

Chapter 6

System Management

6.1 International and regional

6.1.1 Good practice: Documentation and participation in ESD activities at the regional level

There is no doubt that the UNDESD, with UNESCO as the lead agency, has elevated the profile of ESD to a level of unprecedented significance. Including work produced by central and cluster offices, UNESCO has produced thousands of pages of documentation and hosted countless hours of workshops to support regions, countries, institutions and even individual teachers in the implementation of the UNDESD. This work has included not only the establishment of fundamental frameworks to support implementation, but also resource materials for those involved directly in the implementation, as well as numerous publications cataloguing and elaborating on best practices in ESD in relation to teacher education (UNESCO 2007; Cambers et al. 2008), the application of the Earth Charter (Earth Charter International 2007) and in the Pacific (ACCU-UNESCO 2007). This work has effectively positioned ESD on the global agenda for education reform, alongside longstanding priorities such as literacy and gender equality, leading other international organisations without explicit environment-related agendas to focus on ESD as a priority as well.

While the preceding comments deal mostly with global and regional initiatives, these initiatives would not have been possible without the support and participation of the involved countries. Table 6.1 below seems to suggest that formal commitments on the part of the focus country governments have been the exception rather than the norm. However, the evidence at the more granular level of regional activities is much more positive. There appears to be quite a high level of participation in regional activities, with most of the focus countries represented in the participant lists of the many workshop and seminar reports. The number of such activities, and the level of participation, is particularly high in the Pacific region.

Extending the good work: Despite participation, engagement and even commitment at the regional level, on-the-ground implementation and results achievement are proceeding steadily at best in the focus countries. Several of the country-based sources consulted commented that despite funds, profile and activities related to ESD, the work has produced few tangible results. This comment reflects, in part, the challenges related to determining what constitutes *results* in ESD, and how these can be measured, and reinforces the earlier suggestion that there continues to be a need for more research on ESD. However, there also appears to be sense of anxiety that the available resources could all be exhausted in deliberation, rather than implementation. In the Pacific, a great deal of time and energy went into the development of regional frameworks and guidelines for national ESD indicators, followed by the development

Table 6.1 Participation of focus countries in international ESD initiatives

	Jamaica	Dominica	Guyana	Maldives	Mauritius	Samoa	Tonga	PNG	Solomon Islands	Nauru
Main teacher education institute involved in international network*	Yes									
Formal endorsement or official launch of the DESD**	Yes						Yes			
Completed 2009 or 2011 ESD surveys (UNESCO)*	Yes						Yes			
Endorsement of regional agreements***	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

* Information provided by UNDESD Secretariat.

** Information from several sources, including country mapping reports and UNESCO 2007.

*** Such as the Tortola Declaration (Caribbean) and the Pacific ESD Framework (Pacific).

of the indicators themselves, but this exercise has reportedly not resulted in effective results-oriented monitoring. One of the lessons learned was that it directed finite and financial resources away from the *implementation* of ESD itself. In the Caribbean, similarly, there is evidence of interest in the establishment of localised ESD indicators, with a number of workshops and presentations having focused on this topic, although this work is ongoing, and a number of challenges remain (Collins-Figueroa 2011).

This experience underscores the challenge of describing progress in a field which is highly process-oriented, and of assessing learning outcomes which are not only content based. There appears to be a tacit consensus about the importance of goals and indicators, yet it remains challenging to describe ESD in these terms. As the next few years will see the end of a number of internationally agreed goals (IAGs) such as Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals, as well as the UNDESD, there will be an opportunity to revisit these experiences with a view to establishing clear and tangible goals for the next round of IAGs, along with indicators which adequately describe what the goals intend to achieve.

6.1.2 Gap: Lack of effective regional co-ordination on ESD implementation

One of the common claims from those involved with ESD in multiple countries is the importance of working regionally in order to provide co-ordinated support and share lessons learned across countries. This makes sense in light of limited resources as well as common themes within each region in terms of context, entry points and constraints. There is an excellent track record of co-operation between island states on relevant issues, as well as a wealth of organisations and structures in place to facilitate co-ordination. While there appears to be a gap in effective co-ordination on ESD implementation, the text box below suggests that this gap, at least in the Pacific and Caribbean, is not attributable to lack of relevant co-ordinating entities. Rather, what appears to be the case is that there has been a lack of leadership and collaboration

between the various co-ordinating bodies. Different groups have assumed differing roles on an ad hoc basis, according to their own mandates, resulting in fragmented implementation. Having said this, the cases of the three regions are quite different.

Relevant co-ordination bodies and support networks:

- Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)
- Caribbean Community (CARICOM)
- Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC)
- Caribbean Network of Teacher Educators
- Global Islands Partnership (GLISPA)
- Global University Network for Innovation
- Global Universities Partnership on Environment and Sustainability (GUPES)
- International Network of Teacher Education Institutes (associated with UNDESD)
- MESCA group
- Network of Institutes for Sustainable Development (NISD)
- Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)
- Pacific Islands Forum
- Pacific Network of Island Universities (EDULINK project)
- Secretariat of the Pacific Community
- Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
- SIDSnet
- UNESCO Associated Schools Project

In the Pacific, a great deal of effort has gone into regional co-ordination. Co-ordination activities have benefited from institutional infrastructure like that provided by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, and the support of UNESCO and other organisations such as the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environmental Programme (SPREP), the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and the University of the South Pacific (USP), among others. The USP's Pacific Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development (PACE-SD) has taken on a lead role, having been designated as the co-ordinating body for both the regional ESD strategy and action plan. However, due to changes in leadership and other factors, this co-ordination role has reportedly been largely unfilled, and with the exception of a few activities, the action plan has not been implemented. Furthermore, as an environment-oriented department, PACE-SD has recently focused more on climate change activities, leaving the role of ESD co-ordination largely to the stakeholders more directly involved.

Unlike the Pacific community, regional co-ordination activities in the Caribbean and AIMS regions have been decidedly less. In the AIMS region, this review did

not obtain any evidence of regional co-ordination activities focused on ESD. In the Caribbean, there have been a number of regional workshops and seminars, supported by UNESCO's Kingston office, UNEP and the Cropper Foundation, among others. Activities included a regional launch of the UNDESD in Jamaica; however, to date, no regional plans or strategies have been developed. Despite the commitment of a common core of individuals from a number of countries, ESD initiatives have been undertaken mainly on an ad hoc basis, without a broader implementation scheme to support a results chain or consistent follow-up. The Cropper Foundation, for its part, has been helping to resolve this issue, and appears to be becoming a focal organisation on ESD activities in the Caribbean. The organisation has taken the initiative on a number of regional activities in recent years, including a 2011 regional workshop on ESD, hosted by the Cropper Foundation with the support of UNESCO. The workshop was well attended and brought together a wide range of specialists to share approaches and expertise. While there continues to be engagement and leadership from a number of individuals and organisations, reports have indicated the need for stronger commitment at the institution and government levels. The University of the West Indies, as a regional institution with campuses in several countries, has played an informal role in co-ordinating a number of activities and sharing lessons between countries. However, this too has been largely on an ad hoc or per project basis.

Bridging the gap: Most information sources have noted that co-ordination, both regionally and nationally, has been inadequate. The most common recommendations relate to the appointment of stable focal points, and most often the recommendation is that these be associated with regional and/or national universities. While changes in leadership at PACE– SD have been used to explain the relative lack of regional co-ordination in the Pacific, it is notable that USP's School of Education and Institute of Education have picked up much of this role. In addition, other organisations like the UNESCO Apia Office and SPREP have also played de facto co-ordination roles on various initiatives. It is notable, however, that in the Caribbean and AIMS regions, which lack regional ESD plans of any kind and which have much less active co-ordination bodies, ESD work has also progressed relatively well at the country level owing to a number of active CSOs and donor-supported projects. This raises some questions about the return on investment of regional co-ordination activities. This aspect of ESD implementation warrants further exploration. The situation remains dynamic, with new initiatives being explored each year. One promising initiative in the Caribbean, supported by UNESCO and The Cropper Foundation, is the development of an online portal for ESD in the region, which will consist of a website and clearing house for research and data on ESD in the region, as well as an online discussion forum to facilitate co-ordination and exchange of expertise. This type of decentralised approach may support an efficient way forward for collaboration and co-ordination.

6.1.3 Gap: Need for more strategic and streamlined approaches to regional planning

The importance of internationally agreed goals, as well as regional planning, is generally well recognised. However, the layering of plans, frameworks, strategies

and other agreements, along with the tendency for these to lack strategic and results-oriented approaches, creates a challenging environment to work in at the national level. A 2009 review of progress on the implementation of the action plan associated with the Pacific ESD Framework is illustrative, noting that in addition to complementing the Pacific Plan, the action plan also complements other regional and international initiatives including the MDGs, EFA, the UN Decade for Literacy, the Forum Basic Education Plan, the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) Education and Communication Guiding Framework, and the Pacific Youth Strategy – identifying eight guiding frameworks in a single sentence. While in many ways complementary, the sheer number of guiding documents can easily pull attention away from the real work of implementation, and have the potential to create unnecessary confusion and administrative work. This list is in fact just a beginning – the box below presents additional initiatives relevant to the three regions. In addition to such initiatives, most SIDS also rely on donor-funded projects – many of which span several countries, requiring additional administration and co-ordination. While there tends to be consistency and complementarity between such initiatives, the administrative burden at the top is quite heavy, even before national plans are considered.

Applicable guiding frameworks:

- Action Plan for Implementation of ESD in the Pacific Islands (2008–2014)
- Action Plan for Implementing the PESDF (2008–2014)
- Barbados Programme of Action (BPoA) (1994)
- Bonn Declaration on ESD (2009)
- Earth Charter (2000)
- Education for All (1990–2015)
- Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention (2008)
- Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the BPoA (2005)
- Millennium Development Goals (2000–2015)
- Nassau Recommendations for Climate Change Education for Sustainable Development (2011)
- Pacific Culture and Education Strategy (2010–2015)
- Pacific ESD Framework (PESDF) (2006)
- Pacific Plan (2005)
- Pacific Youth Strategy (2000–2010)
- Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme Education and Communication Guiding Framework
- Tokyo Declaration of HOPE (Holistic, Ownership-based, Participatory, Empowering) (2009)

- Tortola Declaration on Climate Change Education for Sustainable Development (2011)
- Traditional Knowledge Action Plan (2009)
- UN Decade of ESD (2005–2014)
- UN Literacy Decade (2003–2012)

Bridging the gap: Over the past several years, there has been considerable reflection on the need to streamline planning frameworks at all levels. As early as 2005, UNESCO was working to promote the linkages between global education initiatives. As we are now in the final years of many of the current IAGs, discussions are beginning about what will replace them, presenting an opportunity for a more unified approach. At regional levels, this will also present an opportunity to revisit other competing agendas with a possibility of weaving them together into a more coherent approach. While there is value in identifying goals and strategies in particular areas, the textbox above provides an illustration of how this approach can result in a diffusion of priorities, which could make it a challenge to concertedly follow up on each individual strategy, framework and action plan.

A UNDESD review from UNESCO (2012) found that ESD is emerging as a unifying theme for many types of education that focus on different but related priority areas. Because ESD takes into account not only good basic education, but also other priority themes related to environmental protection and social and economic development, it has the potential to pull together a number of different interests under a common banner. This is not to suggest that ESD alone should supplant other educational agendas, but rather that education which embraces sustainability as a core value has the potential to help align a variety of diffuse educational agendas related to issues of global importance. Furthermore, many of these issues – including sustainability as well as many others such as peace, tolerance and social justice – will not be solved by improved teaching of knowledge and skills alone. Because ESD recognises the need for behavioural and dispositional change, and not just the learning of knowledge and skills, it has an important contribution to make to the way that *education* itself is envisaged in the next round of IAGs. What has been learned through ESD implementation around the importance of students’ experiential learning, policy alignment, whole school approaches, pedagogy etc. suggests the need for a comprehensive perspective, which will provide policy guidance in all of these areas.

6.1.4 Good practice: Balancing regional funding with country-level interventions

Given the importance of local contextualisation in ESD, as well as the limited resources available to support educational programming, one of the positive trends observed is the move towards balancing regional funding and programming with support to country level interventions owned and led by different SIDS. This phenomenon is increasingly apparent in the Pacific, where organisations like UNESCO and NZAid have contributed to supporting the development of regional frameworks and strategies, as well as supporting a number of successful local initiatives. This approach represents

a shift away from more regionally-oriented approaches, as well as ‘one size fits all’ programmes.

From a donor or multilateral perspective, there are efficiencies to working at the regional level to support SIDS. With a number of common concerns and contextual factors, it is practical to support regional organisations in order to contribute to a number of countries. However, individual countries often lack the institutional capacity, resources, or political will to translate generalised frameworks into national strategies or action plans. Many such frameworks depend on outside funding for their implementation, which is typically not secure at the time the frameworks are being developed. Based on experiences early in the UNDESD, UNESCO has adjusted its strategy for supporting ESD in the Pacific. The organisation has worked with seven national governments to conduct ESD sector-mapping exercises, and is currently supporting locally initiated ESD interventions in four of those. With this local ownership, it has been observed that these initiatives have gained significant traction where earlier efforts may not have, and that there has been more spontaneous collaboration and communication between government departments and other stakeholders.

Extending the good work: Despite improved approaches overall, there remain a number of issues related to donor funding of ESD activities in SIDS. Donor commitments tend to come with fixed duration. However, a number of sources have indicated the need for sustained relationships in order to accomplish substantive changes in education systems. Short duration ‘project-based’ approaches also tend to result in limited ownership, with challenges related to institutionalisation of good work, particularly when there is too much reliance on outside expertise, rather than working with stakeholders within local systems.

Most notably, information sources in both the Pacific and Caribbean have indicated that there is a tendency for donor funding to distort local agendas because of the availability of funding for interventions in some areas, or on certain themes, but not others, or because of strings attached to the funding itself. In the SIDS context, it is not only CSOs that rely on external funding – even MoEs rely on the opportunities presented by such projects. However, too often, local organisations are forced to go where the money is. Recently, there appears to have been a shift in focus away from ESD and sustainable development towards ‘climate change’ as the new focus of funding. Other prominent issues in recent years have included disaster preparedness, biodiversity, reefs, turtles and so on. The instability created by shifting funding priorities leads to insecurity in a context where there is a need for slow and steady development focused on medium- and long-term goals. This is an area warranting reflection and increased co-ordination from the donor community.

On the heels of the Rio+20 Conference (UNCSD), and with a view towards the next set of IAGs, it is recommended that a more stable and long-term approach be adopted. The outcome document of the UNCSD not only includes a resolution to ‘promote ESD and to integrate sustainable development more actively into education beyond the UNDESD’ (UNCSD 2012: 44), but also outlines the process for the development of sustainable development goals, which will provide a foundation for global discussion around successors to the existing MDGs.

6.2 National management

6.2.1 Good practice: Strong national policies supporting sustainable development being translated into institutionally-grounded changes in the education sector

While the translation of policy into practice is not straightforward, the importance of strong national policies supporting sustainability and ESD cannot be overestimated. As the countries first hit by the impacts of climate change, a number of the focus countries are demonstrating global leadership by prioritising sustainability in national policies and development plans. While all of the focus countries are working in this area to a greater or lesser extent, two examples warrant special mention.

With dense rainforest coverage, continental borders, a relatively large landmass and a low population density, Guyana is distinct from most SIDS. However as a coastal developing nation, it faces many of the same development and educational issues. Recognising the global importance of its rainforest area in terms of ecosystem services (biodiversity, fresh water, carbon sequestration etc.), Guyana in 2011 launched a national Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS). The LCDS aims to transform Guyana's economy while combating climate change. With the support of an increasingly enlightened donor community which recognises the Guiana

Table 6.2 National co-ordination for ESD activities

	Jamaica	Dominica	Guyana	Maldives	Mauritius	Samoa	Tonga	PNG	Solomon Islands	Nauru
National committee/ co-ordinating body	Yes				Yes		Yes			
ESD strategy or action plan	Yes		Yes*		Yes*		Yes*			

* Prominent, but integrated into broader sector documents.

Table 6.3 Titles of national development plans/strategies

Country	National plan
Dominica	Integrated Development Plan
Guyana	Low Carbon Development Plan
Jamaica	Vision 2030 Jamaica National Development Plan
Maldives	Maldives National Sustainable Development Strategy
Mauritius	National Development Strategy; Maurice Ile Durable
Nauru	National Sustainable Development Strategy
Papua New Guinea	Medium Term Development Plan
Samoa	Strategy for the Development of Samoa: Ensuring Sustainable Economic and Social Progress
Solomon Islands	National Development Strategy
Tonga	National Strategic Development Plan

Shield bioregion as a global public good, the Guiana Shield Facility is supporting the implementation of the LCDS through the financing of projects to support this economic transformation. The LCDS is already translating into educational change. As signatories to the Tortola Declaration on Climate Change Education in the Caribbean, Guyana has undertaken curriculum reforms and the development of new programmes to support ESD.

The example of Mauritius inspires in a different way. Recognising the imperative nature of addressing sustainability issues, the prime minister launched the concept of Maurice Ile Durable (MID) in 2008, presenting a long-term vision aiming to make Mauritius a world model of sustainable development, particularly in the context of SIDS. Under MID, a broad multi-stakeholder working group on education referred to as Working Group 5 (WG5) was established to formulate proposals and targeted action plans to transform the current education system into a true embodiment of ESD in order to achieve the MID vision. The vision of ESD set out by WG5 is authentically by and for Mauritius, well grounded in the local context. This vision elaborates four subthemes: empowerment of citizens; environment education; education for sustainable development; and public health education, through five major thrusts: consolidating access; integrating non-formal, informal and formal learning; reorienting the education system; capacity building at all levels; and strengthening awareness of key issues. The approach is systematic and comprehensive, with proposals addressing the core aspects of the education system's institutional infrastructure, which if fully implemented could provide a strong and coherent driver of positive change towards sustainability within a generation. While the implementation of short-term proposals is just beginning, Mauritius will be an example to watch and learn from in the coming years.

Extending the good work: In both of the examples above, there is a clear relationship between high-level policies, and the changes underway in the education systems. This can be attributed in part to the prominence of sustainability thinking in the national policies. In every national policy reviewed, entry points for ESD can be identified, but entry points are not always enough. The dedication to sustainability which is so apparent in both the Low Carbon Development Strategy and Maurice Ile Durable leaves very little choice but to begin the real work of reorienting education. However, for countries without such concerted strategies, entry points nonetheless present real opportunities. Tonga's Strategic Development Framework, while mentioning environmental sustainability, lacks any real emphasis on sustainable development. Nonetheless, Tonga's MoEWAC recently-developed curriculum framework prominently features both sustainable development and sustainable livelihoods as overarching themes to be integrated throughout all course curricula. This example is reflective of what can be done with relatively sparse ESD entry points in national policy documents, provided there is committed leadership within education ministries.

6.2.2 Gap: The implementation gap – translating policy into practice

This study has presented a large number of ESD-related policies, plans, strategies and frameworks from the different regions and focus countries. While there is a great deal of variability from country to country, one of the common themes is a gap between

policies and practices. This is not to say that good work is not happening – to the contrary, there are many excellent examples of ESD implementation. However, these remain relatively isolated examples. Education is notoriously slow to change, and even in countries with strong policy structures to support ESD, the changes have been slow to take effect on any broad scale. This implementation gap relates to the enabling environment and the local capacity to effectively implement high-level policies, even when there is will and commitment to do so. In some cases, system constraints related to resources or technical capacity are at the heart of the issue. In other cases, overburdening and competing agendas are blamed. In still others, there are conflicting messages in which resources are not aligned with policies, or in which policies themselves are not aligned with one another.

Bridging the gap: There are no quick fixes that will make reforms or policies easy to implement. However, some of the challenges can be alleviated through the development of well-formulated national plans with clear accountabilities and focal points. Many of the focus countries do not have a national strategy related to ESD, and of those that do, even fewer have a functioning committee of focal points to co-ordinate ESD. While many MoEs have incorporated ESD into plans for the education sector, most lack a strong emphasis on ESD, and these plans tend not to recognise the important role which higher education, TVET and non-formal education play in ESD. As such, implementation proceeds somewhat haphazardly. It should also be recognised that in most of the focus countries, there is indeed a great deal of ESD being implemented. What tends to be lacking is the coherency and unified thrust that would contribute to real and lasting change. An effective way of viewing ESD implementation comes from Tonga, where educational leaders have recognised that ESD is not a new initiative to be undertaken on top of everything else, but rather, a *set of principles* that can be interwoven into existing initiatives and programmes to add value to their delivery – suggesting that there is room to mobilise or reallocate existing resources to further support this work rather than launching another new programme.

The following list of suggestions for helping to bridge the gap between ESD policies and practices has been drawn from a number of sources representing the different focus countries:

- New policies and plans need to have funds secured/allocated in advance;
- Providing incentives and mandates related to implementing ESD;
- Need to revisit outdated policies which conflict with ESD;
- Need for better resource materials to support all those working on ESD, not just teachers;
- Awareness raising and mass media is necessary to create enabling environment for ESD at community level;
- ESD work is sometimes done on top of other work, but it would be more effective if people could be properly designated to work on it;
- Don't base plans on temporary budgets;

- Involvement of stakeholders, though time consuming, helps make sure that policies are relevant; and
- Involvement of end users during planning and development helps to ensure that there is ownership for the work.

6.2.3 Good practice: Engagement and ownership of local experts and involvement of end-users

One of the characteristics of good ESD is that it is well contextualised within local narratives, local perspectives and local knowledge systems. As such, the involvement of local experts in any ESD initiatives is critical. The word ‘expert’ in this context does not necessarily mean one with multiple degrees or paper qualifications. Rather, the expert is someone who really knows the context in which ESD is to be carried out. One of the major success factors cited in the sustainable livelihoods subproject of the PRIDE project (Nauru) discussed above was the direct involvement of the teachers who would be implementing the sustainable livelihoods curriculum materials. Their knowledge of the local culture and knowledge systems facilitated their research work, and contextualised their analysis and curriculum development. Then, as teaching modules were prepared, their first-hand experiences in local classrooms enabled them to develop viable materials, well-linked to local needs and grounded in local classroom realities.

Extending the good work: Since much of the ESD work being done in the focus countries is funded by foreign donors and multilateral agencies, there is often an expectation of involvement of foreign experts. While outside expertise may add value to the work, the need for local ownership and contextual appropriateness is sometimes at odds with that involvement. The value of ‘cowboy consultants’, who fly in for a short period of time to develop programmes or deliver training, should be re-evaluated by donor agencies. By the same rationale, there should be a review of policies which institutionally undervalue local expertise through the categorisation of ‘local’, ‘regional’ and ‘international’ consultants. This point was reinforced not only by local experts, but also by outside experts who stated, in reference to one particular ESD strategy, that ‘although it is not the way I would have done it, the local initiative and ownership of the strategy is resulting in it actually being implemented’, as opposed to so many which are not. The value of ‘home sown, home grown’ initiatives cannot be overstated, and progressive organisations appear to be shifting to a focus on helping to identify local priorities, and supporting them through a value-added incubation process, rather than introducing programming agendas of their own.

6.2.4 Good practice: Interministerial and interdepartmental collaboration guided by higher-level ESD strategies and frameworks

While much of the work of ESD falls naturally into the formal education sector, there are key roles to be played by other ministries with responsibility for environment, planning, civil society and higher education, to name a few. Interministerial collaboration is a challenge, but most SIDS are rising to this challenge. In Tonga, a National Task Force for ESD was appointed in 2007 to co-ordinate ESD into national

planning and implementation of activities at the national level. Chaired by the Ministry of Finance and National Planning, the Task Force includes representatives of 11 other ministries, as well as key organisations like the National Youth Congress, the Civil Society Forum and the National Media Council. With the emphasis on education, the MoEWAC has been appointed as the secretariat of the Task Force.

In Mauritius, guided by the Maurice Ile Durable (MID) concept and related policy and strategy documents, there is evidence of strong collaboration between ministries and departments on ESD planning thus far. The Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MoEnSD) has overall responsibility for sustainable development policies, and also steers the country's national ESD plan. Multi-stakeholder working groups have developed goals and plans under the MID framework including a detailed vision of education's role in the country's sustainable development. While the MoEnSD take the lead, others which have been involved include the Ministry of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment, the Ministry of Tourism and Leisure and the Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities. The challenge ahead for Mauritius will involve translating this high-level collaboration into effective results-oriented implementation that continues to benefit from the practical expertise of the relevant ministries and departments.

An example of such practical collaboration can be drawn from Samoa, where the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MoNRE) has primary responsibility for sustainable development, yet also plays an important role in awareness raising on environmental issues. The MoNRE has a Capacity Building Section, which works closely with other departments to co-ordinate school programmes as well as activities with community youth groups. The MoNRE's direct involvement in ESD includes production of educational materials, school presentations, assisting with field trips and promoting environmental awareness through school competitions and national awareness days. In addition to the MoNRE, other governmental agencies, ministries and state organisations (such as the Samoa Water Authority) also conduct school visits and provide resource materials for students and teachers.

Enhancing the good work: While the two examples above illustrate some of the potential of intragovernmental collaboration, it is notable that in all three cases, the lead ministry is not the MoE. However, for ESD to be effectively mainstreamed into educational agendas, it is critical that MoEs take a central role in setting educational reform agendas – something which only they have the expertise to do – while working with other ministries to inform that work. However, it is equally important that the support of other ministries does not become marginalised. While ministries of environment typically have a lead role on sustainable development, and are often actively involved in ESD as well, their energies are frequently directed towards classroom visits and resource development. Such activities, while beneficial, are merely *supplemental*, in that they are outside the core of activity. Similarly, the more common ad hoc approaches to interministerial collaboration observed in most countries may achieve targeted results, but rely on the commitment of the individuals involved and are unlikely to be sustained if the parties are transferred or funding shifts. For lasting collaboration, mechanisms likely need to be institutionalised through

incentive structures and accountability measures, terms of reference, or memoranda of understanding between line ministries.

6.2.5 Gap: Co-ordination mechanisms and multi-stakeholder processes to guide on-the-ground implementation

One of the most prominent themes emerging from reports, questionnaires and interviews obtained for this review is the need for better national level co-ordination of ESD implementation. There is a recognition of good work being done by CSOs, by MoEs and other government departments, by public institutes and schools, and by private sector partners, but as one government representative put it; 'There is a need to bring together related activities under the umbrella of ESD under one cohesive plan so that activities are not simply ad hoc, but focus on working towards a unified goal.' ESD cuts across sectors and technical areas, and many stakeholder groups are involved in implementing related activities. While some of the focus countries have meta-organisations which may represent CSOs in government initiatives, such as the Civil Society Forum of Tonga, co-ordination mechanisms are generally weak or absent, particularly those linking government, public institutions, civil society and private sector. In addition, as noted above, many of the focus country governments also tend to lack internal mechanisms for co-ordinating interministerial actions. While strong national policies can help to align the efforts of different ministries and government agencies, their relevance to civil society and private sector organisations is relatively less, particularly when these organisations have not had a strong voice in the development of those policies. This results in inefficiencies and duplication of effort as different groups continue to pursue their own agendas.

Bridging the gap: While there tends to be relatively strong alignment between government priorities and publicly-funded institutions such as universities, there are opportunities for improved partnership with civil society and the private sector. There may be some opportunity to adapt strategies from other areas of work such as literacy, where work has been going on for many decades. Strategies which may have relevance for the ESD community include national literacy networks, as well as online databases and forums for literacy NGOs, used to share material and co-ordinate their activities. Such processes have proven effective in a number of countries in co-ordinating interventions from different stakeholder groups, and even drawing in new funds through private sector corporate social responsibility (CSR) departments. Closer to the field of ESD, the Jamaica Sustainable Development Network was launched in 1998, operating for five years as a UNDP programme before registering as an autonomous organisation. The programme was geared towards facilitating communication, introductions, and sharing information between public, private and non-governmental agencies related to Jamaica's sustainable development. However, it is unclear whether this network was still operational at the time of writing or why it may have closed.

A more current example comes from Tonga's Joint National Action Plan for Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management (Kingdom of Tonga 2010). While not directly focused on ESD, it involves many of the same stakeholders, and outlines a structure for collaboration as well as a documentation of all related initiatives so that

all involved are aware of the activities being undertaken in government and non-governmental sectors, reducing the risk of duplication. In recent years, ESD mapping exercises have been undertaken in a number of the focus countries, providing initial information to work from in the development of such national ESD action plans or other cross-sector co-ordination mechanisms.

6.2.6 Gap: Formalised co-operation between governmental and civil society organisations

This report showcases a number of promising activities and initiatives, some led by ministries or other government departments, others by civil society organisations (CSOs). At the school level, some of the most inspiring initiatives have been led from outside MoE systems. With a narrow mandate and an ability to focus solely on individual issues, it is not surprising that CSOs are leading some of the most promising ESD work. However, there has been a broad failure on the part of governments and CSOs to work effectively together and to formalise collaboration to the point where real benefits are reaped. At best, there seems to be a kind of fair-weather support of CSOs' school-level initiatives. More commonly, the support of ministries of education amounts to a kind of tolerance.

The story of the Jamaica Environment Trust's (JET) School Environment Programme (SEP) is telling in this regard. The SEP was formally launched in 1997/98, and at its height in 2002/03 reached 345 schools, 280,000 students and 550 teachers. Having been evaluated a number of times, the programme has a proven record of results, as well as a proven methodology for working with schools and intermediary groups, and for replication/scalability. Among other activities, the SEP provides teacher manuals to participating schools, conducts school visits and support work, provides training workshops to teachers on environmental themes, organises a national competition and evaluation for participating schools, and hosts a formal awards ceremony each June. Over the years, the SEP has tried to align its work with the formal education system, including mapping environmental activities to existing curricula and providing additional resources for teachers, as well as working with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture (MoEYC) to obtain official recognition for the professional development workshops which teachers attend. The programme has been formally recognised by the MoEYC, and received governmental funding for a period of several years. However, in recent years, resource constraints and shifts in the priorities of funding agencies have caused the programme to contract. At present, the programme is working only in 30 schools – less than 10 per cent of its former glory – and is in danger of cancellation in the upcoming school year due to lack of funding.

Bridging the gap: This closure of SEP would be a loss, as examples of truly successful and replicable programmes are rare. The well-articulated ESD policies of the Government of Jamaica and MoEYC create a space within which there could be a possibility for such a programme to be institutionalised within the K-12 system. This appears unlikely, however, and represents a missed opportunity from which an important lesson should be learned. The SEP, for its part, tried to align its work closely with the MoE system, involving MoE staff and working closely with teachers at participating

schools, seeking to align teacher-training activities with MoE requirements. More than just a well-conceived environmental education programme, the SEP evolved to be closely aligned with MoE system policies and structures, as well as contributing to endorsed Government of Jamaica and MoEYC goals as articulated in the National Environmental Education Action Plan for Sustainable Development. SEP is not simply an extra-curricular or co-curricular programme, but contributes in a direct way to student learning in relation to national goals. However, the SEP was never successfully integrated into the education system. While MoE signatures have been successfully obtained on teacher training certificates, the professional development system has never credited teachers for their participation in these workshops; and while supervisory units had been approached to work with SEP personnel to support participating schools during routine supervision visits, this too never materialised.

The lesson to be learned from this experience relates to a duplication of efforts in systems characterised by major resource constraints. This story resonates with similar situations in many of the focus countries, in which CSOs and intergovernmental organisations are providing services that support an ESD agenda, but without the full benefit of governmental support. In addition, CSOs often find it difficult to scale their programmes up to a national level. Meanwhile, governmental agencies are working to advance ESD within constrained budgets, and limited technical capacity in ESD for the development of viable programmes. This situation warrants increased effort towards collaboration from both sides.

6.2.7 Gap: Lack of consistency and continuity in leadership and co-ordination

While sweeping initiatives like Maurice Ile Durable are promising, there are lessons to be learned from the experiences of related initiatives. Reflection on the experience of Jamaica's National Environmental Education Action Plan for Sustainable Development (1998–2010) suggests that the continuity of co-ordination mechanisms are very important, and that aspects such as funding for co-ordination and staff tenure should be committed in advance. This action plan was years ahead of its time, and was comprehensive in its scope and ambitions, including intragovernmental co-operation, however, implementation was never completed. During the implementation period, leadership for the co-ordination of the plan was passed between different organisations, some of which relied on external funding with fixed timeframes, resulting in a lack of consistency and ownership for its implementation.

A related experience can be drawn from the Pacific Regional ESD Action Plan. The USP's Pacific Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development (PACE-SD) was involved with the development of the plan, and went on to assume the co-ordination role for its implementation. However, as is often the case, the clearest vision of leadership comes from those involved in early stages, and with the retirement of the initial lead of the action plan, the co-ordinating role has been unstable and sometimes vacant, and much of the co-ordination work has been ad hoc, supported by other USP colleagues from the School of Education, UNESCO personnel, SPREP and others. As a result, only a small number of the initiatives described in the action plan have been implemented.

Bridging the gap: Planning for a project lasting a decade, or even several years, requires institutionalised co-ordination, including funds, structures and policies. There is a serious risk when co-ordination is dependent on an individual, or a relatively small group. While there is no guarantee, some stability can be established through the use of steering committees, terms of reference and other institutional structures that reduce the dependency on key individuals and share responsibilities between interested stakeholders. In addition, since instability of both leadership and funding are quite commonplace, contingency (or risk mitigation) measures should be incorporated into the plans themselves so that they do not become derailed should there be a break from initial assumptions.

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