropriate equipment is at a disadvantage. This is the fundamental challenge for the introduction of electronic media into distance education, especially in developing countries.

The promise of eLearning

eLearning offers many important advantages:

• Anywhere, anytime learning. Learners can pursue their studies at their convenience and are not limited by geography or time constraints. This is of particular benefit to people who face barriers to learning such as living in a remote location, discrimination based on gender, or having competing work/home responsibilities.

• A window to a world of learning. eLearning allows online access to a huge array of resources – the libraries and museums of the world, and much more.

• Faster communication. eLearning speeds up communication. Students benefit from timely feedback, and electronic submission of assignments eliminates delays in transmission.

• Access to global intellectual commons. A rapidly expanding array of open educational resources (OERs) is available online as people contribute eLearning materials to online repositories. These materials can be freely used and adapted, resulting in time and cost savings.

Measuring effectiveness of eLearning: the ‘Four As’

By combining connectivity with shared courseware into a new business model, we could increase access to education massively. What is required for this to happen? For eLearning to succeed, it must be accessible, appropriate, accredited and affordable – the so-called four ‘As’.

Is it Accessible?

For eLearning to have any impact it must be accessible to the learner. In extending eLearning to developing countries, the first imperative is to provide ready internet connectivity. The second imperative is to make OERs more accessible and to expand their numbers.

Is it Appropriate?

Once eLearning is accessible, is what it offers appropriate? Does it help to address the key challenges facing higher education in the country? Does the content fit learners’ needs and does it respect their cultural context? Few subjects and delivery methods are universally appropriate. However, OERs allow learning materials to be made appropriate by local adaptation – and translation – and there is a growing skill base among educators to do this.

Is it Accredited?

In cross-border eLearning, accreditation is a key concern. Accreditation in the country of origin is one indicator of quality and provides some consumer protection. However, learners’ own countries must recognise the credential for it to be useful. What impact, if any, will OERs have on quality and accreditation?

Can the quality of eLearning be assessed using criteria already in use or does it need new models and approaches? This is a simple but important question. Research into quality assurance in the mega-universities reveals that they are applying to eLearning the criteria already in use for their other distance learning courses. Furthermore, the quality assessment system for higher education in the UK uses the same approach for all
What about copyright?
Increasing the volume, appropriateness and quality of open educational resources requires a solid understanding of copyright. The general rule is that "you can give away or sell what you own, but do not give away things you do not own". COL is working with Commonwealth experts to provide synthesised information on copyright in education to governments, institutions and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

The aim is both to encourage copyright compliance and to overcome barriers to using content for educational purposes. Developing countries are spending millions of dollars needlessly on copyright clearances because they are unaware of the educational exemptions that exist. COL is promoting awareness of ways that they can save money perfectly legally.

Institutions, including the UK Open University. This suggests that quality criteria can be valid across many delivery mechanisms.

The Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) is developing a Transnational Qualifications Framework (discussed later) that will also help with transfer of accreditation among institutions and nations.

Is it Affordable?
Finally, to come to the fourth A: is eLearning affordable to the many? If the opportunities eLearning offers are not affordable to ordinary people the digital divide will not become a digital dividend. Can OERs make a difference? Because they can reduce the cost of course development they certainly have the potential to do so for the institution seeking to expand access through eLearning.

Answers to these four questions are vital to the expansion and effective use of eLearning.

Obstacles to eLearning
Standing between the promise of eLearning and reality in developing countries are four significant obstacles: connectivity, equipment, software and training.

Connectivity
Limited connectivity in many developing countries impedes access to online learning. One of the keys to overcoming this obstacle is publicising the developmental benefits of connectivity so that governments can make informed decisions about regulating and taxing telecoms.

Equipment
eLearning obviously requires equipment. This is becoming more widely available; rapidly in the case of mobile phones, less rapidly in the case of computers. However, the cost of computers is dropping steadily and there are many schemes to recycle good used computers from developed countries. Initiatives such as One Laptop Per Child and other attempts to make low-cost functional computers have spawned dozens of inexpensive models from commercial computer manufacturers, increasing access to necessary equipment for eLearning.

Software
Software enables educators to design and develop learning content. While proprietary software has in the past constrained educators, there is an encouraging trend towards greater openness. Open standards enable private software companies and open source developers to speak the same language, leading to a wide choice of browsers, editors and authoring tools that produce interoperable content.

Training
No combination of connectivity, equipment and software will achieve anything if people are not trained to use it. While training is often built into ICTs, it is still helpful to seed that process with some formal training.

The Commonwealth of Learning is helping to overcome these obstacles and expand the availability, affordability and quality of eLearning through several initiatives.

A Virtual University for Small States
The Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth (VUSSC) is helping to overcome the training obstacle and the disadvantages of small size, remoteness and limited resources by expanding eLearning in tertiary institutions in small states of the Commonwealth.

Although most of the 32 small states of the Commonwealth have one or more post-secondary institutions, their limited programme offerings mean that many students must travel abroad to study. This has a high foreign exchange cost, and a proportion of students never come back home: the average migration rate of those with tertiary education from these small states is 44 per cent, compared with the Commonwealth average of 18 per cent. Strengthening the range and credibility of tertiary offerings is an important priority.

VUSSC is helping countries expand course offerings collaboratively. The VUSSC network involves almost all the Commonwealth’s 32 small states, which are now the principal actors in its management. Thanks to the collective efforts of VUSSC partners since 2004, hundreds of government officials and staff members of tertiary institutions have acquired advanced ICTs skills, eLearning materials have been created in six professional areas and a widely recognised system of accreditation has been established.

By acting collectively, small states can share the costs of capacity-building and programme development, and become leaders in the age of eLearning.

WikiEducator
WikiEducator.org provides a platform for educators to create free eLearning content that anyone can edit and use. Launched by COL in 2006, WikiEducator is used extensively for the development and dissemination of free educational resources.

WikiEducator is an evolving community focused on collaboration in:

- Planning of education projects linked with the development of free content
- Development of free content on WikiEducator for eLearning
- Building of open educational resources (OERs), and
- Networking on funding proposals developed as free content.

Anyone can edit content and make contributions. Use of WikiEducator is free, and users do not need a high level of technical skills. By radically expanding the availability of free learning content, WikiEducator is improving access to education globally.

The growth of WikiEducator is supported by Learning4Content, an initiative that has provided free wiki skills training to more than 2,300 people in over 200 countries. In return for free training, participants are asked to contribute a learning resource. So in addition to building capacity in online skills, Learning4Content is expanding COL’s library of free learning materials.

eLearning for professional development
International organisations are harnessing the power of eLearning to widen access to professional development for staff,
especially female and junior workers based in field and country offices. Usually using a combination of online communication, CD-ROMs and print materials, COL’s eLearning programmes are tailored for each organisation so that learners can easily apply what they are learning to their daily occupations. The programmes provide learning in areas ranging from effective communication and report writing to operational data management and debt management. A high average completion rate (80 per cent) and a growing list of clients reflects the success of this approach to professional development.

COL has also developed several university-level eLearning courses – the Commonwealth Executive Masters of Business Administration, Masters of Public Administration and Professional Diploma in Legislative Drafting – to build skills among government and business professionals in Commonwealth countries.

**Teacher training**

The task of training a large new generation of teachers is enormous and urgent. As school enrolments rise dramatically and the demands placed on teachers increase, the need for quality teacher development is growing dramatically. eLearning is an effective way of developing quality teachers who can help deliver on the goal of universal primary education.

Teacher training institutions in developing nations are building up and introducing new eLearning programmes. Organisations such as Nigeria’s National Teachers’ Institute are launching ambitious eLearning initiatives to upgrade the qualifications of in-service teachers. COL is supporting these initiatives by providing training in instructional design, audio and video script writing, video production and designing eLearning materials, as well as advocacy, facilitating partnerships and quality assurance. The ‘Green Teacher’ course, developed by COL and the Centre for Environmental Education (CEE) in India, is a Diploma in Environmental Education for teachers. This innovative eLearning programme combines face-to-face sessions with distance learning. The learning materials include an interactive CD containing useful environmental education tips and aids for classroom teaching. The one-year course is aimed at upper primary school teachers in India and South Asia. Environmental education is a priority in India; the Supreme Court recently ruled that the environment should be a compulsory subject in all schools. By broadening access to environmental education, the Green Teacher programme is making a contribution towards sustainable development.

As educators continue to discover the potential of eLearning, they will help learners seize opportunities and help people in small states acquire the skills and training they need to improve their livelihoods and contribute to development in their country.

Sir John Daniel became President and CEO of COL in 2004. Previous positions include serving as UNESCO’s Assistant Director-General for Education, Vice-Chancellor of the UK Open University and President of Laurentian University. He was knighted by Queen Elizabeth for services to higher education and holds 28 honorary doctorates.

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL) is an intergovernmental agency created by Commonwealth Heads of Government to encourage the development and sharing of open learning and distance education knowledge, resources and technologies. COL is funded by voluntary contributions by Commonwealth member governments.
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Education in crisis through to development: the gender implications

By Allison Anderson and Marian Hodgkin, the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies

Over half of the 75 million children who are out of school worldwide are in conflict-affected states, and millions more are living in situations affected by natural disasters. Education is a fundamental human right and a catalyst for development; in crisis contexts it can also be life-saving and life-sustaining. Ensuring girls and boys have equal access to quality educational opportunities in crisis contexts must therefore be prioritised by governments and their partners. This article explores these issues and makes the case for gender-responsive education programming in order to ensure both the protection of the most vulnerable children and sustainable and equitable social and economic development.

"I miss my school. I like to study. My favourite subjects are Kiswahili and science. When I'm older I want to be a doctor. I wouldn't mind staying here if I could study. I don't care where I am as long as I can go to school." – Mercy, a 13-year-old girl who was displaced during the violence following the national elections in Kenya in 2008 (interviewed by Save the Children UK).

Unfortunately, Mercy’s situation is all too common; far too few children affected by conflict and disaster have access to education. As the world enters the final stretch towards the 2015 deadline for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and the time-bound commitments of the Education for All Dakar Framework for Action, access to quality education is still far from universal. Approximately 75 million children are out of school worldwide and more than half of these children – 40 million – are living in conflict-affected states, with millions more living in situations affected by natural disasters. While too often neglected, crisis-affected populations are perhaps those most in need of the knowledge, protection and social and emotional stability that education can provide.

Crisis-affected populations are perhaps those most in need of the knowledge, protection and social and emotional stability that education can provide.

Meeting the educational rights and needs of children affected by crisis, and progress towards these global targets, is further hampered by persistent gender inequities. While some countries such as Ghana, Kenya, and the United Republic of Tanzania have made great strides, globally gender disparities are still deeply entrenched: only 59 of the 176 countries with data available have achieved gender parity in both primary and secondary education. Moreover, of the 776 million adults who lack basic literacy skills, about two-thirds are women (Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2009, UNESCO). For girls and boys living in crisis contexts, the gender inequalities experienced in and through education can have particularly dire consequences. Moreover, for countries in crisis or post-crisis recovery, the macro-level effects of gender inequalities within education are detrimental to stability, peace and development.

‘Education in crisis’ refers to a broad range of educational activities including formal and non-formal opportunities, which are life-saving and life-sustaining and therefore critical for children, youth and their families during times of crisis.

Emergency situations include natural disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis and floods, as well as complex crises involving violent conflict and political unrest. Education service delivery in these contexts includes short-term, temporary measures such as the establishment of ‘tent schools’ or ‘child-friendly spaces’ when buildings are destroyed. However, education in crisis also refers to longer-term education policy and programme developments in chronic crisis situations. This might include refugee or displacement situations, where whole sections of a population are uprooted from their homes for long periods of time, during which young people’s educational needs must still be met. Education activities will evolve over time, and short-term temporary education interventions must be planned with a longer-term perspective, taking into account community
rights and the responsibilities of education authorities and the state, as described by Jackie Kirk in ‘Education in Emergencies: The Gender Implications’ (UNESCO, 2006). Furthermore, crisis situations can provide ‘windows of opportunity’, where innovations and reform can be achieved, providing potentially helpful models for countries which are not necessarily recovering from crisis.

**Education, gender and crisis: different needs, equal opportunities**

As for girls, getting an education is especially difficult. Families pay for boys' education before that of girls when they have few resources. A prostitute girl in Makeni said, “I wasn’t able to go to school because my parents prefer paying for my brother instead of me. So, I ended up being a prostitute.”

Mohamed
Sierra Leone (Interview by the Women's Refugee Commission)

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For dealing with the often radical affects of crisis. Conflict and natural disasters can result in loss of livelihoods and changed social roles, when, for instance, women take sole charge of families. Power dynamics within families, communities and societies are often in flux, and can change women’s and men’s status. Moreover, in these contexts educational needs change while the ability for boys and girls to access school also often changes and is impacted by the crisis and the resulting shifts in gender roles and family circumstance. Being aware of these gender dynamics and understanding social constraints is critical to ensuring that children have equal access to quality education in crisis contexts.

Conflict and natural disasters can result in loss of livelihoods and changed social roles, when, for instance, women take sole charge of families.

Different barriers to education for boys and girls are often apparent, with girls usually experiencing greater disadvantage. For example, access to school is often a major constraint affecting children and especially girls in crisis situations. Schools can be far away and not accessible to girls, younger children and disabled learners. Safety concerns on routes to and from school will mean women and girls many not be able to securely travel even short distances without a male companion. In some contexts, being in school or travelling to and from school places boys and girls at risk of abuse and exploitation.

Girls may also be targeted for forced recruitment into fighting forces, in addition to being at considerable risk of sexual violence and other forms of exploitation (IASC Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action: Education Action Sheet, 2006). In many instances, even when children are able to access a safe learning environment, the school itself can be a site of gender inequality. Often schools are staffed exclusively by male teachers, with a curriculum and textbooks that reinforce gender stereotypes and inequity. Even the basic components of the physical school environment, such as poor or absent sanitation facilities, can result in low attendance and high dropout rates among adolescent girls who are menstruating.

Families themselves, and the wider society, can also impose barriers to equitable educational access. As the quote from a girl in Sierra Leone illustrates, impoverished families sometimes prioritise boys’ education over girls, particularly if there is a policy of school fees. Girls are also frequently relied upon to do household work and look after younger children. Both boys and girls may be expected to generate income rather than attend school. Even in contexts where girls do enrol in primary school, dropout rates in upper primary to secondary levels will often increase, especially where early marriage and pregnancy are common.

Even in contexts where girls do enrol in primary school, dropout rates in upper primary to secondary levels will often increase, especially where early marriage and pregnancy are common.

In crisis contexts, the provision of gender-sensitive education is critical and should be supplied without discrimination of any kind. Despite the barriers and risks, quality education for girls and boys is a fundamental human right, a protection mechanism and a catalyst for development. Governments are duty bound to work with communities and other partners to ensure that all children are able to access safe and relevant educational opportunities.

**An enabling right: education for protection and development**

All people have a right to education, and those affected by emergencies are no exception, including during conflict and natural disasters. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
The key to rebuilding our lives and restoring our communities is education, especially for girls who have suffered disproportionately. A generation without education is doomed. We need assurance, we need to be heard and to participate, we need a future. We have a right to education and we want to go to school.”

Akelo Betty
17-year-old girl from northern Uganda (interviewed by the Women’s Refugee Commission).

(1948) articulates the right to education without discrimination and declares that primary education should be free and compulsory; secondary education in its different forms, including technical and vocational training, should be made available and accessible to all by every means appropriate, and that the higher levels of education should be accessible to all on the basis of merit. Since then, numerous international treaties have reaffirmed this right, as well as several major conferences resulting in international declarations committing the international community, and national governments to making ‘Education for All’ a reality.

Despite the rights-based arguments for the importance of education for all children, including those affected by crisis, until recently education was not considered an essential component of humanitarian response in conflict and disaster situations. There is now growing recognition of the life-saving role that education can play in crisis situations, providing cognitive, psychosocial and physical protection to both students and teachers.

All people have a right to education, and those affected by emergencies are no exception, including during conflict and natural disasters.

Education in emergencies provides physical protection through the creation of safe learning spaces free from crisis-related dangers such as falling masonry or landmines, as well as from risks associated with violent conflict such as forced abduction by fighting forces, or direct attacks on schools, learners or education personnel. Cognitive protection is assured through the provision of relevant educational content which meets the needs of the children and gives potentially life-saving health and safety messages. Psychosocial protection through the creation of a safe and stable environment, where children can interact freely with each other, play and be supported by their peers and trustworthy adults, is also a crucial protective element that education can help to provide.

In crisis contexts, where boys and girls have different needs, vulnerabilities and capacities, a gender-responsive education system is crucial to ensure knowledge of these differences and to determine the resulting protection needs and actions. Physical protection will require particular considerations for girls and women, as they often face greater risks of sexual and gender-based violence. For example, the location of school buildings and sanitation facilities and the timing of classes should be carefully considered. School level policies such as codes of conduct for teachers and administrative staff should be in place to ensure that girls and boys are safe in and around school. Cognitive protection should also be approached with a consideration for the implicit and explicit gender dimensions. Information should be available regarding services for children and youth affected by sexual violence. Young men and women should have access to relevant life skills, including information on reproductive health, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections. While boys, girls and youth of both genders need this information, this will best be provided separately, with male and female teachers assigned to each group.

There is now growing recognition of the life-saving role that education can play in crisis situations, providing cognitive, psychosocial and physical protection to both students and teachers.

Moreover, gender-sensitive psychosocial protection will need to respond to the changing gender dynamics which may be a result of the crisis. Providing space for girls and boys, women and men to discuss their experiences, share ideas and concerns is important. Women and girls’ work will often increase during times of crisis, so making time for these activities within the school can be crucial. For boys and men, the cultural barriers to sharing emotions and expression concerns may be a challenge, so finding appropriate and comfortable space for community self-support is also vital.

The rights-based and protection arguments for the importance of equitable education for all affected by crisis contexts are clear. But national governments and their humanitarian and development partners should also be aware of, and responsive to, the role that a gender equitable education system can provide as a catalyst for development. Recent research that supports earlier studies has determined quantifiable and reciprocal links between progress towards equitable education and impacts on other areas of development, such as poverty reduction, public health, democratisation, and gender equality at the society-wide level. In all countries, ensuring equality of opportunity in education is one of the most important factors for reducing social disparities and overcoming social injustice (Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2009, UNESCO). Equitable education also shores up economic growth and efficiency and ensures that societies are competitive in the knowledge-based world economy. No country can afford the economic inefficiencies and developmental stagnation that arise when people are denied educational opportunities because of their gender or social group, least of all states impacted by crisis.

Apart from the more tangible impacts that education can have on the economic and public health domains of development, a quality education can also impart what are often considered ‘softer’ skills and behaviours, but which are essential to sustainable growth and development. Girls and boys learn social

The right to education in international treaties

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
- The Geneva Convention (IV) Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (1949)
- Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1961)
- Convention of the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979)

Education for All in international declarations

- Jomtien Declaration (1990)
skills, self confidence, critical thinking and other essential tools for life, enabling them to fully participate in their society and make informed decisions that impact positively upon their families and wider communities. Inclusive quality education is therefore not only one of the foundations of democracy, but it also contributes to stability and helps to ensure an informed population that has the skills necessary to rebuild after a crisis. Gender-balanced educational opportunities are a key strategy to create more equitable societies and communities; empowering women and girls, with men and boys, to be actors in and to benefit from sustainable transitions to peace and stability.

"Knowing that educating a girl is educating a nation; what type of nation are we building if the young girl is not educated?"

Nan (15)
Cameroon (interviewed by Plan International)

Opportunities for change: guidance and good practice

In crisis situations, the challenges to ensuring an equitable and gender-sensitive education system can seem insurmountable, with some actors arguing that greater stability is needed before efforts to reach excluded groups can be attempted. However, with the average conflict lasting 10 years and families remaining in internally displaced person camps for an average of 17 years, the failure to provide education in these contexts will render entire generations uneducated and unprepared to contribute to their society’s recovery. Furthermore, the social upheaval that emergencies will often cause can also be an opportunity for change. Using this ‘window of opportunity’ to examine the education system with a gendered lens, considering how a gender-responsive approach might be attempted, and implementing incremental reforms in response to crisis can result in long-term changes in education systems that positively impact more equitable relations, and power and opportunity sharing between women, girls, boys and men (Kirk, 2006).

In crisis contexts, where boys and girls have different needs, vulnerabilities and capacities, a gender-responsive education system is crucial to ensure knowledge of these differences and to determine the resulting protection needs and actions.

Grounded in the Education for All commitments, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the INEE Minimum Standards collate best practice and guidance, ensuring that girls’ and boys’ rights to safe, quality and relevant education are met and that the education provided is gender-responsive and empowering for all. Gender equity is a theme that is integrated across all categories of the INEE Minimum Standards, which cover the broad range of educational components and dimensions from access and learning environment, to teacher training, curriculum development, community participation and policy formulation. Further guidance is available from the IASC Gender Handbook in Humanitarian Action, as well as a number of other inter-agency Gender Strategy Sheets developed by INEE’s Gender Task Team.

National governments and their humanitarian and development partners should also be aware of, and responsive to, the role that a gender equitable education system can provide as a catalyst for development.

With these tools, and the technical guidance that INEE and its member organisations can provide, governments should work to ensure that gender-responsive educational opportunities are available for all children, particularly for those affected by crisis. Governments should:

- **Work across ministries:** to ensure that education is included within humanitarian response, policy and financing
- **Build capacity and resilience:** by including preparedness, mitigation and emergency response plans in education sector planning and policy
- **Finance quality education for all:** donor governments must improve coordination and support flexible financing modalities to ensure that all children in crisis-affected states receive quality education.

The Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) is an open global network of representatives from UN agencies, donor organisations, government ministries, non-governmental organisations, teachers, researchers and individuals from affected populations working together to ensure all people the right to quality and safe education in emergencies and post-crisis recovery.

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On October 21, 2002, the African educational landscape was radically altered by the formal entry of Covenant University (CU) into the Higher Education context. Covenant University is located in Canaan Land, Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria. Covenant University is a growing, dynamic, vision-birthed and vision-driven University, founded on a Christian mission ethos and committed to pioneering excellence at the cutting edge of learning.

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About 27 alumni of the University, who joined the institution as graduate assistants, have successfully completed their M.Sc programmes in various academic disciplines in the University and are now on their Ph.D programmes. Also, a good number of them are pursuing their postgraduate education in overseas countries, including University of Bolton, University of Stanford, Coventry University, University of Leeds, Baruch College, New York, College of New Caledonia, University of Greenwich, Kent University, University of Bedfordshire, Birmingham City University, to mention but a few.

Awards
The most recent include, Best Private University Award 2009. Best ICT Driven University of the Year 2009 (the University also won the Award in 2007), Fastest Growing Private University in Nigeria Award 2008, and Private University with Most Improved ICT Programme and Facilities by the Commonwealth Scholarship Prize and Awards (CSPA 2007). The University’s Leadership, Faculty and students have also bagged laurels and awards for outstanding contributions in the development and advancement of knowledge.
Painting a different picture: the power of the arts in education, health and conflict resolution

By Amber Sainsbury, Founder, Dramatic Need

The arts help to cope with trauma, interpret and communicate experience, relieve suffering, confront long-held community taboos, individualise, inspire and re-humanise. This article looks at the necessity of moving arts-led development initiatives from the periphery to the core of development policy, particularly with regard to long-term development targets such as the United Nations’ Millennium Development Goals.

The advantages of arts-based approaches to education and conflict resolution have been long overlooked. Faced with the current global economic crisis, it is possible that investment in arts and cultural development policies will decline further. This could mean the loss of a considerable opportunity in the context of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the wider arena of human development.

It is easy to dismiss arts-based development programmes as trivial in the face of core socio-economic targets. However, since the failure of the so-called ‘Basic Needs’ development theories in the late 1970s, many government bodies and non-governmental agencies have acknowledged the need for an approach that treats the human condition rather than just the physical symptoms of deprivation and conflict.

A lack of both investment and proven methodologies to measure impact means that evidence of arts-based initiatives aiding development remains largely anecdotal. However, these publications, and many others, emphasise the ability of arts-led initiatives to disseminate information and ‘get a message through’ in a universally accessible, non-didactic way. Crucially, they also point to the essential human need for cultural expression.

Art from the start

The arts have been proven to aid children in understanding context and content and help them assimilate information more easily. Education remains at sub-standard levels in many post-conflict and low-income areas. Tools, such as the arts, that enable the circumnavigation of literacy and language barriers are essential in these communities. British child psychologist Kathleen Doorbar, who has worked extensively with traumatised and underprivileged children, explains, “Children may be able to draw things even though they can’t speak about them. It is a brilliant way for them to get their feelings down – and to get rid of those feelings. Once it is on paper, it is real and can be dealt with. While it is in their head, they can’t formalise it.”

Andrew Firmin and Mark Nowottny, ‘Culture: the missing pillar of development’ in the Commonwealth Foundation Report, ‘Putting culture first: Commonwealth perspectives on culture and development’

Many government bodies and non-governmental agencies have acknowledged the need for an approach that treats the human condition rather than just the physical symptoms of deprivation and conflict.

The UN Charter on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) states that children should have a fundamental right to ‘freedom of expression’ and that this right should include “freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, ... in print, [or] in the form of art” (Article 13, UNCRC, 1990). It also states that it is the right of the child “to engage in play, to participate freely in cultural life and the arts” (Article 31, UNCRC, 1990).

The subject has been widely examined, not least in the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and the Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, and the 2005 UK Department for International Development (DFID) Commission for Africa Report. A lack of both investment and proven methodologies to measure impact means that evidence of arts-based initiatives aiding development remains largely anecdotal.

It has long been acknowledged in the education policies of the developed world that creative approaches to learning can foster confidence, improve visual literacy, encourage participation with others and stimulate cognitive processes. Music, art and drama can inspire children to create something over which they have ownership. This is particularly important in circumstances where children struggle with lack of self-worth. For children who are uninterested or intimidated by the learning process, the arts can offer an alternative access point from which they can work towards achieving sound goals.
The theatre of conflict

The arts, when used to relieve trauma, offer a path to rehabilitation more holistic and comprehensive than simply providing the means for physical and infrastructural restoration. Writing in ‘The Times’, London, about the recent conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo, film-director and Dramatic Need trustee Danny Boyle states:

“To suggest that the only things that maintain our humanity are those that serve our biological needs seems to me palpably incorrect. We are not just what we eat. We are also what we feel, what we fear, what we love and what we hate. Unexpressed tensions find their strength in violence. I look at the Congo now; if there is not a means to move beyond the hatred of the past, we will never move past violence.

“I am not suggesting that we drop paintbrushes on Goma. But I am suggesting that post-conflict relief should look to means of coping with and expressing individual trauma, and that the arts can play a vital role. Whether visual or performance-based, they can be psychotherapeutic. They allow people to participate in their own recovery, help them to relocate and resuscitate their sense of self. It’s not for nothing that the arts are called the humanities; they humanise us.”

Ashfaq Ishaq, Executive Director of the International Child Art Foundation

For children who are uninterested or intimidated by the learning process, the arts can offer an alternative access point from which they can work towards achieving sound goals.

“Our project may not change the world, but it is a step forward. It is an ongoing dialogue, where the universal language of music links with the continuous dialogue that we have with young people, and that young people have with each other.”

Daniel Barenboim, co-founder of the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra

“Music breeds an atmosphere of tolerance and basic humanity that is able to transcend national, social and historical boundaries. By igniting the imagination and feeding the basic human need to create, music in conflict areas can reverse long-held prejudices.”

Andy Staples, Trustee, the Choir of London

Boys participate in a Dramatic Need ‘conflict and theatre’ workshop, Ramalotsi Township, South Africa.
"We risk a failure of words, of concepts, of sympathetic insight in the face of AIDS. We need to fight this failure. We need to respond with imagination and compassion to what is happening around us."


trying to distract the children with paper and crayons as she interviewed their mothers. While a child as young as eight cannot be expected to effectively vocalise the trauma experienced in conflict environments, art is non-threatening and easy to assimilate. In the short term, arts-led programmes in conflict environments can provide both an outlet for anger and grief and a means to express and address a particular experience. However, in the long term, when approached methodically, the arts can be used to fundamentally change the outlook of both victims and perpetrators.

Positive images: the arts and HIV/AIDS

Although there have been some recent successes in the fight against HIV and AIDS, the pandemic continues to have devastating consequences in many developing nations. Its spread is aided and abetted by silence and misinformation. It is crucial that victims, their families and communities are encouraged to bear witness and keep a record of their experiences, thereby creating a dialogue from which others can learn.

Role-play helps young people to explore the social and cultural prejudices surrounding the issue of AIDS without feeling personally indicted by their peers.

For those governments that advocate the EAFC approach (Education, Abstinence, Fidelity, use of Condom), the arts, in particular interactive theatre, can have a significant impact. Role-play helps young people to explore the social and cultural prejudices surrounding the issue of AIDS without feeling personally indicted by their peers. An example of this is Themba, an interactive theatre company that has reached more than 50,000 young South Africans. Themba use theatrical role-play to approach themes including HIV prevention, stigmatisation, safe sex, fidelity, acceptance and abstinence. It is crucial that victims, their families and communities are encouraged to bear witness and keep a record of their experiences, thereby creating a dialogue from which others can learn.

In Chandigarh, India, as a part of their AIDS Awareness campaign, the Servants of the People society continue to hold successful theatre, dance and music workshops for slum children whose parents are drug addicts. Themba use theatrical role-play to approach themes including HIV prevention, stigmatisation, safe sex, fidelity, acceptance and abstinence. They have succeeded in making readily approachable issues that may previously have been taboo within some South African communities.

In Durban, South Africa, the cultural organisation Art for Humanity (AFH) has initiated a series of projects showcasing the works of 50 local women poets and artists displayed on billboards throughout the country to draw attention to violence against women. The Northern Free State, South Africa, Dramatic Need has run extensive workshops using theatre to reverse gender roles. Young men and women are asked to create scenes on domestic violence which are performed twice; in the first instance the men and women are in their traditional roles versa. This urges young men to consider the position of women in their community and encourages an open dialogue about violence against women.

Community participation and the arts

The interactive nature of most arts-led development initiatives means that social inclusion and community capacity building can be greatly enhanced. However, the content of any arts-based
A programme must be designed with a thorough understanding of social norms, behaviours and attitudes within a prospective community. When using the arts to cross social barriers, it is important that these barriers are first thoroughly understood and respected. There is little point orchestrating programmes that effectively ‘import’ arts awareness, or art mediums, from more developed countries, without first acknowledging what can be utilised on the ground. What works in one community may not work in another. The appropriate sourcing of local knowledge and an adequate understanding of pre-established artistic traditions of a community must be investigated before an arts-led initiative can be expected to make headway. The empowering quality of the arts can only be effectively commandeered if it is fully participatory and this in turn can only be achieved through adequate research into a prospective audience. Community leaders need to be consulted and involved in the process as much as possible.

Moving forward

Most education initiatives in developing countries would benefit from the inclusion of an element of the creative arts. There must be a concerted effort to support successful grassroots models, while expanding the mandate of governmental arts and cultural policies to include clear processes and methodology based on internationally recognised development practice. Only then will arts-led initiatives have a sustainable impact at a national level.

Although there has been a Commonwealth Advisory Body on Sport since 2005, there is currently no equivalent for the arts. In 2009, the Commonwealth Foundation is launching a working group on culture and development. This group will work to gain the support of governments in placing a greater emphasis on the role of arts in development agendas across the Commonwealth. I am hoping that this means the arts may finally be given the chance to play the leading role they deserve.

Amber Sainsbury

Amber Sainsbury trained as an actress at the Webber Douglas Academy of Dramatic Arts in London. She has taught drama extensively across Africa, particularly in South Africa and Sierra Leone. She was a keynote speaker at the British Arts Council’s Creative Partnerships Conference 2009 on the role of the arts in development. She founded Dramatic Need in 2007 and continues to teach workshops in conflict resolution for the charity.

Dramatic Need

Dramatic Need is a UK-registered charity (number 1119443) that sends international arts professionals (such as musicians, artists and actors) to host workshops in underprivileged and rural communities in sub-Saharan Africa. The charity promotes creative expression as a tool for conflict resolution, social development, gender empowerment and the assimilation of health messages in underprivileged communities. The Official Patron is Her Excellency Dr Lindiwe Mabuza, South African High Commissioner to the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland. The Board of Trustees includes the Oscar-winning film director Danny Boyle and South African-born actor Sir Antony Sher.

Institut Teknologi Brunei (ITB) was established 23 years ago as an institution of higher clearing offering Higher National Diploma programmes in the fields of Engineering, ICT & Business and twinning degree in Civil Engineering. On 18th October 2008, His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam consented to upgrade ITB to a university status.

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The PNG Office of Higher Education Commonwealth Report 2009

HIGHER EDUCATION & DISTRICT SERVICE

SETTING

At present, the higher education community services in Papua New Guinea (PNG) are weak in the 89 districts and villages. The weak linkage is manifested in the shortage of appropriately trained skilled human resources and relevant programmes and monitoring systems. Community service is receiving new prominence in the light of new impact projects such as the 30 year Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) project, the main access roads to open up the hinterland for economic development and service delivery to the districts, including demands of the government’s vision of income take off for all by 2050. Effective service delivery, require curriculum reform and realignment; expanding research and technology transfer through innovation.

FOCUS ON 89 DISTRICTS

The focal points of developing PNG are the 18 provinces, the National Capital District and the Autonomous Region of Bougainville. Major development projects are located in the 89 districts and the 10,000 Local Level Government areas.

A viable service delivery policy means research and teaching and knowledge transfer programmes focuses on professional teaching by user-driven research, and problem solving institutions of higher education. The promotion of service class higher education system is supported by a system of IHE performance rating on specified national objectives delivered through professional teaching of Agriculture; Engineering; Economics; Environmental climate science; Health sciences; Politics, anthropology and social studies and Statistics. These in turn will be supported by management and leadership skills for implementation through courses in communication and negotiation; human resource management; financial management; monitoring and evaluation; project design and management and strategic determination skills.

Thus by working with district authorities, the IHE is adding value to the role of higher education as part of the whole of government service delivery system and similarly, districts are accessing higher education expertise and higher education are learning from the local level governments and benefit from synergies accruing from the impact projects such the Liquefied Natural Gas, mining & petroleum; manufacturing and trade; banking services; science and engineering, natural resources, agriculture, fishery, timber, medicinal drug, biology, climatic conditions agriculture, sociology and anthropology and Teacher preparation and certification.

District service is critical because it is contributing to border development through information exchange system – a partnership that drives innovation, research and business competitiveness within small-to-medium-sized companies in manufacturing industries in the international border area, by aligning our programs to match the needs for high impact programs.

We believe Higher education is equal peer in PNG’s service delivery and the large role higher education plays within society makes the focus to district, the minimal obligation for higher education towards transforming the country. Our motto is Expanding the Frontier of Higher Education Service.

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Abbott and the company's philanthropic foundation, the Abbott Fund, are strengthening communities around the world by expanding access to health care. Abbott Fund's Global AIDS Care programs have successfully served more than 1 million children and families impacted by HIV/AIDS in India, Romania and several countries in Africa. One example of this work is a unique public-private partnership with the government of Tanzania to modernise the country’s health system. To date, Abbott and the Abbott Fund have invested more than $60 million to upgrade health clinics, modernise hospital labs and train health workers in Tanzania - helping to build sustainable capacity to deliver quality testing and treatment for people with diabetes, heart disease, HIV/AIDS and many other conditions.

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Promoting the export of health services

By Nikhil Treebhoohun, Adviser and Head, Trade Section, Commonwealth Secretariat

The export of healthcare services holds great potential for Commonwealth member states in their bid to diversify their economies towards the services sector. This paper looks specifically at the state of medical tourism globally, the forces that are driving it as well as the factors which might impede its development. It also provides a brief overview of one country that has been assisted by the Commonwealth Secretariat to elaborate a roadmap for the exports of tradable services, including healthcare services.

Faced with the erosion of trade preferences, and with growing competition in a globalised environment, many developing countries of the Commonwealth have been exploring ways to diversify their exports base. Worldwide services exports, which increased almost ninefold between 1980 and 2007, driven mainly by ICT and finance, seem to hold the greatest potential. Not surprisingly, the Special Advisory Services Division (SASD) of the Commonwealth Secretariat has received requests from several member countries to assist them to either assess their potential for exporting services or to develop strategies and roadmaps for promoting the export of professional services. ‘Professional services’ is used here in a very broad sense and includes consultancy, legal, medical, construction, information technology-enabled services (ITES), but excludes tourism which is already a fairly mature sector in many countries. Tourism is a special area of focus of the Trade section of the SASD.

By the end of 2008, the following countries had received technical support: Malta, Cyprus, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, St Lucia, Barbados, Dominica, Trinidad and Tobago, Mauritius, Jamaica, Guyana, Kenya and Ghana. In addition, a Pan-Commonwealth Conference was held in Malaysia in February 2008 to provide a platform for the sharing of experiences among the countries and to listen to service providers as well as experts on the potential and prerequisites for the export of different types of services, whether business process outsourcing (BPO) or medical tourism, construction-related or educational. The feedback from the participants coming from 35 countries revealed a consensus on the need for greater information dissemination and sharing of learning experiences among Commonwealth member states, as it was felt that there is a global market for services and countries need to gear themselves up to be able to exploit these new opportunities. However, a different approach is required where services are considered to be exportable and not just for local consumption. Some countries, such as Singapore, have been able to find a middle path which seems to provide satisfaction to its citizens (www.singaporemedicine.com).

The nature of health services exports

Health services exports can take several forms:

- Private clinics can be opened in a foreign country (mode 3), and
- Doctors and medical staff may offer their services on a temporary basis in a foreign country (mode 4).

The WTO website has detailed papers on the definitions and the General Agreement on Trade in Services.

The healthcare services market for exports is estimated at US$40 billion worldwide, and can be subdivided into four segments: (i) medical tourism; (ii) wellness and spas; (iii) nursing and elderly care; and (iv) research and diagnostic services. Medical tourism covers a comprehensive range of therapeutic services, including general surgery, orthopaedics, urology, gynaecology, ophthalmology, dialysis, cardiology and cardiac surgery. Other areas that have witnessed rapid growth in recent years are cosmetic surgery, dentistry, and spas and wellness tourism (e.g. Ayurvedic medicine and acupuncture). The most important segment is medical tourism.

A different approach is required where services are considered to be exportable and not just for local consumption.

Medical tourism

Medical tourism, i.e. travelling abroad for medical care, is not a new activity – it has been around for centuries – but the flow of patients tended to be from poor to affluent countries. In the last decade there has been a reversal of this trend. Here are some quick facts about this sector (some of the forecasts may have to be revised downwards as the international economic landscape has become more rugged since last year; however, the trend is still expected to be upwards):

- The global export market for health services was estimated in 2007 to be over US$25 billion.
- Medical tourism alone accounted for about 80 per cent of that total.
- Medical tourists logged an estimated 19 million trips and spent over US$20 billion in 2008.
- In 2006, more than 50,000 people from the UK travelled abroad for some medical treatment. That is projected to increase to 200,000 by 2010, creating a UK healthcare off-shoring market of between £900 million and £1,000 million (US$1.8 billion to $2 billion).
- In 2007, 150,000 Americans went abroad for treatment, driven by medical costs in the US, with healthcare expenditure abroad of US$2.5 billion.
- The medical tourism industry from the US is growing by 15–20 per cent annually.
Drivers of medical tourism

The growth of medical tourism has been driven by demand and supply factors. The two major factors pushing citizens of developed countries to go abroad for medical treatment are cost and long waiting lists. It has been estimated that a patient can make savings of up to 70 per cent by going to a developing country specialising in medical tourism (see Table 1).

Table 1. Comparative costs of major surgical procedures in USA, Asia and South-East Asia (US$)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedure</th>
<th>US cost</th>
<th>India</th>
<th>Thailand</th>
<th>Singapore</th>
<th>Malaysia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heart bypass</td>
<td>&gt;$130,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$11,000</td>
<td>$18,500</td>
<td>$9,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart valve replacement</td>
<td>$160,000</td>
<td>$9,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$12,500</td>
<td>$9,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angioplasty</td>
<td>$57,000</td>
<td>$11,000</td>
<td>$13,000</td>
<td>$13,000</td>
<td>$11,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hip replacement</td>
<td>$43,000</td>
<td>$9,000</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hysterectomy</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
<td>$4,500</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knee replacement</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
<td>$8,500</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$13,000</td>
<td>$8,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spinal fusion</td>
<td>$62,000</td>
<td>$5,500</td>
<td>$7,000</td>
<td>$9,000</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The two major factors pushing citizens of developed countries to go abroad for medical treatment are cost and long waiting lists.

Challenges and barriers

While there is definitely a market for services globally and these provide an opportunity for many developing countries – in particular the small island developing states (SIDS) – to diversify their economic base by securing some market niches, countries must be aware of the need for domestic reforms to overcome potential constraints and barriers. There are some preconditions to be met before medical tourism can be realistically expected to contribute to national economic growth.

Internally some of the challenges that governments need to address are:

- An adequate supply of skilled medical and paramedical staff
- State-of-the-art infrastructure
- Affordable communications
- A change of mindset in the regulatory bodies (ministry of health, medical council, pharmacy boards) from control to facilitation
- Pricing policies
- Compilation of statistics for the trade in services sector, and
- Greater coordination among private sector suppliers of services.

Promoting services exports in Mauritius: a case study

The Trade Section of the Special Advisory Services Division of the Commonwealth Secretariat has, as indicated previously, assisted several countries to develop strategies for the promotion of professional services exports. A new approach was adopted for a project to develop a roadmap for the exports of professional services from Mauritius, undertaken at the request...
of the government of Mauritius. Instead of following the traditional approach of hiring a consultant to review the country's potential and of submitting a report to the government for consideration, it was decided jointly with the government of Mauritius that it would be a cost-sharing exercise which would involve the Mauritian government and business sector at policy levels as integral participants in the thinking and execution phases. Four symposia (each focusing on a specific sector – finance, ICT, health, and human resource development) were organised to find answers to the following questions: what kind of investment must be attracted to Mauritius to ensure substantial services exports from Mauritius? Are the existing conditions in Mauritius conducive towards the expansion of the professional services sector? What would potential investors need to use Mauritius as a platform?

It was found that Mauritius can benefit from the exports of health services as it was already involved in exports in hair transplants, fertility, and cardiology.

These symposia were expected to result in practical outcomes from which could be extrapolated what needs to be done:

- By government, in terms of policy and administrative change, and
- By business, by way of changes in strategic perspective, investment and employment.

The participants were government policy makers and decision takers, regulators and professionals, domestic and foreign firms with extant/incipient capabilities, unions and civil society organisations.

These discussions were expected to illuminate key policy issues affecting service exports in general as well as specific sectors; product, service, industry and institutional issues affecting export service capacity; resource constraints, especially in terms of human and financial capacity; and operational and behavioural barriers that prevented Mauritius from exporting services more effectively/extensively to a wider range of global markets.

To make things happen, the prerequisites are: national consensus, commitment by government to create the proper regulatory framework and set the appropriate quality standards, a dynamic private sector, and openness to foreigners.

The findings from these symposia, including the exports of healthcare services held in April 2008, have been published by the Commonwealth Secretariat in book form, entitled ‘The Exports of Tradeable Services in Mauritius: A Commonwealth Case Study in Economic Transformation’. It was found that Mauritius can benefit from the exports of health services as it was already involved in exports in hair transplants, fertility, and cardiology. It is estimated that some 1,500 foreign patients travelled to Mauritius in 2007.

But it was also clear that a cluster approach had to be adopted if significant gains were to be enjoyed. The medical services exports cluster would consist of tourism, education, clinical trials and the hospitality sector. In the area of medical education a framework for the setting up of campuses as well as for clinical training is being worked upon. A Clinical Trials Bill was expected to be debated in Parliament in the second quarter of 2009. By the end of March 2009, investment had already been made by Apollo Hospital, Fortis Group, Challenge Hair, Kairali Ayurvedic, and Harley Street Fertility Centre.

**Conclusion**

A country can benefit from medical tourism if certain conditions are present. Apart from the obvious ones such as air access and appropriate infrastructure in terms of hotels, hospitals and spas, these include: portability of health insurance in target markets; respect for client privacy and confidentiality; institutions accredited by recognised bodies; ease of obtaining visas; recognition of professional standards; and a framework for malpractice insurance of out-of-jurisdiction personnel. However, to make things happen, the prerequisites are: national consensus, commitment by government to create the proper regulatory framework and set the appropriate quality standards, a dynamic private sector, and openness to foreigners.
Barbados Fertility Centre: Conception to Reality

The concept of medical tourism is not new. Patients from third world countries for decades have travelled for healthcare to first world countries. What is new is the concept that medical tourism may present an option for “third world” countries to develop specific highly specialised medical treatments and potentially, maybe be able to even provide this service to a better standard or with better results than some first world countries.

Barbados Fertility Centre is an example of such a phenomenon! Prior to 2002, there was no specialized fertility treatment service on this Caribbean island. Couples with infertility travelled outside the region for treatment. In-Vitro Fertilisation (IVF) has transformed options and dreams of having a family. However, typically in first world countries one IVF unit is required for every 500-750,000 population. At a 250,000 population Barbadians would have been destined not to likely see this treatment option available.

However, the vision was always to be a world class IVF unit with the latest scientific advances and technology. Specific to infertility it was well recognized that while science had advanced considerably, following the first IVF birth in 1978, that there was another often immeasurable factor – the impact of stress. Studies suggested stress to negatively impact on egg numbers, embryo quality and therefore success rates from IVF. It was this that also influenced the choice in developing this IVF unit in the tranquil, safe, well established, popular tourism destination on the island of Barbados.

The concept of Barbados Fertility Centre was born in 2002. The support of the Barbados Government was sought and gained. The first challenge was to put together the infrastructure of both facility and specialized team for the task. By 2004 the service was full time and by 2005 the clinic moved into a state of the art single site clinical facility with consultation rooms, ultrasound monitoring facilities, a modern egg retrieval suite and fully equipped specialized IVF laboratory. The centre is fully accredited by the independent healthcare accreditation body – Joint Commission International, ensuring high operating standards and quality assurance.

The team is headed by Dr. Juliet Skinner, Consultant Gynaecologist, who while a native Barbadian and Barbados Scholar was trained in the prestigious Trinity College Dublin, Ireland. Together with specialist IVF Nurses, two UK trained embryologists and the necessary administrative team they have developed this entity to what it is today.

The clinical output has grown 33 to 50% per annum from its first year of service in 2003. For the last 4 years over 85% of couples having IVF treatments are non-residents of the Barbados and medical tourists. Apart from traditional medical science, the team have a holistic approach and encourage couples opting to incorporate supportive care such as acupuncture, reflexology and massage into the stress relief gained from simply being on holiday in an island such as Barbados.

The success rates at the clinic are superior to national published rates in the UK. These success rates have been maintained and for many UK couples are part of the reason they opt to travel for treatment which is available in the UK. In addition, significantly shorter waiting lists and for example, wider options such as is the case in Donor egg treatment cycles have led to a substantial increase in the numbers of UK couples going to Barbados Fertility Centre for IVF treatment.

For further information please go to www.barbadosivf.org or call +246 435 7467

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**Success rates 2005:**

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**Graph showing success rates for different age groups**
Maternal health – at the centre of development

By Sarah Brown, Patron, the White Ribbon Alliance

As the poverty goal that has seen no progress in 20 years, tackling maternal mortality must be a priority for all of us. It is an outrage that one in seven mothers can expect to die as a result of pregnancy in countries like Sierra Leone, Niger and Afghanistan, compared with about one in 30,000 in developed ones.

Women are at the heart of every community – and so women’s health, education and general wellbeing is central to all development. It is women who run most small businesses, who dig the fields, put food on the table, make sure children go to school, and look after the old. Wise women also make great leaders, from community to national and right up to international level.

According to the Department for International Development (DFID) in the United Kingdom, “in rural Africa it is women who carry two-thirds of all goods that are transported – not trucks or planes. In South-east Asia it is women who provide 90 per cent of the labour for rice cultivation.”

Mothers play a vital role in the physical and economic health of their families and communities.

Women make up the sole workforce for more than 25 per cent of all households.

The forgotten Millennium Development Goal?

To focus on pregnancy and childbirth – still the leading cause of death for women of reproductive age in developing countries – is the most effective use of resources. For not only will each woman saved live to contribute to the health and well-being of her society, but if she lives, her child is ten times more likely to survive too.

To focus on pregnancy and childbirth – still the leading cause of death for women of reproductive age in developing countries – is the most effective use of resources.

Yet so far little progress has been made in reaching Millennium Development Goal 5 (MDG 5), to reduce maternal deaths by two-thirds no later than 2015. This year – as for decades past – half a million women will die from preventable complications of pregnancy and childbirth. Of the survivors, 15 million will suffer serious and debilitating injuries. No wonder MDG 5 has been called ‘the forgotten MDG’.
Making progress

However, there are encouraging signs of change. As we pass the halfway mark between the millennium and 2015, many more citizens are demanding change, and many more leaders are sitting up and taking notice. The White Ribbon Alliance, of which I am Patron, is a global movement, now with members in 118 countries and growing fast. With members from every sector of society across Africa and Asia, and increasingly in Europe, Australia, the USA and Canada, pressure is building for better policies and better implementation of those policies, for greater and more sustained investment in maternal health, and for greater integration with other health issues.

At the global level, the Maternal Mortality Campaign, of which many governments, NGOs, professional groups and professional organisations are members, is making headway. The Maternal Mortality Campaign supports the introduction of a major new innovative financing mechanism to fund health systems, and to have financed health plans in place in 20 countries by 2010 in order to meet the World Health Organization’s recommended levels of 2.3 workers per 1,000 people by 2015.

From political will to practical policies

There is no ‘magic bullet’ for maternal health. Instead, broad, concerted and urgent effort is needed at every level.

Political will for change is the first priority in ending the needless deaths of millions of mothers and their babies. Historically, the most effective way to increase political pressure has been through sustained advocacy – from the community to district level, from national to international – to promote and deliver maternal health within countries. This is now building from the grassroots up with the participation of communities around the world. And in more and more countries, leaders are responding to the needs of their people by increasing budgets for maternal health.

A focus on health systems

Even today, when it is widely known that professional healthcare, especially midwifery, is key to saving the lives of mothers and newborns, almost half of women in the developing world are still giving birth with no nurse or midwife.

Often, health ministers are keen advocates of maternal health, but they face budgetary pressures from all sides. Pressure from civil society can help health ministers in their bids to increase the budget for maternal and newborn health, especially when groups unite under one banner, such as that of the White Ribbon Alliance, and speak with one voice to government. For when reproductive health is addressed, everyone benefits; not just women themselves but their families, their communities, health systems and national economies.
Unlike some health issues it is very hard to predict who is at risk; that is one reason why we need to make health systems themselves more effective if we are to make progress.

But there are many reasons. Reducing maternal mortality and morbidity cannot be done without a well-funded and well functioning health system – which encompasses infrastructure, equipment and supplies, human resources and financing, and enabling processes such as transport and communications. Indeed, there is increasing agreement that the best measure of a country’s health system is its maternal mortality ratio.

However, for many countries, measuring maternal mortality remains a major challenge. Only 30 per cent of countries have routine death and birth registration. Maternal deaths are often not recorded, let alone investigated. The absence of data from countries with some of the worst maternal mortality ratios makes it hard to assess progress in reducing deaths, and also hard to discover the most effective strategies to improve maternal health.

Most maternal deaths can be averted if women receive skilled care during pregnancy and childbirth, and if this care is supported by a well functioning health system.

Within the health system, the priority is to train, employ and deploy skilled birth attendants (trained midwives, or doctors or nurses with midwifery skills), so that they can provide health services close to where women live.

Health professionals know what to do to prevent women from dying, and the technologies involved are relatively simple. About 15 per cent of all pregnancies will have serious complications that could lead to death, but even the five ‘big killers’ – haemorrhage, infection, unsafe abortion, eclampsia and obstructed labour – can be treated or prevented if births are attended by a skilled health professional and emergency care is readily available.

The key to success: the skilled birth attendant

A skilled birth attendant is a nurse, doctor or midwife who has received the training necessary to look after a woman during a normal birth and who, crucially, can also recognise, manage and refer complications when they arise. Most maternal deaths – 74 per cent, according to the World Bank – can be averted if women receive skilled care during pregnancy and childbirth, and if this care is supported by a well functioning health system that ensures necessary supplies and equipment are available. Indeed, the proportion of births attended by a skilled health professional has risen from 43 per cent in 1990 to 58 per cent in 2010.

Community participation

Community involvement and participation is fundamental to developing an effective health system. Participation by citizens is also vital to building the demand for health services; the positive response of elected representatives to that demand is central to modern democratic nations.

Some practical examples from White Ribbon Alliance India:

- In Orissa, a checklist has been piloted in four districts to track the implementation of policies and programmes, especially the provision of health facilities and skilled birth attendants.
- In Rajasthan, 226 health sub-centres were assessed and 607 mothers interviewed about the services they received. The survey found that less than a third of those health centres had a health worker available round the clock, while most did not have the capacity for training of skilled birth attendants. This advocacy campaign by civil society is bringing sustained pressure to bear for achieving MDG 5.
Maternal death is the leading cause of death for girls aged 15 to 19 in the developing world – they are twice as likely to die in childbirth as women in their twenties.

UK Department for International Development

Pregnancy intervals of less than six months are associated with a 150 per cent increased risk of maternal death.

International Planned Parenthood Federation

Preventing unplanned pregnancies alone could avert at least one quarter of maternal deaths each year, including the 68,000 that result from unsafe abortion.

UK Department for International Development

as well as improved nutrition. Education also lowers the risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS, and increases women’s resistance to harmful cultural practices such as female genital cutting that can double the risk of maternal death.

Improving maternal health can be done, and has been done, even in countries with limited resources, when there is political will.

The good news is that progress on MDG 5 is eminently achievable; improving maternal health can be done, and has been done, even in countries with limited resources, when there is political will and where the people of the country get together to demand their rights to healthcare.

Crucial to progress is the recruitment of more healthcare workers, making sure they have up-to-date midwifery skills and training, the drugs and supplies they need to do their jobs properly, and decent pay and conditions.

Crucial to progress is the recruitment of more healthcare workers, making sure they have up-to-date midwifery skills and training, the drugs and supplies they need to do their jobs properly, and decent pay and conditions – especially in remote and rural areas.

Fixing the health system may seem like a tall order, but the benefits extend to all citizens – and to the economy.

Empowering women: central to every nation

The empowerment of women is at once a means to reducing maternal death, and a positive result of doing so. For instance, family planning enables women to make decisions about their reproductive lives, and this is important if women are to take their full part in society. Girls and young women must be able to complete their education or training, while older women have more time and resources to devote to family and the wider community if they are able to decide on the number and spacing of their children.

As well as being an important step towards women’s empowerment, the health benefits of good family planning are a direct move towards achieving MDG 5.

Women who have been educated are also less likely to die during childbirth because they tend to have fewer children, better knowledge of health services during pregnancy and birth,
THE TUBERCULOSIS THREAT

A summary by the SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL TUBERCULOSIS ASSOCIATION

The new millennium is facing a profound threat from an old adversary, tuberculosis (TB). The World Health Organization (WHO) has recognised that the alarming growth of drug resistant strains of TB could well become a global phenomenon, threatening the achievement of both health and economic goals.

In response to this, millions of dollars have been earmarked internationally for research. This research is for new vaccines, improved and faster diagnostic methods and new drugs for shorter treatment regimens and to combat drug resistant strains. New international non-profit organisations such as the TB Alliance and Stop TB Partnership have been established to spearhead these research efforts, but their results once achieved must still be tested, accepted and financed before roll-out.

In the interim drastic action is required, especially in the worst affected countries. As ever it would seem that basic infection control procedures practiced in the past have been quietly abandoned. This no doubt is the result of reliance on modern drugs at the expense of tried and previously trusted prevention methods. These methods were effective, at least in part, before the advent of TB drugs in the 1950s. Why should they not still be effective, at least in part, against the new drug resistant TB strains?

The answer is that all known infection control practices must be rigorously enforced to at least stem the growing flood of TB. These practices include:

- Lots of sunlight and out-door (“fresh”) air, plus isolation whilst infectious
- Good/nourishing food with plenty of rest
- Medical support and advice
- Good hygiene, such as coughing, sneezing and spitting into paper or cloth, which is then burnt, boiled or disinfected
- Washing hands before and after eating
- Boiling and/or disinfecting crockery and cutlery
- Avoiding alcohol and substance abuse
- Sleeping alone

Enforcement of these basic practices in health facilities and communities should help contain the TB pandemic while research continues into affordable and effective treatment. Additional funding is also urgently required for TB and HIV awareness/education campaigns, for escalating the rate of HIV and TB testing and for improving nutrition to boost immunity and maintain CD4 counts."

SANTA’s Mission

“SANTA, as a dynamic, community-based voluntary association, is committed to serving communities and TB patients throughout South Africa by providing preventative, curative and rehabilitative services in partnership with other stakeholders”

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Marketing yourself to medical tourists: a practical guide for Commonwealth countries

By Melissa Lynch, Business Development Manager, YourSurgeryAbroad

Also referred to as health travel, medical tourism is a term used to describe the act of travelling across international borders to obtain healthcare. This can be for virtually any type of treatment, but often includes elective procedures, or those requiring complex specialisation not available in one’s home country. Currently more than 50 countries identify medical tourism as a national industry.

Key drivers encouraging medical tourism

- High domestic cost of private healthcare in the US, UK, etc.
- Lack of domestic medical insurance or state medical provision
- Waiting times in the key source destinations
- Improvements in technology, healthcare standards and international accreditation in destination countries
- The increasing ease and affordability of international travel
- The benefit of greater confidentiality when being treated abroad (such as with HIV treatment and cosmetic surgery)
- Various treatments being only available abroad (such as Stem Cell treatments)
- Ability to link operations in-between vacation time at a tropical destination.

In terms of the current impact on Commonwealth nations, major existing medical tourism destinations include South Africa, India, Singapore, Malaysia (where the number of foreign patients tripled from between 2001 to 2006, reaching nearly 300,000 - Source: Deloitte), Malta and New Zealand to name but a few, while numerous Commonwealth nations within the Caribbean, Africa and Asia are also actively advancing their medical offering to external visiting patients.

“The market valuation to destination countries of America’s departing patients alone is expected to reach US$21 billion a year, by 2015...”

Deloitte

Medical tourism – a world of potential

Also referred to as health travel, medical tourism is a term used to describe the act of travelling across international borders to obtain healthcare. This can be for virtually any type of treatment, but often includes elective procedures, or those requiring complex specialisation not available in one’s home country. Currently more than 50 countries identify medical tourism as a national industry.

Medical tourism is an industry experiencing rapid growth and development worldwide. According to Deloitte, the major international accounting and consulting firm, throughout 2007 over one million American, British and Canadian patients were treated abroad and this figure is predicted to rise beyond 15 million by 2017. Deloitte also reported that with over 47 million people in the US (2006) being uninsured and not able to receive state-funded domestic medical treatment, an estimated six million of these will travel abroad for treatment and surgery by 2010.

Other key factors driving the increase in treatment abroad are patients simply wanting more affordable private healthcare or seeking to obtain immediate surgery (thus avoiding state healthcare waiting lists), those requiring a medical specialisation only offered in another country, or those who just like the idea of recovering whilst relaxing in a holiday destination. Skyrocketing private medical costs in developed nations plus an increasingly ageing population in the west will also contribute to fuelling cross-border patient travel.

In the US in particular, there are other significant catalysts including the proliferation of US-based medical insurance companies now providing discount policies for those holders who agree beforehand to treatment abroad, plus major US companies choosing to send their employees abroad for quicker and more cost-effective treatment.

In the UK, one of the major promoting factors behind medical tourism is the recent EU Proposal for a Directive on patients’ rights in cross border healthcare which was released in 2008. This will allow patients the freedom to obtain core health services (to which they are entitled to in the UK) in another European Union Member State and the UK National Health Service (NHS) will be requested to reimburse patients for the direct treatment costs. Patients will even be able to undertake treatment without the prior consent of the NHS or the constituent primary healthcare trusts.

Taking all of the above into consideration, it is easy to see why the medical tourism industry is beginning to blossom and governments worldwide are beginning to fund the development and promotion of their healthcare systems and infrastructure to a widening pool of international patients. As an indication of the economic appeal, the market valuation to destination countries of America’s departing patients alone is expected to reach US$21 billion a year, by 2015 (Source: Deloitte). Traditionally, the key departing medical tourist markets in addition to the US and UK are Canada, Australia, Japan and certain areas of mainland Western Europe. Well-established travel routes exist – medical tourists from the US and Canada often travel to South East Asia, Central and South America, and the Caribbean. UK residents are fond of travelling to Southern and Eastern Europe (and also the US, for treatments unavailable on the NHS) and according to research by McKinsey in 2007, 99 per cent of Australian medical tourists travel to Asia. Medical tourism is also developing in smaller nations: the Middle East state of Jordan for example received an estimated 3,000 US, UK and Canadian patients in 2007 (Source: Deloitte).
Advantages to Commonwealth nations

Members of the Commonwealth are in an advantageous position when it comes to aligning themselves as medical tourism destinations. Commonwealth nations have existing and well-established social, economic and cultural connections with countries that are currently leading source markets for medical tourism such as the UK, Canada and Australia.

Commonwealth nations often have higher levels of spoken and written English; a crucial factor for the vast majority of medical tourists, and medical personnel are also generally trained to similar standards to other more developed Commonwealth nations. Many surgeons, doctors and hospital staff from emerging Commonwealth nations take part in training exchanges within major hospitals in the more developed Commonwealth nations. Both of these factors combine to create an appealing set of circumstances for would-be medical tourists.

Lastly, strong family ties between a nation and its Commonwealth counterparts are a major draw for medical tourists and should not be overlooked. For individuals who already have family relations in a particular destination (which is not an uncommon occurrence between Commonwealth nations), travelling for medical purposes is made all the more appealing and many individuals will undertake minor surgical procedures (such as dental treatments) in more affordable clinics, while on vacations to see family and relatives.

The three key elements to establishing a successful medical tourism industry

In order to successfully establish a medical tourism industry at both national and regional/local scales (this can even include supporting a cluster of individual clinics), it is essential for Commonwealth Ministers to consider the following three elements:

1. Accreditation and healthcare standards

Perhaps the primary factor that can deter potential medical tourists from making the decision to be treated abroad is the perceived standard of healthcare and cleanliness in clinics, hospitals and surgeries overseas, especially in what are seen as less-developed nations. In many cases this is a mistaken assumption as some of the world’s finest and most respected medical institutions are now located in destinations such as India, Thailand, Mexico and Costa Rica.

In a 2008 survey of patients by the American-based Medical Tourism Association (MTA), 81 per cent of medical tourists indicated that accreditation played a role in their decision to travel overseas, and this entire group reported that the specific accreditation of the chosen hospital was an important or very important consideration for their decision. Demonstrating your nation’s macro and micro medical accreditations and record of surgical excellence cannot be under-estimated.

On international healthcare accreditation, the main body evaluating individual clinics and hospitals is the American-based Joint Commission International (JCI), commonly perceived as the ‘gold standard’ in international healthcare accreditation. In addition to JCI, there are three other main schemes: the Trent Accreditation Scheme (primarily UK/Hong Kong based); the Australasian Council on Healthcare Standards International (ACHSI) and the Canadian Council on Health Services Accreditation (CCHSA). However, international accreditation is by no means wide-reaching – the total number of hospitals and clinics being part of one of these four schemes is in the hundreds, not the thousands. In addition, accreditation is a big financial commitment so it may not be cost-effective for smaller clinics to apply. National and region-specific qualifications can also offer important indications of quality.

For Commonwealth destinations that currently have no such accreditation bodies (or an affiliation with one of the aforementioned international organisations), this is clearly something worth establishing through relevant governmental health departments. Ensuring your healthcare offering at all levels is of the highest international standard and is thoroughly accredited and regulated, is the first stepping-stone to encouraging increasing patient numbers from abroad.

2. The Internet

How do potential patients in the medical tourism source nations research their medical treatment possibilities? Unsurprisingly, in the same survey, the MTA highlighted that 73 per cent of medical tourism patients researched their international medical treatment options using the Internet.

Consequently, this means a web presence is essential for all destinations, individual specialists, clinics and hospitals seeking the attention of the medical tourism trade.

In almost all cases your website is the first impression potential clients will have of you, which means your website should be a direct reflection of your nation’s (or clinic’s) mission and strategy.

While the old saying is ‘never judge a book by its cover’, this is generally not the case with medical tourism websites. Potential medical tourists will inevitably have some reservations about the perceived quality of services when travelling abroad for treatment and it is highly likely that a vast majority will, even if only subconsciously, link the look and feel of your website to the quality and professionalism of your surgical offering. An error in the loading or navigation of your site could be the quickest way to send a potential patient to a competing destination.

Be sure to have a professional-looking site to help alleviate any concerns of quality. The website should be aesthetically pleasing, clean and easy to use and navigate through. Offering different language versions of your website is also a major advantage.

Lastly, including your website and thus your clinic, hospital or authority’s details on a medical tourism directory website or search engine is an effective way to maximise treatment enquiries and resulting patient numbers. YourSurgeryAbroad.com, for example, contains almost 1,200 clinics and hospitals in 75 destinations, covering 26 treatment areas and is becoming an increasingly popular destination for potential medical tourists to conduct their initial online research.
**Best practice example: Malaysiahealthcare.com**

A world-class example of a Commonwealth medical tourism provider is Kuala Lumpur based Malaysiahealthcare.com – an excellent online portal for international patients interested in treatment and surgery in Malaysia.

Through their website www.malaysiahealthcare.com, they offer patients a one-stop service, acting as medical and holiday consultants and using their established network of national providers. The organisation’s services include:

- Identifying and booking desired medical treatment, hospital and doctor
- Identifying and booking all travel, stay and/or holiday within Malaysia
- Online payment and wire transfers
- Pre-treatment consultations with specialists
- Help in immigration procedures
- Arrangement of a destination manager to handle all groundwork and treatment itinerary in Malaysia
- 24 hours toll-free number for patient assistance

This excellent level of service is a result of a long-term and sustainable approach, and produced by partnering with leading hospitals, tour operators, and finance and insurance companies.

The benefits are obvious – by providing incoming patients with a seamless service the prospect of going abroad for treatment becomes far more appealing and hassle free. This industry-leading format should be replicated across other Commonwealth nations and providers.

### 3. Accessibility

If a potential medical tourist has the confidence that your nation’s medical provision is of a high standard, and they have been able to clearly research an available clinic or hospital, it goes without saying their final decision will probably rest with how easy it is to both travel to the destination and be treated once they are there.

Ensuring air transfers into your key airports are linked (ideally directly) to major national hubs is an obvious priority; however what is often over-looked is the level of service (both in terms of medical, accommodation, transfers, etc.) that patients receive during their stay.

International patient liaisons have proven popular in many well-travelled medical tourism destinations. These liaisons are staff members whose sole purpose is to communicate with international patients prior to, during and after treatment, as well as to provide assistance with any information desired by potential patients such as accommodation, visa assistance, tourism advice and bookings.

Having one central person to contact and assist who is familiar with the anxiety and needs of foreign patients is a comfort to incoming patients. Obviously, having dedicated staff members is more relevant to larger hospitals and clusters of clinics that have the staff and financial capacity. For smaller clinics, simply assigning an existing staff member as the central contact for foreign patients will suffice.

If this is not in a clinic’s capacity, it is worthwhile investigating the use of medical tourism brokers/facilitators who will take the place of an international liaison. A broker provides holistic packages by organising the communication and appointment with clinics, travel, accommodation, etc. For destinations that are currently not serviced by any commercial brokers, this is something that should be established as statistics from the MTA show that just over half (51 per cent) of medical tourists used some form of facilitator to help coordinate their care.

Even if there is no established international patient contact, and the decision is made not to use brokers, destinations should develop relationships with complementary services, such as translators, tour companies, hotels and airport pick-ups. This allows them to offer holistic packages to potential medical tourists and thus eliminates the additional burden associated with worrying about where to stay and how to get there. At the very minimum, the availability of translators and hotel or airport pick-up are a good start.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the expanding global medical tourism industry provides Commonwealth nations with a world of opportunity to establish and promote their private healthcare provision specifically for international patients.

The benefits of this to Commonwealth nations are not just economic, bringing patient fees and indirect expenditure around accommodation, travel, retail and subsistence. Two other benefits include, firstly, the impact on the state healthcare provision of having international standard facilities within the nation’s borders (and the consequent knowledge and technology exchange between institutions and individual specialists).

Secondly, with the world in the middle of an economic downturn and talk of global recession, medical tourism may be one of the only industries that is truly ‘recession-proof’. During times of economic slump in developed nations, patients are actually more likely to seek more cost-effective and affordable treatment abroad.

It is essential that Commonwealth nations lay solid foundations which include healthcare provision of the highest standards and that they consider future international patient requirements at every stage of the development process. For example, the national and local tourism boards must work in partnership with the nation’s health authorities. Not only must a government health authority ‘sell’ their facilities and expertise, but they must also promote the destination as a whole.

**Melissa Lynch** joined the team at YourSurgeryAbroad in 2009 and has a background in the not-for-profit and health sectors, as well as commercial consultancy. Melissa has a Bachelor of Commerce (Hons), a Bachelor of Arts and a Masters of Science from the University of Wollongong, Australia.

**YourSurgeryAbroad** is a directory of over 1,200 medical tourism providers, making accessing international treatment centres easier for everyone. The site is aimed primarily at patients from the US and UK, two of the largest source markets for medical tourism, and provides details of healthcare providers across 75 countries and 27 treatment areas, to form the most comprehensive collection of worldwide clinics on the web.

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Email: info@yoursurgeryabroad.com

Website: www.yoursurgeryabroad.com
A leading African organization

iThemba Laboratory for Accelerator Based Sciences, also known as iTL or iThemba LABS, is a National Research Facility administered by the National Research Foundation (NRF). iThemba LABS boasts with two sites located in Cape Town and Johannesburg. The facility aims to be the leading African organization that is internationally recognized for research, training and expertise in accelerator based sciences and technologies.

Particle beams of various energies and types are provided by the separated sector cyclotron in Cape Town and are used for fundamental nuclear research, radioisotope production and particle therapy. iThemba LABS is the only facility in the southern hemisphere with the capability of offering both proton and neutron therapy. The cyclotron has been in operation for more than 20 years resulting in 1500 patients being treated with neutrons, 500 patients treated with protons, a large number of postgraduate students completing their dissertations with data acquired at iThemba LABS, and various radiopharmaceuticals and radionuclides produced for the local and international markets.

The activities at iThemba LABS are further strengthened through two Van de Graaff accelerators located at the Cape Town and Johannesburg sites. The beams delivered by the accelerators are used for ion beam analyses which include Rutherford Backscattering Spectrometry (RBS), Proton Induced X-ray Emission (PIXE), and Elastic Recoil Detection Analysis (ERDA). The possibility of extending the research activities within the Biological Sciences is made possible through a Nuclear Microprobe (NMP). Considerable progress has been made in Johannesburg to establish an Accelerator Mass Spectroscopy facility. This facility will be the first of its kind on the African continent. Other analytical facilities available at iThemba LABS include an X-ray Diffractometer (XRD), Atomic Force Microscope (AFM) and an Environmental Isotope Laboratory (EIL).

The Science and Technology Awareness Programme (STAP) at iThemba LABS is responsible for interacting with the various stakeholders (learners, students, teachers, general public) to ensure that the contribution of the facility to the development and growth of the country and continent as a whole is recognized and appreciated.

www.tlabs.ac.za
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The Division for Community Interaction and Training (CIT) at iThemba LABS is responsible for interacting with the various stakeholders (learners, students, teachers, general public) to ensure that the contribution of the facility to the development and growth of the country and continent as a whole is recognized and appreciated.
Dear Minister,

We'd like to let you in on a little secret: toilets are a proven, winning investment during these tough economic times. Improved sanitation and hygiene earn $9 in benefits for every $1 invested. They reduce health care costs, increase the return on investment in education, safeguard water resources, and boost industries like tourism. Talk about bang for the buck! In fact, countries can lose 2% of their GDP, if not more, due to poor sanitation.

More than ever, sanitation is transforming itself into a vibrant, everyday human economic activity. Learn more about sanitation at www.wsscc.org.

Sincerely,

Water Supply & Sanitation Collaborative Council
The silent crisis – why we need a global framework for action on water and sanitation

By Barbara Frost, Chief Executive, WaterAid

There is a silent development crisis gathering pace around the world today, including many Commonwealth countries. It is silent, because it affects primarily those who have the least power to speak up: women, children, and those living in extreme poverty. Every year, 1.4 million children die from diarrhoea directly caused by unsafe water and poor sanitation, and hundreds of millions of children miss school as a result of being ill. This crisis is holding back human and economic development. The current response of the international community is inadequate. To resolve this situation a ‘global framework for action’ is required.

Water and sanitation are taken for granted by most people. However, one in eight people around the world do not have clean drinking water, some 900 million people in total. Furthermore, one in three do not have anywhere safe to go to the toilet, a total of 2.5 billion. This masks the fact that the only option for almost half these 2.5 billion people is open defecation – in fields, gutters or bushes – a daily reality for 665 million people in India alone.

One in eight people around the world do not have clean drinking water, some 900 million people in total. Furthermore, one in three do not have anywhere safe to go to the toilet, a total of 2.5 billion.

Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 7, Target 10, outlines the global ambition to halve the proportion of people without access to water and sanitation by 2015. However, at current rates of progress, in sub-Saharan Africa the water target will not be met until 2035 and the sanitation target will not be met until the 22nd century. This is a crisis compounded by rapid urbanisation. Nowhere is urbanisation happening as fast as in Africa, where by 2030 more people will be urban dwellers than rural dwellers. Because most African countries are not managing to keep up with rising demand for housing and services, this is not urbanisation, but ‘slumisation’.

A gendered crisis that holds back progress on health and education

In much of rural Africa and South Asia, women and girls spend on average 15 to 17 hours a week collecting water, often from dirty, unprotected sources as the woman in Burkina Faso in the photo on the right is doing. Access to safe water near the home would end this daily drudgery, but also allow women to increase their incomes by engaging in productive work. One study from rural India suggests that reducing water collection to one hour a day would enable a woman to earn an additional US$100 a year, a significant amount when many live on less than $2 a day.

Collecting water also impacts heavily on girls’ education. In Tanzania, school attendance levels are 12 per cent higher for girls in homes 15 minutes or less from a water source, than in homes an hour or more away. Furthermore, UNDP estimates that about half the girls in sub-Saharan Africa who drop out of primary school do so because of poor water and sanitation facilities.

Often this water is not even fit for human consumption – it can spread diseases like diarrhoea and cholera. Every year, 1.4 million children die from diarrhoea directly caused by unsafe water and poor sanitation. That is 4,000 children dying every day for want of these basic human rights. Diarrhoea is the second biggest killer of under-fives around the world, and kills more children than AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria combined. The associated costs of illness are also significant. It is estimated that 443 million school days are lost each year due to water-related diseases. These illnesses also hinder the health sector – at any one time, half of all hospital beds in developing countries are filled with people suffering from water-related diseases. These avoidable costs equate to about 12 per cent of public health spending in sub-Saharan Africa.

Sophie Zongo collects water from a pond rimmed with animal faeces in her village of Bayandi Palogo, Burkina Faso.

Source/Photo: WaterAid/Suzanne Porter
Scarcity or inequitable distribution?

Reading the global media in recent years, one would think that climate change and water scarcity are the leading drivers of poor access. This is far from the case. While it is a serious problem that by 2030 more than half the world’s population will live in high-risk areas of water scarcity, this is first and foremost a justice issue. There is enough water to go around, if it is shared equitably. The photo above bears this out. The green fairways of the Royal Nairobi Golf Club are next to Kibera, a slum where one million people live and where access to safe water is very low. Across the world, there would be enough water for everyone if it was shared in a fair way, climate change or no climate change.

The crisis in water and sanitation hits the poor hardest. Two-thirds of the 900 million people without water live on less than US$2 a day. Furthermore, the richest 20 per cent in many Commonwealth countries are three times more likely to use improved sanitation than the poorest 20 per cent. This comes as no surprise to poor people themselves. On the rare occasions that they get asked, poor people frequently put access to safe water at the top of their priorities, ahead of health and education. Scandalously, the urban poor even pay more for their water than their richer neighbours. This is because they cannot afford the large fees required to be connected to the network, and must therefore pay water vendors by the bucket. These vendors, with their inefficient supply chains, sell poor people water for typically around 10 times more than the networked rate, litre for litre.

Institutional fragmentation means that in many countries, responsibility for delivering these essential services is split across several ministries.

The drivers of the crisis

Given the scale of the crisis, and the massive potential benefits of action, why is so little happening? There are a multitude of reasons, and the responsibility lies with both developing country governments and donor governments. First of all, institutional fragmentation means that in many countries, responsibility for delivering these essential services is split across several ministries. This is especially true for sanitation, which often falls between the gaps of ministries of water, health, education and environment. Accountability is further undermined by the fact that the burden of the crisis is borne disproportionately by women, children and those in extreme poverty – the very people who have least voice in key decision-making processes.

Analysis of sector expenditure often reveals that, in urban areas, money is often not going towards financing new connections for the unserved, but towards improving services for the non-poor who already have connections. An analysis of aid levels to the sector reveals how donor countries are complicit in the misallocation of financing, with roughly three times as much aid going to ‘large systems’ rather than basic levels of service. Looking at the distribution of aid by country also reveals worrying trends, such as middle-income countries receiving the lion’s share of aid. For example, Jordan, Malaysia and Tunisia all received an annual average of US$80-100 million over 2002-2006, despite all having around 95 per cent water coverage. Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Togo, with around 50-60 per cent coverage, received an average of US$1-2 million over that time.

Looking at the distribution of aid by country also reveals worrying trends, such as middle-income countries receiving the lion’s share of aid.

A development narrative with a missing link

Political leaders rarely extol the virtues of toilets. Health and education are far easier ideas to sell. This neglect is reflected in aid levels over the last decade, as the graph shows. Since 2000, the proportion of aid to health and education has increased significantly, while the proportion for water and sanitation has declined and then stagnated. This approach, when compared to the success of Asian ‘tiger’ states such as South Korea and Malaysia, appears to pay little

Relative aid levels to health, education and water and sanitation (five-year moving average).
The water and sanitation sectors are among the weakest performing MDG sectors, with sanitation trailing furthest behind.

A further aim of the high-level meeting would be to identify which credible plans are not being properly financed. Donors would then jointly decide on how to align their money to finance those plans.

Tackle the crisis urgently

The water and sanitation sectors are among the weakest performing MDG sectors, with sanitation trailing furthest behind. The critical weaknesses in water and sanitation are down to a failure of leadership. The international development community must now urgently bring together high-level bodies that can target resources at the areas of critical failure. Without a framework for action, we will continue to see unbalanced financial inputs and diminished outcomes.

The beginnings of a global framework for action are already appearing, championed by the Dutch and UK governments. However, there is still a long way to go, and more high-level support is needed. This is why WaterAid calls on governments to urgently tackle the crisis by agreeing to a global framework for sanitation and water, including an annual review of the sector, an annual high-level meeting, and a commitment that no credible national plan should fail for lack of finance.
As **insecticide resistance** spreads across Africa, children like Nathan will need a bed net that’s smarter than the mosquitoes.

Learn more about the innovative
The ‘Silent Killer’: a disease affecting 66 million Commonwealth citizens can be prevented and treated

By Ann Keeling, CEO and Prof Martin Silink, President, the International Diabetes Federation

All Commonwealth countries are affected by a disease that has reached global epidemic proportions. This single disease affects over 250 million people, with numbers increasing fast everywhere. It is causing premature death in both children and adults, and devastating complications including amputations, kidney and heart disease. The cost of this disease is challenging health systems even in the wealthiest countries. In low income countries, it threatens to reverse health and economic progress made towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In most cases this disease can be prevented, and where it cannot be prevented, we know how to treat it so that lives can be saved and those affected can continue their lives uninterrupted. Often described as ‘the silent killer’, the disease is diabetes.

The paragraph at the head of this article could easily be mistaken for something written about HIV/AIDS 10 years ago. It took a long, hard struggle to put HIV/AIDS on global and national health agendas and begin to leverage the action and resources that the disease justified (and we are not there yet). The aim of this article is to learn the lessons of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and apply them to the diabetes pandemic, which has now outstripped HIV/AIDS in terms of numbers affected. Like HIV/AIDS, the effects of diabetes seem overwhelming in scope. Though the problem is large, there are cost-effective solutions that can help governments begin to reverse the epidemic and to lower their healthcare costs. We know what to do and there is hope.

Health burden

Similarly to HIV/AIDS, diabetes has now reached epidemic proportions and the figures show it can no longer be thought of as a ‘rich man’s disease’. Today, over 250 million people live with diabetes, 80 per cent of whom live in low- and middle-income countries (LMCs). In contrast, HIV/AIDS affects around 33 million people worldwide, according to UNAIDS. If nothing is done, the International Diabetes Federation predicts that by 2025 diabetes will affect 7 per cent of the global adult population, more than 380 million people.

In the Commonwealth, currently 66.5 million people live with diabetes while 19.8 million live with HIV/AIDS.

Diabetes is also important in the control of tuberculosis. Diabetes is likely to be responsible for 15 per cent of new tuberculosis cases in India. Although non-communicable diseases (NCDs, including diabetes) account for 60 per cent of the global disease burden, NCDs are seriously under-resourced. Most bilateral and multilateral funding organisations of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) to low-income countries have no funding for NCD programmes. We strongly support the focus on the Millennium Development Goals and the continued need to focus on off-track MDG targets but it makes no economic sense – and it is immoral – to ignore the connections between NCDs such as diabetes and the MDGs, and fail to address the growing burden of non-communicable disease.

Economic losses

Once thought of as a disease of the elderly, diabetes is now occurring in younger and younger age groups (ages 20-39 and 40-59). It is impacting on the health of the most productive sectors of society.

The devastating effects of diabetes on families translate into significant losses for every individual in society. The mechanisms are many: losses to employers of trained labour and working days; increased taxation (in all its forms) needed for medical care and support of the disabled; the economic failure of family units and small businesses; withdrawals of children from education (especially girls) to care for ailing relatives; AIDS, tuberculosis,
Health & Welfare

crime and other adverse consequences of destitution; and the general loss of hope and self-reliance that ultimately drive all economic growth.

The direct healthcare costs of treating people with diabetes are generally 2-3 times greater than for those without diabetes, and 4-8 times more if diabetes complications are present. Most developed economies are already spending 10-12 per cent of their healthcare budgets on diabetes. Considering mainly the effects of premature mortality, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that between 2005 and 2014 diabetes, heart disease and stroke combined will cost US$336.6 billion in India and $2.5 billion even in a very poor country like Tanzania. The United States is home to roughly 8 per cent of the world’s population living with diabetes and spends more than 50 per cent of all global expenditures for diabetes care.

It makes no economic sense – and it is immoral – to ignore the connections between NCDs such as diabetes and the MDGs.

Much of the heart disease and stroke in these estimates is linked to diabetes.

Because diabetes is increasing faster in the world’s developing economies than in developed ones, it is the developing world that will bear the brunt of lost economic growth. If nothing is done, diabetes threatens to subvert the gains of economic advancement globally. Accounting for disability, the opportunity costs of care-giving and other factors might triple these WHO figures. Government budgets worldwide will face the immense strain of diabetes care on disability payments, pensions, social and medical service costs, and revenue. Furthermore, private health insurers and employers will face the spiralling costs of treating more and more people with diabetes.

The current global economic crisis only exacerbates these problems. On a national level, the immediate impact of the economic downturn will be felt in reduced public health budgets and upon those individuals and families who struggle to fund their own care. The longer term impacts remain to be seen, but as many developing countries depend on overseas development assistance, a decrease in foreign aid will adversely affect healthcare budgets.

Diabetes requires multiple, long-term medications which, if taken regularly, are very effective in reducing complications such as heart attacks, strokes, amputations, blindness and kidney failure. However, in developing countries, people living with diabetes bear the brunt of medical costs out of their own pocket, given the lack of adequate healthcare infrastructure. The negative effects of failing to take the medication – such as increased glucose, blood pressure or cholesterol levels – are often not immediately apparent. Therefore, there is a high risk that individuals will cut down on their medication in an economic downturn and subsequently suffer the consequences.

The direct healthcare costs of treating people with diabetes are generally 2-3 times greater than for those without diabetes, and 4-8 times more if diabetes complications are present.

It is vital that governments recognise that the population’s health is a valuable asset which must be protected both because health is a human right but also because it makes economic sense to focus on prevention and early treatment to avoid much costlier complications.

Can anything be done?

Overwhelming as the problem seems, action is possible. The response to HIV/AIDS has provided the model that can now be applied to the diabetes epidemic. The HIV/AIDS epidemic required huge action and significant investments in order to begin stabilising the disease’s growth. It required concerted action by government, foundations, non-governmental organisations, the private sector, the international community and people living with HIV/AIDS.

Government budgets worldwide will face the immense strain of diabetes care on disability payments, pensions, social and medical service costs, and revenue.

The epidemic faced climbing mortality rates and had begun devastating economies before it sparked awareness that huge action was needed. Due to the major investments made there is now significant improvement – the levelling of the epidemic, large-scale rollout of anti-retroviral drugs in low- and middle-income countries and tremendous resources steered towards HIV.
The costly and fatal effects of diabetes arise largely from its complications, especially heart disease, stroke, amputation and kidney failure.

In developing countries, people living with diabetes bear the brunt of medical costs out of their own pocket, given the lack of adequate healthcare infrastructure.

Conclusions

The International Diabetes Federation is the voice of the global diabetes community representing our 200 national member associations in over 160 countries. Our most important role has been to raise awareness of the growing diabetes epidemic and to catalyse political action. The global Unite for Diabetes campaign led by IDF resulted in a ground-breaking United Nations Resolution on diabetes, adopted unanimously in December 2006 by all UN member countries agreeing that action should be taken. But myths about diabetes persist and ignorance about the disease and its prevalence remain widespread. The governments of the Commonwealth have many competing priorities and it is not our intention to add another to the list.

The costly and fatal effects of diabetes arise largely from its complications, especially heart disease, stroke, amputation and kidney failure.

Professor Martin Silink is President of the International Diabetes Federation for the period 2006-2009. He led the successful Unite for Diabetes campaign that resulted in the passage of the United Nations Resolution on diabetes in December 2006. Dr Silink is also a Professor of Paediatric Endocrinology at the University of Sydney and the Children’s Hospital at Westmead, Sydney, Australia.

Ann Keeling joined the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) as Chief Executive Officer/Executive Director in November 2008. Before joining IDF she was Head of Gender Equality Policy for the UK Government. Between 2005 and 2008 she was Director Social Transformation Programmes Division at the Commonwealth Secretariat, leading on health, education and gender. She has spent 15 years working overseas, first as an education planner in Papua New Guinea and going on to work in Pakistan, Indonesia and the Caribbean.

The International Diabetes Federation (IDF) is an umbrella organisation of over 200 member associations in more than 160 countries, representing over 250 million people with diabetes, their families, and their healthcare providers. The mission of IDF is to promote diabetes care, prevention and a cure worldwide. IDF is a non-governmental organisation in official relations with WHO and associated to the United Nations Department of Public Information.

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The UN Resolution on diabetes was led at UN level by the developing world with Bangladesh as the resolution’s sponsor. Governments, especially in the low- and middle-income countries that bear the brunt of the diabetes epidemic, must use the cost-effective solutions available and work with WHO, the international community and organisations such as ours – the International Diabetes Federation – to reverse this devastating epidemic.

While these treatments are very important, what is really needed is intervention before people develop type 2 diabetes. Studies have shown that type 2 diabetes can be prevented by improving diets and increasing physical activity. However, making these changes at the population level is much more difficult and requires cross-governmental action on areas such as urban planning, food legislation and education.

The success of this initiative has led to it being used as a model for the development of other similar foot care programmes in other countries. The cost-effective techniques learned throughout this programme are designed to save people with diabetes from foot and leg amputations. Foot care training courses are now being planned in the Caribbean for 2009-2011.

Box 2. Foot care in India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Tanzania

Foot complications are one of the most serious and costly results of diabetes. Improved foot care saves governments money. The International Diabetes Federation (IDF) and the International Working Group on the Diabetic Foot (IWGDF), together with the Diabetic Foot Society of India (DFSI) and the Muhimbili University College of Health Sciences, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania (MUCHS), have created a foot care project called ‘Step by Step, improving diabetic foot care in the developing world’. Participating countries were India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Tanzania. Teams, consisting of a doctor and a nurse or paramedic, were invited to attend a basic and an advanced course to improve educational skills and the management of diabetic foot problems. An experienced national and international faculty was responsible for teaching and the practical sessions.

The costly and fatal effects of diabetes arise largely from its complications, especially heart disease, stroke, amputation and kidney failure.
Health Information Systems (UK) Ltd (HiSL) supplies clinically-rich electronic patient record systems (EPRs) to health institutions throughout the UK and around the world. Originally based at the world-renowned Guy’s and St Thomas’ Hospitals in London, the company has its roots in developing team-based EPRs, the first of which was ‘Diabeta3’, used in diabetes management.

With the product range being developed for new disease areas, there was a need for re-branding, and the generic name of VECTOR was chosen. There are now versions of this diverse EPR application for Diabetes, Diabetic Retinopathy Screening, Cardiology, Orthoptics (Cataract, Glaucoma, Vitreo Retinal, Low Vision, Medical Retina, Orthoptics & AMD), Hypertension, Urology (bladder, testicular and prostrate cancers), Lipids, and Sickle Cell, with further disease areas under discussion.

PERSONAL SERVICE
The core of the HiSL Team have been together for over 10 years now, although the roots of Diabetes Clinical System are in the 1970s. ‘With the team initially based in the hospital environment and working with clinicians day to day developing and evolving systems, HiSL brings an unrivalled depth of experience to help healthcare professionals to implement a system to match their own particular clinical requirements’, according to CEO Steve Courtney.

‘The stability of the VECTOR Team, with many years of health experience, is invaluable, both to us when designing a system, and to our clients so that we can help them get the most out of the technology available. Working closely with our clients every day, we consider ourselves less as a third-party supplier, and more as a part of their team. Additionally, we maintain close relationships with the client’s own IT department, which is fundamental to the success of any system. Our track record speaks for...’

Supporting disease management
The flexibility of the VECTOR patient record management system creates timely access to data across multiple disease areas, enabling seamless patient care in the NHS.

‘HiSL brings an unrivalled depth of experience to help healthcare professionals to implement a system to match their own particular clinical requirements.’
itself. We have happy customers around the UK where VECTOR is configured to fit in snugly with clinical practice. We foster close relationships with team members at each hospital, allowing us to ensure that VECTOR supports and enhances all aspects of the care process.

VECTOR HISTORY
Formally known as Diabeta3, VECTOR was developed at St Thomas’ Hospital, London in the academic Department of Medicine by a team of systems analysts and programmers, in requirements’ close liaison with the St Thomas’ diabetes care team.

VECTOR now supports every aspect of the multidisciplinary care of patients with diabetes, and its users range from administrative and clerical staff through to nurses, podiatrists and dieticians to consultant Diabetologists.

The first version of the diabetes clinical information system was developed in the early 1970s. Since then, the system has become increasingly sophisticated, evolving into Diabeta3, and is now in use in over over 20 acute clinics around the UK, supporting the full range of disciplines involved in the provision of long term care.

FLEXIBLE BY DESIGN
As Steve Courtney explains, VECTOR has been designed, above all, to be flexible. ‘Over the many years we have supported clinical care, we have found that modifications to the system are required as standards and practices change.

Initially, we found that medical staff all shared information, but needed the facility to record their own specialised data. From this premise, VECTOR has grown to allow a depth of knowledge to be available to each discipline, as well as the facility to share core common information across specialities and disease areas.’

When a site chooses VECTOR, they don’t just purchase a fixed set of screens around which their clinical practice must adapt; they get a tailored system. Specialised report writing, and ordering which is unique to the way individual organisations work can be incorporated. VECTOR has therefore been written to be flexible enough to meet the needs of today, and to adapt to the needs of tomorrow.

With the constantly changing needs of clinicians and management and the diversity of technology available within the NHS, the direction taken in developing VECTOR has centred upon meeting these changes. This in-built flexibility ensures that an investment in VECTOR is an investment in clinical service for the long term.

SEAMLESS PATIENT CARE
Health Information Systems is now a successful commercial concern, with sales funding the further development of the system to meet NHS needs.

As Steve Courtney says, ‘NHS innovations such as the N3 network are being exploited and the inherent flexibility of VECTOR means it can be easily adapted to support the information needs across the whole care team. GPs, via access to N3, are now able to view their patient’s record, held on the VECTOR database within the acute hospital, from their own surgery. Further, linking to N3 via secure tokens will benefit clinicians making home visits by allowing access to the main system via any PC or laptop accessing N3, thus enabling updates from remote sites.

VECTOR has also been developed for Diabetic Retinopathy Screening and has been deployed across the UK, including Greater Manchester, which covers over 100,000 patients across nine PCTs, with data being captured from some 104 High Street Optometrists and a variety of static and mobile camera stations.

VECTOR now offers a multi-disease electronic patient platform, covering a care pathway across diabetes management, diabetic retinopathy screening and the ophthalmology sub-specialties of Cataract, Glaucoma, phthalmology, Low Vision, Primary Care, Vitreo Retina, and Medical Retina. This multi-disease platform approach obviates the need for a healthcare organisation to procure a multiplicity of systems from several different suppliers, which would result in the duplication of data and effort, and a maintenance nightmare. With VECTOR, one EPR services many disease areas, with the ability to link into other Trust and national systems via an in-built integration engine, using industrystandard methodologies.

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Innovations in immunisation: the experience of the GAVI Alliance

By Dr Julian Lob-Levyt, CEO, the GAVI Alliance

At the end of the 1990s, vaccination and immunisation efforts in the poorest parts of the world had slowed down, and in some cases gone into reverse. One major gift jolted the thinking – a US$750 million commitment from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Suddenly, the grand idea of delivering vaccines to millions of the world’s most vulnerable children became not only possible, but expected. The brilliance of the Gates grant was not only the size of the funding – US$150 million a year over five years – but the scope of the dream as well. That vision inspired developing country and donor governments, the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the World Bank, the vaccine industry in both industrialised and developing countries, research and technical agencies, NGOs, and private philanthropists to join forces and create new ways of addressing the problem. This was the context for the foundation of the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation, now known as the GAVI Alliance.

Vaccines provided by the GAVI Alliance in 2008 alone prevented 600,000 deaths in the poorest countries; protected 13 million poor children with basic vaccines against diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis; and protected another 31 million children with vaccines against hepatitis B, ‘Haemophilus influenzae’ type b (Hib) and yellow fever. These diseases together once killed thousands of children in the United Kingdom every year. Part of the huge boost in the last two years came from the accelerated availability of a pentavalent vaccine that protects against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, hepatitis B and Hib, the cause of deadly forms of meningitis and pneumonia. The combination vaccine was so popular that 19 countries started using it in 2008, doubling the number of countries using this particular vaccine.

Significant time has to be spent planning for the future, especially the rollout of new vaccines against two of the most prevalent and preventable childhood killers: pneumococcal disease, the single largest cause of childhood pneumonia and meningitis; and rotavirus, the deadliest of diarrheal diseases. Together these scourges kill more than 1.4 million children a year, most of them in poor nations. These brand new initiatives will reach into some of the most difficult-to-access places on earth – including 20 Commonwealth nations that meet the funding criteria.

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It is nine years since the foundation of the GAVI Alliance, a newcomer in the crowded development world but already among its most innovative players. The Alliance was launched at a time when the distribution of vaccines to children in the poorest parts of the world had begun to falter. After strong initiatives in the 1980s saw some countries increase vaccine coverage from 20 to 80 per cent in just a decade, stagnation, and in some cases reverse momentum took over in the 10 years that followed. By the end of the 1990s, serious questions – and doubts – were raised about the future of vaccination efforts. At the turn of the millennium, nearly 30 million children born every year in developing countries were not fully immunised.

Breaking ground with new ideas

The mission is the same today as when the Alliance was launched in 2000: to save children’s lives and protect people’s health by increasing access to immunisation in poor countries. At that time experts in the vaccine world identified three major gaps:

- Between existing immunisation coverage and the children not being reached
- In the significant time lag it takes to introduce a vaccine in the developing world after it has been put on the market in rich countries, and
- Between the need for new vaccines in the developing world and the failure to dedicate the research and resources to create them.

All three gaps are central to the GAVI mission and the organisation has sought to create innovative ways to fill them.

Targeting the funds

First, GAVI allowed governments of countries with gross national product per capita below US$1000 to apply for funds; this criterion initially created a pool of 75 eligible countries (today, 72 countries can apply). Funding was committed for five years, which ensured that governments could plan ahead and over the long term. The Alliance did not dictate how governments should spend the money, as long as the countries met performance goals for immunisation coverage. For countries with greater than...
50 per cent coverage of diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (DTP3). GAVI supported funding for new or under-used vaccines, which initially included vaccines against hepatitis B, Hib and yellow fever. GAVI is also the only organisation of its kind that requests that beneficiary governments help finance their own immunisation programmes.

Successes abound. Consider three Commonwealth countries in recent years:

• In Bangladesh, which has received approximately US$52 million in support from this source, just 5 per cent of children under the age of five were immunised against hepatitis B vaccine in 2003; by 2006, the nation’s vaccination rate for hepatitis B was 84 per cent and the country vaccinated 3.5 million children with DTP, or nearly 700,000 more children than it vaccinated in 2000.

• Cameroon had vaccinated 53 per cent of children with DTP3 in 2000, by 2006, the vaccination rate had risen to 81 per cent thanks to GAVI support.

• And in 2003, small, mountainous Lesotho vaccinated 17 per cent of children with hepatitis B vaccine; five years later, with approximately US$750,000 in support, Lesotho vaccinated 90 per cent of its children against hepatitis B.

Predictability of funds
The Alliance also set out to rapidly accelerate the availability and predictability of funds for immunisation. To do this, members created the International Finance Facility for Immunisation, or IFFIm. Launched in 2006 thanks to the initiative of the United Kingdom and France, IFFIm also received significant support from Italy, Spain, Sweden, Norway and South Africa who together pledged to contribute US$5.3 billion to IFFIm over 20 years. IFFIm raises finance by issuing bonds in the capital markets and so converts the long-term government pledges into immediately-available cash resources. The long-term government pledges are used to repay the IFFIm bonds. Investors are attracted to the bonds because of a solid monetary return, as well as the opportunity to support a worthy social cause.

Since its inception in 2006, IFFIm has raised US$1.6 billion.

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Affordability
A third challenge was the difficulty in introducing new vaccines to the developing world at an affordable price. Market failures normally inhibit rapid development of affordable high-quality vaccines to the poorer countries. The time lag between development and introduction can be as long as 15 to 20 years. GAVI’s Advance Market Commitments (AMCs) initiative aims to address this challenge by stimulating the development and manufacture of affordable vaccines tailored to the needs of developing countries. Through an AMC, donors commit money to guarantee the price of vaccines once they have been developed, thus creating the potential for a viable future market. These commitments provide vaccine makers with the incentive to invest the considerable sums required to conduct research and build manufacturing capacity. Companies that participate in an AMC make legally binding commitments to supply the vaccines at lower and sustainable prices after the donor funds made available for the initial fixed price are spent. Most importantly, the donor funds are not provided until after the proposed vaccines have met stringent, pre-agreed technical criteria and developing countries request them.

In February 2007, the governments of Italy, the United Kingdom, Canada, Norway, and Russia, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation launched a pilot AMC against pneumococcal
disease with a collective US$1.5 billion commitment. In 2008, GAVI made an additional commitment of $1.3 billion for the period 2010-2015 to help fund the cost of vaccines. In 2009, Alliance partners will work together to launch the pilot. Ultimately, through the AMC, developing country governments will be able to budget and plan for their immunisation programmes knowing that vaccines will be available in sufficient quantity, at a price they can afford, for the long term.

Seeking to make history

While the momentum must remain in the introduction of existing and under-used vaccines, plans are already under way to introduce promising new technologies against other deadly childhood diseases. Beginning in 2009, GAVI will dedicate resources to accelerating the delivery of new vaccines against pneumococcal infections and rotavirus.

There is no parallel in modern history to the push for these vaccines. Their rapid introduction to poorer nations will come just a few years after their rollout in rich countries. In fact, some developing countries plan to introduce a pneumococcal vaccine before some of the wealthiest countries in the world. By 2015, GAVI’s goal is to introduce the pneumococcal vaccine in 42 countries and the rotavirus vaccine in 44 countries.

Speed is not the only impressive feat. The other main accomplishment is that these vaccines will fight the foremost childhood killers in most of the developing world – DTP3, Hib, and hepatitis B – saving three to four times the number of lives saved by other basic vaccines. And since new markets are promised for the new vaccines through the AMC and purchased through contract auctions, vaccine manufacturers are already making preparations, leading to expectations that competition will further reduce cost.

Judging the results

How does one judge the cost benefit of vaccines, especially now that costs in some cases have dropped from dollars to cents? Past analyses have focused mostly on pure health indicators – numbers of averted illnesses; hospitalisations and deaths; disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) gained; and medical costs avoided. Most of GAVI’s vaccination programmes cost less than US$50 per year of healthy life gained. In comparison, for example, treatment for hypertension in the United States costs between $4,340 and $87,940 for each DALY gained.

Harvard economist David Bloom and others argue that these analyses do not fully capture the full benefit of vaccinations. They point out that immunisation protects people from the long-term effects of illness on physical, emotional, and cognitive development, with subsequent impact on productivity later in life. Evidence supporting this health-improves-wealth perspective suggests that healthier workers will be more productive (better attendance, more energetic) and will invest more in savings (greater incentive to save because of longer life expectancy). The studies by Bloom, Canning and Weston, described in The Value of Vaccination [World Economics, July-September 2005], also found that the long-term impacts of immunisation translated into increased cognitive ability in 10-year-olds, which in turn was associated with higher earnings in adulthood.

In nine years, the GAVI Alliance has channelled hundreds of millions of dollars for developing countries to expand vaccine coverage, allowing them great flexibility in how to spend the money; created business solutions for the sustainable supply of new vaccines while driving the price down; and helped provide life-saving vaccines to millions of children who never would have received it without this effort.

Dr Julian Lob-Levyt is Chief Executive Officer of the GAVI Alliance. Before joining the GAVI Alliance in January 2005, Dr Lob-Levyt, a British national, worked for UNAIDS as Senior Policy Adviser to the Executive Director. Prior to that appointment, Dr Lob-Levyt was the Chief Health and Population Adviser (latterly Chief Human Development and Health Adviser) at the UK Department for International Development (DFID). He had in the past represented the UK government and donor constituencies as a member of the GAVI Board, and as a founding board member of the Global Fund to Fight TB, AIDS, and Malaria. He has been involved in several health schemes of the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI) and the International Microbicides Partnership, as well as WHO programmes. Dr Lob-Levyt has worked in Africa, where he was the Zimbabwe-based Regional Health Adviser for the European Commission. He has also worked for WHO in Cambodia. He is currently a board member of IAVI.

The GAVI Alliance is a unique organisation that aligns public and private resources in a global effort to create greater access to the benefits of immunisation. It does this with precision and in creative, innovative ways to ensure that donor contributions efficiently save lives and help build self-sufficiency in the world’s poorest communities and regions. These efforts are directed through the financing mechanisms of the GAVI Fund and the work of the Geneva-based GAVI Secretariat which channel funding, optimise product availability and market pricing, and coordinate the field support necessary to plan and implement programmes in the world’s poorest countries.

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The South Africa National Health Laboratory service (NHLS) was established in 2001 by an Act of Parliament. As a single organisation under one management structure, it is uniquely placed to coordinate the monitoring of South Africa’s health situation. This monitoring function task is facilitated by its role as the principal provider of clinical laboratory diagnostic services to the 5000+ public service health facilities serving 80% of South Africa’s population, and also by its formal strategic academic affiliation with all nine of the country’s university-based health sciences faculties.

Through our integrated network of 265 laboratories in all nine provinces, the NHLS provides comprehensive diagnostic testing services in the fields of microbiology, chemical pathology, haematology, anatomical pathology and human genetics. These services are supported by a system of professional discipline-based academic supervision, state-of-the-art technology and automation, and rigorous quality assurance procedures to ensure accuracy of results and conformance to international standards.

Through our affiliated academic departments and our National Institutes for Communicable Diseases and Occupational Health, and the National Cancer Registry, NHLS is the nation’s foremost institution for health research in the fields of pathology and epidemiology. Research activities include the generation of critical disease surveillance data upon which national health policies are based, operational and applied research studies aimed at improving cost efficiency, precision, accuracy and accessibility of laboratory testing, both regionally and globally, and cutting-edge basic research into the pathogenesis of diseases common in Africa, such as tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, malaria, typhoid fever and cholera.

By virtue of its Umbrella Agreement with the institutions of tertiary education, NHLS is the nation’s dominant institution for education in pathology, medical technology and biomedical engineering. Teaching activities include formal under and postgraduate courses in the pathology disciplines for students for medicine, science and engineering, support for the teaching of medical technology, and diverse activities targeting public understanding of science, engineering and technology.

Pathology, the only true pathway to medical understanding
Social marketing – an effective way to influence the public

By Dr Ishratul Ebad Khan, Governor of Sindh Province, Pakistan, and Dr Munawwar Alam, Adviser, Governance and Institutional Development Division, Commonwealth Secretariat

Marketing is a relationship between the customer and marketer in which an exchange of value takes place. In commercial marketing there is a direct relationship between the provider and the recipient. People who receive the value (product or services) are the same people who provide the value (money) to the business for a sustainable and profitable commercial operation. As against this, in social marketing, the people to whom a value is being given may not necessarily be the same as those who give the value (in money or taxes) in return. For instance, a polio vaccination campaign or promoting family planning practices may not be funded directly by the beneficiaries, clients or target audience.

Social marketing is the use of marketing principles and techniques to influence a target audience to voluntarily accept, reject, modify or abandon a behaviour for the benefit of individuals, groups, or society as a whole [Philip Kotler and others, 2002]. Normally it is the public sector that ventures into social marketing. The public sector has multiple audiences and a number of objectives. While maintaining a distinct identity, social marketing uses strategies, methods and theoretical concepts of commercial marketing to bring about voluntary behaviour change. As it reaches a large target audience, it is commonly cost effective, with the following additional benefits:

- Promotion of healthy behaviour
- Promotion of services
- Increases in utilisation rates
- Improvements in customer satisfaction
- Enhancements of compliance.

Conscious, deliberate and planned efforts for bringing about behavioural change are not a new phenomenon. As long as 3,000 years ago, campaigns were introduced in Greece and Rome to free the slaves. What management philosophers have developed in the recent past is a targeted approach to influencing the audience and bringing desired changes in its behaviour, attitude, practices, etc.; and this approach is called ‘social marketing’. Credit for this term goes to Philip Kotler and Gerald Zaltman, who presented in the Journal of Marketing (1971) the idea that principles and techniques of marketing to sell products to consumers could also be used to sell ideas and behaviour. Strong impetus was added to this nascent academic discipline in 90s with the entry of the World Bank and the United Nations. Formal academic courses and research began in American universities, leading to the establishment of the Social Marketing Institute in Washington DC. Nowadays, many universities in the US and UK teach social marketing as a separate subject.

### Commercial versus social marketing

**The nature of the product/services.** In social marketing, instead of a product or service, the marketer sells behaviour. This ‘idea’ may be a thoroughly new attitude, or requiring some kind of partial or complete replacement or modification of existing behaviour. The techniques and principles of influencing the target audience are the same in both fields.

**Return on investment.** In contrast to commercial marketing, social marketing does not envisage immediate and direct benefit in terms of quality of product or return on investment. In most cases the response is voluntary; even the public sector cannot support the use of legal or any other kind of compulsion.

**Magnitude.** The beneficiary in social marketing is not only the individual or community but the nation and country as a whole. In commercial marketing the beneficiary is the owner of the business, individual or corporate.

**Objectives.** In the commercial sector, the ultimate purpose is to earn profit and therefore the strategies are tailored accordingly. However, in social marketing, the aim is individual and societal gain. Often, there may be a long-term financial premium to be gained by social marketing; for instance, family planning may lead to population control, which can indirectly lead to better allocation of resources for the socio-economic sector. Similarly, a polio eradication campaign can reduce the burden of disease on health providers and government through reduced hospital admissions and healthcare costs.

**Segmentation.** In social marketing, segmentation is done on the basis of the extent and prevalence of the problem or issue. The market is primarily segmented on the basis of behaviour variables such as knowledge, beliefs and current behaviour, e.g. the HIV/AIDS pandemic in many countries.

### Table 1. Characteristics of the private and public sectors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Private sector (commercial marketing)</th>
<th>Public sector (social marketing)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual choice in the market</td>
<td>Collective choice in the policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demand and price</td>
<td>Need for resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closure for private action</td>
<td>Openness for public action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The equity of the market</td>
<td>The equity of need</td>
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<tr>
<td>The search for market satisfaction</td>
<td>The search for justice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Customer sovereignty</td>
<td>Citizenship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Competition as the instrument of the market</td>
<td>Collective action as instrument of the policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exit as the stimulus</td>
<td>Voice as the condition</td>
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Inseparability between production and consumption so that perishability of product/service. A given service cannot be stored to be used at a later date like a physical product.

Roberto argues that social marketing campaigns that have tangible products (such as family planning) are relatively easier to launch than campaigns that are purely directed to seek behavioural change without involving any kind of product, such as countering child abuse, anti-smoking, etc.

Price. In social marketing, the price of the product may not necessarily be monetary; instead, it may require the client or customer to give up intangibles, such as time or effort, or to risk embarrassment or disapproval. If the costs outweigh the benefits for someone, it is unlikely that he or she will adopt the product. The consumer must perceive benefits to be at least equal to or preferably more than the perceived cost so that the chances of adoption are much greater.

Place. Place is the way the product reaches the consumer. In commercial marketing this includes the distribution system such as the warehouse, sales force, retail outlets, etc., where it is sold. However, in social marketing, place is less clear cut, but includes the channels through which people are reached with information or for creating awareness. This may include doctors’ clinics, malls, mass media, specially selected media, etc.

Promotion. Promotion is the most visible part of a marketing effort, and some people think it is the only thing involved in marketing. For social marketing, promotion includes everything done to get your message to the targeted audience. It can include newsletters, direct mail, posters, flyers, personal presentations, and others. As the focus is on behavioural change manifested in the form of a sustained demand for the product, mobilising opinion moulders is a good option; but other methods can work well also, such as media events, editorials and talk shows.

The beneficiary in social marketing is not only the individual or community but the nation and country as a whole. In commercial marketing the beneficiary is the owner of the business, individual or corporate.

Differences in the marketing mix

Differences also exist between commercial marketing and social marketing in the context of the traditional ‘Four Ps’.

Product. In social marketing, the product may or may not be a tangible item, and can vary from physical products (such as pills and vaccines) to services (such as rehabilitation of drug addicts), practices (such as giving up smoking) and more intangible ideas (such as protecting the environment). In order for the product to be viable, people must first perceive that they have a genuine problem, and that the product offers a good solution for that problem. Besides tangibility, the following factors further differentiate the two diagonal modes of marketing:

- Inseparability between production and consumption so that the services offered in social marketing are consumed at the same time they are produced.
- Heterogeneity, that is to say that no two experiences will be similar at the service delivery outlet despite similarity of quality and quantity of product or service. Here, there is a difference of perception and preconceived notions. For instance, two students may perceive quality of education differently. Dingwall and Fenn state that the greater this difference in knowledge is, the more difficult it is to market the service.
- Perishability of product/service. A given service cannot be stored to be used at a later date like a physical product.

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Partnership, policy and politics

Elizabeth Gregory and Ellen Ritter have highlighted many of the special aspects of social marketing in the public sector:

Partnership. Social and health issues are often so complex that it is very difficult to make a difference without mobilising community support and volunteer organisations such as NGOs. Therefore, social mobilisation and public communication are necessary for a successful social marketing campaign.

Policy. Social marketing is directed at achieving change in behaviour, but that is hard to sustain unless the person’s environment supports that change for the long run. Therefore policy change is often needed, and media advocacy programmes and commitment of the government can help. Social marketing can directly contribute to policy development as it is based on sound understanding of citizens, their lives and communities. Improving this level of understanding is therefore critical to

The Government of Pakistan formulated population policy in the year 2002. The government is attributing particular importance to the role of social marketing, as well as to the cooperation between the public and the private sector (public-private partnership), though a national social marketing policy is still missing.

Greenstar Social Marketing is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation devoted to improving quality of life among low-income people. Following the Government of Pakistan, it is the country’s second-largest family planning provider. Established in 1985 with the assistance of USAID, Greenstar pioneered social marketing products, now 19, (relating to family planning) and instituted a social franchise of private providers of over 18,000 male and female doctors, female paramedics, and pharmacists.
achieving measurable impacts on people’s behaviour across a range of different policy and practice agendas. It is being increasingly recognised now that social marketing can improve the impact and effectiveness of behavioural interventions, whether in policy formulation, strategy development or implementation and delivery.

**Politics.** Issues addressed by social marketing programmes are often controversial or complex, such as safer sex, family planning or violence, and may need some diplomacy with community organisations to gain support, to get access to the target audience, or to neutralise potential adversaries. Therefore, it is necessary for the government to have political ownership of the programme.

In view of the ever-increasing pressure on the public sector for the qualitative and quantitative improvement in service delivery, the boundary between the state and the market needs to be adjusted. The programme managers of the public sector tasked with social marketing can learn from the way the private sector and commercial marketers promote their products, for the general benefit of the common man. In the contemporary environment, the concept of ‘socially responsible corporate citizens’ is gaining currency. Together, public and private partnership can bring about radical improvement in the plight of the teeming millions, especially in developing countries where government has myriad problems of resources and expertise. A list of references for this article can be obtained from the authors.

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Dr Ishratul Ebad Khan is the youngest and longest-serving Governor of Sindh Province in Pakistan. By profession he is a doctor. Sindh is the second largest province in Pakistan in terms of population but is the biggest in terms of trade, and is home to Karachi, which is the world’s seventh mega city and the hub of Pakistan’s economic, cultural, and industrial activities. Dr Ishrat is also Chancellor of public sector universities in the province. He writes on health issues that have a public policy dimension. He has been instrumental in bringing a sizable foreign direct investment in the province and in promoting infrastructure development of megacity.

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The Governance and Institutional Development Division (GIDD) of the Commonwealth Secretariat helps Commonwealth developing countries strengthen their structures of governance and administration. GIDD’s work covers the full spectrum of public sector administration and management, as well as working to strengthen civil society and private sector institutions with public responsibilities. GIDD provides a range of technical assistance to help governments improve their public services. Programmes are tailored to country, regional, and pan-Commonwealth needs. GIDD implements some 70 public sector development projects annually.

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Since 1999, **Medicines for Malaria Venture (MMV)** has worked with partners to develop new medicines against malaria, targeted towards vulnerable groups most affected by this disease: small children and expectant mothers.

The first MMV-supported product, a sweet-tasting paediatric formulation **Coartem® Dispersible**, was approved by a stringent regulatory authority and launched in January 2009. Two other artemisinin combination therapies, **Pyramax®** and **Eurartesim®**, will be submitted for registration in 2009. MMV and partners are working to ensure that these new medicines reach those who most need them.

To drive the eradication of malaria, MMV is collaborating with over 600 scientists to discover and develop new therapies to combat resistance, tackle other malaria parasites, and reduce transmission of infection. Its vision is a world in which innovative medicines will cure and protect the vulnerable and under-served populations at risk of malaria, and help to ultimately eradicate this terrible disease.

**Curing Malaria Together**

**Developing new products for malaria eradication**

**Medicines for Malaria Venture** is a not-for-profit public-private partnership dedicated to reducing the burden of malaria in disease-endemic countries by discovering, developing and facilitating delivery of new, effective and affordable antimalarial drugs.

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Since 1999, **Medicines for Malaria Venture (MMV)** has worked with partners to develop new medicines against malaria, targeted towards vulnerable groups most affected by this disease: small children and expectant mothers.

The first MMV-supported product, a sweet-tasting paediatric formulation **Coartem® Dispersible**, was approved by a stringent regulatory authority and launched in January 2009. Two other artemisinin combination therapies, **Pyramax®** and **Eurartesim®**, will be submitted for registration in 2009. MMV and partners are working to ensure that these new medicines reach those who most need them.

To drive the eradication of malaria, MMV is collaborating with over 600 scientists to discover and develop new therapies to combat resistance, tackle other malaria parasites, and reduce transmission of infection. Its vision is a world in which innovative medicines will cure and protect the vulnerable and under-served populations at risk of malaria, and help to ultimately eradicate this terrible disease.

**Curing Malaria Together**

**Developing new products for malaria eradication**

**Medicines for Malaria Venture** is a not-for-profit public-private partnership dedicated to reducing the burden of malaria in disease-endemic countries by discovering, developing and facilitating delivery of new, effective and affordable antimalarial drugs.

www.mmv.org | info@mmv.org

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LED Fluorescence Microscopy
Solutions for TB & Malaria
QBC ParaLens provides a low cost, durable solution.

Fluorescence microscopy based diagnosis of TB smears has been proven to provide greater sensitivities and shorter examination times compared to standard light microscopy, but until late, the required resources have not been feasible for many economically challenged and remote healthcare facilities.

QBC Diagnostics is committed to providing high quality epi-fluorescence microscopy to the developing world.

**Significant problems with standard fluorescence microscopy:**
- Expensive capital costs
- Short-lived light sources
- Technician fears of UV induced health hazards
- Delicate instrumentation
- Stable power requirements
- Significant training is required

**Benefits of the QBC LED light source:**
- Low power requirements
- Long lamp lives (e.g., 20,000 hours)
- Emits no harmful UV
- Systems require less instrument training
- Low cost

LED based fluorescence microscopy is an effective means of diagnosing TB affording at least a 10% increased sensitivity over standard light microscopy with no decrease in specificity\(^1\). This new technology has also overcome several key hurdles introduced by standard fluorescence microscopy.

The ParaLens retrofits a lab’s current compound light microscope, turning it into an epi-fluorescence scope and thus reduces the capital costs. Since the technicians are already familiar with the lab’s microscope, the training is significantly minimized. The ParaLens is very robust, performing well in various healthcare settings and environments. Finally, to accommodate even the most remote health care facilities’ QBC Diagnostics also offers solar packs and 12V battery adapters to power the ParaLens LED source.

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Who We Are.
Verve is an information technology products and services company, working from our strong base of industry knowledge and software expertise, we provide solutions, outsourcing and consulting services.

We work with companies to save time and money and increase operating efficiency by automating business processes, efficiently managing workflow and replacing, augmenting, supporting or outsourcing processes.

Verve has grown from serving local clients to serving clients in the African region.

Our Employees:
Verve was founded by passionate people, which is a common denominator among all who work here. We want a company culture that exposes excellence; one that encourages staff to innovate and to get involved in all aspects of company operations and that promotes employee career development.

Verve is committed to encouraging each employee to learn and progress. Employees are informed of what the company expects from them and are expected to give their best of themselves every day. In return, the company gives employees the feedback and coaching to help them grow. We have a total of 70 employees spread in different departments.

Our Vision:
"To be a globally revered corporation using technology to provide 1st class business solutions, delivered by world-class people."

Mission Statement:
"To achieve our objectives in an environment of fairness, honesty, and courtesy towards our employees, clients, partners and society at large."

Our values are the basis for everything that we do. They guide the way that we manage the careers of our staff, the way that we deal with our customers and the way that we run our business. Verve caters for the human factor as the key to project success, especially in managed services. This is highlighted Verve's core values:

Programs, Recognition & Memberships
2. Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), 2002-2004
3. Memberships
   • Member ARMA International (Association for Information Management Professionals)
   • Member PRISM International (Professional Records & Information Services Management)
   • Kenya BPO & Contact Centre Society
   • Member of the World Future Society
   • Computer-Human Interaction (SIG-CHI)
   • Enterprise Content Management Systems Organization (AIRM)

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Information & Communication Technologies
KENYA - the Rising Giant

Kenya has reached a point that it has embraced a knowledge economy. The ongoing upgrading of the ICT sector in Kenya through the formulation of a National ICT policy and strategy is significant because it has the potential to generate additional jobs and employment for a growing youthful population. In setting out the direction, the policy lays out emphasis on the development, deployment and exploitation of ICTs to aid the development of the Kenyan economy.

Strategically located in the Eastern part of Africa, Kenya is poised to be an outsourcing powerhouse. With a population of slightly over 30 million people, an improved business environment and a convenient time zone (GMT+3), Kenya positions itself as a leading destination for call centre, Business Process Outsourcing, software development and other related activities.

Why Kenya for ICT Investment?

New developments in ICT: Kenya has put in place an aggressive Fibre Optic terrestrial and submarine programme. The programme will be complete in a few months time. We are making great strides towards becoming an outsourcing giant for Africa.

A Dynamic Private Sector:
The private sector has played an important role in the economic development of the country. It has participated in the Manufacturing, Agriculture, Tourism and Financial sectors of the economy with trade unions existing in every sector.

Preferential Market Access:
Given its geographical position in Africa, Kenya is a hub to the rest of Africa and the world. A market outlet for over a billion people can be reached from Kenya, and Kenya is an active member of most regional and International Trade agreements.

Kenya’s most trading partners are the COMESA (Common Market for East and Southern Africa) with a population of 385 million, EAC (East African Community) with a population of 93 million members, the European Union, the United Arab Emirates and the United States. We are the largest single exporter to the EAC and COMESA.

In March 2004 the EAC Customs Union Protocol was signed. It came into force in January 2005, viewed as a major breakthrough this agreement established the region as a free investment and marketing area. The agreement binds the member countries to remove existing trade barriers (tariff and non-tariff) in order
to move towards the institution of a full free trade regime in five years.

Kenya also has membership in African Caribbean and Pacific states, Generalized System of Preferences; it also has access to the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA).

**Qualified Work Force:**
Kenya prides itself of its large pool of professional workers trained both at home and in other parts of the world. Kenya holds the distinction of having the highest number of university and college educated English speaking professionals in East Africa.

Most Kenyan universities offer courses in IT and various colleges, technical and management institutions offer diploma courses. Kenya therefore has skilled personnel in the IT profession including computer programmers, software developers, hardware maintenance engineers, systems analysts, and IT consultants.

**Political Stability:** Kenya boasts of a model coalition Government, the first of its kind in Africa. Since independence Kenya has enjoyed remarkable stability despite changes in its political system and instability in neighboring countries.

Reforms in the legal and political systems of the country have led to improved freedom and led to a more open and engaging political and governance system.

**The Government Portal:**
The ministry of Information and Communication through the ICT board is implementing the Kenya Information Resource Center project dubbed BASHIRI. The project consists of two main components. The Bashiri web portal and the Bashiri information Centers.

The overall aim of Bashiri is to provide information on a wide range of government services to the citizenry as well as provide a platform for Kenyans, investors and partners in the various governance and development sectors to upload and share community content (news, pictures and other information).

Within the portal is a blog gaav. go.ke which provides a platform for Kenyans, investors and other non governmental actors to interact with government agencies and departments.

Kenya has always been in the forefront of Information Technology developments in Africa, establishing the first internet peering point for ISPs in Africa. The country also recently rolled out first national Internet backbone connecting six cities with the use of digital switches, fibre optic cable and satellite services.

With these developments coupled with the innovative and pioneering spirit of the Kenyan people the opportunities in the ICT sector in Kenya are boundless.
Enriching human capital in the Commonwealth through ICTs

By Omer Ahmed Awan, ICT Officer, Governance and Institutional Development Division, Commonwealth Secretariat

There is a broad consensus among contemporary development policy makers about the impact information and communication technologies (ICTs) can have on poverty reduction, human capacity building, empowerment and many other benefits. In the economic sense, the spread of ICTs is often considered as a path to a new industrial revolution. The diffusion of ICTs in all human activities is accelerating economic and societal changes, giving rise to a new economy – an information economy that is, in the words of Victoria Tinio, “powered by technology, fuelled by information and driven by knowledge” (UNDP, 2003).

ICTs gained global recognition as basic enabling tools towards achieving the Millennium Development Goal of reducing poverty to half by 2015, at the World Summit on Information Society in 2003 at Geneva. The ICT for Development (ICT4d) platform was introduced to exchange knowledge between developing countries and industrial countries about the use of ICT for development and capacity building.

"The route from poverty to empowerment starts with the click of a mouse.”

Maartje Op de Coul, 2004

From there, a whole range of ICT definition and classification emerged with links to human and economic development. In general, ICTs are “technologies that can be used to interlink information technology devices such as personal computers with communication technologies such as telephones and their telecommunication networks” (Robert Chapman, Tom Slaymaker and John Young, 2003). However, in a broader perspective, ICTs can be described as “a range of electronic technologies which when converged in new configurations are flexible, adaptable, enabling and capable of transforming organisations and redefining social relations. Moreover, ICTs combine technical, functional, organisational and human characteristics that influence communication processes and information content” (Sabine Michiels and Loy Van Crowder, 2001).

This broader definition opens up a new concept of ICTs that encompasses a full assortment of technologies that ranges from radios, television, the press, physical notice boards and computers with internet, at one end; to personal data assistants (PDAs), mobile phones, digital cameras, networks, databases, portals and software at the other. However, it is imperative for policy makers to keep in mind the difference between rich and poor in the relevance of ICTs in general use. Most Commonwealth countries are still categorised as ‘developing’, with some showing an alarming level of poverty. Figure 1 highlights common ICTs that are relevant to development needs.

It is imperative to realise the implication of this figure: that Commonwealth developing countries should not focus merely on the complexity and modernity of ICTs, as these can pose questions of accessibility, costs of consumption – as well as taxing users’ ability to learn the necessary skills. It is clear that the simpler the technology, the greater the access and usage among poor segments of the society. So the golden rule, in the words of Alfonso Gumucio Dagron, would be: “Leave ‘access’ behind and adopt ‘process’, mind more about ‘contents’ and less about ‘machines’.”

Human capital enrichment

The human resources of Commonwealth countries are the cornerstone of their economic growth, socio-political stability and ability to compete in the global economy. In the current era of survival of the fittest, a proactive approach is required to realise that ‘human capital enrichment’ will be the basis to become the fittest. On a very simple note, as defined by DFID, human capital represents the skills, qualification, knowledge and ability to work that together enable people to pursue different livelihood strategies and trigger economic growth.

Policy makers across the Commonwealth should realise that human capital enrichment is the basis of their survival. It is an ongoing process; however, the two most important variables of human capital enrichment are the provision of education/learning, and training. Moreover, the knowledge-based economy has driven the need for continuous investment in human capital, so that the changing patterns of competitiveness can be met to
accordingly. Similarly, it has now become the responsibility of Commonwealth countries that they should develop the human and intellectual capital to produce the optimum supply of intellectual assets for a sustainable and competent workforce with relevant knowledge and skills. The major policy shift in this regard will be a transformation process from provision of traditional education and training towards ‘continued learning’, where learning is the key factor. According to the futurist Alvin Toffler, “The illiterate of the 21st century ... will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn, and relearn.”

“ICTs greatly facilitate the acquisition and absorption of knowledge, offering developing countries unprecedented opportunities to enhance educational systems, improve policy formulation and execution, and widen the range of opportunities for business and the poor. One of the greatest hardships endured by the poor, and by many others who live in the poorest countries, is their sense of isolation. The new communications technologies promise to reduce that sense of isolation, and to open access to knowledge in ways unimaginable not long ago.”

World Development Report, 1998

**Enriching Human Capital**

**Education & Learning**

**Training**

**Linking human capital enrichment with economic gains**

The biggest competitive advantage of the Commonwealth is its immense human capital, with more than one-third of the world’s population. Now is the vital time to realise that increases in human capital are not merely a development problem; linking its enrichment with economic gains can replace a potential difficulty with a golden opportunity.

The first basic step is to re-examine the expenditure on human resource education and training as it indicates a country’s investment in human capital and the resultant link with economic growth. Then, enrichment in human capital can be measured by a consequent increase in the number of skilled, educated and qualified human resources in targeted areas. The government’s investment in human capital enrichment can provide both direct and indirect forms of benefit, at both the individual and the macroeconomic level. At an individual level, human capital will be directly benefited by high productivity and more income generation, as well as indirect advantages such as better health and civic amenities. At a macroeconomic level, enriched human capital – along with individual gains – will result in better economic growth, high productivity levels and, more importantly, a competitive Commonwealth workforce.

**ICTs and human capital enrichment**

As in any sphere of development, ICTs have the potential to enable human capital enrichment through their applicability in education and training sectors. More and more developing countries are adopting ICT technologies to mainstream their strategic goals of human capital enrichment, as there is an increasing need for development of world class human resources that can handle local technological needs, as well as competing with the other nations in the international markets both in terms of quality of work and cost-effectiveness. To attain that result, it has become imperative for policies and practice to integrate ICTs into education from the grassroots level upwards.

There are five potential areas of human capital enrichment through education and training where ICTs can play a vital role (UNESCO, ‘Using ICT to Develop Literacy’, 2006). Those areas are discussed below:

a) Enriching and enhancing learning
b) Enhanced access to education and learning
c) Training of the trainers in education
d) Creating local content
e) Creating an enabling environment for education and learning.

**Enriching and enhancing learning**

Over the years, ICTs have been utilised in education and learning outcomes. ICTs, in the context of most of the developing Commonwealth countries, can enhance acquisition of literacy skills. Evidence from studies suggests that ‘use of ICTs, in particular computer technologies, is correlated to positive academic outcomes, including higher test scores, better attitudes towards schools, and better understanding of abstract concepts ... In addition, a secondary benefit of ICTs in education is to familiarise new generations with the technologies that have become integral components of the modern world’ (Wadi D Haddad and Sonia Jurich, in ‘Technologies for Education’, UNESCO 2002). It is also worth noting that amalgamation of various ICT tools can add value and trigger exciting stimuli for learners. For instance radio, when used in combination with printed course material, can make literacy lessons more true-to-life and interesting. Similarly it can cause a psychological
effect on learners as well. For instance, a combination of audio and visual stimuli is more effective than visual stimuli alone in enhancing vocabulary and sentence construction skills.

In a comprehensive study of ‘Information Technologies and Education for the Poor in Africa’ (Wanger, Day and Sun, 2004) it was asserted that one of the most dramatic, powerful and effective outcome of ICTs is the distance learning opportunity through radio, television and now PCs with internet connectivity.

Enhanced access to education and learning
Traditionally, policy makers face numerous and multidimensional barriers as they work to ensure optimum access to education – including socio-cultural factors, amount of time required to access education while keeping other livelihood strategies unaffected, and most importantly geographical constraints. It is quite amazing to realise that ICTs have overcome most of the barriers (if not all of them). With the help of ICT tools, access to education has grown exponentially over the years and education is now reaching areas that no policy makers would have imagined possible some years ago. Most of these ICT-enabled techniques are categorised under eLearning or distance learning:

- **eLearning** is commonly known as technology supported education/learning (TSL) where the medium of instruction is through computer technology, particularly involving digital technologies (Wikipedia, 2008).

- **Distance learning**, on the other hand, is an ICT-enabled learning where various tools other than only the computer are used for learning at a distance, especially when sufficiently trained teachers and other resources are lacking. These ICTs such as radio, television, audio cassettes and the internet can be used in isolation as well as in combination to promote literacy in remote areas.

Training of the trainers in education
Human capital enrichment is not possible if the trainers are not fully equipped to enhance the skills of the trainees. ICTs can by no means replace trained and qualified teachers; however the technologies can not only assist in reducing the teachers’ workload, but can also stimulate innovations in pedagogy, curriculum and school organisation. The role of ICTs as a vital enabler of professional development for human capital enrichment is evident by UNESCO’s ICT Competency Standards for Teachers (ICT-CST), that will sooner or later become an integral part of all countries’ professional development and human enrichment policy. UNESCO has created the ICT Competency Framework for Teachers (ICT-CFT); a policy framework, set of competency module descriptions and implementation guidelines to support a more consistent approach to teacher professional development and skills recognition. It is also aimed at the teachers’ use of ICT skills and

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**Pakistan Television Corporation’s ETV Project**

One of the smallest but successful projects is Pakistan Television Corporation’s Adult Functional Literacy Programme, an education television (ETV) project where television was used as the major ICT tool to facilitate literacy lessons to targeted learners in areas including health and nutrition, financial management and child care. As a the basic aim of the project, adult learners were taught various lessons to equip them with skills to read and write simple sentences relating to their daily life and work with the help of audio-visual techniques. Such ICT tools illustrated how letters and words are formed and reinforced learning of the elements taught. This two-year project was regarded as successful and various NGOs were collaborating with PTV, including Adult Basic Education Society (ABES).

(UNESCO, 2006)

**Functional Education Project for Rural Areas (Pakistan)**

Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) has initiated a project named the Functional Education Project for Rural Areas (FEPRA). The primary aim of this project was to facilitate literacy skills and education to remote regions based on their own local needs. The project involved setting up literacy centres in the target areas and visiting learners at these literacy centres fortnightly to teach classes and monitor progress. The ICT mode used to deliver these courses involved audio cassettes along with printed literacy primers which provided lessons in reading and writing in the local languages. Apart from basic education the cassettes also covered subjects of local interest including poultry-keeping, better yields, and first aid.

(UNESCO, 2006)
The African Virtual University – an open distance eLearning (ODeL) initiative

The African Virtual University (AVU) is a Pan African Intergovernmental Organisation based in Kenya whose aim is to significantly increase access to quality higher education and training through the innovative use of ICTs. AVU is working on the mandate of increasing access for tertiary education and training using open distance and eLearning (ODeL) methodologies. The basic AVU architecture includes the use of mixed ICT tools and modes of delivery, such as video conferencing, use of the internet, CD-ROM, video and audio cassettes and print-based materials and mobile learning. A typical AVU remote class which meets at a learning centre has 25-50 learners who either view a lecture on a large screen or work online on computers that have been provided to learning centres throughout Africa. The learners interact with tutors and other students via e-mail, using WebCT and through the telephone.

Creating local content

Another dilemma in the use of ICTs for human capital enrichment is that local human resources feel themselves alienated from externally driven content, whereas local content is considered as a keystone for optimum utilisation of ICT tools. Local content is defined as “material conceptualised, produced, and packaged by people using their own instruments (languages, values, beliefs) as a source of identity and development, and it enables cultures to flourish. Therefore, development of local content is like ‘localising’ the World Wide Web, rather than an ocean of information that is irrelevant to local needs. Communities, on the other hand, need small ponds of sweet water that are suited for their consumption.” [Gerolf Weigel and Daniele Waldburger, ‘ICT4D: Connecting People for a Better World’, 2004]

Various ICT tools, both in isolation and in combination, can assist in creation, distribution as well as management of local content. For example, word processing software can be used to modify literacy education material that has been developed elsewhere, to make it available in local languages and on locally-relevant subjects. Similarly, desktop publishing technology is useful in creating local teaching and learning materials and it eliminates the problem of outdated learning content in many countries since it makes production of printed matter much more timely and relevant [UNESCO, 2006]

Seelampur ICT Centre (India) – creating local content

Recognising the importance of local content creation, distribution and management, UNESCO, in partnership with the National Informatics Centre of India, has developed eNRICH, a new computer application for content and knowledge management by local communities. One of the tools to create and record local content was done through development of Seelampur ICT Centre. The purpose of this ICT centre was to create local content at Seelampur in north-east Delhi, about 20 kilometres from the city centre. Local women were involved in the creation of rich local content based on local heritage. ICT resources to improve their teaching, to collaborate with colleagues, and perhaps ultimately to become innovation leaders in their institutions. The overall objective of the project is not only to improve teacher practice but to do it in a way that contributes to a higher quality education system that can advance a country’s economic and social development. This comprehensive framework can easily become a benchmark for all Commonwealth countries, especially for those that are aiming to equip their future human capital with necessary 21st century skills.

Multimedia content: Seelampur Community ICT Centre, Delhi

I. Theme: women’s empowerment and basic literacy
   i. Computer aided basic literacy – learning elementary maths and calculations. Hindi literacy.
   ii. Nikah – understanding of Islamic marriage laws, duties, rights and obligations
   iii. Personality development and office administration
   iv. Basic IT literacy including familiarity with the internet, information retrieval and access of data.

II. Theme: women’s healthcare and life skills
   i. Basic healthcare for the self and for the family
   ii. Life skills and adolescence education
   iii. Maternal and child care
   iv. Reproductive and sexual health.

III. Theme: vocational skills enhancement, economic sustenance including practical demonstrations
   i. Basic tailoring
   ii. Dress making
   iii. Candle making
   iv. Home-based liquid soap manufacturing
   v. Mehndi application and bridal make-up
   vi. Tie and dye
   vii. Home-based phenyl manufacture
   viii. Chalk making
   ix. Book binding, notepad making and notebooks and other stationery
   x. Pappad making units
   xi. Agarbati making
   xii. Handicrafts making such as table covers, food covers, purses, dolls
   xiii. Soft toys and decorative items making
   xiv. Cycle repair
   xv. Electric repair.

IV. Nuts and bolts of running micro-enterprises
   i. Forming self-help groups and micro-credit for women
   ii. Home-based catering service.

Initiative B@bel – a UNESCO project

The primary aim of this project is “Giving access to information by promoting linguistic and cultural diversity in cyberspace”. UNESCO has identified an immense area of concern: that is, 90 per cent of the existing internet content is available in 12 languages, as these languages are considered commercially viable; while speakers of the world’s other 6000 or so languages who do not understand one of these ‘major global’ languages are excluded from participating in this valuable information flow. It also shows that immense cultural, social, political and even scientific information can be ignored because of ignorance of the language used. So ‘Initiative B@bel’ is aimed at:

- Promoting the use of multilingualism on the internet with a view to make access to its content and services more equitable for its users worldwide, including developing countries and countries in transition.
- Supporting linguistic and cultural diversity, preventing language segregation and protecting languages in danger of disappearance through the application of ICTs.
- Supporting pilot projects and the development of multilingual content management tools and resources.
methods of digital recording and CD-ROM were used to record their knowledge about local practices. As a result of this activity, in-house CD-based packages were developed that incorporated newly created local content in diverse areas. The list of multimedia content is given in the box overleaf.

Creating an enabling environment for education and learning

“For literacy to become widespread in a society, written material should also be readily available in daily life and accessible to all. Such an environment cultivates opportunities for coming into contact with, and creating, written material and thereby reinforces and promotes the development of literacy skills.” (UNESCO, 2006)

To enrich human capital with required literacy skills, it is therefore imperative that there is a steady flow of information at all times. IGTs have considerable potential to serve this purpose as various ICT tools can be incorporated in the human enrichment process to facilitate the flow of information, particularly in written form. Some of the ICTs include television, mobile messaging, desktop printing, internet, eLearning centres and so on.

An immensely valuable enabler

Human capital enrichment is an urgent need. Commonwealth countries need to develop highly efficient personnel to hold their own in the ever changing and increasingly competitive global market. IGTs, being the basis of the information revolution, can act as an immensely valuable enabler and catalyst to allow developing Commonwealth countries to leapfrog certain stages of human capital development. While primarily focused on education and training, ICTs can provide tremendous support in enriching the learning options, broadening the access to education in untapped remote areas, training the education professionals, creating rich and valuable local content and enabling an overall conducive environment for learning and human development.
Poised to cross the digital divide

Mobile communications has the potential to lift some of the most vulnerable populations out of poverty and enable them to engage fully with the global digital community. During the last few years, we have seen affordable mobile communications become reality in many countries. Serving lower-income consumers has not only proved to change individual lives, create wide socio-economic benefits, but it has also lead to profitable business. Success stems from the cooperation and contribution of all players involved: vendors, governments and service providers.

By 2015, 83 percent of the global population will live in emerging markets and 45 percent will be under 25 years old. These are the people who stand to reap the biggest benefits as the communications industry reaches out to the next billion consumers.

Furthermore, the benefits of mobile communications extend beyond individuals to deliver improved growth and development for entire economies. As studies confirm, an increase of 10 mobile phones per 100 people boosts GDP growth by 0.6 to 1.2 percentage points.

Knocking down the affordability barrier

For many people cost remains the main barrier to better lives through the mobile. Typically, people are willing to spend between 5 and 10 percent of their disposable income on mobility. With 2.7 billion people earning less than 2 US dollars per day, a monthly cost of 5 US dollars or less is needed to enable the majority of the world’s lower-income consumers to join the mobile community.

As Nokia research shows, emerging market average total cost of ownership (TCO) is 10.88 US dollars, down from 13.16 US dollars in 2007. Although much remains to be done to lower TCO further, this is a huge advance compared to the meager drop in TCO of just one percent from 2005 to 2007 and increases the potential to reach more and more consumers every day.

Information that makes life simply better

As mobile communications becomes more affordable, many lower income consumers will also have their first internet experience via a mobile phone.

Migrating people from voice to data services takes a deep understanding of local user behavior. As the results from Nokia Life Tools from India show, the right information delivered and presented in an accurate way is life-changing. With Nokia Life Tools the rural dwellers are able to use internet services, including market prices for produce, weather information, and information about diseases as well as English and general knowledge courses, to make their lives better.

Widespread, affordable access to information services and the internet will further enhance people’s lives through improved business opportunities and social well-being. The road ahead is wide and open, leading to the promise of a better future for all, with everyone connected.


2 For example: Vodafone policy paper: the impact of telecom on economic growth in developing countries and potential and the growth of mobile services in sub-Saharan Africa, GSMA report, 2008.
Mobile banking: the potential to provide millions with financial access

By Mike Foster, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, UK Department for International Development

More than a third of the world’s 4 billion mobile phone users live in developing countries and many of those lack access to basic financial services. Mobile banking can dramatically reduce the cost of delivering financial services to the poorest by up to 50 per cent and increase the outreach of financial services to poor people. However, for this to happen there have to be changes in banking regulation, industry models and commercial strategies by financial service providers. The major challenge is that policy makers and regulators are struggling to develop effective regulation for this new and fast-changing environment, which is at the convergence of technology and financial services.

This is an anxious time for the global financial system and for the world economy as a whole. What began as a financial crisis has become a global economic downturn. Many trillions of dollars have literally disappeared from the global economy.

Given this, it may seem an unusual time to talk about extending financial services to the 2 billion people without them.

Those without access to banks

But I would argue that the financial crisis has shown us precisely how vital banks are to any economy – be it in America, Europe, Africa or Asia. It is because the banks matter so much to all of us – as savers, as householders and as business people – that governments and others have stepped in to safeguard them against collapse. Yet for 2 billion people these basic tools of financial management are out of reach. This lack of access to finance in some parts of the developing world stifles entrepreneurship, stunts development, and leaves people trapped in a poor, cash-only society.

Yet advancements in technology that have changed our lives over the past 10 years have the potential to even more powerfully transform the lives of the world’s poorest people.

Mobile phones – transforming lives

While many of the world’s poorest people remain without access to finance, there has in recent years been an extraordinary explosion in the number of mobile phones in developing countries. 10 years ago, just eight per cent of the world’s population had access to mobile phones. Today that proportion has risen to more than half the world’s population – some four billion people.

Africa has the highest growth in mobile phone subscribers anywhere in the world at more than 50 per cent a year over the past five years alone. And mobile phones, by enabling people in developing countries to ‘leapfrog’ crumbling or non-existent infrastructure, are already transforming lives for the better.

A recent study out of Harvard tracked fishermen off the coast of Kerala in southern India, and found that when they started using mobile phones to call around prospective buyers while they were still out at sea, their profits went up by an average of eight per cent – while prices in the local marketplace actually went down by four per cent. Mobile phones didn’t just result in a better deal for producers – they led to a better deal for consumers as well.

And mobile phones – along with other technologies such as smart cards and biometrics – are beginning to offer the opportunity of giving financial services to the many millions of people who have never had a bank account.

Mobile banking – domestic and international opportunities

Vodafone and Safaricom’s mobile money transfer service in Kenya – M-PESA – was launched two years ago with support from the UK’s Department for International Development. M-PESA allows customers to effectively make payments by text message and then access a network of agents in petrol stations, supermarkets or small stores across Kenya to deposit or withdraw cash.

In just over two years since it was launched, M-PESA has over six million subscribers, which means that there are more M-PESA customers in Kenya than there are bank accounts.

There is a huge opportunity across the developing world to replicate this kind of success. In Pakistan, just 25 million people have bank accounts, while 70 million have mobile phones. There is a clear market need that should be served. An example of this happening is in Pakistan where Telenor Pakistan, the second largest mobile provider in the country, took a controlling stake in Tameer Microfinance Bank with a view to entering the mobile banking market.

But this opportunity does not just exist within countries. For as people move across the world in ever greater numbers, they want to find ways to move their money too. Last year, the total flows of remittances according to the World Bank were over $300 billion.

As the economic downturn takes hold, the World Bank predicts global remittances will fall by as much as eight per cent as migrant workers find it harder to send money home. But when money is tight, it is even more important that people are able to send money home as cheaply as possible. Mobile phone remittances offer the prospect of cutting the transaction cost to the customer by half – a saving that could go directly into the pockets of many of the poorest people in the world.

It is not just mobile phone technology that offers new banking opportunities. One pilot scheme in India is using smart cards to bring down the costs of transactions by 90 per cent. In Latin America, banks have used card-swipe and barcode technology to establish more than 105,000 virtual branches in shops and post offices in parts of the country that, just seven years ago, had no form of banking at all.

The opportunities of this technology-enabled ‘branchless banking’ are clear. But, and rightly so, there are also concerns at the rapid pace of change in this marketplace.

Regulators

Policy makers and regulators are trying to develop effective regulation for this new and fast-changing environment at the
convergence of technology and financial services. Making policy and law is a difficult process in terms of providing the right level of regulation that will determine not only whether branchless banking is permitted, but also to what extent it can safely realise its potential to reach previously unserved or underserved poor people.

At the beginning of 2009 the UK Department for International Development launched a new three-year project, Facilitating Access to Financial Services through Technology (FAST, see box) to support developing country governments and regulators to share experience, learn from where others have gone before and in so doing, help expand the availability of this technology across the developing world.

Private sector support

Governments and regulators alone will not be able to determine whether branchless banking can transform the lives of millions of people around the world. That can only be achieved with the time, expertise and investment of telecoms companies, financial providers, analysts, retailers and civil society.

Some might argue that in these tough economic times, there is no scope for such investment in a growth area such as this. Others would say that if the opportunity is right, and there are literally millions of customers waiting for a product, then it is an area that should not be missed.

It is only by working together – governments, private sector and civil society – that we can help millions of people to lift themselves out of poverty, by putting opportunity in the palm of their hands.

FAST

The Facilitating Access to Financial Services through Technology programme, or FAST as it has come to be known, will support this growth area in three ways:

• Providing research and diagnostic support for regulators and policy makers
• Supporting development of industry standards related to branchless banking, and
• Supporting development of a policy framework and promoting adoption of new technology based government to person payment channels that can help increase efficiency while promoting financial inclusion.

Mike Foster is the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the UK Department for International Development.

DFID, the Department for International Development, leads the UK government’s fight against world poverty. One in five people in the world today, over one billion people, live in poverty on less than one dollar a day. In an increasingly interdependent world, many problems – like conflict, crime, pollution, and diseases such as HIV and AIDS – are caused or made worse by poverty. DFID supports long-term programmes to help eliminate the underlying causes of poverty. DFID also responds to emergencies, both natural and man-made. DFID’s work aims to reduce poverty and disease and increase the number of children in school, as part of the internationally agreed UN Millennium Development Goals.

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Mobile Banking for the Un-banked – The story of E-Fulusi Africa in Tanzania

On this, the 60th Anniversary of the organization of Commonwealth States, it is an opportune time to speak of what we at E-Fulusi Africa see as a shift in paradigm. E-Fulusi Africa has been integrally involved with these rising innovators for over 6 years, not only through developing technological solutions, but recognizing that innovation requires multi-disciplinary approaches. In a country where more than 85% of its population is un-banked, technology for mobile banking is indispensable. With the goal of revolutionizing the banking tendencies in Africa, E-Fulusi Africa has developed a solution that allows the un-banked communities to send, receive money and make merchant payments. E-Fulusi Africa’s mobile banking and money transfer technology system is available to both formal and informal financial institutions, forming a wide ecosystem of partners ranging from commercial banks and MFI’s to Credit Cooperatives and Mobile Network Operators. The importance of context awareness and taking a multi disciplinary approach was first discovered through the 18-month regulatory process with the Central Bank of Tanzania and the Tanzanian Communications Regulatory Authority we were determined to go through before launching our services. We engaged in a dialogue with stakeholders, while internally trying to develop innovative approaches, culminating in developing a policy framework on mobile banking in Tanzania in conjunction and partnership with the Central Bank. We were once again faced with the importance of context in the education and sensitization campaign we developed for our first service launched. Through dialogue, partnership, trial and error we launched a nationwide campaign introducing mobile banking and its socio-economic benefits to individual livelihoods, tailored for local cultural norms while simultaneously using innovative mediums and methods. As its stands today, E-Fulusi Africa has established a system to process transactions and payments through mobile cellular networks. The two services utilizing our mobile banking solution are MOBIPAWA a network independent service and as of April 2008 Z-Pesa, a service provided by Zantel, a Tanzanian MNO. E-Fulusi Africa has also developed other solutions that can benefit different parties such as Merchant Payment Module and Airtime Vending Suite (AVS). www.efulusi.co.tz
South Africa – building the information society

This year the South African Government looks back 15 years and assesses its achievements as the first democratic government of the country. The Department of Communications’ contribution to the government’s achievements are, among others, the promulgation of the Electronic Communications Act, Broadcasting Digital Migration Policy and their efforts to tackle the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) skills shortage through the establishment of the Meraka e-Skills Institute.

The Electronic Communications Act

The Electronic Communications Act (ECA) was promulgated in 2009 to usher in a new policy and regulatory environment in the country. This groundbreaking legislation is important because it created a new environment which enabled convergence in the broadcasting and telecommunications sectors, introduced licensing of new services in network, communication and broadcasting services, and provided for a transparent framework for interconnections. A special feature of the legislation is that it provided for an interconnection and facilities leasing regime. This means that all communications network services have the right to interconnect with other network services, on a non-discriminatory basis, and such interconnection agreements must be lodged with the regulator. This environment is especially important as it increases competition in the ICT sector, which in turn reduces the cost of communication.

The ECA ensures that there is affordable access to a wider choice of international broadband infrastructure and also affordable open access. It is government policy to support the use of diverse technologies, particularly those that promote affordable access to ICTs.

The vision of the ECA was always to efficiently and effectively, which will ultimately result in value for money for consumers and customers.

Broadcasting digital migration

South Africa is preparing to move its terrestrial television broadcasting from an analogue to a digital platform. The International Telecommunications Union set an international deadline for the Africa and Europe regions to have migrated to digital broadcasting by June 2015, as digital migration is critical for the more efficient use of the frequency spectrum.

South Africa’s digital signal was switched on on 1st November, 2008, marking the start of a three-year dual-illumination period. The migration to digital terrestrial television broadcasting means that viewers will have better picture quality. A benefit from moving to a digital platform is that frequency spectrum will be freed up and this will result in a wider choice of services and programmes.

Government adopted the Broadcasting Digital Migration Policy in August 2008, which sets out a clear policy environment within which broadcasting digital migration is implemented. This includes ensuring a future for existing broadcasting services and introducing new services, taking cognizance of the challenges that exist related to local content and access to government information, especially by the poor.

The Broadcasting Digital Migration Policy is premised on the national development agenda of South Africa, in particular social cohesion and national identity, job creation and serving the needs of people with disabilities.

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open the sector by creating a vista of innovative opportunities for entrepreneurs to enter into the marketplace. The competition landscape will be such that there will no longer be any distinctions between different types of operators, nor between voice, video and data. This age of digitisation is leveraged to provide competitive services economically, efficiently and effectively, which will ultimately result in value for money for consumers and customers.

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The Broadcasting Digital Migration Policy is premised on the national development agenda of South Africa, in particular social cohesion and national identity, job creation and serving the needs of people with disabilities. A key aspect of the policy is the Scheme for Ownership Support (SOS) of set top boxes for poor households, which will see the Digital Migration Office to oversee the country’s broadcasting migration process. This office is called the Digital Dzonga (meaning Digital South in Tshivenda, one of South Africa’s eleven official languages) and Dr Ivy Matsepe-Casaburri, South Africa’s Minister of Communications, appointed the Digital Dzonga Council in mid-2008, to drive the process.

Tackling SA’s skills shortage at the source

In South Africa there is unanimous

Radio and telecommunications broadcasting is made possible by these radio and microwave transmitters in the Western Cape.
agreement that a skills shortage exists within the ICT sector. Many reasons are offered for this shortage, including an insufficient number of school leavers with the required entrance qualifications; a lack of interest in ICT careers (at school level, in mathematics and science); a mismatch between qualifications and actual demand; and a shortage of educators and trainers with up-to-date experience.

The South African government’s Joint Initiative on Priority Skills Acquisition (JIPSA) is focused on fast tracking the cultivation of 11 sets of priority and scarce skills, and has identified a number of bottlenecks in the skills pipeline which need to be addressed as a matter of urgency. One bottleneck is the fact that the numbers of learners entering ICT programmes at university is much higher than the number of those completing them. Another area of concern is the fact that employers often prefer recruits to have hands-on experience with specific types of software systems. This is a problem because the majority of tertiary institutions only offer theoretical courses.

What this boils down to is the fact that there appears to be a serious level of mismatch between the jobs available and the careers for which universities are preparing students.

**The need for an e-Skills Institute**

To overcome the issues outlined above, a new institution, called the Meraka e-Skills Institute (e-SI), is being established that will take a totally new approach to ICT education and training. The Institute will be in a position to consider supply and demand issues, provide an appropriate portfolio of offerings, and innovative ways of teaching and learning from a variety of perspectives, without the need to defend entrenched opinions.

The e-SI will not duplicate any existing ICT skills programmes in the country, as its primary goal has been determined as one which will leverage existing ICT education and training expertise, infrastructure and courses. It will therefore collaborate with existing institutions and private sector organisations that will partner with it to develop frameworks that include curriculum planning, course development and course planning.

The e-SI will also identify gaps, shortages and mismatches in course content. To this end, the National e-Skills Dialogue Initiative (NeSDII), which was launched in March 2009, will be dedicated to ongoing dialogue between the e-SI and a variety of role players in the industry, to ensure alignment between the supply and demand of skills.

**Commitment and vision**

The e-SI is committed to ensuring that all its students will – on completion of their qualifications – be ready to function effectively in the respective sectors and environment this programme is aimed at, including business, government and the community at large.

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**The Digital Dzonga**

The formation of the Digital Dzonga demonstrates a noteworthy commitment by the South African government to inclusive and transparent decision-making processes. The Digital Dzonga council includes senior representatives from all parts of the digital terrestrial television value chain, including broadcasters, signal distributors and manufacturers. The Digital Dzonga is chaired by Lara Kantor, who has wide experience in broadcasting and is based at the public broadcaster, the South African Broadcasting Corporation.

Although modelled on examples of digital migration offices from other territories, the Digital Dzonga is structured to allow it to meet South Africa’s unique needs. The role of the Digital Dzonga includes all aspects of the digital migration programme, including, but not limited to, defining digital standards and specifications, managing the digital platform, promoting digital transition and establishing and overseeing help schemes for vulnerable viewers. Within the African context, the Digital Dzonga is a first in terms of its inclusive approach and broad digital remit. The Digital Dzonga is tasked with giving strategic guidance to the Minister and the Department of Communications to ensure that the migration from analogue to digital broadcasting is achieved in a swift, effective and coordinated manner, and to develop an implementation plan for digital migration including a communications plan and a plan to assist low-income and special needs groups to switch to digital television.

Among its innovative plans for the next year is the implementation of a consumer education campaign and, with the aid of government, to implement a help scheme and decoder subsidy scheme for vulnerable and poor viewers.

Training will involve diverse groups with a special focus on previously disadvantaged individuals. Students will include unemployed youths and adults, graduates, school leavers, government officials, working professionals and community development workers. Training programmes will be fully accredited locally and internationally, where appropriate.

It is increasingly obvious that a national programme is urgently needed to achieve large-scale improvement in the supply of ICT skills, along with the understanding of how to optimally utilise such skills.

With this in mind, the Meraka e-SI’s vision is to be a key role player and responsive change agent in the development of South Africa within a globally evolving information and knowledge environment. It will lead the way in the creation of the appropriate e-skills development strategy, solutions, practices and the implementation thereof, in order to benefit the entire population of South Africa.
Colombo, Sri Lanka

The growing IT/BPO industry in Colombo offers a unique opportunity for Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) to enjoy premium access to high quality talent, which is becoming increasingly impossible in large established destinations such as India and China. The environment is also highly conducive for establishing high-in-demand niche competency centers for even larger global services companies.

The national competency programs focus on building Sri Lanka as a Center of Excellence (COE) for Software services capabilities in Telco, BFSI and Software Testing and BPO capabilities in financial & accounting service, investment research, engineering processes and UK based legal services.

Sri Lanka is ranked among the Top 50 Global Outsourcing destinations by AT Kearney and ranked among the Top 20 Emerging Cities by Global Services Magazine.

Country Facts

- **Area:** 65,610 sq km
- **Commercial Capital:** Colombo
- **Population:** 20 million (similar to the population of Australia)
- **Location:** A tropical island off the south-eastern coast shores of India, 880 km north of the equator, in the Indian Ocean
- **Time Zones:** GMT+5:30
- **Literacy rate:** 90.7%
- **Language:** Sinhala, Tamil and English are widely spoken throughout Sri Lanka, with the exception of remote villages
- **Per Capita GNI:** US$ 1540
- **Unemployment:** 7.2%
- **Currency:** Sri Lankan Rupees

Workforce Advantage

- Colombo offers a rapidly growing niche workforce which is low cost, highly adaptable, English speaking and loyal.
- Colombo is comparatively cheaper and has a lower upward wage pressure than many established global sourcing destinations. The total cost per associate can be as much as 30% lower.
- With an established norm of early entry of individuals to the workforce soon after college and the well-developed work-study approach, the entry level wages are dramatically low compared to the traditional practices of hiring graduates.
- Currently, over 50,000 are employed in the IT and BPO industry in Colombo and the workforce is growing at over 20% year-on-year.
- The workforce is stable with very low attrition rates ranging from 10-15%.
- Sri Lankans are noticeably friendly, highly productive, creative, and adapt very fast to different cultures and environments. The primary business language in Colombo is English with a high level of fluency.
- Colombo has the world’s largest pool of UK qualified English speaking accounting professionals outside UK itself.

Leading Global IT and BPO Companies operating in Sri Lanka (indicative):

- Aviva, HSBC, WNS, Microsoft, Motonía, Industrial & Financial Systems (IFS), Anhba Research, RR Donnelley, Quattron, Virtusa, eCollege, Valanta, Millennium Information Technology, Inmeda Isogen

Niche COEs established in Sri Lanka by Large Global Services Companies (indicative):

- Accounting and UK Legal Services Center of WNS (NYSE:WNS)
- Investment Research Center of Anhba Research
- PEGA & Testing Competency Centers of Virtusa (NASDAQ:VRTU)
- Accounting Process Outsourcing Center of Quattron
- UK Banking Center for HSBC
- Finance and Accounting Center for Aviva
- Schooling up to secondary level is free and widespread, leading to the country's high 91% literacy rate. Graduate and Postgraduate education is provided by 15 state universities and numerous private educational institutions, many of which award international degrees.

- With many incentives by the government, Sri Lanka is attracting leading foreign universities and many private investments in education. Students can study for degrees from leading global universities such as Monash, Curtin, Staffordshire, Manchester Metropolitan and many other universities from UK, Australia, USA and India while in Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka is also becoming an education hub for foreign students from neighboring countries.

Business Climate & Investment Incentives

Sri Lanka has an open market economy and is the first country in South Asia to liberalize its economy. The Sri Lankan economy has proved to be resilient with the Central Bank of Sri Lanka projecting a growth rate of 5% in 2009. Sri Lankan government has identified the IT/BPO sector as a priority growth sector for economic development and provides many incentives to promote investments. In 2007, the country attracted the highest ever FDI of US$700m.

Tax holidays range from 5-12 years. In addition, a concessional rate of income tax of 15% up to a maximum period of 20 years is also extended after the tax holiday period.

Government also provides special assistance on real estate acquisition based on investment and employment generation potential.

Substantial cash grants are provided for companies for Training, Consulting expertise, Marketing, Quality enhancements (CMMI, COPC, ISO etc.) and for a host of other developmental activities.

Sri Lanka has an independent judiciary and follows the British Commercial Law principles and practices in its legal system.

Sri Lanka is a signatory to international treaties on Intellectual property rights such as the Berne Convention and WTO/TRIPS and adopted a comprehensive IP regime [Act No. 36 of 2003]. Sri Lanka also enacted an Electronic Transactions Act, Computer Crimes Act and is a signatory to the latest UN e-contracting convention. A Data Protection Code of Practice is also under preparation.

Tier 1 Infrastructure with Tier 2 Cost

Sri Lanka has 8 telecom operators and is connected to the world with three international submarine cables providing ample redundancy. Broadband, Leased-line and Satellite connectivity are widely available. Sri Lanka is among the first South Asian countries to establish a 3G network. The Telecom Regulatory Commission also provides special access facilities to IT and BPO companies enabling easy import of equipment and commissioning of international connectivity.

Colombo has a well-established road network with a quality supply of power, modern office facilities and a well-developed set of support infrastructure services.

There are over 140 flights per week to most cities in India. Most Indian cities are less than 2 hours away from Sri Lanka. The modern international airport welcomes more than 20 international airlines with direct flights to many worldwide destinations weekly.

Living and Working in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka offers ample recreational facilities within just 2 to 3 hours of driving from Colombo. Exquisite beaches, wild life sanctuaries, cultural heritage sites dating back to 500 B.C., beautiful hill country views, surfing, water sports, and exciting night life makes Sri Lanka a truly a tropical paradise to live and work in. Mixing business and pleasure has never been this easy for the discerning expatriate professionals or to the frequent business traveler.
ICTs and the Millennium Development Goals

By Dr Hamadoun Touré, Secretary-General, International Telecommunication Union

As the UN-specialised agency charged with promoting and harmonising access to information and communication technologies (ICTs), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is committed to bridging the ‘digital divide’. We believe in the fundamental human right to communicate – and we believe that ICTs can and will play a critical role as catalysts in helping reach the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). As the former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said, “To achieve the MDGs, we must harness the potential of ICTs.”

When they approved the Millennium Declaration, world leaders reiterated their firm belief that ICTs would be instrumental to meeting all eight MDGs. They understood that greater access to ICTs would improve farming practices and assist micro-entrepreneurs; help prevent AIDS and other communicable diseases through better information and better healthcare; promote women’s equality by empowering them to take control of their lives; and foster environmental protection through climate monitoring and early response. Indeed, a specific MDG target explicitly promotes availability of the many benefits of ICTs throughout the developing world.

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We are now over halfway to the 2015 MDG deadline, and ICTs have indeed been playing a huge part in helping us make the progress we need to realise these critical goals. ICT-based systems and services – such as electronic commerce, distance learning, telemedicine and e-government – are improving the quality of life for countless people around the world.

ICTs reduce poverty and empower people through reducing transaction costs, integrating local and global markets, and increasing the potential value of human capital. Around the world, there are numerous, enlightening examples of the many benefits that access to even relatively simple technologies can bring.

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ICTs are helping eradicate extreme poverty and hunger through village phone projects, where poor women are given assistance in buying mobile telephones, and can then sell phone services on to fellow villagers. In just a few years this initiative has created 100,000 new jobs, boosted the incomes of local micro-entrepreneurs, and provided phone access to more than 60 million people in poor rural areas.

At the same time, by connecting low-income artisans to global markets, online cooperatives give poor craftspeople direct access to consumers, rather than having to sell to middlemen, who take most of the profits.

And by providing direct, relevant agricultural information online, and in local languages, ICTs can also help farmers vastly improve the productivity of their land – by planting the right seeds, using the right fertiliser and weeding and harvesting at the right time.

ICTs are helping achieve universal primary education, as well as promote gender equality and empower women.

Rwanda – which hosted ITU’s first Connect Africa event in 2007 – is an excellent example. Distance learning is now being widely used to train school teachers, as well as to deliver information, education and critical life-skills via solar-powered radios to young people orphaned by civil strife or by disease.

Distance learning is also being used to help break the cycle of women’s poverty by teaching girls and women in remote areas to read, learn maths, and develop basic ICT skills.

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ICTs are helping combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. Through the Global Media AIDS Initiative, more than 50 media networks [including regular TV networks, cable and satellite-based TV and their websites] are working directly to expand public knowledge and understanding, not only increasing awareness and prevention, but also helping to lift the stigma associated with HIV/AIDS.

To fight the scourge of malaria, satellite monitoring is now helping identify, target and control mosquito breeding areas. And telemedicine is making possible great advances in the fight against tuberculosis and other infectious diseases, as well as many chronic conditions such as diabetes and heart disease.

ICTs are helping ensure environmental sustainability, through initiatives as diverse as using radio programmes to promote

The Commonwealth Ministers Reference Book – 2009
The internet is becoming as vital to social and economic development as networks like transport, water and power. While there are indeed positive growth trends – millions of people in LDCs now have basic access to the internet – growth rates and access speeds are still nowhere near fast enough.

While broadband users speed along the internet superhighway, dial-up users are left stuck in traffic jams, choking on exhaust fumes, unable to benefit from anything like the full online experience. Increasingly, they are likely to find themselves locked out of the online world altogether, as graphics- and multimedia-heavy websites become the norm, and fail to load over slower links.

In 2007, developing countries accounted for just over a third of the 366 million fixed broadband subscribers around the world. If China – already the second largest fixed broadband market in the world – is excluded from the figures, then the developing country share drops to only 17 per cent. This translates to a fixed broadband penetration rate of 2.4 per 100 inhabitants in developing countries, including China, compared with 19.4 per 100 inhabitants in developed nations.

Lack of local internet exchange points means developing countries often have to pay the full cost of a link to a hub in a developed country thousands of kilometres away.

Looking even further, discrepancies in international internet bandwidth – the critical infrastructure that dictates the speed at which websites in other countries can be accessed – are nothing short of astounding. For example, in 2007, the Netherlands had close to twice the international internet bandwidth of Latin America and the Caribbean combined.

The high cost of international bandwidth remains a major constraint. Lack of local internet exchange points (IXPs) means developing countries often have to pay the full cost of a link to a hub in a developed country thousands of kilometres away. Worldwide, in 2007, 57 countries had less than 1 kbps of bandwidth per internet user, whereas in much of Europe an 8Mbps ‘triple play’ consumer ADSL package is readily available for around €30 a month.

This contrast between available bandwidth – which in many developing countries remains scarce and expensive, but which in the developed world is now a commodity already declining rapidly in price – is a major barrier to bridging the new broadband divide. While users in the industrialised world can choose from an ever-greater abundance of information and content, users in the developing world, already disadvantaged when it comes to educational opportunities and access to information, risk falling behind at an alarming rate.

A wireless solution?

Much has been made of the success of mobile cellular technology in bridging the voice gap in developing nations. With extensive wireless networks already in place, and fixed-line networks in most of the developing world in a poor state of repair, high-speed mobile technologies such 2.5G (GPRS, CDMA2000 1x) and 3G (WCDMA, CDMA EV-DO) could provide an alternative platform for internet access.

Mobile internet is already starting to prove effective as a solution to bridging the digital divide. By the beginning of 2008, around 85 countries worldwide had launched and were exploiting 3G/IMT-2000 networks, and there were over 50 million mobile broadband subscriptions in the developing world. In some countries there are more broadband mobile subscriptions...

Digital bridges

Around the world, from the richest nation to the poorest, ICTs are virtually ubiquitous. The number of mobile cellular subscribers globally has passed the four billion mark, and well over one and a half billion people now have access to the internet.

But how much progress has been made in recent years in the countries that most need it – the 49 UN-designated Least Developed Countries (LDCs)?

In many ways, it has been a miraculous millennium for most of the world’s poorest nations. The total number of telephone subscribers in the LDCs as a whole has risen more than 20-fold since the year 2000, from around 5 million to well over 120 million.

A new ‘broadband breach’ is opening up, a gaping chasm separating those communities that enjoy fast access to an online world increasingly rich in multimedia content, and those communities still struggling with slow, shared dial-up links.

In 2001, just seven LDCs had a total teledensity of 5 lines per 100 people or more; by 2007, fully 37 of them had reached or surpassed this level of penetration.

Mobile telephony has been the main driver behind this extraordinary success story. From sharing just 1.7 million mobile connections between them only eight years ago, the 49 LDCs had close to 120 million mobile subscriptions by the beginning of 2008, with several LDCs currently ranked among the world’s fastest-growing mobile markets.

High speed hiatus

While this is excellent news, it is not enough. There are now real fears that a new digital divide is being created just as we are succeeding in bridging the original gap. A new ‘broadband breach’ is opening up, a gaping chasm separating those communities that enjoy fast access to an online world increasingly rich in multimedia content, and those communities still struggling with slow, shared dial-up links.

In the 21st century, affordable broadband access to the internet is becoming as vital to social and economic development as networks like transport, water and power. While there are indeed positive growth trends – millions of people in LDCs now have basic access to the internet – growth rates and access speeds are still nowhere near fast enough.

While broadband users speed along the internet superhighway, dial-up users are left stuck in traffic jams, choking on exhaust fumes, unable to benefit from anything like the full online experience. Increasingly, they are likely to find themselves locked out of the online world altogether, as graphics- and multimedia-heavy websites become the norm, and fail to load over slower links.

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than fixed broadband subscribers – and in 2007, in Indonesia, broadband mobile subscriptions outnumbered fixed broadband subscriptions by ten to one.

However, for the moment, these are the exceptions, and it should be remembered that just because a mobile broadband subscription allows users to have data communications at broadband speeds, it doesn’t necessarily mean that subscribers are actual users of those services (they may just be using their mobiles for telephone calls or SMS).

2.5G, and particularly 3G, are not yet widely implemented across the developing world, and where they are, they are not always available as part of prepaid packages (which serve the vast majority of users in developing nations), or tariffs are simply far too expensive.

In some countries there are more broadband mobile subscriptions than fixed broadband subscribers – and in Indonesia broadband mobile subscriptions outnumber their fixed line counterparts by ten to one.

Another development that could be cause for concern is new initiatives focused on producing cheaper ‘basic service’ handsets for developing countries. While this is a welcome development for spreading voice communications, there is a worry that such handsets, stripped of advanced capabilities, will in their own way represent a barrier to future internet access.

Finding a way forward

What can be done to boost internet penetration and put developing countries more firmly on the path to the accessible, equitable Information Society envisaged by delegates to the World Summit on the Information Society when they adopted the Tunis Agenda?

Countries could encourage the launch of 3G networks by eliminating high licence fees and high taxes, making the required frequencies available, and allowing current operators to upgrade or deploy new networks using their existing spectrum allocations.

Predictably, the problem is a complex one, with no single panacea that could be applied equally to all countries. But it is certain that this requires innovation in the way we do business and in the regulatory and policy framework, investment in infrastructure, and commitments to education and capacity building. Other important factors include:

Leveraging the capability of broadband wireless technologies. This includes deploying high-speed mobile technology on the back of the existing cellular networks that are already so successful in developing nations. Countries could encourage the launch of 3G networks by eliminating high licence fees and high taxes, making the required frequencies available, and allowing current operators to upgrade or deploy new networks using their existing spectrum allocations. Countries could also support the use of high-speed mobile for bridging the digital divide through innovative universal service schemes with mobile operators.

WiMAX is another promising wireless technology that has great potential in the developing world. As with high-speed mobile, governments should make the requisite spectrum available quickly and as cheaply as possible, and avoid the temptation to charge high licence fees.

At the same time, countries should strive to open their telecom markets to the fullest extent possible. The resulting competition will help drive additional infrastructure deployment and reduce prices, making services more affordable for citizens. Competition is particularly important for internet access and – critically – for international connectivity. Where there are still regulatory obstacles to freeing the international bandwidth market, governments should consider alternative ways of reducing wholesale prices.

Encouraging use of the internet, particularly in markets where low internet usage is not primarily linked to lack of infrastructure or affordability. This can be done through government and industry partnerships to raise awareness of the benefits of the internet, and programmes to train potential users. Governments can also attract more internet users by developing e-government services that citizens regularly need to use, and ensuring that these applications are available nationwide through community access centres.

Governments can provide the vital boost for an industry confronting a crisis in end-user demand, and can in turn benefit from very competitive prices and roll-out deals as suppliers strive harder than ever to win new business.

The Republic of Korea – now the world’s most advanced broadband market in terms of penetration and service offerings – provides an excellent example. In 1995, the country had a broadband penetration of just 1 per cent. To proactively drive take-up of high-speed services, the government launched Cyber Korea 21, a programme offering affordable IT education to marginalised groups such as housewives, the elderly and the disabled. Complementing this, the country embarked on a comprehensive e-government programme, investing US$24 billion in a national fibre optic backbone that provides more than 28,000 government departments and agencies with fast broadband access. Progressive market liberalisation in the early 1990s was also instrumental in helping drive high-speed penetration, with new operators using broadband as a clear service differentiator.

Leveraging the power of partnership. Public-private partnerships are proving the best way of making rapid progress in ICT deployment. In the wake of the current economic crisis, they will be more important than ever. Governments can provide the vital boost for an industry confronting a crisis in end-user demand, and can in turn benefit from very competitive prices and roll-out deals as suppliers strive harder than ever to win new business. For users – and the economy as a whole – this should prove a win-win situation, with ICT investment providing the much-needed stimulus that will help kick-start other sectors of the economy back into forward motion.

The cooperative will of the international community – ITU Connect

The international community has a critical role to play, particularly in assisting the 49 Least Developed Countries, where for the moment simple economics cannot foster widespread access because of extremely low per capita incomes. The 22 countries with an internet penetration of less than 2 [at the beginning of 2008] should be a particular focus of attention.
In an effort to target these countries on a region-by-region basis, ITU recently launched its ITU Connect events, the first of which welcomed over 1,000 top-level delegates and raised an unprecedented US$55 billion in investment commitments targeting intra-regional connectivity.

Held in Kigali, Rwanda, the ITU Connect Africa Summit ambitiously brought forward ICT connectivity goals to 2012, with a view to accelerating progress towards the broader MDGs. It saw commitments to interconnect all African capitals and major cities with ICT broadband infrastructure and strengthen connectivity to the rest of the world by 2012, and to extend broadband and ICT services to all African villages by 2015.

ITU is now extending this highly successful initiative to other world regions, with the next ITU Connect event, which targets the CIS region, scheduled to take place in Belarus in November 2009.

Dr Hamadoun Touré was elected Secretary-General at the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference in Antalya, Turkey, in November 2006 and took office on 1 January 2007. He served as Director BDT from 1998 until 2006. Dr Touré is committed to make ITU an innovative, forward looking organisation adapted to meeting the challenges created by the new ICT environment and to spearhead the Union towards implementing the resolutions of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). As Director of BDT from 1999 until 2004, he played a significant role in the WSIS process by launching numerous projects based on partnership building with international organisations, governments, civil society and the private sector. Hamadoun Touré holds a Master’s Degree in Electrical Engineering from the Technical Institute of Electronics and Telecommunications of Leningrad (LEIS, USSR) and Doctor of Philosophy Degree (PhD) from the University of Electronics, Telecommunications and Informatics of Moscow (MTUCI, Russia).

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is the leading United Nations agency for information and communication technology issues, and the global focal point for governments and the private sector in developing networks and services. For nearly 145 years, ITU has coordinated the shared global use of the radio spectrum, promoted international cooperation in assigning satellite orbits, worked to improve telecommunication infrastructure in the developing world, established the worldwide standards that foster seamless interconnection of a vast range of communications systems and addressed the global challenges of our times, such as mitigating climate change and strengthening cybersecurity.

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CHANCELLOR COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI

Chancellor College is one of the five constituent colleges of the University of Malawi. The other four colleges are: Bunda College of Agriculture, Kamuzu College of Nursing, College of Medicine and the Polytechnic. The five colleges make up a federal system administered by the University Central Office headed by the Vice-Chancellor.

Chancellor College is located at the foot of Zomba Mountain in the city of Zomba. The College has five Faculties, namely, Education, Humanities, Law, Science, and Social Science. Seven Research Centres provide a nucleus for academic research and outreach, complementing research done in Departments under each Faculty.

The College offers programmes leading to a variety of four-year Bachelor’s degrees and an honours degree in Law. Students are admitted on both residential and non-residential basis. The College also offers various postgraduate programmes in the five Faculties, leading to a Master’s degree, as well as PhD programmes in several Faculties. Selected Certificate, Diploma and short courses are routinely offered for up-grading to meet the demand for trained manpower.

New developments to embrace e-learning are underway to optimise programme delivery. In addition, internet links with other universities have been established to implement tele-education programmes such as those being offered for the Pan African e-network with Indian universities. Other current initiatives include joint postgraduate degree programmes with universities in Africa and Europe.

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Welcome to the largest Arab community in the sky — only from Arabsat

In a world getting more and more interconnected, Arabsat is helping make the world a smaller place. As the largest satellite operator in the Arab world covering the Middle East and Africa—as well as Europe and beyond—only Arabsat offers the full spectrum of broadcast, telecommunications and broadband services. With the youngest satellites in the region, plus more satellites launching every year until 2012, this capacity will continue to grow and provide unprecedented reach, superior reliability and unmatched flexibility for broadcast and telecom operators. Indeed, Arabsat gives you the most powerful way to reach the largest Arab community in the sky, and much more. Join our premium neighborhood now!

www.arabsat.com
Serving the Arab World

Founded in 1976 by the 21 member-states of the Arab League, Arabsat has been serving the growing needs of the Arab world for over 30 years. The Arabsat world now covers millions of homes in over 100 countries across the Middle East, Africa and Europe, including over 164 million people across 21 Arab countries.

Serving the Middle East & Africa

Arabsat’s main coverage area spans the Middle East and North Africa including Sudan. However, in the last 5 years, the telecommunications sector in the north and south of Africa has experienced huge demand. Arabsat has thus started expanding its reach to bring all of Africa within its coverage area. To achieve this, Arabsat has added its 5-A, 5-C and Badr-5 satellites to cover Africa, complementing its original Middle East coverage. These satellites are located at the Arabsat orbital positions of 26°, 26° and 30.5° East. This vastly expanded reach will lead to the following enhanced offerings in Africa.

Broadcasting sector

Arabsat has started C-band transmissions of its Digital TV bouquets from its 30.5° East orbital position, creating a TV Hot-Spot for DTH TV services for all of Africa. Two bouquets are currently carrying over 20 TV channels. These bouquets will be transferred to the new Arabsat 5-A satellite planned for launch by end of 2009 to the same orbital position. Once launched, Arabsat will have 100% coverage of the African continent with excellent downlink power allowing dishes of just 1 to 1.2 meters to receive these TV channels. Additionally, Arabsat will launch its Badr-5 satellite in the first quarter of 2010. Badr-5 will cover the whole Middle East and North Africa, supporting its existing Ku-band TV Hot Spot at 26° East. It will act as an in-orbit hot backup satellite for the existing Arabsat fleet (Badr-4 and Badr-6) and provide expansion capabilities.

On board the new Badr-5 satellite, a steerable Ku-band beam can be directed toward any area in the west of Africa—from Morocco in the north to South Africa in the south—to provide DTH services in Ku-band over specific target areas.

Telecommunications Sector

The current Arabsat 2-B satellite at 30.5° East and Badr-6 satellite at 26° East provide C-band coverage for two-thirds of the African continent. To expand its African coverage and reach all of the continent, Arabsat 5-A will be located at 30.5° East, replacing Arabsat 2-B by the end of 2009. Arabsat 5-A will provide higher spot power over the eastern and western parts of Africa.

In addition, Arabsat has deployed another beam covering two-thirds of Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia. This beam operates in a planned C-band spectrum of 6.7 to 7.0 Ghz uplink. This new addition—which also covers Europe’s main Internet backbone—will provide vastly enhanced capacity for various telecom services, GSM backhauling, Internet and other VSAT or dedicated networks across the expanding Arabsat world.

Towards the end of 2011, Arabsat will also launch its 5-C satellite and position it at 26° East, an ideal orbital position to cover the African continent.

Arabsat is launching one satellite every year until 2012, vastly expanding its coverage across all of Africa. With its enhanced capacity, the Arabsat fleet will be a vital contributor to African development, opening new business opportunities in the telecommunications and broadcasting sectors, generating new jobs and stimulating the business environment with new tools for developing and growing the African economy.

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Disaster recovery through satellite-based emergency management communications strategies

By Martin Jarrold, Chief, International Programme Development, GVF

In all disaster recovery situations, both in developed and developing nations, the deployment of some form of constantly functional wireless communications is essential, and among the very first priorities in any emergency response, rescue, or relief situation. Particularly in earthquake situations, it is critical for government and emergency workers to have access to networks that are wholly independent of any terrestrially-based networks and systems – whether wired or wireless. In this article the author gives a broad description of the options for satellite-based communications, and gives information about where more detail can be found.

The morning news in London on 6th April, 2009, was headlined with reports of the L’Aquila earthquake in central Italy. Measuring some 6.3 on the Richter scale of earthquake magnitude, it was not an insignificant emergency, and indeed the reports later said that some 280 people had lost their lives, a further 1,500 were injured, and several tens of thousands made homeless.

Against the backdrop of general opinion that the Italian authorities could have done more to prepare for such an emergency – particularly given that the immediate region experiences tremors on a regular basis as a result of high levels of localised tectonic activity – the scale of the quake ultimately constituted a greater recovery challenge for the local and regional emergency services than was initially expected.

Such expectations were framed in the context of a comparatively highly developed emergency infrastructure, one generally considered well able to cope with the aftermath of such a disaster. Though a desperately tragic event for all those affected by it – as well as undoubtedly a disaster for the Abruzzo region – a more rapid recovery from the earthquake ought to have been within the national capabilities of Italy, a country with an advanced economy and sophisticated infrastructure, and with a national geography that is well within the reach of terrestrial communication systems. Therefore, in all such disaster recovery situations, both in developed and developing nations, the deployment of some form of always functional wireless communications is essential.

However, as perhaps the ultimate irony in such circumstances, it is in the very nature of such emergency and disaster situations as earthquakes, floods and major storms, etc., that the very communications networks that are based on wire, cable or fibre connections are themselves very likely to be disaster damage casualties. In addition, terrestrial wireless equipment – for example, mobile phones or land mobile radios – is only useful where communications towers and other fixed equipment are in place, and fully functioning, to connect local wireless terminal equipment to a wire infrastructure backbone. But, in the majority of emergency situations, as in the examples cited here, this terrestrial wireless infrastructure, if and where it pre-existed, will be destroyed just as readily as a wired infrastructure – by the disaster itself.

Therefore, in all such disaster recovery situations, both in developed and developing nation contexts, the deployment of associated communication strategies
understanding of the different capabilities of the various satellite system types.

be achieved and integrated into their overall emergency management community has a variety of choices for obtaining access to these various satellite services, with handheld mobile satellite systems being the simplest, in keeping with the way the systems work.

Handheld mobile solutions
In the immediate aftermath of a disaster which renders destroyed or inoperable a local, ground-based communications infrastructure, there is one reliable form of communications that is immediately deployable – handheld satellite telephone systems provided by mobile satellite service (MSS) providers. Such systems provide satellite communications access through small, mobile phone-sized devices, as well as pagers and in-vehicle units.

GEO satellites are capable of providing a full range of communications services, including voice, video and broadband data. They operate with ground equipment ranging from very large fixed gateway antennas down to fully mobile terminals the size of a mobile phone.

Handheld mobile solutions provide satellite communications access through small, mobile phone-sized devices, as well as pagers and in-vehicle units.

Fixed satellite service (FSS)
Fixed satellite service (FSS) terminals are typically installed in situations where the equipment is required for periods of longer than one week, including pre-disaster applications (e.g. environmental monitoring, communications redundancy, etc.) as well as post-disaster recovery operations. Such systems are configurable to provide everything from low-speed data transmissions up to very broad bandwidth data and full broadcast-quality video to replace local and national infrastructure and services. FSS systems must be installed by qualified technicians, and to support their installation and deployment satellite companies have, through GVF, developed an industry-standard ‘VSAT Installation & Maintenance Training Certification Programme’, more details of which are shown in the box overleaf, and at http://gvf.coursethost.com.

The disaster recovery and emergency management community has a variety of choices for obtaining access to these various satellite services, with handheld mobile satellite systems being the simplest, in keeping with the way the systems work.

COTM: portable and transportable equipment
Terminals used for ‘communications on the move’ (COTM) include equipment that can be transported and operated from inside a road vehicle, maritime vessel, or fixed wing and rotary aircraft, including commercial aircraft. This kind of terminal is useful where high-speed and data-intensive connections are required on an expedited basis for damage assessment, medical evaluation, or other applications where voice, video and data are required in combination. Depending on the satellite system and the type of equipment in use, these systems can typically be made ready for operational use within five to 30 minutes of arrival on site, usually without the need for expert technical staff. As with communications systems in general, higher satellite terminal prices – whether mobile, portable or fixed – equate to more robust services, greater levels of reliability, faster delivery, and a wider range of features and options.

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VSAT Installation & Maintenance Training Certification Programme – or ‘How to get the right training resources in your neighbourhood’

Even the unique characteristics of satellite communication can get a little lost if its unique technical solutions are incorrectly applied – often due to inadequate personnel training. A ready solution for this potential problem has been available and accessible for some time: the GVF VSAT Installation & Maintenance Course.

In 2002, the GVF initiated its Certified VSAT Installer Programme in response to requests from the satellite communications industry to identify solutions to the increasing problem of interference resulting from improperly aligned VSAT antennas, incorrectly calibrated transmission equipment, etc. Installers who have undertaken the GVF VSAT Installation & Maintenance Course have mastered a high level of training and are counted among the most qualified technicians in the world.

Specifically, the course was designed to achieve three key objectives:

• Reduction of signal interference caused by improper installations
• Strengthening the industry’s quality of service, and
• Assuring the industry’s competitiveness.

In addition, an online database of GVF-certified VSAT installers has now been launched on the global satellite communications association’s website, www.gvf.org, where satellite communications companies and, indeed, emergency planners and disaster recovery first responders that require highly-qualified technical assistance, can find contact details for hundreds of professionals who have successfully completed the rigorous training programme. The database is designed to serve not only as a valuable information tool, but also to promote the business and operational effectiveness of those who have become GVF certified – including the organisations for which they work. Satellite operators and manufacturers worldwide now strongly recommend or require that all VSAT installation personnel become GVF certified.

There are a number of global satellite carriers that operate fleets of GEO satellites. These provide fixed or portable communications, although some are also used for mobile services, including those used on ships and aircraft. There are also a large number of regional and national satellite carriers that provide FSS and portable services covering North and Latin America, Europe, Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Oceania. In addition there are several operators of systems providing service to handheld satellite phones and pagers.

The disaster recovery and emergency management community has a variety of choices for obtaining access to these various satellite services, with handheld mobile satellite systems being the simplest, in keeping with the way the systems work. All that is required is contact with one of the many value-added resellers to lease or purchase the equipment and sign a service contract. These suppliers can be readily located via the internet, and the handheld units can be shipped on an expedited basis.

For portable and fixed services it is possible to either contact the satellite companies directly, or to work through one of the wide range of network integrators that provide end-to-end communications services – including fixed very small aperture terminals (known as VSATS), and satellite bandwidth access – on either a global, regional or local basis. These companies are often registered with local telecommunications regulatory agencies, and most are members of the GVF. (To access the GVF ‘Interactive Online Industry Directory’, please go to www.gvf.org and click on the link to the Member Directory.)

Long-term planning for disaster mitigation can be well supported by satellite-based networking. Fully redundant communications networks supported by back-up satellite solutions are one of the most effective means of ensuring operational continuity throughout any emergency.

How should planners plan for what is needed from a satellite connection?

Information about the nature of satellite-based solutions, how to access them, and how to optimise them to the requirements of a specific organisational context, are critical elements in all operational planning practice. To achieve this optimisation, disaster recovery/emergency planners need to take the following steps:

• Ascertain whether satellite does indeed fit the application
• Design a satellite network optimised to the specific requirement(s)
• Develop a business plan to sustain the network
• Procure a competitively-priced satellite network
• Deploy, maintain, operate and – potentially – grow the network.

In order to support the incorporation of these knowledge elements into approaches to operational planning, the GVF in conjunction with the annual Conference of the International Association of Emergency Managers (Orlando, Florida, USA, November 2006) agreed on a number of high-detailed considerations that needed to be taken into account to facilitate for Emergency Managers a ‘Guideline for Inclusion of Satellite Communications in Disaster Operational Plans’. This guideline, too lengthy to include here, is available from the author of this article, at GVF.
Emergency management with satellite

The underlying issue for the satisfactory deployment of satellite communications for disaster response and recovery is the availability of advance funding capabilities in order that Emergency Managers can make their planning, preparation and procurement processes both cost-effective and precise.

Experience with the establishment of communications as the result of previous disasters has clearly demonstrated that advance funding capabilities are required for:

- Provisioning of first responder satellite communications equipment that is consistent with the time-frames outlined in the Guideline
- Availability of satellite capacity for the carriage of disaster response and recovery communications
- Availability of first responder satellite communications equipment on an as-needed basis from locations outside of the disaster area, that are consistent with the time frames outlined in the Guideline
- Availability of satellite communications equipment to augment that already existing at emergency operations centres on an as needed basis
- Availability of satellite communications equipment for mobile emergency operations centres
- Familiarisation and training for emergency management personnel on a routine basis.

As disasters can occur over large geographical areas, it is essential that the planning, preparation and procurement be undertaken by the Emergency Managers on a collaborative and co-ordinated basis involving all jurisdiction levels and by all those with disaster response/recovery interests.

Only by these means can a realistic response be made to establish satellite communications that meet the criteria outlined in the Guideline, and which includes such factors as:

- Interoperability
- Scalability
- Multi-agency coordination.

The five kilogram, attaché case-style, satellite-based PICK (Portable Individual Communications Kit) project was developed over an 18-month period up to August 2007. During this development phase PICK was tested and operationally deployed in a number of Commonwealth countries, as well as elsewhere in the world. It was deployed during the Mozambique floods, and at other times has been used in Kenya and in South Africa. Other deployments have included to Chad and Niger in Africa, to Lebanon in the Middle East, and in Asia to the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, and Nepal. The kit was also used during the post-tsunami recovery in Banda Aceh, Indonesia.

The PICK project continued the strategic objective to build a satellite-based communications kit that could provide international relief agencies with the ability to rapidly and effectively deploy, and establish, field communications, both voice and data, to headquarters and other agencies, to serve both an emergency response situation and also a small field project or programme office requiring short-term internet connectivity.

PICK has a global deployment footprint, minimising the need for multiple regional solutions, is fully portable and self contained, and provides limited standalone independent and alternate power capability. It requires minimum IT support in the field, is easy to use, and consists of standard off-the-shelf equipment.

PICK is intended for deployment during the first initial response phase of an emergency situation up to and possibly including the transitional period of semi-permanency until the establishment of a permanent field office environment. Once the permanent office is established the kit can then be used for connectivity backup by providing communications redundancy for urgent messages, if the main connectivity method to the office should fail.

In common with the characteristics of all satellite-based communications systems, PICK is re-usuable, rapidly deployable, reliable, and primarily, cost-effective. Strategic emergency stockpiles of kits have been established with more planned, particularly to strategic countries to enhance immediate local response capacity to an emergency. The basic kit with many variations in accessories is beginning to emerge as a standard item in first responder emergency communications for many field agencies.

Martin Jarrold was appointed GVF Chief of International Programme Development in June 2001. His particular responsibilities include outreach to the member organisations of the GVF and for the further development of the profile of the Forum within the satellite communications industry, and across the global telecommunications policy and regulatory community. He is a frequent contributor to various telecommunications publications. Previously, Mr. Jarrold was Commissioning Editor and Head of Research for Space Business International magazine. His earlier career was predominantly in teaching and writing. Mr. Jarrold holds an honours degree in History and Politics.

GVF – Founded in 1997, GVF is the single and unified voice of the global satellite industry. It brings together organisations engaged in the delivery of advanced broadband and narrowband satellite services to consumers, and commercial and government enterprises worldwide. Headquartered in London, GVF is an independent, non-partisan and non-profit organisation with 200+ members from more than 80 countries. The broad-based membership represents every major world region and every sector of the satellite industry, including fixed and mobile satellite operators, satellite network operators, teleports, satellite earth station manufacturers, system integrators, value added and enhanced service providers, telecom carriers, consultants, law firms, and users.

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Earth Observation: a powerful tool for Disaster Management

Natural disasters and man-made calamities unfortunately occur all over the world and at all times. Everybody remembers the Tsunami disaster on December 26th 2004 in Asia. The world learned from this very sad experience that Earth Observation (EO) is a powerful tool that can aid relief workers and decision makers not only during the crisis but also post factum to assess damage, especially when the disaster is located in remote and difficultly accessible areas. NASA’s airborne AVIRIS sensor has been used for example to assess the environmental impact of the 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center.

Today, images or image derived geo-information obtained from spaceborne as well as airborne sensors are increasingly used by decision makers, planners and emergency managers thanks to global initiatives like Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS). GEO, the Group on Earth Observations coordinating GEOSS, ensures that EO data and information remain universally accessible as a global public good. GEOSS addresses simultaneously nine areas of critical importance to people and society. One of these nine areas is support to disaster management. Nowadays, airborne and spaceborne based geo-information is used for the management of all the phases of a crisis or disaster situation (prevention/mitigation, monitoring/detection, crisis/response, damage assessment).

The “Charter” for free-of-charge spaceborne images

The International Charter on Space and Major Disasters or the “Charter” (www.disasterscharter.org/main_e.html) is an initiative between various space agencies and the United Nations. It aims at providing satellite imagery free-of-charge in case of major disasters. The “Charter”, declared operational on 1 November 2000, aims to provide a unified system of spaceborne data acquisition and delivery to people affected by natural disasters or man-made calamities through Authorized Users. The satellite imagery is used e.g. for developing an evacuation strategy in case of floods or developing a strategy to fight forest fires.

Near-real time geo-information

The current situation is still insufficient though. Decision makers at the emergency center or relief workers on the spot do not always receive the geo-information in due time. One of the most important issues when dealing with Disaster Management is the gathering of the requested geo-information in (near) real time especially for rapidly evolving (dynamic) events like forest fires. The end users being e.g. the fire brigade officer on the spot or the decision makers at the emergency center need access to the geo-information with a delay of a few minutes at most.

To be able to provide the end user with geo-information within this very short delay, spaceborne and airborne images have to be down-linked directly after acquisition to a receiving ground control station for further processing. This is generally the case for satellite images, but not so for data acquired from manned aircraft.

Earth Observation

Earth Observation (EO) is the technology to observe from a distance objects or phenomena at the Earth’s surface. Images are typically acquired in the visible, near infrared and/or short wave infrared but also in the medium infrared or thermal infrared wavelength range.

The imaging sensors can be installed either at ground level (e.g. fixed camera for survey) or in the air. In the latter case, the sensors can be mounted on different types of platforms like manned aircraft, unmanned aerial systems or satellites.

The FP6 OSIRIS project is the framework of the FP6-IST OSIRIS project (Open architecture for Smart and Interoperable networks in Risk management based on In-situ Sensors, www.osiris-fp6.eu) a service oriented architecture using OGC (Open Geospatial Consortium, Inc.®) standard services has been designed and implemented. Especially the Sensor Web Enablement (SWE) standards of OGC ensure interoperability between sensor networks and application systems which allows end users to access multi-domain information. It allows “plug and play” of different sensor types (including airborne sensors). In other words, the use of standard SWE services allows easy data fusion (with results obtained from other sensors) in a format directly usable in standard GIS systems. The benefits of OSIRIS and SWE with respect to a faster and/or better decision making for Disaster Management is evaluated by means of four live demonstrations.

One of the demonstrations involves a controlled forest fire in the Cévennes region in the South of France. Four types of smart sensors/sensor networks were deployed, all of them accessible in near-real time via SWE services: firemen positioning system based on combined Ultra Wide Band (UWB) and GPS systems, smart wireless video cameras located on the ground, a mobile meteorological station and an Airborne Remote Sensing (ARS) system providing real time video imagery.

After data processing and data fusion the information is available (via web services) in near-real time to end users located both at the site as well as in the departmental fire station.

Forest fires demonstration

During the OSIRIS forest fires demonstration in the South of France a manned aircraft was equipped with a Wescam video camera. A data link transmitted the position and video images in real-time to the mobile Processing and Archiving Facility (i-PAF) installed at the site. The video and GPS data were synchronized and archived in the i-PAF before being transferred to the Central Data Processing Centre (CDPC) located at the VITO premises in Mol via a robust two-way satellite communication system (using the Eutelsat SESAT-1 satellite). After automated processing (using grid computing), high resolution geo-referenced composite images of the whole area were produced at regular time intervals.

OGC-based web services (Web Map Service - WMS and Web Catalogue Service - CSW), allow end users to search the image catalogue and to access and visualize the acquired images in near-real time at any location via the Internet.

Integrating this information in end users’ GIS systems allows continuous and up-to-date assessment of the situation simultaneously from different locations.

Furthermore, an OGC-based Sensor Planning System (SPS) coupled to an Iridium SMS communication system was available to allow end users to request, in real-time, optimization of the flight pattern depending on the fire evolution. The satellite communication system (using Eutelsat SESAT-1 satellite), the OGC-based web services as well as the automated processing chain have been developed by VITO with maximum flexibility allowing further use for
different types of platforms, especially for low and high altitude Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) and sensors.

Furthermore, VITO is currently developing a UAS capable of continuously providing high resolution aerial images.

**Different scales for different applications**

Depending on the extent of the disaster, information at various scales (local, regional, global) with various spatial resolution is required. E.g. GMFS (www.gmfs.info) or Global Monitoring for Food Security, an ESA-funded project coordinated by VITO, uses low spatial resolution (1 km x 1 km) satellite images of the African continent acquired with the VEGETATION instruments (www.spot-vegetation.com). Satellite images of the agricultural areas in the early growing season are combined with meteorological data in a model. Researchers use this model to forecast yields for the coming growing season, and thus detect abnormal situations in time. GMFS aims at reducing the risk of food shortage on continental and regional levels in Western, Eastern and Southern Africa and at national level in Senegal, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Sudan and Malawi.

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**VITO**

As independent and customer-oriented research organisation, VITO provides innovative technological solutions as well as scientifically based advice and support in order to stimulate sustainable development and reinforce the economic and social fabric of Flanders. In doing so, VITO works closely with universities and other research institutions, both nationally and inter-nationally. VITO performs research within the domains of industrial innovation, energy and quality of human environment. VITO was founded on 3 May 1991 and counts ca. 550 employees.

The VITO Earth Observation unit (VITO-TAP) offers society access to reliable geo-information based on Earth Observation sensors and in-situ data and in this way increases the understanding in its changing environment on a local, regional and con-tinental scale. To achieve this the following research is done:

- the development of new remote sensing systems, platforms and instruments (research team technology)
- the development of applications based on Earth Observation imagery (research team applications)
- the processing and distribution of Earth Observation imagery (research team GEODATA & flight operations)

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EDUCATING GLOBAL LEADERS
One of the largest residential universities in South Africa, the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) consolidates the resources, infrastructure and intellectual capital of two major regional universities following the merger of the Universities of Natal and Durban-Westville. UKZN is recognised as one of the top 501 universities in the world. The University is committed to academic excellence and advances knowledge through globally competitive teaching, learning, scholarship, research, innovation and academic freedom. UKZN has nearly 40 000 students and offers an extensive suite of programmes at both undergraduate and postgraduate level on five campuses, and the expertise of South Africa’s leading academics and internationally acclaimed scientists.

A LEADING RESEARCH UNIVERSITY
UKZN is the second most productive University in South Africa in terms of research output. The University’s strategic research initiatives include Conservation and Biodiversity, Economic Development, Ethics and Bioethics, Forestry and Forestry Products, HIV and AIDS, Sustainable Rural Livelihoods and Water. These are areas where University researchers have made an impact on global research trends.

Major UKZN Research Centres include: The Centre for African Literary Studies (CALS); The Centre for Cosmology and Astrophysics; The Centre for Critical Research on Race and Identity (CORE); The Centre for Quantum Technologies; The Centre for Smart Materials; The Centre for AIDS Programme of Research in South Africa (CAPRSA); The Africa Centre for Health and Population Studies; The Health Economics and AIDS Research Division (HEARD); and The Ujamaa Centre for Contextual Hermeneutics.

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS
The University’s links with over 250 institutions abroad continue to flourish, providing the opportunity for international student exchange programmes and partnerships, mentorship and collaborative research studies.

UKZN has a rich history of community engagement. Our communities include professional and social groupings, non-government and community-based organisations, government, business and industry. Each initiative provides the basis for dynamic interfaces in which different forms of knowledge accumulation and dissemination can intersect with each other and hence provide the basis for new approaches to knowledge production and the advancement of African scholarship.

THE UNIVERSITY HAS FOUR COLLEGES AND EIGHT FACULTIES:

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- Faculty of Science & Agriculture

THE COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES
- Faculty of Health Sciences
- Nelson R Mandela School of Medicine

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- Faculty of Education
- Faculty of Humanities, Development & Social Sciences

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VISION
The University’s vision is to be a fountain of knowledge and wisdom that produces excellent, visionary, skilled, proactive, hardworking and transforming servant leaders.

MISSION
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- Training in the specified theological, social sciences, and other disciplines as well as in short term post experience skills building.
- Conducting research and publication of research findings on issues of spiritual and socio-economic development.
- Offering consultancy services to the general public in order to create a society free from diseases, ignorance, poverty and injustices.

DEGREE PROGRAMMES
Under the Faculty of Education and Business Studies and the Faculty of Theology, we offer the following:
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  - Bachelor of Business Administration (three years)
  - Bachelor of Business Administration with Education, (three years)
  - Bachelor of Theology, Bachelor of Theology with Education, Bachelor of Christian Education.
- Diploma in Education (two years)
  - In addition to Professional Education Studies (PES), the programme offers a wide variety of subjects including the Geography, English Language, History
- Diploma in Business Administration (two years)
- Diploma in Marketing (two years)
- Diploma in Human Resource Management (two years)
- Certificate in English Proficiency (six months)
- Diploma in Theology (two-years)
- Diploma in Christian Education (two-years)
- Bachelor of Theology with Education (three years)
- Diploma in Theology (two-years)
- Diploma in Church Music (Diploma in Performing Arts (two-years)

Further information may be obtained from:
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Putting family first

By Jane Nethersole, Director, National Family Week, Henley Media Group

Between the 25th to 31st May 2009 the UK welcomed its first ever National Family Week. With good family life being crucial for personal happiness and the future of society in terms of education, health, employment, economic success and social cohesion, this new national occasion aimed to highlight the importance of strong family ties, encourage families to spend more quality time together and stimulate debate about the key issues that face families of all shapes and sizes. The initiative has brought together the UK’s largest coalition of family issues. Spearheaded by a small private sector organisation without any funding from the government, National Family Week quickly gained support from all the UK’s major political parties including the Prime Minister. The initiative demonstrates the need for countries to prioritise and celebrate family life as part of their political and social agenda and demonstrates how this can be done in a celebratory and effective manner.

Introduction

In the throws of a global economic crisis, the dynamics of families around the world are being challenged. Specifically looking at developed countries, it is clear that longer working hours, stronger reliance on grandparents as childminders, a reduction of parental involvement in children’s education and even the increasing neglect of the simplest exercise like sharing a meal are all changing family dynamics. Issues affecting family life have a direct impact on society and the wellbeing of children and adults; key areas being education attainment, social cohesion, crime rates and health. In a recent UNICEF report measuring children’s wellbeing in rich countries, the United Kingdom was placed last out of 21 OECD member nations; Canada was placed sixth.

Further, one of the largest children’s charities in the UK, The Children’s Society, reported that generally children in the UK feel they have insufficient time with their parents and that both children and parents recognise this as a problem that is affecting their sense of wellbeing. Health, education, behaviour and family relationships are four fundamental areas suffering as a result.

It is clear that we need to address family issues, to encourage our societies to be more family-friendly and to reduce the breakdown of family relationships. This in turn will impact a whole host of social issues that are crucial to the future of our families and society generally.

The impact of family life on society

On current trends, without any intervention, 90 per cent of today’s children will be overweight or obese by 2050, by 2023 there will be a 54 per cent rise in Type II diabetes and by 2051, life expectancy will fall five years.

Stricter budgets have led to a decrease in the buying of fresh fruit and vegetables to use in home-cooked meals, and an increase of profits by fast food chains. Atypical working hours and a general lethargy which comes with increased emotional pressure and strain also means family members are eating at different times and rarely use mealtimes to engage with each other, but instead prefer to watch television. Last year, a quarter of families didn’t regularly have a meal together at home, which has long been a valued and important tradition of the family.

Taking time to encourage children in sports, and being physically involved in their activities can have huge health benefits.

Health

An investment of time is essential in the achievement of health in families. Being active and eating healthily as a family requires diligence and commitment on the part of parents to ensure children grow to understand the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle and develop the tools to achieve this.

On average, children in the UK spend approximately 17 hours a week watching television, which is the equivalent of half a working week [Good Childhood Enquiry] and on current trends, without any intervention, 90 per cent of today’s children will be overweight or obese by 2050, by 2023 there will be a 54 per cent rise in Type II diabetes and by 2051, life expectancy will fall five years.

Education

According to national education charity Campaign for Learning, parental involvement in a child’s learning is more powerful than family background, size of family or level of parental education...
and, in the primary years, has more impact on attainment than the school itself. At the age of seven, what parents do is up to six times more important than what schools do in terms of children’s achievement. Unfortunately in the UK, daily reading aloud with children has decreased between 2006 and 2008 and 23 per cent of parents never read aloud to their children. Booktrust reports that the top three reasons parents/carers do not read more with children include: too much else to do (35 per cent), tiredness (30 per cent) and busy cooking dinner (25 per cent), yet one in five children wish they could spend more time reading with their friends and family.

Parental involvement in a child’s learning is more powerful than family background, size of family or level of parental education and, in the primary years, has more impact on attainment than the school itself.

Further, fathers take a less active role than mothers in their children’s learning and education, but research shows that when father is actively involved in their child’s learning, their achievement is enhanced. This is especially the case for boys in the UK given that girls outperform boys in literacy tests at all ages throughout school.

Parental separation is also a factor, with the Good Childhood Enquiry reporting that children whose parents separate are 50 per cent more likely to fail at school, suffer behavioral difficulties, anxiety or depression. Low levels of education also impact employability and correspond with income levels.

Using reading and learning as a valuable way to spend time together is becoming increasingly important. Failure to do so is not only directly detrimental to the wellbeing of a child, but as they become adults and have their own children, lack of education and literacy will then directly impact their children’s experiences.

Behaviour
Children who spend little or no time with their parents are 1.6 times more likely to engage in antisocial behaviour. With £3 billion a year to spend, children in the UK attract massive amounts of advertising. It is commonly recognised that the more a child is exposed to television and the internet, the more materialistic they become, relationships with their parents deteriorate and some experts believe their mental health is affected. Increased exposure to violent content is also believed to be breeding violent behaviours and increased mental illness.

The Good Childhood Enquiry reports that one in ten 5-16 year olds now has clinically significant mental health difficulties – ranging from anxiety, depression, over activity, inattentiveness (ADHD) and anorexia, through to conduct disorders such as uncontrollable or destructive behaviour. Only a quarter receive the specialist help they require.

A child living apart from their father is one of the key factors contributing to this statistic. By the age of 16, one third of British children are living apart from their biological father and around 28 per cent of all children whose parents have separated have no contact with their fathers after three years. Living apart from their fathers increases their difficulties by over 40 per cent.

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Other contributing factors include family conflict, poor mental health of a parent, living in rented housing and “more than two adverse life events.” 90 per cent of adolescents convicted of crime had shown conduct disorder in childhood with the proportion of children with behavioural difficulties being 50 per cent higher in families with single parents or stepparents than in families where both parents are still together.

The answer is not for unhappy marriages to stay together. However, if parents do make the decision to separate, extra time and care must be invested in their children to maintain a sense of safety and security, and social support systems and networks must be available to support them in this. Also dedicating time increases the quality of relationships and neglecting to invest in these are what regularly leads to the breakdown of marriage.

Family Relationships
Increasingly, the ‘nuclear’ family is becoming an obsolete notion. According to the Policy Studies Institute, by 2010, more families will go through separation and restructuring than will stay together. Charity Age Concern states that in the past two generations, the number of children cared for by grandparents has jumped from 33 per cent to 82 per cent in the UK. As parents work longer hours and there is an increase in double-income households, 23 per cent of all children under 12 years old are being minded by their grandparents rather than going into childcare, which in turn is impacting older people’s freedom in retirement and places higher financial and physical demands on the aged. However, this time spent with grandparents impacts positively on extended family relationships.

Working parents find it increasingly hard to meet the emotional needs of their families. On average, men with children work 65 minutes more per week than those without. The Fatherhood Institute maintains that two thirds (66 per cent) of fathers regret not having more time to spend with their children and, as mentioned previously relating to education and behaviour, lack of time spent with their fathers is detrimental to children in a measurable way.

Family relationships rely profoundly on ‘quality time’ being spent together. This means time devoid of pressure and strain where they can bond through learning, laughter and the enjoyment of each other to help achieve a general sense of well-
being which incorporates emotional, physical and spiritual health. A study by 4Children revealed that 50 per cent of Britons feel that family life is harder today than it was 20 years ago. More than ever before, families need more support, tools and encouragement from their governments.

**Positive action**

It is not all doom and gloom for families. These risks to the family dynamic have long been recognised and increasing action is being taken by charities, community groups and governments, as well as responsible actors within the commercial sector. In the UK, initiatives such as Change4Life, policies such as flexible working for families, and awareness campaigns like National Family Week are helping to improve the forecast for families.

The creation of a coalition such as the UK’s National Family Week sees a whole range of active and influential bodies uniting to deliver a strong and cohesive message. 160 nationwide not-for-profit organisations ranging from Save the Children to the Football Association; celebrities including TV personalities, royalty and sports stars; sponsors including healthcare companies and supermarket chains; and politicians, including the Prime Minister pledged their support and committed to further exploring development of family life.

Charities, community groups, sporting associations and sponsors helped to make the week fun for families of all shapes, sizes and ages, running a total of 4048 events throughout the Week, encouraging families to spend more quality time together. This unprecedented number of activities ranged from story times and sports days to conferences and debates.

The week attracted an exceptional amount of media coverage, with over 1,300 pieces covering families and family issues including national and local broadcast, print and online. It focused on a positive celebration rather than negative dissection of the family experience.

Praise of the family and celebration of its permanent and unparrelled bonds is underestimated. National Family Week was born out of a recognition that there is a need for positive support of parents who are under increasing pressure from external factors such as media, environment, lifestyle and the current financial climate. The organisers of National Family Week in the UK believe strongly that awareness of how these factors are impacting general trends in family life needs to be raised and, whilst scare tactics and implementation of serious education campaigns are an element, a simple celebration and call to examine and rejoice in their relationships is just as important.

The concept of celebrating family life is not confined by national borders. It is something that is relevant to all countries, developed and developing, small and large.

**Would your country benefit from a National Family Week?**

The concept of celebrating family life is not confined by national borders. It is something that is relevant to all countries, developed and developing, small and large. It is critical that governments focus on the family agenda which is so intrinsically linked with all other elements of society.

Funding from government, although preferred, is not necessary; in the UK, National Family Week was set up and run by a private sector organisation which, in turn, is funded by sponsorship from the corporate sector.

The article is co-authored by Joanna Lawrence, Marketing and Operations Manager for National Family Week. If you would like to know more about National Family Week and how the UK’s model could be adapted and run in your country, please contact Jane Nethersole at jnethersole@nationalfamilyweek.co.uk

Jane Nethersole has been working at Henley Media Group for seven years, during which time she has headed up the Commonwealth Division managing publishing and events and established Climate Action, a successful partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme. She was instrumental in founding National Family Week in the UK and is now one of the initiative’s Directors.

**National Family Week** in the UK is run by Family Week Ltd, one of Henley Media Group’s subsidiary companies. Henley Media is a publishing and marketing company that specialises in developing events and publications on social, environmental and business issues in partnership with governments, UN agencies, multilateral organisations and the corporate sector. Working in partnership with the Commonwealth Secretariat, Henley Media Group is the publisher of the Commonwealth Ministers Reference Book – as well as a number of other Commonwealth titles, and assists governments with securing funding and logistics for various high level events.

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In COMMON pursuit of a world where all free people have freedom of expression, without fear of recrimination, intimidation or misrepresentation. And let these free persons rightfully express themselves through the written and spoken word through bits and bytes, so that all of society may hear, see and touch the voice of truth and freedom.

MISA congratulates the COMMONWEALTH on its 60th Anniversary.
VISION
MISA’s vision is of a southern Africa region where the media and members of society, individually or collectively, are free to express themselves through any media of their choice without hindrance of any kind. A region, too, whose access to information must be unhindered and whose information is readily available.

MISSION
The mission of MISA to realise this vision is to play a leading role in creating an environment of media freedom and free expression that promotes independence, pluralism and diversity of views and opinions, media sustainability, competency and professionalism in the southern African region. In dealing with these elements, MISA seeks to ensure that gender-specific needs form an integral part of all its programmes. At the same time, MISA programmes aim to empower civil society to demand and gain access to information as an inalienable right with the resultant free information flow strengthening democratic participation in social, political and economic processes by more informed citizens.

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A sporting chance for change: the Australian experience

By Kate Ellis, Minister for Sport and Youth, Australia

The idea that sport can promote social cohesion should not be a remarkable concept. Most of the world’s population has one or more sport that they follow passionately. Whether it’s cycling, any one the numerous football codes, netball or horse riding, there is a sport for all segments of our social fabric. A government’s investment in sport will reap more than just on-field success for players, clubs and supporters. It is the activity and opportunities ‘behind the play’ where the greatest benefits are to be found. Here, the investment can translate into community engagement in government initiatives across a range of areas – at the community, national and international level.

In 2008 I chaired a meeting of Commonwealth Sports Ministers in Beijing. Our agenda was to look at how sport can be used to support implementation and understanding of government policies and programmes.

An area of particular focus was youth policy. This was more than simply creating more opportunities for safe and accessible participation; rather, it was about bringing together key government departments at the national and local levels – education, health, sport, gender, culture, law and order, social inclusion – to develop an integrated youth sport policy. This is an important idea. Sport can be a thread that binds our policy fabric together as part of a holistic suite of initiatives and actions to help people achieve better social, health and educational outcomes.

Sport can be a thread that binds our policy fabric together as part of a holistic suite of initiatives and actions to help people achieve better social, health and educational outcomes.

The United Nations also believes sport plays an important role in implementing policy objectives. Its 2003 report ‘Sport for Development and Peace: Towards Achieving the Millennium Development Goals’, concluded that well designed sport-based initiatives are practical and cost-effective tools to achieve objectives in development and peace. The UN sees sport as a powerful vehicle that could support its objectives in areas such as eradicating extreme poverty and hunger; improving primary education; promoting gender equality and empowering women; and improving health and environmental sustainability. I agree.

The opportunities for inclusion, promotion and engagement that sport provides are as relevant to social justice promotion as they are to health initiatives.

The place of sport in Australia

Sport is a particularly powerful social marketing tool, especially in Australia, where the affinity for sport is obvious. It is part of the national psyche. Participation in physical activity and sport is encouraging. In 2007, some 10.9 million people aged 15 years and over – 66.7 per cent of the population – participated at least once a week, on average, in a physical activity.

Australia has about 26,000 local sporting clubs that have played a key role in local communities for more than 100 years. These grass roots clubs help promote values such as volunteerism, good health, cooperation, leadership, teamwork, meeting challenges, overcoming adversity and pursuing excellence. That has been particularly important in disparate communities and for people who are vulnerable or disadvantaged. Australia has seen sport create a sense of community for people from all backgrounds and walks of life.

At the elite level we clearly punch above our weight. We take pride in our successes, both at home and in the international arena but sport must be about more than simply winning. The grassroots values must be a critical part of a successful sporting culture.

The benefits of community sport

Participation in sport and physical activity brings with it many benefits. The Australian Government believes an involvement in sport from an early age can help build character and discipline in children – qualities that can be applied to other aspects of their lives. The precepts of hard work, self-esteem, good health, discipline, and teamwork that are necessary to achieve success in any sporting endeavour can be translated to everyday life.

In our educational system there is growing evidence that physical activity enhances the academic performance of school children. The fitter kids tend to perform better academically. They
tend to sustain higher energy levels and classroom attentiveness; they have enhanced concentration skills and positive study habits.

Research into high school student participation in physical activity found that regular physical activity has been associated with improved class grades, better performance on standardised tests, increased school attendance rates, and decreased behavioural problems at school. (Source: Thorpe, Kathryn; et al, ‘Effects of Schooling, Gender, and Self-efficacy on High School Students Participation in Physical Activity: Social and Educational Implications’, Association for Research in Education Conference Paper, TH005304,AARE 2005 Conference Papers at http://www.aare.edu.au/05pap/tho05304.pdf)

Getting young people involved in sport is an investment in the intellectual future of the nation. A healthier society brings with it many benefits, across almost all areas of social and economic development.

The precepts of hard work, self-esteem, good health, discipline and teamwork that are necessary to achieve success in any sporting endeavour can be translated to everyday life.

Success of a local social programme
In Far North Queensland there is a small town of about 1,500 people. It had the unenviable reputation for the highest rate of domestic violence in the state, and national campaigns were having little impact. Community leaders turned to the local rugby league club and, with funding from the Australian government, ran a grass roots ‘Domestic Violence – It’s Not Our Game’ campaign. While the messages about anti-domestic violence were essentially the same as those in our national campaigns, the cut-through achieved by the well regarded local sports team resulted in a drop of 55 per cent in reported incidents within a year. Sport proved to be the most effective platform to remedy a ghastly social problem.

Health and well-being
Sport and physical activity have obvious benefits for national health and well-being. In the Health Portfolio, physical activity is very much an integral part of our preventative health agenda – an agenda that looks at the emotional and physical well-being of all people, at every stage of life. Our belief is aligned to that old adage about a healthy body and healthy mind. Physical well-being is a liberating tonic.

Poor health arising from physical inactivity creates economic and social costs to the Australian community as a whole and individually. While the government is making significant investments to improve our health service delivery mechanisms, we are as much focused on reducing the number of people who will need to access them.

In addition to the promotion of sport and physical activity, sporting identities are also helping promote broader messages about healthy lifestyles. An example is the National Rugby League’s (NRL) ‘Eat Well Play Well Stay Well’ programme that utilises the profile of players to engage students and encourage...
them to consider their own behaviours and attitudes towards leading a healthy, balanced life.

Sport and structured physical activity is a simple way to help minimise the onset or impact of many chronic diseases. Cardiovascular disease, which was estimated to cost Australia A$7.6 billion in 2004, or 11 per cent of the country’s health expenditure, could be significantly reduced if people lived healthier active lifestyles. The total financial cost to Australia in 2004 was closer to A$14 billion or 1.7 per cent of GDP, according to a report by Access Economics for the National Heart Foundation.

Social development
Another area where sport has an important role, both on and off the field, is social development. Sport has a critical and formative influence on the ethics, beliefs and behaviours of its participants. By working with sporting associations, governments can play a role in shaping sports club culture, tackling issues such as alcohol abuse and anti-social behaviour.

Binge drinking is a good example of government and sport coming together to tackle a serious social problem. Despite well publicised indiscretions by some sporting stars, the Australian government sees sporting organisations as part of the solution rather than part of the problem.

The Australian Government has invested A$53 million as part of a national strategy to tackle binge drinking. Of this A$2 million will go to the Club Champions Program to establish ambassadors who can promote the message of sensible alcohol use within their codes.

Under our Club Champions Program, Australia’s seven major sports bodies – the Australian Football League, Netball Australia, the Australian Rugby Union, the National Rugby League, Football Federation Australia, Swimming Australia and Cricket Australia – have developed and adopted the first nationally consistent code of conduct on responsible alcohol use. It is not just those playing sport or belonging to clubs who benefit. The flow-on effect will promote the same responsible behaviour in supporters and in the wider community.

We have a number of social programmes in Australia which capitalise on association with sporting heroes. The cut-through provided by this association can open doors that traditional communication methods cannot.

Research into high school student participation in physical activity found that regular physical activity has been associated with improved class grades and better performance on standardised tests.

Indigenous sport
The reach of sport is also evidenced in sports programmes the Australian government supports to connect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Some of Australia’s greatest Australian Rules footballers have come from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander backgrounds. By funding an All Stars Ambassador Program and an Australian Football League (AFL) Club Fostering Program we are using football – our unique version of it – to promote awareness about things like sports participation, health, education and employment. There are around 87,000 indigenous people taking part in Australian football programmes.

By working with sporting associations governments can play a role in shaping sports club culture, tackling issues such as alcohol abuse and anti-social behaviour.
Overall, government sport programmes have resulted in almost 355,000 indigenous Australians actively participating in a wide range of sport and structured physical activity programmes. Importantly, 1,844 indigenous Australians have completed accredited coaching and officiating courses across 32 sports, which enables them to take on an ownership role in organising, managing and sustaining community-based sport for the future.

**The economic contribution of sport**

Marketing government programmes or initiatives through sport is an effective adjunct to traditional channels, particularly as markets are segmenting beyond the reach of traditional media. Sport provides direct and indirect links to a wide variety of people and communities.

Australia has developed an international reputation for sporting excellence through our national team performances and by the staging of major international events such as the Olympic and Paralympic Games, the Commonwealth Games and the 2003 Rugby World Cup. We are hoping to add the FIFA World Cup to this list in 2018 or 2022.

In countries such as Australia, where there is a strong culture of sporting excellence, there is also great opportunity to use sport as part of relationship building with developing countries. We have the resources, services, knowledge and facilities and we want to use them to help others.

**International development and outreach**

As part of its commitment to the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, the Australian Government is actively using sport as a medium for change in developing countries.

In 2008-09 the Australian Sports Outreach Program (ASOP), which aims to build the capacity of individuals and organisations to run quality sport programmes that have social benefits, provided more than A$151,000 for 20 projects in countries including Fiji, Samoa and the Cook Islands.

In countries such as Australia, where there is a strong culture of sporting excellence, there is also great opportunity to use sport as part of relationship building with developing countries.

It is not necessary to spend a lot of money to make a big difference in peoples’ lives. It is things like A$3,000 to increase access to sport for people with disabilities at the village level in Tonga; A$2,500 for a females in schools table tennis programme, in Tarawa, Kiribati; or A$10,000 for the provision of a sporting field for Wapenamanda school and community in the remote Enga Province in Papua New Guinea. These projects all make a difference.

Our funding commitment in the Pacific region through to 2011 is A$1 million a year. In southern Africa we are providing A$400,000 each year.

The Australian Sports Outreach Program (ASOP) is at the forefront of utilising sport as a development tool. ASOP supports organisations and communities to implement and run grassroots sport with a focus on increasing participation and community capacity building. Utilising the lessons learnt from domestic programmes, ASOP works in a coordinated approach with AusAID, Australian Sports Commission, and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in real partnership with local communities. There is a strong focus on the Pacific region, in Nauru, Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa and Vanuatu.

**Case studies of development and sport**

There are a range of examples of the success of these outreach programmes. The benefits of the outreach has recently been seen in the Nauru community of Yaren where a specifically designed programme known as Epon Keramen, or ‘People Gather to Play Games’ is showing real dividends. The local programme is designed to encourage women to get involved in sport and physical activity and provides the opportunity to enjoy team sport and all the additional benefits that it brings. The programme is built on consultation and engagement with local community members and was adapted to suit the particular needs of the community. It has been adopted by local community leaders and is contributing to a sense of pride in the community through the programme’s local success. Through the ASOP programme to start community basketball, almost half the women in the town are now participating in sport. Interest is spreading to other communities and the programme can be adapted to focus on other demographics and age groups.

AusAID projects in the Pacific have turned vines into skipping ropes as part of a health programme to reduce the incidence of obesity and diabetes; further afield in Laos, a child may be taught the difference between a ball and a landmine while learning a new game. These are very real changes that we can make under the banner of sport and physical activity.

We are also working with the Papua New Guinea Sports Foundation to help local sports teams develop community connections and partnerships. In this initiative, communities choose sporting activities that reflect different age groups and interests. These activities are run by local volunteers who are supported with advice, training and basic equipment. In addition to the core sports-based activities, additional classes in things such as gardening and food preparation and HIV/AIDS awareness are added.

The issue of HIV/AIDS is serious in Papua New Guinea. Through our sports programmes we have helped create the Committee on HIV Prevention Through Sport. An example of how this committee has tapped into sport for education is seen in a simple poster and essay competition it organised around the Prime Minister’s XV Rugby match with Australia. Young people were asked to put forward their views on how sport can help address HIV in their communities. When the competition winners met the rugby teams we were able to record radio and television bites that were used in AIDS awareness promotions across Papua New Guinea.

**Anti-doping activities**

Australia is extremely proud to be a world leader in the fight against doping. Drug control is an extremely important factor in maintaining sport as a powerful vehicle to inspire change. Sport must be beyond scandal or disrepute, and to this end administrators and governments need to uphold both the integrity of the sport and the health of athletes through effective anti-doping programmes.

The effective operation of the World Anti Doping Agency (WADA) over the past decade shows how governments and the international sporting movement can cooperate to remove drug cheats from sport. The message is clear – there is no place for cheats from sport. The recent decision of the Commonwealth Secretariat to review and subsequently cease funding to the Regional Anti-doping Organisations is disappointing. This decision will have an immediate impact on the delivery of anti-doping education and the ability of the countries within the Oceania region to combat and deal with sport. The recent decision of the Commonwealth Secretariat to review and subsequently cease funding to the Regional Anti-doping Organisations is disappointing. This decision will have an immediate impact on the delivery of anti-doping education and the ability of the countries within the Oceania region to combat and deal with sport.

In Australia, applications for federal funding from national sporting organisations are conditional on sports anti doping policies in line with the World Anti Doping Code.
The government does not pretend that sport alone can
magically fix problems at home and abroad. What the
The Australian government believes that while sporting government is passionate about is that the genuine partnership
organisations do and should run sport, the government must between government and sport can have a powerful influence
have the capacity to influence and support where it sees on the social, health and economic well-being of local
communities, the country and our neighbours.
potential for community benefit.

Conclusion

Youth, Sport & Culture

Sport must be beyond scandal or disrepute, and
to this end administrators and governments need to
uphold both the integrity of the sport and the health of
athletes through effective anti-doping programmes.

We take an active role in promoting elite and community-level
sport and physical activity. Through our Australian Sports
Commission, the delivery arm of our sports policy, we have one
of the world’s finest sports development and sports excellence
programmes, providing national high performance facilities like
the Australian Institute of Sport, as well as community-focused
projects providing primary school-aged children with access to
free, structured physical activity programmes in the after-school
timeslot of 3.00 pm to 5.30 pm.
Our financial commitment to sport, which in 2008 was more
than A$330 million, is an investment in the future well-being of
our people. Our return on investment is a society that is stronger
– physically, emotionally and financially.

Kate Ellis was appointed Australian Minister for Sport and Youth in 2007. She has
since launched the government’s blueprint for the future of Australian sport –
‘Australian Sport: Emerging Challenges, New Directions’ and has announced an
independent expert panel to examine better ways to run, promote, and manage sport
in Australia. She is passionate about the power of sport to strengthen communities,
tackle the obesity epidemic and define Australia’s national identity.
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Youth empowerment and international relations – a Commonwealth perspective

By Raj K Mishra, Regional Director, Commonwealth Youth Programme Asia Centre

Young people throughout the Commonwealth have an enormous contribution to make in their countries. The Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP) works with young people to create the opportunity for them to become active citizens who can fully participate in development projects that create opportunities for themselves and their communities. This article discusses the opportunity and the challenges faced by young people today, underlining why their empowerment becomes imperative, and analyses how this can be achieved. The author explains how an empowered youth can contribute to the building of a just, equitable and peaceful international order while lamenting the fact that the international community has not done enough to empower its next generation.

Youth empowerment – what is it?

The word ‘empowerment’ has been used extensively in development parlance these days, with the user often being unsure of its exact meaning. It is therefore imperative to demystify the word and explain its meaning in simple terms, particularly in the context of young people.

The Commonwealth Heads of Government (CHOGM) and the Commonwealth Youth Ministers have endorsed the following definition of youth empowerment: “Empowering young people means creating and supporting the enabling conditions under which they can act on their own behalf, and on their own terms, rather than at the direction of others.”

The mission statement of the Commonwealth Youth Programme is also founded on the principle of youth empowerment. It reads, “CYP engages and empowers young people (aged 15 to 29) to enhance their contributions to development. We achieve this through youth mainstreaming in partnership with young people, governments and other key stakeholders.”

The enabling conditions mentioned in the above definition would include a stable environment of democracy, equality and peace; a sound economic and social base; supportive legal and administrative frameworks; strong political will; adequate resource allocation; access to knowledge, information and skills; and a positive societal value system. These are discussed later under the heading ‘Youth empowerment – how?’. However, it is appropriate to spell out the implications of these conditions:

• The first point is that young people cannot be expected to do everything on their own and unassisted.
• Secondly, youth empowerment does not mean shifting the responsibilities of other stakeholders on to young people’s shoulders.

Youth empowerment – why?

The answer to this question lies in the opportunity and the challenges facing young people today. To take up the opportunity first: there are 1.3 billion youths aged 12-24 in the world today, of whom 1.2 billion alone are in the developing world. In much of the developing countries youth population will peak in the years leading up to 2015. This ‘demographic bulge’ represents a great economic opportunity: young people with fewer children, and improving ratios of productive to dependent population. However, benefits from this scenario will accrue only if the youth sector receives adequate investments, and young people are empowered economically, socially and politically.

The challenges faced by young people today are many and multi-dimensional. It is a fact that the largest ever population of young people also form the largest ever cohort of the unemployed, not to speak of the poverty-affliction they face. According to a report from the UN International Labour Organization (ILO), the number of unemployed youth was 85 million in 2005, up from 74 million a decade earlier. The World Bank’s World Development Report for 2007 forecasts that in the next five years 1.3 billion young people will compete for only 300 million jobs.

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What about poverty? According to one estimate more than 500 million youth today are living below US$2-per-day poverty line. Economic enfranchisement of young people is, therefore, the key to finding a solution for large-scale poverty and unemployment among them. This situation, if not remedied urgently, is sure to impact on the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). As the World Bank has observed, “the majority of the developing world’s poor are children and youths. Most of the MDGs directly targeting the young are not likely to be met unless greater attention is paid to the next generation.” (Children and Youth: Framework for Action 2005, World Bank)

This ‘demographic bulge’ represents a great economic opportunity: young people with fewer children, and improving ratios of productive to dependent population.

The next big challenge faced by the youth of today is the number of risks they are exposed to – HIV/AIDS, drugs and substance abuse, conflicts, trafficking and so on. In 2007 an
estimated 5.5 million youths aged 15-24 were living with HIV of which young women accounted for 3.4 million (source: Children and AIDS – Third Stocktaking Report, 2008 by UNICEF, UNAIDS, WHO and UNFPA). According to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), some 208 million people worldwide in the age group of 15-64 were consuming drugs in 2006-07 (World Drug Report 2008). Studies on substance abuse around the world show an alarmingly increasing incidence among the youth, even those below 15 years of age. Everyone knows that HIV/AIDS, drugs and substance abuse adversely impact young people’s productivity and life-span. The need, therefore, is to empower them with requisite information, knowledge and skills to avoid these hazards.

Unfortunately, lack of information is still a serious handicap for the youth in coping with these risks. According to the 2008 Report of the UNAIDS, only 40 per cent of the males and 38 per cent of the females in the age group of 15-24 have accurate and comprehensive knowledge about HIV and how to avoid its transmission. This falls well short of the global goal of ensuring comprehensive HIV knowledge in 95 per cent of young people by 2010.

As regards trafficking, according to the latest report of the UNODC, 79 per cent of all victims fall under the category of sexual exploitation, of whom an overwhelming majority are labour; the second most common form of trafficking is forced labour; which accounts for 18 per cent of all victims. Juxtapose this with the estimates of the ILO, according to which, globally, there are 12.4 million victims of forced labour, including 2.4 million who are trafficked for forced labour and sexual exploitation (ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific press release, 2008). There is no gainsaying the fact that a majority of those trafficked, either for forced labour or for sexual exploitation, are young women and children.

Worldwide, an estimated 300,000 under the age of 18 are involved in armed conflict, and another 500,000 have been recruited into military/paramilitary forces (source: Civil Paths to Peace – Report of the Commonwealth Commission on Respect & Understanding). Approximately 6.6 million young people worldwide are displaced by conflicts, surviving in acute poverty, and separated from their families and communities. Thus they need to be empowered with the requisite knowledge and skills to resist being drawn into the vortex of conflicts and be able to manage and survive in post-conflict situations.

Youth empowerment – how?
The scenario outlined above draws us into the next big question – how to achieve youth empowerment. This brings us back to the enabling conditions discussed earlier. A stable environment of democracy, equality and peace provides ideal conditions for promoting youth empowerment inasmuch as these encourage unfettered and equal participation of the youth in all spheres of life.

A stable environment of democracy, equality and peace provides ideal conditions for promoting youth empowerment inasmuch as these encourage unfettered and equal participation of the youth in all spheres of life. The voice of youth is heard at all forums of policy and implementation. Youth being a multi-sectoral subject requires collaboration with and coordination among various stakeholders – government ministries/departments, civil society organisations and international agencies. The recognition and acceptance of the principle of youth mainstreaming – introducing a youth perspective into the national development agenda – is thus the key to empowerment of youth.

Finally, provision of adequate resources for the sector is a sine qua non for empowering the youth. Be it education or health, skill building and credit support for employment, investment of resources for young people are a must by all governments. Unfortunately, this is not often the case. The allocation of budget for the youth sector by most governments in the developing world is minuscule compared with other sectors. Even the World Bank laments its own neglect of this sector by conceding, "Youth remain a largely neglected constituency in Bank analytical and operational work, either as participants or beneficiaries, despite their demographic importance and their potential for positive economic and social contribution” (2005). What is worse, political leaders tend to take the youth for granted, remembering them only at election times or when the country is faced with a natural calamity or an external aggression!

The Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment 2007-15

The Plan for Action for Youth Empowerment (PAYE) is a significant initiative of the Commonwealth Youth Programme that provides a framework for action by governments on 13 key points. Its uniqueness lies in the fact that governments can adopt any of the action points for implementation which have salience for their countries. Its endorsement by the Commonwealth Youth Ministers invests it with an international appeal and makes it an effective instrument for achieving youth empowerment. Among the important points for action are:

• Development and implementation of measures to promote economic enfranchisement of youth
• Strengthening social support systems and collaboration between key stakeholders
• Strengthening ministries, departments and legal frameworks
• Promoting participation of youth in decision-making
• Provision of quality education and improvement of access to IT
• Promotion of health and values through sports and culture
• Engagement of youth in the promotion of the environment; and above all,
• Monitoring and evaluation of progress achieved in the sphere of youth development.

Contribution of an empowered youth to international relations

Empowered young people can make a major contribution towards strengthening and promotion of international relations. There are many areas that can be enriched through such a contribution. Take, for instance, democracy and governance.
Through their active participation, right from the local to the national, youth can strengthen the forces of democracy all over the world. Being idealistic and generally devoid of vested interests, they can also ensure transparency and accountability in governance by their participation in and vigilance over the affairs of the community/state.

An empowered youth can be a strong force for resolving/managing conflicts and building a climate of international peace, friendship, respect and understanding. As the report on 'Civil Paths to Peace' states, "Young people need not be only the victims or perpetrators of violence; they also have an important role as peace makers. They are not so much the problem as at the heart of the solution."

Being the most productive segment of the society, an economically enfranchised youth can play a significant role in the reduction of poverty, hunger and illness. Similarly, they can work as 'change agents' fighting against injustice, abuse of power, elimination of graft and corruption, thus contributing towards the creation of a just and more equitable international order. History has recorded many instances when youth power has succeeded in overthrowing oppressive and corrupt regimes and in the installation of a more just and humane political order.

Has the international community done enough towards youth empowerment?

This is the most obvious question one would tend to ask after throwing some light on the potential contribution of an empowered youth to international relations. The answer, unfortunately, will have to be a firm 'no'. Let us take the case of the apex world body, the United Nations. It is a fact that the UN has no dedicated agency for youth, as it has for women and children. True, agencies such as the WHO, ILO, UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNDP, UNFPA and UNIFEM (which works for women and therefore for young women) work in areas that impact on aspects of lives of the young, but it is not the same thing as having a nodal body to look after affairs of the youth. Currently, there is only a youth unit under the Division for Social Policy and Development of the UN which deals with matters pertaining to young people. Surely this is not enough. No doubt, the General Assembly of the UN has from time to time passed seminal resolutions calling for governmental and international action in areas affecting young people. However, their implementation and follow-up would have been more effective had a nodal agency been in place.

It was a matter of gratification that the World Bank released its World Development Report 2007 under the title 'Development and the Next Generation'. Similarly, the recognition by the international community of certain youth-related MDGs has been an important milestone. The Commonwealth Youth Programme, arguably the largest international and inter-governmental agency working towards youth empowerment in its member countries, has been doing laudable work since its inception in 1973. However, it has been hamstrung by a severe resource crunch, both financial as well as human. There have been other international organisations such as the World Assembly of Youth, Youth Employment Network (YEN), European Youth Forum and the International Association for National Youth Service, etc., who have been doing laudable but limited work in the field of youth empowerment.

History has recorded many instances when youth power has succeeded in overthrowing oppressive and corrupt regimes and in the installation of a more just and humane political order.

What is clearly needed, though, is a well-thought-out vision and plan of action for youth empowerment [on the lines of CYP’s PAYE] by the international community, spearheaded by the UN. This would perforce entail an unwavering commitment from the national governments to create and sustain the enabling conditions outlined earlier to promote youth empowerment. This is the least the international community can do for its next generation.

Raj K Mishra is a former civil servant of 30 years’ standing and is now Regional Director of the CYP Asia Centre, located at Chandigarh, India. He has been dealing with youth and development issues for the last over 10 years.

The Commonwealth Youth Programme Asia Centre, established in 1975 in Chandigarh, India, works in collaboration with eight Commonwealth Asian countries – Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, India, Pakistan, Maldives, Malaysia, Singapore and Sri Lanka – towards promotion of youth empowerment. It is one of the four Regional Centers of the CYP, which is the only decentralised programme of the Commonwealth Secretariat. It is also the largest inter-governmental and international youth programme in the world.

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- **Barbados Ministry of Community Development and Culture:**
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- **Barbados Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs:**
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- **Barbados Ministry of Housing and Community Development:**
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- **Barbados Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs:**
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- **Barbados Ministry of Transport, Works and Housing:**
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- **Barbados Ministry of Urban Renewal:**
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- **Barbados Ministry of Youth and Sports:**
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Commonwealth Governments and Ministries

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Belize

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**Risk Management**

**Commonwealth Ministers Reference Book – 2009**

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Minister: The Hon Peter Gordon MacKay, PC, QC, MP (also holds Cabinet portfolio for National Revenue)

Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency: (Head Office): Blue Cross Centre (3rd Floor), 644 Main Street or POB 6051, Moncton, New Brunswick E1C 9J8. Tele: +1 506 851 2271. Fax: +1 506 851 7403. (Ottawa): 60 Queen Street, 4th Floor, PO Box 1667 STN B, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5R5. (Courier Address: K1P 5Y7). General Enquiries: +1 613 954 1064. Fax: +1 613 954 0249. Website: www.acoa-apec.gc.ca

Minister: The Hon Peter Gordon MacKay, PC, QC, MP (also holds Cabinet portfolio for National Defence)

Minister of State: The Hon Keith Ashfield, PC, MP

Canada Revenue Agency: 555 MacKenzie Avenue [7th Floor], Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0L5. Website: www.cra-arc.gc.ca

Minister of Natural Resources: The Hon Jean-Pierre-Blackburn, PC, MP (is also Minister of State for Agriculture)

Canadian Heritage: (National Headquarters): 15 Eddy Street, Gatineau, Quebec K1A 0M5. Tel: +1 819 997 0055. Website: www.canadianheritage.gc.ca

Minister for Canadian Heritage and Official Languages: The Hon James Moore, PC, MP

Minister: The Hon Gary Lunn, PC, MP

Status of Women Canada: (National Office): MacDonald Building, 123 Slater Street [11th Floor], Ottawa, Ontario K1P 1H9. Tel: +1 613 995 7835. Fax: +1 613 947 0761. Website: www.swc-cfc.gc.ca. Email: infonational@swc-cfc.gc.ca

Minister of State: The Hon Helena Guergis, PC, MP

Citizenship and Immigration: Jean Edmonds Building, Tower South [21st Floor], 365 Laurier Street West, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 1L1. Tel: (Call Centre, Toll Free): 1 888 242 2100, +1 613 954 1064. Fax: +1 613 957 2688. Website: www.cic.gc.ca

Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism: The Hon Jason Kenney, PC, MP

Minister: The Hon Michael Chong, PC, MP

Department of Finance: 140 O'Connor Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0G5. Tel: (Information Services): +1 613 992 1573, +1 613 996 7861. Website: www.fin.gc.ca

Minister of State (Democratic Reform): The Hon Steven Joly, PC, MP

Department of Justice Canada: 284 Wellington Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0H8. Tel: +1 613 957 4222, +1 613 992 4621. Fax: +1 613 954 0811. Website: www.justice.gc.ca

Minister of Justice and Attorney General: The Hon Robert Douglas Fletcher, PC, MP

Minister of State (Democratic Reform): The Hon Steven Joly, PC, MP

Department of Justice Canada: 1255 Peel Street, Suite 900, Montreal, Quebec. Tel: +1 514 283 6412. Fax: +1 514 283 3302. Website: www.dec-ced.gc.ca

Minister of State: The Hon Denis Lebel, PC, MP

Environment Canada: (National Office): Les Terrasses de la Chaudière, 10 Wellington Street, Gatineau, Quebec K1A OH3. (General Enquiries): 351 St Joseph Boulevard, Place Vincent Massey [8th Floor], Gatineau, Quebec K1A OH3. Tel: +1 819 997 2800. Fax: +1 819 994 1412. Website: www.ec.gc.ca

Minister of Environment and Climate Change: The Hon Jason Kenney, PC, MP

Minister: The Hon Michael Chong, PC, MP

Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec: (Head Office): Dominion Square Building, 1255 Peel Street, Suite 900, Montreal, Quebec. Tel: +1 514 283 6412. Fax: +1 514 283 3302. Website: www.dec-ced.gc.ca

Minister of State: The Hon Denis Lebel, PC, MP

Minister: The Hon Rob Mayor, PC, MP

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs (Americas): The Hon Peter Kent, PC, MP

Health Canada: Brooke Claxton Building, Tunney's Pasture, Ottawa, Ontario K1A DK9. Tel: +1 613 957 0200. Fax: +1 613 952 1154. Website: www.hc-sc.gc.ca. Email: info@hc-sc.gc.ca

Minister: The Hon Leona Aylitt, PC, MP

Human Resources and Social Development: 140 Promenade du Portage [Phase IV], Gatineau, Quebec K1A 0J9. Website: www.hrsdc.gc.ca

Ministers: The Hon Diane Finley, PC, MP and The Hon Rob Merrifield, PC, MP

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada: (Public Enquiries Contact Centre): Terrasses de la Chaudière, North Tower, 10 Wellington, Gatineau, Quebec K1A 0H4. Tel: +1 819 997 0022. Fax: +1 819 957 4222. Website: www.indianandnortherncanada.gc.ca

Minister: The Hon Stockwell Day, PC, MP

National Defence: (Mailing Address, General Enquiries): National Defence Headquarters, Major-General George R Pearkes Building, 101 Colonel By Drive, Ottawa, Ontario K1A DK2. Tel: +1 613 996 3100. Fax: +1 613 995 8189. Website: www.forces.gc.ca

Minister: The Hon Peter Gordon MacKay, PC, QC, MP (also holds Cabinet portfolio for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency)

Natural Resources: 580 Booth Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1A OE4. Tel: (General Enquiries): +1 613 995 0947. Fax: +1 613 996 4397. Website: www.nrrcc-nr.gc.ca

Minister: The Hon Lisa Raitt, PC, MP

Privy Council Office: (General Enquiries): 85 Sparks Street, Room 1000, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A3. Tel: (General Enquiries): +1 613 957 5153. Fax: +1 613 957 5043. Website: www.pco-bcp.gc.ca

Minister: The Hon John Baird, PC, MP

Minister of State (Democratic Reform): The Hon Steven John Fletcher, PC, MP

Public Safety Canada: Sir Wilfred Laurier Building, 340 Laurier Avenue West, Ottawa K1A 0B8. Postal Address: 269 Laurier Avenue West, Ottawa K1A 0B8. Tel: (General Enquiries): +1 613 944 4875. Fax: +1 613 954 5186. Website: www.ppspc-ppsc.gc.ca

Email: communications@ppsc.gc.ca

Minister: The Hon Peter Van Loan, PC, MP

Public Works and Government Services: 11 Laurier Street, PDP III, Gatineau, Quebec K1A 0S5. Fax: +1 819 956 9062. Website: www.pwgsc.gc.ca

Minister: The Hon Christian Paradis, PC, MP

Minister: The Hon Rob Merrifield, PC, MP

Transport Canada: 330 Sparks Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1A DN9. Tel: +1 613 990 2309. Fax: +1 613 954 4731, +1 613 998 8620. Website: www.tc.gc.ca

Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities: The Hon John Baird, PC, MP

Minister of State: The Hon Rob Merrifield, PC, MP

Treasury Board of Canada: Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, Strategic Communications and Ministerial Affairs, L'Esplanade Laurier, East Tower [8th Floor], 140 O'Connor Street, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0H9.
**Fiji Islands**

(Fiji islands was suspended from the councils of the Commonwealth on 8 December 2006 following a military coup led by Commodore Voreqe Bainimarama, who is now the country’s Interim Prime Minister)

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**HEAD OF GOVERNMENT**
Interim Prime Minister: Commodore Voreqe Bainimarama (also holds portfolios for Finance and National Planning and Sugar, Public Service, Peoples’ Charter for Change, Information, Communications and Archives, Foreign Affairs, International Co-operation and Civil Aviation), New Government Buildings or POB 2353, Suva. Tel: +679 3211 201. Fax: +679 3306 034. Email: pmsoffice@connect.com.fj

**MINISTRIES**
- **Attorney-General’s Chambers and Department of State for Justice:** Marina Parade, Banjul. Tel: +220 4228181. Fax: +220 4225352. Secretary of State and Attorney-General: The Hon Marie Saine
- **Department of State for Agriculture:** Bedford Place Building, Banjul. Tel: +220 4228231. Fax: +220 4225357. Secretary of State: HE Professor Alhaji Dr Yahya A J Jammeh (also Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces and holds Cabinet portfolios for Agriculture, Public Service, Peoples’ Charter for Change, Information, Communications and Archives, Foreign Affairs, International Co-operation and Civil Aviation)
- **Department of State for Basic and Secondary Education:** Bedford Place Building, Banjul. Tel: +220 4228231. Fax: +220 4225357. Secretary of State: The Hon Ms Fatou L Faye
- **Department of State for Defence:** The Quadrangle, Banjul. Tel: +220 4222702. Fax: +220 4225009. Secretary of State: Commodore Voreqe Bainimarama (also Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces and holds Cabinet portfolios for Defence and National Planning and Sugar, Public Service, Peoples’ Charter for Change, Information, Communications and Archives, Foreign Affairs, International Co-operation and Civil Aviation)
- **Department of State for Development Planning:** POB 838, State House, Accra. Tel: +233 21 685006. Fax: +233 21 677114. Website: www.moc.gov.gh. Email: moc@ghanagov.gh
- **Department of State for Education:** Quay Street, Accra. Tel: +233 21 665012. Fax: +233 21 667836. Website: www.moee.gov.gh. Email: moee@ghanagov.gh
- **Department of State for Energy and Mineral Resources:** 7 Marina Parade, Banjul. Tel: +220 422 4122. Fax: +220 422 5009. Secretary of State: The Hon Ousman Jammeh
- **Department of State for Finance and Economic Affairs:** The Quadrangle, Banjul. Tel: +220 4228291. Fax: +220 4227954. Secretary of State: The Hon Musa Gibril Bala-Gaye
- **Department of State for Fisheries and Water Resources:** 5 Marina Parade, Banjul. Tel: +220 4228702. Fax: +220 4228628. Secretary of State: The Hon Yankouba Touray (also holds Cabinet portfolio for National Assembly Matters)
- **Department of State for Foreign Affairs:** 4 Marina Parade, Banjul. Tel: +220 4223577; +220 4228654. Fax: +220 4223578. Secretary of State: The Hon Dr Omar Touray
- **Department of State for Forestry and the Environment:** 5 Marina Parade, Banjul. Tel: +220 4228702. Fax: +220 4228628. Secretary of State: The Hon Momodou Boukta Cham
- **Department of State for Health and Social Welfare:** The Quadrangle, Banjul. Tel: +220 4227605. Fax: +220 4229325. Secretary of State: The Hon Dr Mariatou Jallow
- **Department of State for Trade, Industry and Employment:** Independence Drive, Banjul. Tel: +220 4228370, +220 4228868. Fax: +220 4227756. Secretary of State: The Hon Abdou Kolley
- **Department of State for Women’s Affairs:** State House, Banjul. Tel: +220 4227605, +220 4229325. Secretary of State: HE Aja Dr Isatou Njie-Saidy
- **Department of State for Works, Construction and Infrastructure Development:** Office of the President, State House, Banjul. Tel: +220 4227708. Fax: +220 4228937. [General Information]: +220 4223811. Fax: +220 4227034. Email: [General] info@statehouse.gov.gh. [Press]: dprr@statehouse.gov.gh
- **Department of State for Youth and Sports:** New Administrative Building, The Quadrangle, Banjul. Tel: +220 4225266, +220 4227881. Fax: +220 4225267. Secretary of State: The Hon Sherrif Gomez

**Ghana**

**HEAD OF STATE**
President: HE Professor John Evans Atta Mills

**HEAD OF GOVERNMENT**
President: HE Professor John Evans Atta Mills, Office of the President, POB 1627, The Castle, Osu, Accra. Tel: +233 21 665415, +233 21 666281

**MINISTRIES**
- **Ministry of Communications:** POB M42, Ministries, Accra. Tel: +233 21 685006. Fax: +233 21 667114. Website: www.moc.gov.gh. Email: moc@ghanagov.gh. Minister: The Hon Haruna Iddrisu
- **Ministry of Culture and Chieftaincy:** POB 1627, State House, Accra. Tel: +233 21 685012. Fax: +233 21 678361. Minister: The Hon Alexander Asum-Ahensah
- **Ministry of Defence:** Burma Camp, Accra. Tel: +233 21 776111/15. Fax: +233 21 778549. Minister: The Hon Lt.-Gen. [Rtd.] J H Smith
- **Ministry of Education:** POB M45, Accra. Tel: +233 21 660700. Fax: +233 21 664067. Website: www.moess.gov.gh. Minister: The Hon Alex Tettey-Enyo
- **Ministry of Employment and Social Welfare:** POB 1627, State House, Accra. Tel: +233 21 663549. Fax: +233 21 667251. Minister: The Hon Stephen Kwao Amoano
- **Ministry of Energy:** P.O.B T40, Stadium Post Office, Accra.
Grenada

GOVERNOR-GENERAL
HE Sir Charles Daniel Williams, GCMG, QC [representing HM Queen Elizabeth II, Head of State], Office of the Governor-General, Government House, St George’s. Tel: +1 473 440 6639. Fax: +1 473 440 6688

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT
Prime Minister: The Hon Tillman Thomas (also holds Cabinet portfolio for Legal Affairs), Office of the Prime Minister, Ministerial Complex (6th Floor), Botanical Gardens, Tanteen, St George’s. Tel: +1 473 440 2255. Fax: +1 473 440 4116. Email: pmsec@spiceisle.com, pmsec@govgd
Cabinet Secretary: Mrs Elizabeth Henry-Greendige. Tel: +1 473 440 2661. Fax: +1 473 440 4116

MINISTRIES
Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Forestry, Fisheries, Public Utilities and Energy: Ministerial Complex (2nd Floor), Botanical Gardens, Tanteen, St George’s. Tel: +1 473 440 2708, +1 473 440 3078, +1 473 440 3083. Fax: +1 473 440 4191. Email: agriculture@govgd
Minister: The Hon Michael D. Lett
Ministry of Carriacou and Petit Martinique Affairs: Beausejour, Carriacou. Tel: +1 473 443 6026/28. Fax: +1 473 443 6040. Email: mincoup@govgd
Minister: Senator the Hon George Prime
Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development: Ministry of Education Building, Botanical Gardens, St George’s. Tel: +1 473 440 2737. Fax: +1 473 440 6650. Website: www.grenadaedu.com
Minister: The Hon Nazim Burke
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Tourism: Ministerial Complex (Fourth Floor), Botanical Gardens, St George’s. Tel: +1 473 440 2640; +1 473 440 2712. Fax: +1 473 440 4184. Email: foreignaffairs@govgd, Tourism: www.genadagrenadines.com
Minister: The Hon Peter David
Ministry of Health: Ministerial Complex (1st & 2nd Floors), St George’s. Tel: +1 473 440 2649. Fax: +1 473 440 4127. Email: min-healthgrenada@spiceisle.com
Minister: The Hon Karl Hood
Ministry of Housing, Lands and Community Development: Ministerial Complex, St George’s. Tel: +1 473 440 3195. Fax: +1 473 440 4191
Minister: The Hon Alleyne Walker
Ministry of Legislative Affairs: Ministerial Complex (3rd Floor), St George’s. Email: legal@govgd
Minister: The Hon Tillman Thomas (also holds Prime Ministerial portfolio)
Ministry of Social Development, Ecclesiastical Affairs and Labour: Ministerial Complex, West Wing (1st Floor), Botanical Gardens, St George’s. Tel: +1 473 440 2269. Fax: +1 473 440 7990. Email: mhousing@hotmail.com
Minister: The Hon Glynis Roberts
Ministry of Works, Physical Development, Public Utilities and Environment: Ministerial Complex (4th Floor), St George’s. Tel: +1 473 440 2181. Fax: +1 473 440 4122
Minister: The Hon Joseph Gilbert
Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Culture and Sports: Ministerial Complex (3rd Floor), Botanical Gardens, St George’s. Tel: +1 473 440 6917/18. Fax: +1 473 440 6924. Email: sports@govgd
Minister: The Hon Patrick Simmons

Guyana

HEAD OF STATE
President: HE Mr Bharrat Jagdeo

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT
President: HE Mr Bharrat Jagdeo, Office of the President, New Garden Street, Bourda, Georgetown. Tel: +592 225 1330/38. Fax: +592 226 7811. Website: www.op.gov.gy
Email: op-iu@spiceisle.com, opmed@sdnp.org.gy
Presidential Secretariat: New Garden Street, Bourda, Georgetown. Tel: +592 225 1573/76. Fax: +592 227 3050. Website: www.op.gov.gy
Email: op-iu@sdnp.org.gy, opmed@sdnp.org.gy
Head of Presidential Secretariat: Dr Roger Luncheon

MINISTRIES
Office of the Prime Minister: Wights Lane, Kingston, Georgetown.
Commonwealth Governments and Ministries

[The Commonwealth Ministers Reference Book – 2009]

India

(List as at 2008. Elections taking place April/May 2009)

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Tel: +91 11 230 15321. Fax: +91 11 230 17290, +91 11 230 17824.
Website: www.presidentofindia.nic.in.
Email: presidentofindia@rb.nic.in

HEAD OF GOVERNMENT
Prime Minister: The Hon Dr Manmohan Singh, (also in charge of the following Ministries/Departments not specifically allocated to any Minister: Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Ministry of Planning, Department of Atomic Energy, Department of Space and Ministry of Coal and Ministry of Environment and Forests), Office of the Prime Minister, South Block, Raisina Hill, New Delhi 110 001. Tel: +91 11 230 12312.
Fax: +91 11 230 16857. Website: http://pmindia.gov.in

Cabinet Secretary: Shri K M Chandrasekhar, Cabinet Secretariat, Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi 110 004. Tel: +91 11 230 16696.
Fax: +91 11 230 12095. Website: www.cabsec.gov.in

DEPARTMENTS & MINISTRIES
Department of Atomic Energy: Anushakti Bhavan, Chatrapathi Shivaji Maharaj Marg, Mumbai 400 001. Tel: +91 22 220 26823.
Fax: +91 22 220 47476.

Minister: The Hon Dr Manmohan Singh (also holds Prime Ministerial and Cabinet portfolios for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Planning, Space and Coal and Environment and Forests)

Ministry of Agriculture, Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution: Knishi Bhawan (Room No. 120), New Delhi 110 001. Tel: (Agriculture): +91 11 233 83370. Fax: +91 11 233 84129.
Tel: [Food]: +91 11 233 88165. Fax: +91 11 233 82756.

Minister: The Hon Shri Sharad Pawar

Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers: Udyog Bhavan (Room No. 192), New Delhi 110 011. Tel: +91 11 233 86519. Fax: +91 11 233 84020.
Website: www.chemicals.nic.in

Minister: The Hon Shri Ram Vilas Paswan (also holds Cabinet portfolio for Steel)

Ministry of Civil Aviation: Rajiv Gandhi Bhawan, Safdarjung Airport, New Delhi 110 003. Tel: +91 11 246 10358.
Website: www.civilaviation.nic.in. Email: secy.moca@nic.in

Minister of State: The Hon Shri Praful Patel

Ministry of Coal: Shastri Bhawan (Room No. 321, A), A Wing, New Delhi. Tel: (Additional Secretary): 91 11 233 84887.
Fax: +91 11 233 84893. Website: www.coal.nic.in. Email: secy.moca@nic.in

Minister: The Hon Dr Manmohan Singh (also holds Prime Ministerial and Cabinet portfolios for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions, Planning, Atomic Energy and Space and Environment and Forests)

Website: www.commerce.nic.in

Minister: The Hon Shri Kamal Nath

Ministry of Communications and Information Technology: Electronics Niketan, 6 GCO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi 110 003. Tel: Information Technology: +91 11 237 39191. Fax: +91 11 237 69719. Tel: [Communications]: +91 11 237 15797. Fax: +91 11 237 12333.
Website: http://mit.gov.in. Email: mocit@nic.in

Minister: The Hon Shri A Raja

Ministry of Corporate Affairs: Shastri Bhawan (A Wing), Rajendra Prasad Road, New Delhi 110 001. Tel: +91 11 233 84470. Fax: +91 11 230 73806.
Website: http://mca.gov.in. Email: oandm.dca@sb.nic.in

Minister: The Hon Shri Prem Chand Gupta

Minister of Culture: Shastri Bhawan (Room No. 334 A, C Wing), Dr Rajendra Prasad Road, New Delhi 110 001. Tel: +91 11 233 82331.
Fax: +91 11 233 84867.
Website: www.indiaculture.nic.in.
Email: js.culture@nic.in

Minister: The Hon Smt. Ambika Soni (also holds Cabinet portfolio for Tourism)

Ministry of Defence: South Block (Room No. 104), New Delhi 110 001. Tel: +91 11 230 12286. Fax: +91 11 230 15403.
Website: http://mod.nic.in

Minister: The Hon Shri A K Anthony

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Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur, the first and the largest in the chain of several IITs, was set up in the year 1951 by the Government of India. The Institute currently has 7,000 students and is fully residential. The Institute distinguishes itself for its quality students, committed faculty, and world-class academic infrastructure. The alumni of the Institute presently occupy top positions in academics and industry and have achieved laurels in India and abroad.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES

The Institute (19 departments and 15 centers and schools) offers the following academic programmes in Engineering, Science, Humanities and Social Sciences, Management, and Law:

- Undergraduate: 16 B.Tech (Hons.), 1 B.Arch., and 6 M.Sc. programmes
- Postgraduate: 49 M.Tech and MMST, MBA, MCP, and LLB. programmes
- Dual Degree: 55 B.Tech-M.Tech programmes
- Research: MS, Ph.D., PDF, and D.Sc. programmes
- Joint M.Sc-Ph.D and Joint M.Tech-Ph.D. programmes

OPPORTUNITIES FOR OVERSEAS STUDENTS

- Overseas students can apply for admission to the postgraduate, doctoral, and post-doctoral fellowship programmes.
- Students can attend the courses on full-time or part-time basis.

COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH

- Promotes joint Ph.D. programmes with leading Universities of the world.
- Has research collaboration with leading national and international academic and industrial organizations (such as UNDP, CIDA Canada, European Commission Brussels, Microsoft Corporation USA, Intel Corporation USA, General Motors USA, National Semiconductors, USA, John Hopkins University USA, The Third World Academy of Sciences Italy, and Korea Research Institute Korea).
- Has developed collaborative research laboratories (such as Vodafone-Essar-IIT Kharagpur Center of Excellence in Telecom, Steel Technology Center, General Motors-IIT Kharagpur Research Lab on ECS, Advanced VLSI Design Laboratories & AVLSI Consortium, Nano and Microfluidics Research Laboratory, Center of Excellence in Information Assurance, Kalpana Chawla Space Technology Cell, Ocean Science and Technology Cell, Advanced Laboratory for Plant Genetic Engineering, and Microelectronics and MEMS Design Center).
- The Institute has international collaboration with many institutes of the world (such as University of New South Wales Sydney Australia, University of British Columbia Vancouver Canada, Aachen University Germany, City University Hong Kong, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich Switzerland, University of Tokyo Japan, Cambridge University UK, University of Birmingham UK, Georgia Tech University USA, University of California Berkeley USA)

PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION

- Ranked as the Top Technical Institution in India by four (out of the five) ranking agencies in India.
- Ranked by DATAQUEST as the Top Technical School for its contribution to the Indian industries.
- One among the top 500 Universities in the world for its contribution to research and intellectual capital (Ranked by Shanghai University).
- Ranked 58th among the 350 institutions for its intellectual wealth generation and outstanding performance of its graduates (CEO of Fortune 500 Companies) by Ecole Polytechnique de Paris, France.

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INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY KHARAGPUR, KHARAGPUR 721 302
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Ministry for Development of the North Eastern Region: Shastri Bhawan (Room No. 401, 4th Floor, C Wing), New Delhi 110 011. Tel: +91 11 233 86520, +91 11 233 84183. Fax: +91 11 233 81898. Website: www.mdoNER.gov.in

Ministry of Environment and Forests: Ministry of Environment and Forests: Paryavaran Bhawan, GCO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi 110 003. Tel: +91 11 243 60874. Fax: +91 11 243 60779. Website: www.dod.nic.in

Minister: The Hon Shri Kapil Sibal (also holds Cabinet portfolio for Panchayati Raj)

Ministry of Earth Sciences: GCO Complex (Block No. 12), Lodhi Road, New Delhi 110 003. Tel: +91 11 243 60874. Fax: +91 11 243 60779. Website: www.dod.nic.in

Minister: The Hon Shri Kapil Sibal (also holds Cabinet portfolio for Science and Technology)

Ministry of External Affairs: Ministry of External Affairs: Shastri Bhawan, C Wing, Room 401, New Delhi 110 001. Tel: +91 11 233 89401, +91 11 233 81949. Fax: +91 11 233 81898. Website: www.mea.gov.in

Minister: The Hon Dr Manmohan Singh (also in charge of the Ministry of Planning, Department of Atomic Energy, Department of Space and Ministry of Coal)

Ministry of External Affairs: South Block (Room 172), New Delhi 110 011. Tel: +91 11 230 12312, +91 11 230 13149. Fax: +91 11 230 16857. Website: www.meaIndia.nic.in

Minister: The Hon Shri Pranab Mukherjee

Ministry of Finance: Ministry of Finance: North Block, Lok Nayak Bhavan, New Delhi 110 001. Tel: +91 11 230 92980. Fax: +91 11 230 93289. Website: www.finmin.nic.in

Minister: The Hon Shri Pr Chidambaram

Ministry of Food Processing Industries: Ministry of Food Processing Industries: Panchsheel Bhawan, August Kranti Marg, New Delhi 110 009. Tel: +91 11 264 92475. Fax: +91 11 264 93228. Website: www.mofpi.nic.in

Minister: The Hon Dr. Manmohan Singh


Minister: The Hon Dr. Anbumani Ramdoss

Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises: Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises: Udyog Bhawan (Room No. 155), New Delhi 110 001. Tel: +91 11 230 63598. Fax: +91 11 230 63552. Website: www.mhpe.nic.in

Minister: The Hon Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev


Minister: The Hon Shri Sushil Kumar Shinde

Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation: Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation: Nirman Bhawan, Safdarjung Road, New Delhi 110 011. Tel: +91 11 230 61928, +230 11 63989. Fax: +91 11 237 42067. Website: www.mhup.gov.in

Minister of State: The Hon Kumari Selja

Ministry of Human Resource Development: Ministry of Human Resource Development: Shastri Bhawan, C Wing (Room No. 301), New Delhi 110 001. Tel: +91 11 237 82698. Fax: +91 11 233 83265. Website: www.education.nic.in

Minister: The Hon Shri Sushil Kumar Shinde

Ministry of Information and Broadcasting: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting: Shastri Bhawan, A Wing, New Delhi 110 001. Tel: +91 11 233 84340. Fax: +91 11 237 82118. Website: www.mib.gov.in

Minister: The Hon Shri Priyaranjan Dasmunsi

Ministry of Labour and Employment: Ministry of Labour and Employment: Shram Shakti Bhawan, Rail Marg, New Delhi 110 001. Tel: +91 11 237 17515. Fax: +91 11 237 10240, +91 11 237 18730. Website: www.labour.nic.in

Minister of State: The Hon Shri Krishan Pal Theeralam

Ministry of Law and Justice: Ministry of Law and Justice: Shastri Bhawan [A Wing, 4th Floor], Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi 110 001. Tel: +91 11 233 87557. Fax: +91 11 233 84241, +91 11 233 87259. Website: www.lawmin.nic.in

Minister: The Hon Shri H R Bhardwaj


Minister: The Hon Shri Mahavir Prasad

Ministry of Mines: Ministry of Mines: Shastri Bhawan [A Wing, 3rd Floor], New Delhi 110 001. Tel: +91 11 237 88121. Fax: +91 11 338 6402. Website: www.mines.nic.in

Minister: The Hon Shri Sis Ram Ola

Ministry for Minority Affairs: Ministry for Minority Affairs: Paravaran Bhawan (11th Floor), CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi 110 003. Tel: +91 11 243 64271.
Ministry of Tribal Affairs: Shasti Bhawan, New Delhi 110 001. Tel: +91 11 233 88482. Fax: +91 11 230 70577. Website: www.tribal.nic.in. Email: dirtrt@tribal.nic.in

Minister: The Hon Shri P R Kyndiah

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Minister: The Hon Shri S Jaipal Reddy

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Assistant Minister, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: The Hon Lewis Nguyai, MP
The Hon Uhuru Kenyatta, MP (also holds Cabinet portfolio for Finance)
Assistant Minister, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: The Hon Dr Obura Odinga, MP

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East African Business Council

The Voice of the Private Sector in East Africa

East African Business Council is the apex body of business associations in Kenya, Uganda Tanzania, Rwanda, and Burundi whose mission is to promote Private Sector's regional and global competitiveness in Trade and Investment.

Our 131 members are drawn from five EAC Partner States and comprise Ordinary members (national private sector associations), associate Members (public business facilitating bodies) and corporate members.

Our activities are focused not only on leveraging all issues that impede full realisation of potential benefits of regional integration, but also on providing a platform where the business community can regularly discuss and drive reforms to ensure the environment for business is conducive. Through the annual Business Climate Index, EABC monitors progress in removal of non tariff barriers like customs, business, registration, licensing procedures among others and improvement of investment climate factors like legal and regulatory framework, access to power, finance, among others.

Together with the Commonwealth Secretariat, EABC is currently involved in a 3-year project aimed at implementing the East African Community Private Sector Development Strategy.

Our website www.eabc.info is an information portal for anyone seeking to do business in the region. For more information contact us at info@eabc-online.com.
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Vice Prime Ministers
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Nauru

[No Nauru is a Member in Arrears]

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President: HE Mr Marcus Stephen

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Minister for Fisheries and Education: The Hon Ronald Kun
Minister for Finance, Economic Planning, Foreign Affairs and Trade and Minister assisting the President: The Hon Dr Kieren Keke
Minister for Health, Sports and Justice: The Hon Matthew Batsiua
Minister for Internal Affairs, Land Information, the National Library) and is Secretary to the Cabinet and Clerk of the Executive Council: Rebecca Kitteridge, ONZ

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Minister: The Hon Judith Collins (also holds Cabinet portfolios for Police and Veterans’ Affairs) and has responsibility for the Serious Fraud Office

Associate Minister: The Hon Dr Pita Sharples (also holds Cabinet portfolio for Maori Affairs) and is Associate Minister of Education

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Minister: The Hon John Carter (also holds Cabinet portfolios for Senior Citizens, Racing and is Associate Minister for Local Government)


Email: info@lgc.govt.nz

Minister: The Hon Rodney Hide (also holds Cabinet portfolio for Regulatory Reform) and is Associate Minister of Commerce

Associate Minister: The Hon John Carter (also holds Cabinet portfolios for Civil Defence, Senior Citizens and Racing)

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Minister: The Hon John Key also holds Prime Ministerial and Tourism portfolios and has responsibility for the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service and the Government Communications Security Bureau

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Ministers: (Arts, Culture and Heritage): The Hon Christopher Finlayson (also holds Attorney-General’s and Treaty of Waitangi Negotiations portfolios), (Broadcasting): The Hon Dr Jonathan Coleman (also holds Cabinet portfolio for Immigration) and is Associate Minister of Tourism and Health, (Sport and Recreation): The Hon Murray McCully (also holds Cabinet portfolio for Foreign Affairs and the Rugby World Cup)

Ministry of Defence: Defence House (Level 4), 1-12 Aitken Street, Wellington or POB 12703, Mapp House, Wellington, 6144. Tel: +64 4 496 0999. Fax: +64 4 496 0859. Website: www.defence.govt.nz. Email: information@defence.govt.nz

Minister: The Hon Dr Wayne Mapp (also holds Cabinet portfolio for Research, Science and Technology) and is Associate Minister for Economic Development and Tertiary Education

Associate Minister: The Hon Heather Roy (also holds Cabinet portfolio for Consumer Affairs) and is Associate Minister for Education

Ministry of Economic Development: 33 Bowen Street, Wellington or POB 1473, Wellington. Tel: +64 4 472 0030. Fax: +64 4 473 4638. Website: www.med.govt.nz. Email: info@med.govt.nz

Ministers: (Economic Development): The Hon Gerry Brownlee (is also Leader of the House and holds Cabinet portfolio for Energy Resources and is Associate Minister of the Rugby World Cup), (Commerce): The Hon Simon Power (is also Deputy Leader of the House and also holds Cabinet portfolios for Justice, State Owned Enterprises, the Law Commission) and is Associate Minister of Finance, (Small Business): The Hon Maurice Williamson (also holds Cabinet portfolios for Building and Construction, Customs and Statistics)

Associate Ministers: (Economic Development): The Hon Dr Wayne Mapp (also holds Cabinet portfolios for Defence, Research, Science and Technology) and is Associate Minister for Tertiary Education, (Energy and Resources): The Hon Pansy Wong (also holds Cabinet portfolio for Ethnic Affairs and Women’s Affairs) and is Associate Minister for ACC, (Commerce): The Hon Rodney Hide (also holds Cabinet portfolio for Local Government and Regulatory Reform)

Ministry of Consumer Affairs: 33 Bowen Street, Level 7, Wellington or POB 1473, Wellington. Tel: +64 4 474 2750. Fax: +64 4 473 9400. Website: www.consumeraffairs.govt.nz.

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Minister: The Hon Heather Roy (is also Associate Minister of Defence and Education)

Ministry of Tourism: 33 Bowen Street, Level 7, Wellington or POB 5640, Wellington. Tel: +64 4 498 7460. Fax: +64 4 498 7465. Website: www.tourism.govt.nz. Email: info@tourism.govt.nz

Minister: The Hon John Key (also holds Prime Ministerial and Cabinet portfolios for Ministerial Services, the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service and the Government Communications Security Bureau)

Associate Minister: The Hon Dr Jonathan Coleman (also holds Cabinet portfolios for Immigration and Broadcasting) and is Associate Minister of Health
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Minister: [Environmetal Change Issues]: The Hon Nick Smith (also holds Cabinet portfolio for the ACC) and is Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs


Minister: [Fisheries]: The Hon Phil Heatley (also holds Cabinet portfolio for Housing)


Minister: [Foreign Affairs]: The Hon Murray McCully (also holds Cabinet portfolios for Sport and Recreation and the Rugby World Cup) and Associate Minister (Foreign Affairs): The Hon Tim Groser (also holds Cabinet portfolio for Conservation) and is Associate Minister for Climate Change Issues (International Negotiations) and is Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs

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Minister: [Health]: The Hon Tony Ryall (also holds Cabinet portfolio for State Services) and Associate Ministers: The Hon Dr Jonathan Coleman (also holds Cabinet portfolios for Immigration and Broadcasting) and is Associate Minister for Tourism, The Hon Tariana Turia (also holds Cabinet portfolio for Conservation and is Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs and Climate Change Issues (International Negotiations) and is Associate Minister for Social Development and Employment and Disability Issues, The Hon Peter Dunne (also holds Cabinet portfolio for Revenue)


Minister and Deputy Leader of the House: The Hon Simon Power (also holds Cabinet portfolios for State Owned Enterprises, Commerce, the Law Commission) and is Associate Minister of Finance

Department for Courts: Website: www.courts.govt.nz

Minister: The Hon Georgina te Heuheu (also holds Cabinet portfolio for Pacific Island Affairs, Courts, Disarmament and Arms Control) and is Associate Minister of Maori Affairs


Minister: The Hon Paula Bennett (also holds Cabinet portfolios for Social Development and Employment and Disability Issues) and is Associate Minister for Foreign Affairs and Climate Change Issues (International Negotiations)


Minister: The Hon Tariana Turia (also holds Cabinet portfolio for the Community and Voluntary Sector) and is Associate Minister for Health and Disability Issues (National Office): 45 47 Pipitea Street, Thorndon, Wellington or POB 1666, Thorndon, Wellington. Tel: +6 4 463 8000. Fax: +6 4 463 8001. Website: www.msd.govt.nz.

Minister: The Hon Paula Bennett (also holds Cabinet portfolios for Social Development and Employment and Disability Issues) and is Associate Minister of Local Government

Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector: Charles Ferguson Building (West Block), Bowen Street, Wellington or POB 1556, Wellington. Tel: +6 4 916 3645. Fax: +6 4 916 0091. Website: www.myd.govt.nz.

Minister: The Hon John Carter (also holds Cabinet portfolios for Civil Defence and Racing) and is Associate Minister of Local Government


Minister: The Hon Steven Joyce (also holds Cabinet portfolio for Communications and Information Technology) and is Associate Minister of Finance and Infrastructure

Ministry for Women’s Affairs: Revera Building (Level 21, 48 Mulgrave Street, Thorndon, Wellington or POB 10-B49, Wellington. Tel: +6 4 915 7112. Fax: +6 4 916 1604. Website: www.mwa.govt.nz.

Minister: The Hon Pansy Wong (also holds Cabinet portfolio for Ethnic Affairs) and is Associate Minister for ACC and Energy and Resources

New Zealand Customs Service [Corporate Office]: The Custom House, 17-21 Whitmore Street, Wellington or POB 2218, Wellington. Tel: Freephone 0800 4 CUSTOMS (0800 4248 786). International: +6 4 300 5399. Fax: +6 4 359 6730.

Website: www.customs.govt.nz. Email: feedback@customs.govt.nz

Minister: The Hon Maurice Williamson (also holds Cabinet portfolios for Building and Construction, Statistics and Small Business)

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Pakistan

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Minister: The Hon Makhdoom Amin Fahim

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Minister of Defence: The Hon Chaudhry Ahmed Mukhtar

Minister of Defence Production: The Hon Abdul Qayyum Khan Jatoi

Minister of Education: Block D, Pak Secretariat, Islamabad. Tel: +92 51 9201392, +92 51 321020. Fax: +92 51 822851. Website: www.moe.gov.pk

Minister: The Hon Mir Hazar Khan Bighari

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Minister: The Hon Makhdoom Shah Mehmood Qureshi

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Minister: The Hon Mir Aijaz Hussain Jakhrani

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Minister: The Hon Rehmatullah Kakar

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Minister: The Hon Waqar Ahmed Khan

Ministry for Labour and Manpower: Block B, Pak Secretariat, Islamabad. Tel: +92 51 9210007. Fax: +92 51 9203462

Minister: The Hon Dr Khurshheed Ahmed Shah

Ministry of Law, Justice and Human Rights: Block R/S, Pak Secretariat, Islamabad. Tel: +92 51 9210628, Fax: +92 51 9202628

Minister (Law and Justice): Vacant

Minister (Human Rights): The Hon Syed Mumtaz Alam Gillani

Ministry of Livestock and Dairy Development: Islamabad. Tel: +92 51 9202444

Minister: The Hon Hamayun Aziz Kurd

Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development: Hajvery Plaza, Blue Area, Islamabad. Tel: +92 51 9203374/75

Minister: The Hon Justice (Rtd.) Abdul Razzaq A Thahim

Ministry of Minorities: Green Trust Tower, Floors 4-8, near UBL Building, Blue Area, Islamabad. Tel: +92 51 9203908. Fax: +92 51 9203905

Minister: The Hon Shahbaz Bhatti

Ministry of Narcotics Control: Shan Plaza, Blue Area, Islamabad. Tel: +92 51 9208367, +92 51 9208363

Minister: The Hon Nawabzada Khawaja Muhammad Khan Hoti

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Minister: The Hon Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan

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Minister: The Hon Dr Asad Umar

Ministry of Tourism and Environment: Block B, Pak Secretariat, Islamabad. Tel: +92 51 9208154. Fax: +92 51 9203462

Minister: The Hon Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan

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Minister: The Hon Dr Asad Umar

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Minister: The Hon Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan

Ministry of Youth Affairs: Block A, Pak Secretariat, Islamabad. Tel: +92 51 9204926. Fax: +92 51 9202704. Website: www.youth.gov.pk

Minister: The Hon Dr Asad Umar

Ministry of Youth Affairs: Block A, Pak Secretariat, Islamabad. Tel: +92 51 9204926. Fax: +92 51 9202704. Website: www.youth.gov.pk

Minister: The Hon Dr Asad Umar
Thabazimbi Municipality is excelling in living up to its mission of promoting, implementing and ensuring the financially and environmentally sustainable and development of the Municipality with a diversified and viable economy that provided an environment and services that benefit all.

The Municipality is one of the country’s most progressive developmental institutions, offering unsurpassed business, industrial and tourism development. It has demonstrated its tremendous economic growth prospects through the existence of its diverse economic potential, therefore affording the Municipality an opportunity of being the national Vuna Award winner for Local Economic Development in 2008. The Agricultural–Tourism–Mining development value chain positions the Municipality to be one of the prominent economic hubs in South Africa.

Critical to the success of local economic development of Thabazimbi Municipality is the comprehensive facilitation of this fast growing economy, which encompasses upgrading of current infrastructure, improving business skills for SMMEs, and practically closing the development gaps for communities education and employment. Strong co-ordinated efforts do prevail amongst different Stakeholders in addressing these economic challenges.

Existing pillar sectors like Mining, for instance, partake in sound processes towards addressing job creation, Municipal infrastructure backlogs and capacity constraints.

The development activities in Thabazimbi take strong cognizance of planning that is in line with the national and provincial government policies and initiatives (e.g. NSDP, PGDS, ASGISA etc). While we strengthen the Municipality’s long term economic competitiveness, these legislative mandates and guidelines serve as yardsticks through integrated development processes. The Municipality has a sound Integrated Development Plan, Local Economic Strategy, Spatial Development Framework, Land Use Management System that are all core to the current systematic economic growth within the Municipal area.

While we embrace our visible and self explanatory achievements, we are also aware that there is still a long road towards achieving our vision of being the leading municipality offering quality services in the most economic, affordable, equitable and sustainable manner. Some of the critical challenges still facing the Municipality include lack of land for ever growing development, poverty and skills development. With this dedication staff and leadership the Municipality is going for much greater heights.

**CONTACT**

Municipal Manager: TSR NKhumise

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E-Mail: info@thabazimbi.gov.za  
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Minister: The Hon Mir Israrullah Zehri

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Minister: The Hon Syed Naveed Qamar

Ministry of Railways: Block D, Pak Secretariat, Islamabad.
Tel: +92 51 9213170, +92 51 9218515
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Ministry of Religious Affairs, Zakat and Ushr: Civic Centre, G-6, Islamabad.
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Minister for Religious Affairs: The Hon Syed Hamid Saeeed Kazmi
Minister for Zakat and Ushr: The Hon Noor-ul-Haq Quadri

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Minister: The Hon Muhammad Azam Khan Swati

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Minister: The Hon Ms Samina Khalid Ghurki

Ministry for Special Initiatives: Islamabad
Minister: The Hon Lal Muhammad Khan

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Minister: The Hon Pir Aftab Hussain Shah Jilani

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Minister: The Hon Najmuddin Khan

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Papua New Guinea

GOVERNOR-GENERAL
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HEAD OF GOVERNMENT
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Deputy Prime Minister: The Hon Dr Peta Prew, CMG, MP (also holds Cabinet portfolio for Lands, Physical Planning and Mining), (Ministry Office): Aopi Centre (4th Floor), POB 5645, Boroko, NCD. Tel: (Ministry): +675 301 3206, +675 301 3103. Fax: +675 301 3205, (Parliament House). Tel: +675 327 7680

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Minister: The Hon Sam Abal, MP

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Minister and Attorney-General: The Hon Dr Allan Marat, MP
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Minister: The Hon Mark Majakai, MP
Office of the Minister for Lands, Physical Planning and Mining:
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Minister: The Hon Dr Puka Temu, CMG, MP (is also Deputy Prime Minister)
Office of the Minister for National Planning and District Development:
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Minister: The Hon Paul Tammur, MP
Office of the Minister for Petroleum and Energy:
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Minister: The Hon Don Polye, MP

St Kitts and Nevis

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A major challenge facing the South African mining industry continues to be the attainment of sustainable improvement in the health and safety performance. The Mine Health and Safety Act of 1996 led to the establishment of the Mine Health and Safety Council as a tripartite statutory body accountable to the Department of Minerals and Energy of South Africa.

The Council is made up of equal representation by state, employer and organised labour members under chairmanship of the Chief Inspector of Mines.

**Funding Sources**
The Council has three key sources of funding: appropriation from the national government for administrative support, levies from the mines (based on their health and safety performance), and administrative fines.

**Functions**
The primary function of the MHSC is to advise the Minister of Minerals and Energy on research, regulations and occupational health policies to improve occupational health and safety in South African mines. To give effect to the mandate, the Council manages three permanent committees with key responsibilities in health and safety research (SIMRAC), legislation to promote occupational health and safety at mines (MRAC), and monitoring of occupational health at mines (MOHAC).

The Council is also tasked to promote the development of a preventative occupational health and safety culture and to support the achievement of the industry milestones focused on preventing occupational diseases, accidents and injuries. An executive office supports the functioning of the Council and manages the operational deliverables.

**Summit**
Every two years the Council hosts a tripartite summit to review the state of occupational health and safety at mines. The summit is attended by mining industry leaders, presided over by the Minister of Minerals and Energy, and allows stakeholders to recommit to corrective action, where necessary.

**Research Outcomes**
The MHSC is currently focusing its research programmes within nine thrust areas on investigating human-factor issues, rock bursts, rock falls, occupational and physical diseases, on preventing explosions and fires, and on machinery and engineering hazards.

The research results are available through reports, handbooks, informative books and booklets, multilingual comics, information packages, CDs, DVDs and short films. Two influential handbooks were developed, namely on occupational health and on occupational hygiene measurements. As part of communicating research outcomes, the MHSC is planning awareness roadshows during 2009 to promote the dangers, control and prevention of silicosis.

The MHSC website hosts a collection of research reports and downloadable booklets on occupational health and safety completed on behalf of the Council.

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Trinidad and Tobago marked 100 years of the commercial production of oil and natural gas, its dominant industry, in 2008.

While other economic activities, such as manufacturing and financial services, now play an increasingly important role in the US$24.7 billion economy, the continued growth of the petroleum sector remains a key focus of the Government and its development plans.

The Government has set 2020 as the year by which they would like to see Trinidad and Tobago, with a population of 1.3 million on a land area of 5,128 sq. km, located at the end of the Caribbean archipelago, attain the status of being a “developed country”. The petroleum sector is expected to play a crucial role in the achievement of that ambition. However, it requires continued investment in all facets of the industry.

There is a mix of both state and private participation in the sector. Indeed, it was because of the British Admiralty's search for a more efficient substitute to its coal fired navy during World War I, and the subsequent operations of the consortium of small British petroleum companies that launched Trinidad and Tobago on the international energy arena. With independence, came a thrust towards direct state involvement in the sector, supported by both local and international private sector investment.

Today, the state wholly-owned entity, the Petroleum Company of Trinidad and Tobago Ltd. (PETRONIN), lifts about 54,249 barrels a day (B/d) out of current total production of some 122,000 B/d. PETRONIN also operates the only refinery in the country. At the present time, a refinery optimisation is being undertaken to enable the company to compete in markets requiring more environmentally friendly fuels.

The Government-owned National Gas Co. (NGC) is also the sole owner of the country-wide natural gas transmission system and transports all of the natural gas used in the domestic market.

The major player in domestic fuels retailing is also a state firm, the National Petroleum Marketing Co. (NP Mark).

By 1996, natural gas production surpassed crude oil production and Trinidad and Tobago transitioned into what is now considered a country based economy with current production totaling 3.7 billion cubic feet (BCF) per day or 538,000 barrels of oil equivalent (BOE). It is in this arena that the private sector predominates—compunies such as British Petroleum of Trinidad and Tobago, British Gas Trinidad and Tobago, BP Hilson, Repsol YPF, and ENI Resources.

Investment opportunities open to both local and international investors are numerous—particularly exploration and production (upstream), additional refining capacity (midstream) and certainly industrial expansion based on natural gas (downstream). There is also room for new power generation capacity.

Despite its longevity in the business, geologists agree that the twin-island nation has not run out of crude deposits by any means and there is an excellent chance of more being found. To date, only one third of the country known hydrocarbon bearing acreage has been explored. There is therefore, sufficient unexplored acreage left both on and offshore to put this belief to the test and the Government’s continued offerings of exploration acreage provide the opportunity for companies to do so.

Five new on shore blocks have already been selected for offer to interested parties. They are 4(b) (off Trinidad’s east coast), 5(b) (south east of Trinidad) and NCM 3, 4 and 5 (off Trinidad’s north coast and west of Tobago). The Government is currently engaged in a review of the competitive bidding procedures which has resulted in a shorter, cleaner and more transparent process. Further, in order to encourage exploration and development activities in new and existing areas, as well as ensure that the fiscal regime allows for flexibility in varying economic circumstances, the current fiscal regime is also being revised to ensure that the industry remains sustainable and competitive while maximising value to the Government. As such, a consultant has been contracted with the mandate to assist in the review of:

- The fiscal incentives for deep water blocks;
- The Supplemental Petroleum Taxes to small petroleum operators;
- The incentives for small fields, drilling activities, enhanced oil recovery and heavy oil, as well as;
- The taxation regime for downstream projects.

The structure of Production Sharing Contracts is also being revisited. A policy position is expected on these matters ahead of the planned offer of blocks in 2009. Also in 2009, it is expected that exploration will be inaugurated in a frontier province, the Trinidad and Tobago Deep Atlantic Area (TTDAA), where water depths range from 1,200-3,000 metres. The Norwegian company StatoilHydro, won the bid in 2006 to explore for hydrocarbons in the TTDAA 5 block. The TTDAA region is regarded as a promising frontier for new discoveries, providing significant volumes of both oil and gas for future use. Studies being conducted in the TTDAA area provide the insight that the area is extremely prospective. Several TTDAA blocks are expected to be offered in late 2009. Another new geological province in which there are expectations for new oil discoveries and where the Government is encouraging companies to explore, is the deep land area. Many wells have been drilled onshore in Trinidad during the first century and close to two (2) billion barrels of oil produced. Most of these wells were, however, drilled without the benefit of 3D seismic. The Government is of the view that acquisition of this seismic could reveal potential targets for exploration in the deep onshore.

Three companies, Canadian Voyager, Trinidad Exploration and Development (TED) and Fulcrum Energy have each been awarded one deep block on land.

The Central Range Deep Production Sharing Contract with Canadian Voyager has been signed and exploration has already commenced. It is expected that the Production Sharing Contracts for the South West Peninsula Deep and for the Guayaguayare Deep Blocks will be signed by the end of first quarter 2010.

The other area in which the Government is most keen to see exploration proceed is that of downstream gas-based industrialisation. Other possibilities being explored for the commercialisation of gas reserves include floating LNG and another LNG train, Tain X for which a feasibility study has been done. However, gas for domestic use remains a priority. The Government’s aim is to go further downstream and use the basic derivatives from the gas stream to mount an extensive programme of further industrialisation into consumer products that can command a wider overseas market and create a larger number of jobs.

Upstream and downstream are, of course, inextricably linked, in that they feed off each other. The upstream is arguably, more significant, because without the oil and gas, nothing else is possible. That’s why the current Minister, Senator the Honourable Conrad Enil, a management expert by training, is energetically pursuing transformation the Ministry of Energy and Energy Industries into a world class organisation, structured to meet the expectations of all, through a quality of service component, including speed of response. After all, it is the Ministry that has to arrange block auctions, vet the companies and generally oversee the whole exploration and subsequent development effort.
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