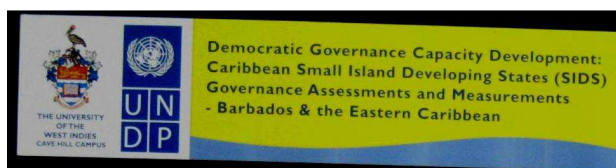


CHAMPIONING INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE THROUGH SIDS-SPECIFIC GOVERNANCE

ASSESSMENTS:

Technical Launch of the Democratic Governance Capacity Development: Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Governance Assessments and Measurements (DGA) Project for Barbados & the Eastern Caribbean.



On 16 March 2010, the UNDP Barbados-based Sub-Regional Office, which provides assistance to Barbados and OECS Member States, in collaboration with the University of the West Indies (UWI) - Cave Hill Campus, launched the **Democratic Governance Capacity Development: Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Governance Assessments and Measurements (DGA) Project for Barbados & the Eastern Caribbean.**

The primary objective of this project is to modernize and strengthen evidence-based policy development in Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean with the use and adaptation of global methodologies. The project activities are designed to strengthen capacities of Caribbean decision-makers in the use democratic governance assessments and indicators to support SIDS policy formulation, monitoring and implementation. This capacity development project will support

1. country-led governance assessments,
2. a mix of global research methodologies including public/poll surveys to generate comprehensive, comparable, country specific, disaggregated, accurate, useful and user-friendly data for use by national, regional and international governance stakeholders.
3. beneficiary groups including governments, political parties, civil society organizations, research and learning institutions and development partner agencies.

The following 5 primary areas of Caribbean democratic governance relevance will be supported through:

1. *strengthening of the democratic architecture, institutions and practices addressing issues of constitutional and justice sector reforms, decentralization and local governance, public sector reform, e-government and political parties;*
2. *public participation and civil society;*
3. *public education and awareness;*
4. *gender advancement;*
5. *addressing and mitigating systems' threats - multi-ethnicity, multiculturalism, economic crisis, crime, conflict management, resolution and consensus building.*

WHY IS THIS PROJECT UNIQUE?



For Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS), the abovementioned challenges have been addressed by Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 8 goals and targets, which addresses SIDS vulnerability issues. Mr. Stein Hansen, UNDP Resident Representative a.i., stressed that traditional vulnerability issues of economic growth and trade are now compounded by climate change, water, natural disasters and high debt. Therefore, addressing these new development agendas, in the context of an already complex mix of policy and programme issues, require the use and application of new governance tools. These tools have been developed and funded by the UNDP Oslo Governance Centre Global GAP Programme, which already supports 17 countries through its global programme build broad-based national ownership and use of governance indicators in policy processes.



strengths.

The research capacity of **University of the West Indies (UWI)** is a critical asset that must be supported and promoted to maximize the region's future research capability. For this reason, UNDP engaged UWI as its implementing partner for this innovative project which builds on existing UWI capacities and technical

The UWI team tasked with implementation support responsibility are as follows:

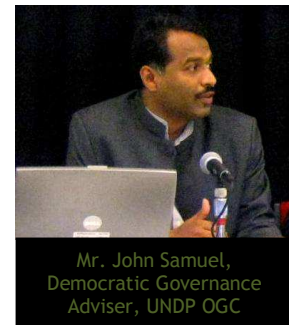
- Professor George Belle, Project Director
- Dr. Pearson Broome, Project Manager
- Dr. Kristina Hinds-Harrison, Deputy Project Manager
- Ms. Andrea Belgrave, Administrative Assistant



One of the highlights of this launch included the proposal that the efforts of this project could eventually evolve into a **Governance Research Centre of Excellence**. This point was highlighted as an urgent need in relation to the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME) by Sir Hilary Beckles, Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the UWI-Cave Hill Campus, who, in providing the historical context stressed the need for enhanced **national engagement** to better govern effectively in the context of civil rights, human rights/inherited

rights, justice and equality. He then asked, “How can this be delivered if governance is not strong?” and posited that, in this context, the DGA Project is well placed to effectively respond and evoke positive change in Barbados and the OECS.

Mr. John Samuel, Democratic Governance Adviser represented UNDP’s Oslo Governance Centre (OGC), which will provide technical and advisory support to UNDP Barbados Subregional Office, the UWI-Cave Hill Project Team and UWI Network, noted that the governance debate is on-going and referred to the importance He stressed that



UNDP’s role in this project is more catalytic and facilitating rather than leading the *process*. Mr. Samuel noted that this is **2-year project with the potential for 20-year impacts** given the critically important historical context shared by Sir Hilary Beckles. He indicated that the Project’s importance and catalytic role, highlighting the following reasons:

1. **South-South Cooperation** - *Learning and Knowledge project outputs will support global south-south exchanges, particularly in the context of other Small Islands countries across the world*
2. **University link and implementation role** - *is an ideal convening and synergy space for mobilizing stakeholders*
3. **1st UNDP SIDS DGA Project Globally** - *producing indicators that are SIDS contextualised which will make a real difference in people’s lives*
4. **Democratization of knowledge** - *building social accountability capacities that are critically needed to ensure citizen participation and that all population groups learn about governance processes and systems that impact their lives.*
5. **National Ownership** *builds ownership, legitimacy to processes supported as well as promotes political transformation*
6. **Inclusive Participation:** *it is indeed important to go beyond e ‘traditional’ stakeholders to ensure the voices of women, youth, marginalized and poor population groups are included in the project’s activities and processes with encouraged Intervention and a sense of ownership, call to action by all national and regional stakeholders*
7. **A great learning opportunity for UNDP Global Programmes** - *providing outputs addressing MDG 8 and SIDS-specific contexts and vulnerabilities*
8. The real relevance of this project is its potential to improve **accountability, transform the quality of services and governance** and, more importantly, its projected outputs that can make positive differences in the lives of all and specifically the most marginalized population groups.



In delivering appreciation remarks, as this successful Launch came to a close, Ms. Paula Mohamed, UNDP Governance Programme Manager, expressed appreciation to the OGC, UWI, Mr. Glenford Howe, the consultant who worked on the initial project proposal, and the Senior Management Team of the UNDP Subregional Office for

Barbados and the OECS, for their endorsement and support throughout formulation and competitive bidding processes to access global resources. She further noted that the Barbados Governance Unit successful bid and access to OGC GAP Global Programme resources enabled the Caribbean to join the already operational GAP programme in 17 countries and to be a part of the additional 10 to be rolled out in 2010. For this reason, she added, UNDP was particularly pleased with the keen support from OGC which resulted in the mission and participation of Mr. Samuel in the UWI Launch event. Ms. Mohamed referenced the presentation by Mr. Samuel noting that OGC fully grasped the importance, history and context and the need for **SIDS-specific indicators and assessments** to enhance evidence-based Caribbean policy-making as a contribution to building regional and national governance capacities.

The UWI hosted Technical Launch of the UNDP Project was supported by a diverse cross-section of representatives of Faculty and staff of the University of the West Indies - Cave Hill Campus, local and UWI media, UNDP Barbados staff. It is proposed that once the Project Team starts, a Project advocacy strategy will be clearly defined and a broad-based consultation with Governments, civil society as well as regional and national partners will be held to formally launch the Project and its related programme activities.



For more information on UNDP, Oslo Centre and the Global Assessments Programme, please visit: www.gaportal.org and www.undp.org/oslocentre

For more information on the UNDP Barbados and the OECS Office, please visit www.bb.undp.org
