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2012 *to* **2021**   OECS EDUCATION SECTOR STRATEGY

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FOREWORD

Recent events in the global financial landscape have deepened the challenges faced by Member States of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States. The ripple effects of a recessionary world economy have limited the ability of governments and the private sector to respond timely and appropriately to an increasing competitive environment that is constantly being reshaped by the overwhelming demands of globalization and rapid changes in technology. Moreover, persistent threats of natural disasters have exacerbated efforts to deal with the weakening social and economic fabric of these small island states.

The Revised Treaty of Basseterre which establishes the Economic Union of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States promises many opportunities and provides hope for the countries of our region to meet these challenges. In many respects, the Economic Union seeks to harness the unwavering resolve of the Leaders and people of the OECS to pursue a coordinated approach to national and regional development. The field of education has been identified as one of the key areas of endeavour for pursuit of joint action and policy by Member States. This supports the widely accepted view that achieving better quality education will contribute to improved productivity and competitiveness and therefore, stimulate growth and development for the OECS which is both inclusive and sustainable.

The OECS Education Sector Strategy (OESS) provides the framework of a regional approach to achieve better quality education in the region. By embracing the vision that Every Learner Succeeds the OESS seeks to promote an approach to teaching, learning and the management of education that secures fair and equitable access to quality education and training by all citizens of the OECS. Sweeping interventions are proposed for improving the management and delivery of education at all levels of system. The Strategy adopts a results-based monitoring and evaluation mechanism that will assess the progress towards desired outcomes and their contribution to the broader goal and vision on a regular basis.

Developing the OESS has been a model of collaboration among the Ministries of Education in the OECS. Strong support and participation at policy, technical and professional levels have contributed to a Strategy which truly reflects the education priorities of Member States. As with past regional reform initiatives it is anticipated that implementation will be characterised by similarly strong display of cooperation. The process has also exemplified the desirable state for effective collaboration among development partners and regional institutions in support of national and regional educational development. The OESS offers an ideal opportunity for sustaining and improving on the collaborative spirit among all parties during its implementation.

An elaborate implementation plan which accompanies the OESS maps out the exciting journey in education for the OECS over the next decade. There are critical roles for key stakeholders and partners in the process. We invite all to join and to support the realisation of the vision that Every Learner in the OECS succeeds.

Len Ishmael
Director General,
Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States

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ACRONYMS

GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IA	Impact Assessment
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IFI	International Funding Institution
ILO	International Labour Organisation
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOE	Ministry of Education
NTA	National Training Agency
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
OERU	OECS Educational Reform Unit
OESS	OECS Education Sector Strategy
PLA	Prior Learning Assessment
PPP	Pillars for Partnership and Progress – the second OECS Education Sector Strategy
STAVEP	Strengthening Technical and Vocational Education Project
SVGeNET	St. Vincent and the Grenadines Electronic Network
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNESS	UNESCO Education Support Strategy
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
USE	Universal Secondary Education
UTT	University of Trinidad and Tobago
UWI	University of the West Indies
UTech	University of Technology, Jamaica
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank

All citizens, at every stage of the learning journey, from early years to adulthood, are able to reach their full potential and be successful in life, at work and in society.

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The main purpose of the OESS is to guide the educational directions and priorities of Member States of the OECS. The OESS provides the framework for Member States to align their national Strategies and Plans. It is strategic, results-oriented and concentrates on learner outcomes.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background and Context

1. The OECS Education Sector Strategy (OESS) is the overarching education strategy of the OECS and will be used by Member States to align their national Strategies and Plans. It is built on the successes of two previous education sector initiatives, Foundations for the Future 1991-2000 (FFF) and Pillars for Partnership and Progress 2000-2010 (PPP).

2. Within the context of the OECS Economic Union, the OESS provides the framework for collaboration in education development among Member States and builds on the gains from efforts to harmonise the education systems. This is expected to contribute to strengthening and deepening the OECS integration process.

3. The OESS reflects an overall shift from the reform focused approaches of the FFF and PPP, to a strategic approach aimed at strengthening the leadership, management, and accountability systems within the education sector in the region.

4 This strategic approach is a response to lessons learned from the implementation of the earlier reform strategies, and to key concerns gleaned from the analysis of an Impact Assessment (IA) of the PPP. In addition, the OESS takes into account several new imperatives, developments and challenges impacting education policies, structures, practices and outcomes across the region.

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Purpose

5. The main purpose of the OESS is to guide the educational directions and priorities of Member States of the OECS. The OESS provides the framework for Member States to align their national Strategies and Plans. It is strategic, results-oriented and concentrates on learner outcomes.

Methodology

6. The OESS is informed by extensive collaboration and consultations. These include the findings from reviews and analyses of research and previous regional education sector strategies; results of national and regional initiatives and training activities; and reports of the results of initiatives in Member States. The results of these reviews and consultations were captured in a Concept Paper which was used to stimulate discussion on the educational imperatives, priorities and directions in the coming decade. Two Regional Consultations with representatives of Member States informed the decisions and direction of the OESS.

Status of Education in the OECS

7. The local and regional context for education and training has changed significantly over the last two decades of education reform guided by FFF and PPP.
   Key achievements include:
   - Significant progress in some States in implementing universal early childhood education.
   - Primary and secondary education are almost universal with enrolment rates approaching 100% in some Member States for students of compulsory school age.
   - Improved social support services are available to vulnerable and at-risk students.
   - Good progress has been made in harmonisation of the education system across the OECS.
   - OECS Countries are making significant financial contributions towards education.
   - Common curricula in four core subjects at the primary level and two subjects at the lower secondary level have been developed.

8. Despite these successes, key areas of concern remain. These include:
   - Inadequacies in access at the pre-primary and tertiary levels. Net enrolment at the pre-primary level for the region averages just over 66 per cent. Less than 15 per cent of secondary school graduates go on to pursue post-secondary education and fewer than 10 per cent of adults in the OECS have completed tertiary level education. Many do not possess the critical thinking skills required for today's labour market, let alone for the projected higher levels of knowledge and skills for future economies.
   - Inequality has become more obvious and in some areas the most disadvantaged economically and socially may not be enjoying the benefits of the education system.
   - Gender disparities in performance are evident at all levels of the school system and there is declining participation of males at the upper secondary and tertiary levels.
   - Learners complete secondary schooling with insufficient formal qualifications to proceed to the next level of education.
   - Attracting and retaining qualified teachers has been difficult, particularly in some critical subjects like Mathematics, Science, English and ICT.
   - There is a high level of unemployment, including among graduates.

9. In addition to these challenges, the OECS has experienced severe economic downturn resulting from the global financial crisis. Growth in the region has been slow. A combination of these factors calls for urgent attention to improving education outcomes as one of the strategies for improving growth, competitiveness and social development

Guiding Principles and Philosophy

10. The following principles underpin the development of the OESS:
    - Relevance - does the strategy and subsequent Implementation Plans meet identified needs of the OECS and enable the Vision of EVERY LEARNER SUCCEEDS to be achieved?
    - Efficiency - are resources being used well and are they targeted to Strategic Imperatives and Strategic Objectives?
    - Effectiveness - can the actions identified within the strategy and subsequent Implementation Plans achieve the required outcomes and impact to contribute to the Vision of the OESS?
    - Impact - can the wider strategic objectives be achieved? What difference will the programme or activity make to achieving the Vision that Every Learner Succeeds?
    - Sustainability - will the actions build capacity within the OECS Member States to enable sustainable improvement and will the impact be sustainable?

11. The OESS takes into account the philosophy and values of education in the Caribbean. These values and philosophical underpinnings are derived from a number of diverse sources including:
    - The 1948 United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
    - The 1990 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
    - The 2000 Dakar Framework for Action: Education for All;
    - The 2000 Millennium Development Declaration - Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which was subsequently modified to address Caribbean realities; and
    - The 1998 and 2009 Declarations of the UNESCO World Conferences on Higher Education.

12. The philosophy is also informed by UNESCO's Pillars of Education (1996) and CARICOM's Ideal Caribbean Person. Further, it is consistent with the regional frameworks developed and adopted at the CARICOM level to guide educational development, including:
    - The Montego Bay Declaration on TVET;
    - The CARICOM - Education For All;
    - The Regional Framework for Action on Children; and
    - The Regional Framework on Gender Equality.

The OECS Education Sector Strategy (OESS)

13. The Vision - Every Learner Succeeds
    The **Vision** of the OESS is that All citizens, at every stage of their learning journey, from early years to adulthood, are able to reach their full potential and be successful in life, at work and in society.

14. The overarching **Goal** of education within the OECS and in the OESS is to contribute to the socio-economic advancement of the OECS through a quality education system that enables learners of all ages to reach their true potential.

15. There are seven **Strategic Imperatives** to achieve the Vision and the Goal for education in the OECS. Each responds to the challenges and priorities identified in the analyses, reviews and consultations that informed the development of the OESS. The Strategic Imperatives are:

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I. **Improve the quality and accountability of Leadership and Management**

The outcomes from interventions to implement this imperative will be:
- Qualified leaders are in place across the education system and are supported by Boards (where applicable) and governing bodies.
- Revised legislation, knowledge management and accountability frameworks that devolve decision making to schools.
- Education leaders, managers and aspiring leaders have access to continuing professional development.

Success in the achievement of these outputs will be measured by:

- The "share of qualified education leaders at all levels in posts across the OECS by 2021"; and
- The "share of educational leaders reporting progress annually to oversight bodies and acting on feedback".

II. **Improve Teachers' Professional Development**

The outcomes from interventions to implement this imperative will be:
- Improved teacher quality
- Pre-service training and professional development programmes are in place for all prospective and in-service teachers and teacher trainers respectively, relevant to each stage of their career.
- Regular and systematic teacher appraisal operates in conjunction with established teacher professional standards.
- Reduced numbers of out-of-field teachers in schools.

Success in the achievement of these outputs will be measured by:
- The "share of qualified teaching staff in schools and colleges across the OECS"; and
- The "percentage increase in qualified teaching staff working in their areas of expertise in OECS schools"; and
- The establishment of Teacher Professional Standards.

III. **Improve the quality of Teaching and Learning**

The outcomes from interventions to implement this imperative will be:
- Learners are engaged with all learning and their expectations met.
- Achievement levels are significantly improved; all learners attain required levels of literacy, numeracy and technological skills, and are equipped to use relevant competencies at school, at college, at home and for future work.

Success in the achievement of these outputs will be measured by:

- The "share of schools and classrooms at all levels of education across the OECS that demonstrate the use of learner-centred lessons"; and
- The "percentage increase in learner achievement at all levels to match relevant benchmarks".

IV. **Improve Curriculum and Strategies for Assessment**

The outcomes from interventions to implement this imperative will be:
- Flexible, learner-centred curricula with assessment

at each stage which includes a wide rang of learning outcomes targeting academic, technical and personal development skills.

- A relevant and comprehensive education and skills strategy operates nationally and across the OECS region with resulting curricula that are learner-centred and competency-based to meet the needs of all learners.
- All performance measures for learner outcomes indicate improvement year-on-year at each stage and match comparable international benchmarks.
- All learners can demonstrate core knowledge, skills, attitudes and competencies needed to be successful 21st Century Caribbean citizens, and can confidently contribute and progress at school, college, in their communities and at work.

Success in the achievement of these outputs will be measured by:

- The "percentage of learners at all stages of their education accessing a curriculum that meets their individual needs";
- The "percentage increases in attainment levels that match relevant benchmarks";
- The "assessment strategies in place in classroom and national levels to measure learning achievement; and
- The "percentage reduction in learner disciplinary incidents reported".

V.   Increase (and expand) access to quality Early Childhood Development Services (ECDS)

The outcomes, by 2021, from interventions to implement this imperative will be:

- National operational plans developed and implemented to increase pre-primary education for all learners aged three to five.
- Formal Early Childhood Development Services meet required minimum standards
- A sustainable funding strategy for ECD, supported by both public and private sector investment in place and operational.
- Functioning inter-sector, parent and community collaborative mechanisms in place in all Member States made up of a variety of stakeholders.

Success in the achievement of these outputs will be measured by:

- The "percentage of all children entering primary school with prerequisite readiness skills"; and
- The "share of 0 to 5 year olds accessing ECD services".

VI.   Provide opportunities for all learners in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

The outcomes from interventions to implement this imperative will be:

- Primary school curricula, teaching and learning incorporate exploratory learning experiences that develop basic technical competencies and an appreciation for the world of work.
- Competency based curricula linked to the CVQ framework established across secondary and tertiary education and in all other educational settings in work and in community.
- A Qualification Framework established that enables

learners to move seamlessly between academic and vocational qualifications in formal and informal educational settings.

Success in the achievement of these outcomes will be measured by:
- The "percentage increase in relevant TVET programmes sanctioned by employers and Government"; and
- The "increase in number and share of students participating in TVET programmes".

VII. Increase provisions for Tertiary and Continuing Education

The outcomes, by 2021, from interventions to implement this imperative will be:
- Sustainable funding mechanisms for tertiary and continuing education to meet the economic, social and labour market needs of the OECS and learners can access affordable tertiary education.
- A legal institutional framework that improves the status, sustainability and outcomes of tertiary and continuing education institutions across the OECS.
- Accredited tertiary and continuing education institutions in and outside the OECS produce high quality relevant programmes and research results fostering creativity and innovations.

Success in the achievement of these outcomes will be measured by :
- The "increase in access to tertiary and continuing education";
- The "increase in research and innovation in the OECS"; and

- The "level of employ and government satisfaction with relevance of course on offer at tertiary institutions".

16. In addition to the seven Strategic Imperatives, several important development issues are identified as cross-cutting themes. These are:
- improving achievement levels in the core subjects of literacy, numeracy and technology;
- strengthening boys' education; achieving equity of access for the marginalised and economically disadvantaged;
- strengthening disaster risk reduction and management measures
- establishing effective knowledge management systems;
- integrating technology in the classroom and in education; and
- strengthening learners' pastoral care.

The relationship between the Strategic Imperatives and the cross-cutting themes should be regarded as a matrix, wherein the themes are addressed through the Strategic Imperatives.

Regional Coordination and Oversight

17. The Education Development Management Unit (EDMU will have responsibility for regional coordination and oversight of the implementation process. Its core staff will need to be supplemented by temporary specialist personnel to implement and monitor progress in implementation of the Strategy. There are a variety of ways such an increase in both core and temporary personnel could be addressed; it may not simply be a matter of appointing more professional staff and paying for them. Every possible avenue should be explored including long and short term secondments from education, business and industry as appropriate.

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Monitoring and Evaluation

18. Based on the lessons learned from implementation of previous strategies, a strong monitoring and evaluation mechanism will be established to ensure stronger accountability in implementation of the Strategy. The key principle that undergirds the entire OESS is that monitoring, review and evaluation must focus on two aspects of performance – the outcomes for learners and the implementation of planned strategies and actions designed to improve learner outcomes.

Risk Management

19. This Strategy is not without risk. At a time when some of the problems such as poor achievement in literacy and numeracy are significant, the tendency is to address these in isolation for "quick fixes". The key risks to education system reform across the OECS include: lack of political will; restrictive legislation; fluctuating economic circumstances; lack of capacity and resources of the EDMU; ineffective communication and advocacy; inadequate levels of capacity at the national level; environmental disasters; lack of investment in ICT and ineffective and inadequate monitoring and review at institutional, state and regional levels. The OESS contains strategies to mitigate these risks.

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Inequality has become more obvious and there are increasing concerns that in some areas the most disadvantaged economically and socially may not be enjoying the benefits of the education system.

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The OESS reflects an overall shift from the reform focused approaches of the FFF and PPP, to a strategic approach aimed at strengthening the leadership, management, and accountability systems within the education sector in the region. This strategic approach is a response to lessons learned from the implementation of earlier reform strategies, and to key concerns gleaned from the analysis of an Impact Assessment (IA) of the PPP.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Context

The OECS Education Sector Strategy (OESS) is the overarching education strategy of the OECS. It is designed to build on the successes of two previous education sector initiatives, Foundations for the Future 1991-2000 (FFF) and Pillars for Partnership and Progress 2000-2010 (PPP) both of which were adopted by the OECS Council of Ministers to guide educational development in and among Member States in the region. Within the context of the OECS Economic Union, the OESS provides the framework for collaboration in education development among Member States and helps to build on the gains from efforts to harmonise the education systems. This is expected to contribute to strengthening and deepening the OECS integration process.

In addition, the OESS takes into account several new imperatives, developments and challenges impacting education policies, structures, practices and outcomes across the region. From the IA a number of significant successes were identified and celebrated. However, there are areas in which the expected results of PPP require further significant development; many of these areas have been carried forward in the Strategic Imperatives and cross-cutting themes of the OESS 2012-21.

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1.2 Purpose

The main purpose of the Education Sector Strategy 2012–2021 is to guide the educational directions and priorities of Member States of the OECS. The OESS is not an action plan but it provides the framework for the development of an OECS Action Plan for education and will be used by Member States to align their national Strategies and Plans. It is strategic, results-oriented and concentrates on learner outcomes. Further, the OESS is designed to ensure an approach to the development of and investment in education that will assure measurable, sustainable outcomes for learners and education systems across the region.

1.3 Methodology

The OESS is informed by extensive collaboration and consultations. Supporting the design of the OESS are the findings from reviews and analyses of research; results of national and regional initiatives and training activities; and reports of the results of initiatives in Member States. Crafting of the OESS was also informed by reviews of previous regional education sector strategies; research and consultant reports written over the previous two decades, for the OECS itself, the Caribbean region, donor partners and international sector-based interests.

The results of these reviews and consultations were captured in a Concept Paper which was used to stimulate discussion on the educational imperatives, priorities and directions in the coming decade. Two regional consultations with representatives of Member States informed the decisions and direction of the OESS.

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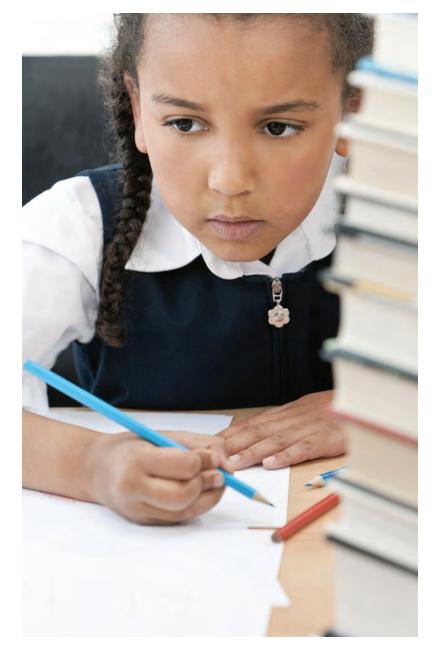
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2.0 Education in the OECS

2.1 Education in national and regional development

"People are the wealth of nations" (UNDP 2010). Research shows that no country has sustained growth without workers, educated and skilled, to attain and support that growth. Countries that do not meet international benchmarks in the educational achievement will fail to keep pace with the socio-economic development necessary to succeed in a competitive global environment. The higher the competence levels of the working population, the greater the potential for increased economic performance and the likelihood of reduction in poverty levels, and societal inequity. Education systems must therefore provide the skills needed to succeed in this dynamic competitive environment.

OECS countries have experienced a severe economic downturn as a result of the global financial crisis and growth has been slow, both calling for improvements in productivity. This crisis has created an urgent imperative to focus on areas for improvement of productivity, and competitiveness in the global economy. Fully integrated into the global economy, improved competitiveness will increasingly matter to the OECS. A key constraint to growth is the absence of adequate development and deployment of the right types of skills. Education has an important role to play in addressing these challenges in the OECS.

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Graduates are no longer finding lifetime employment; they are confronted with serial employment opportunities. Systems that will allow workers to re-skill as job requirements and employment opportunities change, will become increasingly important in the future. Education is no longer a linear, grade-based experience that children begin at a predetermined graduation point, never to return. Providing opportunities for lifelong learning, whether for remediation, up-skilling or re-tooling for career changes and promotion is crucial.

There is widespread agreement within the region at Government and grass root levels that while some progress has been made in the quantity and quality of educational provision and in the achievements of learners, the pace, scale and coverage of these improvements have not been sufficient over the last ten years. The proportion of learners achieving their full potential or achieving adequate levels of skill in literacy, numeracy or technology remains too small. This shortfall, in turn, has contributed to insufficient improvement in socio-economic development at both regional and national levels.

Looking ahead, education continues to be seen as one of the key national and regional strategies for driving forward national economic growth, enabling individual economic well-being and developing socially cohesive, harmonious communities.

2.2 The State of Education in the OECS

Achievements

The local and regional context for education and training has changed significantly over the last two decades of education reform. Key achievements include:
- **Significant progress in some States in implementing universal early childhood education,** in partnership with the private sector.

- **Good progress in access to basic education.** There is expanded access to primary and secondary education to universal levels with enrolment rates, approaching 100% in some Member States for students of compulsory school age.
- **Improved social support services available to vulnerable and at-risk students**
- **Harmonisation of the education system has advanced** through the adoption of new National Education Bills in six OECS Member States.
- **OECS Countries are making significant financial contributions towards education.** On average countries spend the equivalent of 5% of GDP on education. This compares favourably for the average of OECD countries in 2008.
- **Common curricula in four core subjects at the primary level** and two subjects at the lower secondary level have been developed.

Challenges

Despite these successes, key areas of concern remain. These include
- **Inadequacies in access are greatest at the pre-primary and tertiary levels.** Net enrolment at the pre-primary level for the region averages just over 66 per cent. Fewer than 15 per cent of graduates from the secondary school are able to access higher education while fewer than 10 per cent of adults in the OECS have completed tertiary level education
- **Inequality has become more obvious** and there are increasing concerns that in some areas the most disadvantaged economically and socially may not be enjoying the benefits of the education system.
- **Gender disparities in performance are evident at all levels of the school system and there is declining participation of males at the upper secondary and tertiary**

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levels. In 2010, approximately 65 per cent of entries for the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) examination and for Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE)were female. On average, the enrolment rate of males attending tertiary education in OECS States is about 35 per cent.

- **Learners complete secondary schooling with insufficient formal qualifications to proceed to the next level of education.** There are inadequate levels of literacy and low competences in Mathematics, Science and Technology. Performance in Mathematics continues to decline with pass rates reaching 40% for most States in 2011. In that year a mere 23 per cent graduated with the basic qualifications of five passes including English and Mathematics at the end of the secondary cycle. At the early grades approximately 50% of students score below the national average in Mathematics and about 40% are under-performing in English Language.
- **Attracting and retaining qualified teachers has been difficult, particularly in some critical subjects like Mathematics, Science, English and ICT.** This is demonstrated by a large number of teachers being deployed to teach subjects in which they are not trained. The situation is worse for Science, where in some countries the proportion is as high as 100 per cent.
- **Students leaving secondary school do not possess the critical thinking skills required for today's labour market, let alone for the projected higher levels of knowledge and skills for future economies.** Beyond certificates, employers require inter alia: creative, critical thinkers; competences in interpreting data; the capacity to generate and communicate knowledge; ICT skills; ability to work in teams on complex tasks; and demonstration of appropriate work ethics.
- **Social exclusion and inequities in the education systems are evident.** In general, children from lower socio-economic backgrounds attend the lower performing schools and there is a hierarchy of schools at primary and secondary levels. Disparities are evidenced from the pre-primary level where poor children are less likely to participate since parents must pay tuition fees. A higher percentage of children from lower socio-economic backgrounds tend to perform more poorly at school, repeat grades, drop out before completing secondary level and are most likely to be unemployed on leaving school, thus continuing the cycle of poverty.

Priorities

The issues and challenges confronting the education system in the OECS suggest several aspects of the education system which need priority attention in order to ensure that Every Learner Succeeds. Priorities need to be addressed across the system and should involve changes to inputs, processes and the management of the system in a cost effective manner. Key priorities include:

- Improving participation, especially among disadvantaged groups, in early childhood education;
- Extending opportunities for post-secondary and tertiary education to a broader cross section of the population;
- Establishing standards of practice and performance in teaching and learning which are aligned with international best practices;
- Adapting to a curriculum content that better reflects the knowledge and skills required for a dynamic and technologically driven global work environment;
- Instituting cost effective solutions to the delivery of the education service;
- Initiating teacher recruitment, retention and professional development policies;
- Creating opportunities for the greater involvement of the private sector in the delivery of quality education; and
- Strengthening the policy and regulatory framework.

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The proportion of learners achieving their full potential or achieving adequate levels of skill in literacy, numeracy or technology remains too small.

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The OESS is a direct response to the regional priorities in education. It reflects the aspirations of the people of the OECS to be better prepared to contribute to personal and national development agendas. In all its dimensions the OESS focuses on ensuring equitable participation in education and training opportunities in a manner that maximises the potential of all learners.

3.0 THE OECS EDUCATION SECTOR STRATEGY

Lessons from the PPP

Several lessons have been learnt in the implementation of PPP which inform the OESS. These include:

- Collaboration and coordination on the development of policy is painstaking but essential; achieving agreements across the OECS requires time, talent and persistence.
- Policies adopted at the regional level many be difficult to translate to the national level because of differences in culture, perception, trained human resources, available financial resources, existing systems and political will or a combination of these factors.
- The leadership of the EDMU and the larger OECS in accomplishing policy agreements is critically important.

- An effective mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating progress is required.
- The focus should be on outcome-based rather than input-based measures.
- Access to timely and reliable information is central to education decision-making, policy formulation, and programme implementation.
- Stakeholder involvement and buy-in are paramount for the successful implementation of this strategy.

3.1 Guiding Principles

The following principles underpin the development of the OESS:
- Relevance - does the strategy and subsequent

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Implementation Plans meet identified needs of the OECS and enable the Vision of EVERY LEARNER SUCCEEDS to be achieved?

- Efficiency – are resources being used well and are they targeted to Strategic Imperatives and Strategic Objectives?
- Effectiveness – can the actions identified within the strategy and subsequent Implementation Plans achieve the required outcomes and impact to contribute to the Vision of the OESS?
- Impact – can the wider strategic objectives be achieved? What difference will the programme or activity make to achieve the Vision that EVERY LEARNER SUCCEEDS?
- Sustainability – will the actions build capacity within the OECS Member States to enable sustainable improvement and will the impact be sustainable?

A substantial and self-sustaining OESS that enables all learners to reach their true potential can become a reality through rigorous application of the guiding principles at all stages of planning and implementation at sub regional, state and institutional levels.

Development Framework

The development structure for planning the OESS is represented in Figure 1:

The OESS development structure illustrated in Figure 1 adopts a logical staged approach, including:

- A situational analysis that establishes a broad baseline for the current state of education in the OECS and the philosophy and principles that underpin the OESS;
- The development of an overarching Vision and Goal of the Sector Strategy;
- Seven high level Strategic Imperatives for improving outcomes for learners, each with clearly defined, measurable and outcomes focused KPIs;

SITUATION ANALYSIS -
The State of Education in the OECS

PHILOSOPHY AND VALUES -
Underpinning the OECS

Vision of the OESS

OECS Goal for Education

Strategic Imperatives

Strategic Objectives of the OESS

Outcomes of the OESS

Strategies and Outputs of the OESS

Peformance Indicators of the OESS

Figure 1: Development structure of the OESS

Further work will be required to establish clear baseline data for each Strategic Imperative and for setting targets and milestones. These baselines will form a major component of the data used for annual monitoring and evaluating the progress and impact of the OESS.

3.2 Philosophy

The OESS takes into account the philosophy and values of education in the Caribbean. These values and philosophical underpinnings are derived from a number of diverse sources and the strategy itself both reflects and promotes these underpinnings. These include:

- The 1948 United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights which has strongly influenced the content of the OECS Model Education Bill, adopted in six OECS members over the last 10 years. The Model Bill clearly draws on Article 26 of the Declaration that states, "…education should be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms;"
- The 1990 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- The 2000 Dakar Framework for Action: Education for All;
- The 2000 Millennium Development Declaration Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which was subsequently modified to address Caribbean realities, and
- The 1998 and 2009 Declarations of the UNESCO World Conferences on Higher Education.

The philosophy is also informed by UNESCO's Pillars of Education (1996) and CARICOM's Ideal Caribbean Person. It is also consistent with the regional frameworks developed and adopted at the CARICOM level to guide educational development, including:

- The Montego Bay Declaration on TVET;
- The CARICOM - Education For All;
- The Regional Framework for Action on Children; and
- The Regional Framework on Gender Equality.

3.3 The Vision – Every Learner Succeeds

The Vision of the OESS is that All citizens, at every stage of their learning journey, from early years to adulthood, are able to reach their full potential and be successful in life, at work and in society.

This definition represents a fundamental change in focus for the OECS, raising the bar and changing the Vision for education by not only looking at education as a "right," but also now emphasising significant improvement in the kind of learning that takes place and how that learning occurs throughout the lives of citizens. The Vision places the success of learners as a result of their experiences in education at the very core of the aims of education for the OECS: to enable learners to have positive expectations from their own lives, and make a constructive contribution to their families and their communities at local, national and global levels. The OECS has clearly embedded the "right to education" at the core of its work, as part of its DNA, freeing it to consider the core goal - that of enabling all learners to succeed and make a meaningful contribution to their society.

3.4 The Goal

The overarching Goal of education within the OECS as described in the OESS is to contribute to the socio-economic advancement of the OECS through a quality education system that enables learners of all ages to reach their true potential.

3.5 The Strategic Imperatives

Seven Strategic Imperatives for improving education in the OECS emerged from the priorities which were established in the analysis of the state of education in the OECS. Importantly, they

are reflective of national priorities and therefore, should be well-aligned with future education strategies and plans of Member States. Each Imperative contributes to strengthening different facets of the operation of the education system for ensuring the delivery of a more effective education service.   Combined, they contain the critical elements that are necessary to achieve the goal and vision of the OESS. The Strategic Imperatives are as follows:

1) Improve the quality and accountability of Leadership and Management
2) Improve Teachers' Professional Development
3) Improve the quality of Teaching and Learning
4) Improve Curriculum and strategies for Assessment
5) Increase access to quality Early Childhood Development services
6) Provide opportunities for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) for all learners
7) Increase access to and relevance of Tertiary and Continuing Education

These Strategic Imperatives will guide change across the sector regardless of the particular setting in which they are applied. For example, significant change in leadership, management and accountability structures will apply equally across ECD, primary, secondary and TVET education. There is, however, a strong case for specific attention to be paid to certain key areas of education outside compulsory settings. These are: Early Childhood Development and Tertiary and Continuing Education. It is clear that in these settings there are urgent and particular issues that need attention, if the overall Vision and Goal are to be achieved within the next ten years. These areas are therefore treated as separate imperatives with discrete objectives within the strategy.

Cross-Cutting Themes

In addition to the seven Strategic Imperatives, several important development issues are identified as cross-cutting themes. These are:
- improving achievement levels in the core subjects of literacy, numeracy and technology;
- strengthening boys' education;
- achieving equity of access for the marginalised and economically disadvantaged;
- strengthening disaster risk reduction and management measures;
- establishing effective knowledge management systems;
- integrating technology in the classroom and in education; and
- strengthening learners' pastoral care.

The relationship between the Strategic Imperatives and the cross-cutting themes should be regarded as a matrix, wherein the themes are addressed through the Strategic Imperatives. The two examples below illustrate the matrix approach to two of the cross-cutting themes.

Cross - Cutting theme	Leadership Mgmt. & Accountability	Teachers & Professional Development	Teaching & Learning	Curriculum & Assessment	Early Childhood Development	TVET	Tertiary & Continuing Education
Boys attainment	Development of strategy, policy and plans for greater engagement of boys; achievement levels of boys and girls as a key criterion of the accountability framework across the entire education system; data used at school and national levels to target resources to improve boys attainment.	Enhanced initial training and CPD of teachers in literacy, numeracy, technology, learner- centred approaches, addressing male learners' needs, using gender neutral materials.	Improve quality of teaching, including positive reinforcement in behaviour management; use of learner-centred approaches; provide enhanced learning materials that meet boys' interests.	Strengthen relevance of curriculum content and methodology to engage boys; Teaching of study skills and enhanced personal and social education.	Improve teaching of literacy, numeracy, social and personal education to engage males' and females' interests equally.	Enhanced opportunities for access to high quality, relevant vocational education and training.	Increased opportunity for relevant study by males; Availability of PLA for entry and recognition of learning in continuing education.
Pastoral care of learners	Develop explicit policies, minimum standards and best practice guidelines for the pastoral care of learners at all stages; The quality of pastoral care is established as a key criterion of the accountability framework across the education system.	Enhanced initial training and CPD of teachers in pastoral care to enable them to develop best practice and meet minimum standards; pastoral care is embedded within teaching quality standards.	Improve teaching quality; Teachers made explicitly responsible and accountable for pastoral care.	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural curriculum established at all levels within the education system; Mentoring and coaching opportunities provided to support learners.	Pastoral well-being of learners is explicit responsibility of ECD settings which should meet minimum standards; Transition to primary education phase is planned and managed well.	Pastoral well-being of learners is explicit responsibility of TVET settings which should meet minimum standards.	Pastoral well-being of learners is explicit responsibility of Tertiary settings which should meet minimum standards.

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Expected Outcomes

The term "outcomes for learners" is defined not simply in relation to the level of learning achievement, but rather in a more holistic way that looks at the development of the "whole person". Therefore, the strengthening of positive interactions within the school community, increased social and moral development and improved employability skills are some of the outcomes that are expected from the implementation of the OESS.

Implicit within the outcomes-based strategy is the central role of knowledge management to enable the evaluation of impact of actions taken. Establishing accountability frameworks within the education systems of the OECS is a further cornerstone of the OESS for ensuring that all learners reach their true potential.

The following section develops each of the Strategic Imperatives, setting out for each the Strategic Objectives, Expected Outcomes, Strategies, Outputs, and Performance Indicators. Cross-cutting themes are addressed within each of the Imperatives. Annex 1 of this document sets out the strategies and outputs at the level of the OECS.

3.5.1 Improve the quality and accountability of Leadership and Management

Strategic Imperative

Improve the quality and accountability of leadership and management in schools, Ministries and other education institutions.

Key Performance Indicators

Share of qualified teaching staff in schools and colleges across the OECS.

Percentage increase in qualified teaching staff working in their areas of expertise in OECS schools.

Teacher Professional Standards established

The OESS Vision that every learner succeeds relies on the provision of high quality and accessible education services for all. Strengthening governance structures in education thus ensuring that school leaders and managers across the sector are able to plan and deliver a high quality educational experience for learners is fundamental. This Imperative articulates the need to strengthen and develop the quality and capability of leaders within schools and institutions, as well as those in management roles within the wider education system. Through improved supervisory and accountability structures, responsibility for the delivery of high quality outcomes for all learners across the OECS will be reinforced.

The Impact Assessment of the PPP revealed that much of the anticipated work associated with school leadership and management is still to be achieved. The aspiration for a more professional approach to school management and leadership therefore remains a priority, with institutional leaders in the OECS still requiring greater access to leadership training and continuous professional development (CPD). Strategic consideration of the use of on-line training, the setting up of communities of practice (on-line and face to face) and access to on-going professional development opportunities is needed, so that leaders can fulfil their executive and instructional roles and continue to inspire teaching, learning and achievement.

Leadership within schools, other educational institutions and at a systems level is complex and the support of strong School Boards and other governing bodies, where applicable, continues to be of increasing importance. Such a collaborative approach to school governance will result in evaluation utilising reflective practice and external reviews, coupled with the building of robust data and knowledge management systems for decision making. This should be made a priority. Support for leaders in the management of their schools should continue to be provided by Ministries of Education, across the region. However this should be realised through de-centralised governance structures involving the wider community.

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Strategic Objectives and Outcomes

Against this background the following Strategic Objectives and Outcomes will focus on three critical areas:
1. Capability of leaders and managers;
2. Professional development of leaders and managers;and
3. Accountability of leaders and managers.

	Strategic Objectives	Outcomes
1	Improve leadership in the education system.	Qualified leaders are in place across the education system and are supported by Boards (where applicable) and governing bodies.
2	Establish professional development programmes for school leaders across the region.	Education leaders and managers have access to continuing professional development.
3	Strengthen accountability, knowledge management and legal frameworks within which school leaders operate.	Revised legislation, knowledge management and accountability frameworks that devolve decision making to schools.

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3.5.2 Improve Teachers' Professional Development

Strategies

Initial strategies at both a national and regional level are the development of professional standards and performance indicators for school leaders, from pre-primary to tertiary. Ministries of Education will need to revise existing accountability frameworks, establish and/or operationalize policies to ensure the existence of School Boards or governing bodies for publicly funded institutions, accompanied by the devolution of management and decision-making to schools. Linked to these is the importance of establishing a knowledge management system that can provide the necessary feedback on progress both at the local and wider level, across the OECS. Such a contemporary regional knowledge management infrastructure built on an interoperability framework and allowing for the easy creation and sharing of knowledge and digital resources will improve collaboration and communication across education agencies.

To improve the quality of teaching and the outcomes for learners across the OECS, the imperative highlights the need to attract and retain qualified teachers through a harmonised career structure that rewards performance in the context of a common set of professional teaching and teacher training standards. Although the challenges for improving teacher quality appear significant, at a strategic level, they can be seen to fall into three key areas: recruitment and retention; initial training and CPD, and implementation of appraisal, supervisory and performance measures. Key concerns remain: attracting and retaining qualified teachers; recruiting teachers in key subject areas, such as English, Mathematics and Science; ensuring that such qualified teachers are teaching in their areas of expertise; and reducing the high numbers of unqualified teachers and the under-representation of males in teaching.

In addition, initial teacher training and on-going professional development must be viewed as mechanisms that set up good practice from the beginning, not only improving outcomes for learners, but also improving teacher retention. Finally, teacher appraisal and performance measurement needs to be systematic and robust. The OECS Teacher Appraisal Scheme (2003) needs to be reviewed against current requirements for teacher performance and strongly focused on outcomes defining the knowledge, skills and competencies for 21st Century teachers. A revised appraisal scheme also requires a set of clearly defined

professional teaching standards which link effectiveness to learner outcomes. Appraisal as a process must be transparent and supportive, and must provide opportunities for timely supervisory interventions for teachers and have outcomes linked to professional development, career advancement and incentives.

Strategic Objectives and Outcomes

Teachers ultimately have the greatest day-to-day impact on learner outcomes. The interpretation and translation of the curriculum into classroom activities are in the hands of a teacher. Ensuring a stable, qualified and motivated teaching staff is therefore central to the Vision for the OESS. The Strategic Objectives and Outcomes for Teachers and Professional Development in this regard are as follows:

1. Recruit and retain qualified teachers;
2. Improve teacher professional development;
3. Improve teacher management; and
4. Increase numbers teachers operating in their field of expertise.

	Strategic Objectives	Outcomes
1	Recruit and retain qualified teachers and teacher trainers/educators	Improved teacher quality
2	Improve teacher support, training and development.	Pre-service training and professional development programmes are in place for all prospective and in-service teachers and teacher trainers respectively, relevant to each stage of their career.
3	Improve teacher management.	Regular and systematic teacher appraisal operates, in conjunction with established teacher professional standards.
4	Increase the numbers of qualified teachers operating within their field of expertise across schools in the OECS.	Reduced numbers of out-of-field teachers In schools.

Strategies

Building the capacity of the teaching workforce requires the pursuit of a number of critical strategies that will drive the recruitment and retention of qualified teachers. Therefore, a key strategy must be: the pre-qualification and training for the profession, robust induction, followed by continuous professional development (CPD). The training and development of teacher trainers/educators are also crucial in underpinning pre-service training and CPD. Strategies to achieve a strengthened teaching workforce include: the adoption of a set of teacher professional standards and a career path, supported by an appraisal system that recognises and rewards quality teaching. Such an appraisal system must use teacher professional standards that are clearly linked to professional development, career advancement and, where appropriate, incentives. Provision of career opportunities for good teachers is essential, so that retention rates within the teaching profession might improve. Raising the status of the profession and valuing teacher success constitute the keys to ensuring the best outcomes for teachers and their learners.

3.5.3 Improve the quality of Teaching and Learning

Strategic Imperative

Improve the quality of teaching and learning at all levels using learner-centred experiences

Key Performance Indicators

Share of schools and classrooms at all levels of education across the OECS that demonstrate the use of learner-centred lessons .

Percentage increase in learner achievement at all levels to match relevant benchmarks.

While processes of teaching and learning are central to education, the strategies and methodologies that comprise the processes have continued to evolve, depending on whether the learner is in a social environment such as the school, workplace, on-line community, or is working alone. Education systems now recognize that traditional approaches to teaching and learning, in which the learners are silent consumers of knowledge controlled by the teacher, supplemented by information in textbooks and then reproduced in tests and examinations are not as effective as learning that places the learner at the centre of the process.

This Imperative underpins the need to implement learner-centred approaches to teaching, learning and assessment, addressing the needs of all learners, inclusive of those with special educational needs, the vulnerable and marginalized, in order to address inequality, improve achievement and meet the economic and social needs of the OECS in the 21st Century.

Over the past decade, ambitious progress has been made in the area of technology in education, across the region. Harnessing technology within the teaching and learning environment is recognized as a critical issue given the pervasiveness of the Internet, the exponential rate of development of ubiquitous, contemporary communication technologies and the external global pressures to increase access to technology in school settings, beyond its traditional use. Although increased access to technology in classrooms has been impressive in most of the OECS over the last decade, focus has been on the provision of computer operating skills and limited computer aided instruction. The productive use of technologies to bring about change in the nature of teaching and learning and ultimately improvement to learner outcomes, coupled with a re-conceptualising of the modalities through which instruction might be delivered are not in evidence.

A further argument for a change in teaching and learning is the need for the development of critical thinking and problem solving skills and the development of personal attitudes to better prepare young people for employment and future success. To be successful, teachers ultimately will need to be re-tooled in many instances, change their practices, leaning on emerging communities of practice, both face-to-face and online, and so bring about the changes in teaching and learning that are needed.

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Strategic Objectives and Outcomes

The Strategic Objectives and resulting Outcomes focus on the two critical areas to ensure that all learners can:
1. engage well in the learning process; and
2. progress well in their learning.

The Strategic Objectives and Outcomes for Teaching and Learning are:

	Strategic Objectives	Outcomes
1	Provide differentiated approaches that engage learners in active and creative learning experiences.	Learners are engaged with all learning and their expectations met.
2	Improve achievement for all learners and ensure all learners acquire core competencies in the key priority areas of literacy, numeracy and technology.	Achievement levels are significantly improved; all learners acquire required levels of literacy, numeracy and technological skills, and are equipped to use relevant competencies at school, at college, at home and for future work.

Strategies

The strategies identified to meet the Strategic Objectives can be summarized as the need to establish a teaching and learning standards framework, potentially supported by an education and standards body that would provide a significant tool for changing and improving teaching and learning across the OECS. Positive changes can occur if self-evaluation, stakeholder satisfaction surveys and external assessment balanced against established standards are regularly undertaken and reported. Moving to learner-centred approaches requires teacher development programmes to support staff in new approaches. The increasing role technology can play in supporting this approach within the classroom requires teachers to be confident in their use of technology. Adoption of a competency framework for technology will enable teachers and education systems to achieve the best possible outcomes in this area. Finally, the development of a core skills strategy for basic literacy, numeracy and ICT, within an overarching education and skills strategy is critical if attainment levels in core skills are to be achieved by all learners.

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3.5.4 Improve Curriculum and strategies for Assessment

Strategic Imperative

Improve curriculum and strategies for assessment to meet the needs of all learners at all levels of education

Key Performance Indicators

Percentage of learners at all stages of their education accessing a curriculum that meets their individual needs

Percentage increases in attainment levels that match relevant benchmarks

Assessment strategies in place in classroom and at national levels that measure learning achievement Percentage reduction in learner disciplinary incidents reported

This Imperative is underpinned by the need to implement a dynamic and flexible 21st Century curriculum and assessment framework for the OECS, and for equipping all learners with the knowledge, skills and attributes needed for success in their own lives, in society, and the world of work. Over the last decade, significant progress has been made in the area of curriculum development, particularly in regards to the harmonising of curricula across the region, with harmonised primary and lower secondary curricula developed at these levels in four core subject areas and two subject disciplines respectively.

Within the OESS Strategy, curriculum and assessment are projected as two parts of a whole process that should be flexible enough to reflect societal change and to challenge learners to excellence. Assessment should be both formative and summative, utilising both traditional and authentic approaches of delivery. Despite significant activity over the last decade,

summative assessments continue to dictate curriculum and delivery. This approach fails to take account of on-going skills development, learners' engagement in their own learning and supporting them accordingly, and innovation and creativity in the use of technology - exactly the areas that now require emphasis. The role of formative assessment at all stages of education is currently underdeveloped and the ability to report progress using both formative and summative assessment to aid transition between phases needs to be addressed urgently.

Of critical import as well is the expansion of learning outcomes beyond the achievement of qualifications, to include the development of personal and employability skills, as well as vocational and technical competencies, all central to the Strategic Objectives flowing out of this imperative. The notion of the 'Ideal Caribbean Person' should form a legitimate basis for curriculum development within this strategy, enhanced by

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the expected supportive involvement of parents and community and their engagement with the curriculum itself. The role of teachers as curriculum developers is essential, as well as their function as creative facilitators of learning, a theme central to the implementation of quality curriculum. The offering of a high quality curriculum is therefore dependent on the adoption of learner-centred teaching and learning strategies, as previously outlined within the OESS.

Approaches to curriculum development and assessment need to be inclusive and should recognize "value added" for all learners, including those with particular needs and the most vulnerable, if measurable improvements in outcomes for learners are to be achieved.

Strategic Objectives and Outcomes

The Strategic Objectives and outcomes focus on four critical areas:
1. Development of a set of desirable learning outcomes covering knowledge, skills and attributes;
2. An inclusive and integrated curriculum, extending beyond academic requirements to include the integration of technology and the development of critical thinking and creative skills;
3. Establishing benchmarks which compare favourably with international standards; and
4. Strategies to ensure retention, progression and achievement for all learners.

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The Strategic Objectives and Outcomes for Curriculum and Assessment are:

	Strategic Objectives	Outcomes
1	Provide all learners with access to curricula that is based on clearly defined learning outcomes and assessment strategies that include competencies for personal growth and success.	Flexible, learner-centred curricula with assessment at each stage which includes a wide range of learning outcomes targeting academic, technical and personal development skills.
2	Develop a regional education and skills strategy to underpin all curriculum development efforts and which meets the needs of individuals, communities and employers in 21st Century contexts	A relevant and comprehensive education and skills strategy operates nationally and across the OECS region with resulting curricula that are learner-centred and competency-based to meet the needs of all learners
3	Increase learner engagement and achievement, with levels of attainment matching international benchmarks.	All performance measures for learner outcomes indicate improvement year-on-year at each stage and match comparable international benchmarks.
4	Expand learning outcomes for all learners beyond the achievement of qualifications through learning strategies that are relevant to 21st Century life and work including critical, creative and divergent thinking, personal and employability skills.	All learners can demonstrate core knowledge, skills, attitudes and competencies needed to be successful 21st Century Caribbean citizens, and can confidently contribute and progress at school, college, in their communities and at work.

Strategies

The key strategies for achieving the Objectives concentrate on the development of curricula that are based on an agreed set of desirable learning outcomes. Such outcomes reflect the knowledge, skills, attitudes and competencies for all learners, using these learning outcomes as the blueprint for moving forward. Critical to achieving the Objectives is the extension of outcomes and performance measures beyond qualification achievement, ensuring that within a comprehensive strategy for education and skills development, all aspects of a learner's development are considered and addressed. Implementing 21st Century approaches requires greater integration of technology into the classroom activity, as an everyday aspect of curriculum delivery. More detailed actions relating to TVET are included in the Strategic Imperative related to this area.

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3.5.5 Increase access to quality Early Childhood Development (ECD) services

Strategic Imperative

Increase access to quality early childhood development services for children from birth to five years of age across the OECS

Key Performance Indicators

Percentage of all children entering primary school with prerequisite readiness skills

Share of 0 to 5 year olds accessing ECD services

Caribbean governments are now recognising that high quality early interventions are crucial for cognitive and social development. In reality, the provision of high quality structured learning at this stage is now just as important as ensuring wider access.

A separate Imperative for ECDS has been included within the sector strategy to highlight the importance placed on early intervention for this age group. There is increasing evidence that high quality Early Childhood Development Dervices (ECDS) have significant impact on a child's future capacity to learn and be successful within school and life. This Imperative assumes a collaborative approach to early childhood, across the various agencies responsible for young children from birth to age five. Important as well are the issues of parent education, health, nutrition, care and education in early childhood development.

While universal primary education has been attained in the OECS region, enrolment at the pre-primary level varies considerably among Member States. The objective of 100 per cent enrolment of the 2010 pre-school cohort, although targeted, has not been achieved. It is important to note that although some Member States have made significant progress in moving to universal pre-primary education for children aged three years and above, all will be at various stages in this process. There still remains

a significant number of young children, particularly those from more disadvantaged backgrounds, for whom access to ECDS is not possible. Provision for those who are vulnerable, at risk, or with special needs also needs attention and will require close collaboration across agencies.

ECD currently takes place in a variety of settings although much is provided by private sector providers and may be too expensive for many parents and carers. This inequity of access should be addressed as disadvantage on economic grounds, at this stage of a child's development, is too often reflected in poor outcomes for learners later in their educational journey. In addition, issues of compliance and quality also require urgent attention. While examples of excellent provision exist, there are limited mechanisms for sharing effective practice and the varied levels of expertise of practitioners, poor salary levels and lack of training, are also limiting progress.

Strategic Objectives and Outcomes

For ECDS to be strengthened and for universal pre- primary education to be achieved, there are four inter-related areas to be addressed:

1. Strengthening of the enabling environment for improving quality of service delivery;
2. Planned targeting of services for vulnerable children;
3. Supporting parenting and stakeholder partnerships, and
4. Ensuring sustainable funding.

The Strategic Objectives and Outcomes for Early Childhood Development Services are reflected in the following table:

	Strategic Objectives	Outcomes
1	Ensure exposure to stimulation for children birth to two and universal pre-primary education access for children ages three to five years, including the most vulnerable	National operational plans developed and implemented to pre-primary education for all learners aged three to five
2	Improve the quality of formal Early Childhood Development Services, including teaching and learning, to meet the needs of all children from birth to age five, including the most vulnerable.	Formal Early Childhood Development Services meet required minimum standards
3	Improve funding for early childhood sector by developing and implementing a strategy that encourages public-private partnerships.	A sustainable funding strategy for ECD, supported by both public and private sector investment in place and operational.
4	Strengthen inter-sector, parent and community collaboration and partnerships.	Functioning inter-sector, parent and community collaborative mechanisms in place in all Member States made up of a variety of stakeholders

Strategies

Next steps under this imperative should focus on policy development and strategic interventions to support ECDS and raise the quality of provision. Many of the actions required are urgent and should make full use of existing successful examples of 'best practice' in the region. Suggested timelines require significant input at the early stage of strategic implementation to ensure that progress is made quickly. As demographics change in Member States, available facilities in primary schools can provide opportunities for cost effective expansion of public ECDS for those unable to pay private fees. However, this expansion must be parallel to the other initiatives set out in the strategy, if it is to benefit more young learners in the sub-region.

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3.5.6 Provide opportunities for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) for all learners

Strategic Imperative

Provide opportunities for all learners to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable them to progress to further education and training and productive employment

Key Performance Indicators

Percentage increase in relevant TVET programmes sanctioned by employers and Government

Increase in number and share of students participating in TVET programmes

The Imperative recognises the need to raise the status and importance of TVET, develop qualifications and activities that build on learner skills, and relate to the needs of business and industry to ensure all learners develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to be successful in their personal lives, their communities and the world of work.

For all learners the acquisition of technical and employability skills is critical; the removal therefore of the divide between academic and vocational curricula must continue to be pursued at all levels. The Strategic Imperative for TVET looks more closely at vocational curriculum issues, but it is important that the whole curriculum be designed and delivered to provide all learners with skills and competencies needed to succeed in life and work and raise the status of vocational and technical education and qualifications across the sub-region. Many TVET educators favour the integration of academic and technical/technological curricula. The education and training of so-called knowledge workers suggests that this integration trend will predominate in the 21st Century, because learning sophisticated technological concepts requires a sound foundation in Mathematics, Science and Communications, and an understanding of technology. The influence of TVET on traditional academic subjects has resulted in the recent focus on learning outcomes and competency-based assessment in both technical and academic subjects. The real challenge for TVET remains securing its position as a valued and important part of the curriculum for all learners.

Both internationally and regionally, educational theorists and researchers are now recognizing that TVET has a value, at least equivalent to academic education. International perspectives on the importance of TVET demonstrate the increasing need for developing a skilled and competent workforce, across all areas of economic development. The multiplicity of technical and skill-based subjects placed in national vocational qualification (NVQ) frameworks provides a range of opportunities for learners from basic trades subjects to advanced professional technical degrees like Engineering and Computer Science. TVET should be promoted at all levels within formal, informal and non-formal learning environments.

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Strategic Objectives and Outcomes

The Strategic Objectives and outcomes for TVET focus on three critical areas. These three areas are:
1. Integration across curriculum from primary through to tertiary;
2. Competence-based curricula at each phase; and
3. Articulation between academic and technical and vocational achievements.

	Strategic Objectives	Outcomes
1	Provide introductory technical and vocational related experiences for students at the primary level	Primary school curricula, teaching and learning incorporate exploratory learning experiences that develop basic technical competencies and an appreciation for the world of work
2	Adopt, recognize and promote TVET through implementation of competency-based curricula linked to the Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) Framework within the aegis of CANTA and a National Training Agency (NTA) or equivalent agency	Competency based curricula linked to the CVQ framework established across secondary and tertiary education and in all other educational settings in work and in community
3	Create a Qualification Framework that enables learners to move seamlessly between vocational and academic qualifications	A Qualification Framework established that enables learners to move seamlessly between academic and vocational qualifications in formal and informal educational settings

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3.5.7 Increase access to and relevance of Tertiary and Continuing Education

Strategic Imperative

Increase access to and relevance of tertiary and continuing education, and increase in research and innovation in the OECS

Key Performance Indicators

Increase in access to tertiary and continuing education

Increase in research and innovation in the OECS
Level of employer and government satisfaction with relevance of course on offer at tertiary institutions

This Imperative recognises the critical role tertiary and continuing education have to play in the OECS in improving skills, growth and productivity, essential for the region's development, within the context of a global knowledge economy. Currently, across the OECS, tertiary enrolment has remained low, despite almost universal access to secondary education across the region. High levels of unemployment among graduates and low numbers of learners pursuing science, technology, vocational programmes related to Engineering and the creative industries, restrictive governance mechanisms and low levels of research are of concern. The need to address these deficiencies is compounded by competition for limited funding, the geographical factors of scale across the Member States, and the differing relationships and partnerships of states outside the region. Addressing these issues requires a structural and systemic transformation that is carefully coordinated across the region.

The demand for second chance education and lifelong learning for all presents a new challenge, as adult learners will require up-skilling or retraining, or access to education and qualifications they were unable to access or achieve in the school system. Currently, it is estimated that less than 10 per cent of adults in the OECS have completed tertiary education. Nonetheless, tertiary education has progressed significantly over the past decade, with the amalgamation of individual post-secondary institutions like nursing schools, technical colleges, sixth form colleges, and other subject-specific schools, into single tertiary institutions in each Member State. Such rationalization has enabled individual OECS territories to realise efficiencies in post-secondary and tertiary education, through single national colleges, effecting economies of scale, while expanding options for out-of-school youth and continuing adult learners.

A cost effective and sustainable framework for tertiary education in the OECS will require stronger partnership and collaboration between UWI, the national colleges and the private sector.

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Strategic Objectives and Outcomes

The Strategic Objectives concentrate on three critical areas:
1. Funding to meet increasing demand and broaden access;
2. Partnership and collaboration; and
3. Quality to ensure that tertiary and continuing education within the OECS attracts and educates learners, who will contribute to and drive the economic success of the region.

	Strategic Objectives	Outcomes
1	Improve funding mechanisms for tertiary and continuing education institutions across the OECS	Sustainable funding mechanisms for tertiary and continuing education to meet the economic, social and labour market needs of the OECS and learners can access affordable tertiary education
2	Improve governance systems and processes	A legal and institutional framework that improve the status, sustainability and outcomes of tertiary and continuing education institutions across the OECS.
3	Improve the quality of programs and research offered by tertiary and continuing education institutions.	Accredited tertiary and continuing education institutions in and outside the OECS produce high quality relevant programmes and research results fostering creativity and innovations

Strategies

The necessary strategies to ensure that tertiary education can make a substantial difference across the OECS are presented at a strategic level and will require a detailed set of activities to effect the necessary changes. A sustainable funding mechanism that includes contributions from the private sector and students, looking not only at short term requirements, but longer term sustainability will have to be established. For improved institutional security and, in some cases, programme relevance, tertiary institutions need to engage with the private sector, both regionally and internationally, to form public-private partnerships from which should emerge a robust funding methodology suited to the discrete needs of each national institution. Linkages and new relationships with graduates within the diaspora can also unveil innovative funding methodologies. Ideally, regional collaboration and partnerships among tertiary education institutions will contribute to the expansion and diversification of provision needed across tertiary programmes.

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The successful achievement of these tasks has resource implications for EDMU and for national governments. Without them, there is no means of knowing that the planned impacts of outcomes have been achieved.

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The key principle that undergirds the entire OESS is that monitoring, review and evaluation must focus on two aspects of performance – the outcomes for learners and the implementation of planned strategies and actions designed to improve learner outcomes.

4.0 MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

Advancing this strategy requires clear articulation of the roles and responsibilities of all critical stakeholders and in particular the EDMU and its relationship with OECS Ministries. The EDMU will have responsibility for regional coordination and oversight of the implementation process.

Its core staff will need to be supplemented by temporary specialist personnel to implement and monitor progress on the seven Strategic Imperatives. There are a variety of ways such an increase in both core and temporary personnel could be addressed; it may not simply be a matter of appointing more professional staff and paying for them. Every possible avenue should be explored including long and short term secondments

from education, business and industry as appropriate. Delineation of roles at the strategic level is summarised in Figure 2.

4.1 National Implementation Arrangements

Next Steps in Planning

Member States' adoption of the OESS 2012-21 is only a first step. Each one will need to align its national education sector strategy, deciding the relative priority of each Strategic Imperative within the context of national educational, financial and political circumstances. The EDMU and Member State will

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develop Implementation Plans supporting the implementation of the OESS. Clearly there will be critical decisions to make at this stage about the extent to which collaboration is desirable between Member States in the development of OECS-wide policies, frameworks, and possibly services, where appropriate.

4.2 Monitoring and Evaluation

The key principle that undergirds the entire OESS is that monitoring, review and evaluation must focus on two aspects of performance – the outcomes for learners and the implementation of planned strategies and actions designed to improve learner outcomes.

Monitoring and Evaluating Outcomes for Learners

Monitoring and evaluation will focus on the impact of implementing the strategy on outcomes for learners. It is the improvement in these outcomes, not on the level of activity that has taken place in implementing the strategy, that is the critical measure of success. At all stages of implementing the OESS, performance indicators, including intermediate outcome indicators defining the impact on outcomes for all learners, will be established and the means of measuring them through the 10 year life of the strategy will be put in place and maintained.

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1. Agreement of the Council of Ministers to approve the OESS and its Vision, Strategic Imperatives, Strategic Objectives and Outcomes.

2. The EDMU, in collaboration with members of advisory groups;
    i.   specifies the Strategic Imperatives, Strategic Objectives, and Outcomes in the OESS
    ii.   collaborates in ensuring evidence based, consistent, transparent decision making

3. Ministries of Education in Member States;
    i.   develop and/or amend strategic plans, performance indicators and targets at the earlies possible date once regional decisions have been taken
    ii.   Planning Officers, Education Officers and senior education managers establish the framework and system for providing evidence and data to monitor the OESS initiatives at the national level.

4. EDMU Staff manage the reporting process, ensuring that the data collected/reported by Member States and the sub-regional reports produced reflect rigorous methodologies and certain accurate data that is reliable within the parameters specified.

5. Both sub-regional and national reports are produced regularly according to an agreed schedule, and, whether by the EDMU or Member States, are shared regularly and discussed at the sub-regional level at regular meetings.

Figure 2: Roles at the OECS Strategic Level

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Some of the data needed to assess impact on outcomes will require standardized annual data returns from schools and other educational institutions. Further performance information and data will be provided at institutional and Member State level through the implementation of an accountability framework that may include self-evaluation and external inspection of schools and other educational institutions.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Planned Strategies and Actions

Effective quality assurance and impact monitoring of the OESS will additionally require data to be collected on the progress of implementing planned strategies and actions and the achievement of specific targets and milestones that are not defined in terms of outcomes for learners. Monitoring and evaluating the impact of implementing the OESS will focus on the extent to which the Strategic Imperatives have been achieved, as defined by the Key Performance Indicator(s) for each Imperative. Such evaluation will be based on evidence gathered on the impact of planned objectives, strategies, actions and targets and will be measure by defined indicators. Annual monitoring reports in standardised format and using common evaluation criteria and methodology from all OECS Member States will enable the EDMU to rigorously evaluate the progress of implementing the strategy and its impact.

Several key tasks have to be performed for effective monitoring, review and evaluation of the OESS.

These will include:
- Establishing agreed baseline data at the start of OESS implementation;
- Establishing a cycle of annual agreed data gathering to enable close monitoring of OESS implementation and its impact on outcomes for learners;
- Establishing agreed processes for analysis and interpretation of data at State and OECS levels;
- Establishing formal annual impact reporting processes;
- Agreeing on the respective roles of EDMU and State data units in collection, analysis, interpretation and publication of performance data/information;
- Establishing the human and technological capacity for collection, analysis and interpretation of performance data;
- Establishing processes for revision of OESS Strategic Imperatives and Strategic Objectives, based on the analysis of strategy impact data, through the 10 year life of the Strategy; and
- Commissioning periodic thematic reviews focused on the impact of OESS.

The successful achievement of these tasks has resource implications for EDMU and for national governments.

Without them, there is no means of knowing that the planned impacts of outcomes have been achieved.

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A vital element within the evaluation of cost effectiveness is the concept of "value added." The extent to which learners improve their learning or achieve other outcomes in relation to their starting points are the important measures.

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Cost effectiveness must form a central element of the OESS and the implementation plans at OECS and state level that flow from it. Systems need to be developed to analyse the relationship between financial and human costs of taking specific actions on the one hand and the impact in outcomes for learners on the other. Clear links exist here with the use of data, including labour market data, to evaluate the impact of development activities in the Strategy, as measured by the outcomes of all learners.

5.0 RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

Substantial improvement in the outcomes from the education systems of the Eastern Caribbean requires equally substantial funding levels derived from a combination of funding routes including governments, donor agencies, private enterprise and possibly philanthropy. Lessons, both positive and negative, have been learnt from the implementation of FFF and PPP. As an example, the implementation of elements of PPP was significantly impaired through over-reliance on donor funding. When donor priorities changed, projects ended without plans to incorporate successful initiatives into government budgets, or finance streams were diverted.

Therefore, to ensure the effective implementation of the OESS, sustainable models of financing are required. All funding decisions will be required to pass the test of whether consequent actions and developments will build capacity within the EDMU and the education systems of Member States to become self-sustaining and self-improving.

Governments should strengthen OESS implementation through continued commitments to providing the appropriate levels of funding. In the tertiary and early childhood sectors in particular, increasing demand for access will require careful consideration of the modalities for service delivery and their implications for funding. This level of funding will, however, need significant enhancement through other sources, principally through donor agency funding and public-private partnerships.

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In recent years, donor agencies have substantially tightened the parameters within which funding will be provided. Currently, high priority is given to justifying funding based upon the impact it will have on strengthening the education system and advancing the vision, strategic imperatives and goals of education improvement plans. Outcomes-focused or Results-based financing is an exceptionally supportive strategy for OESS implementation, principally because of the sustained focus that it brings to the whole purpose of the strategy.

Public-private partnerships should be explored and targeted at economic sectors where there could be a direct benefit to the sector, especially in relation to the tertiary and TVET education.

Achieving more with fewer resources means that financing should embrace the following standards for sustainable implementation of the OESS:
  • Convergence of education strategy, policy and practice across the OECS
  • Replication of good practice across the OECS, taking examples from sister States, other CARICOM States and countries outside the region;
  • Leverage by the OECS to gain financial efficiencies and apply the benefits of these efficiencies within the education sector;
  • Sustainability of educational development and improvement in outcomes;
  • Cost effectiveness in implementation of the OESS;

Convergence

The last 10 years have seen an increasing trend towards convergence of policy and practice in education across the OECS, and given the huge challenges - particularly in the global economy -- convergence needs to accelerate. A number of new sub-regional activities will benefit from convergence, including

some in the field of education delivery. One specific area where this might happen quite quickly could be school review / inspection services, as detailed in Section 2.5.1 and Annex 1. Convergence of strategy, policy and practice across the OECS, while preserving national individuality, is highly supportive of the core imperative of improving outcomes for all learners.

Potential further convergence should include the development of:
  • Minimum qualifications for teachers and Principals
  • Professional teaching standards
  • Educational management standards for Principals
  • Standards for school governance
  • Teacher recruitment and initial training principles
  • Data and knowledge management systems
  • Accountability systems and standards, including school review/inspection

Replication

Much has been achieved by individual Member States over the last decade that has had highly positive outcomes for learners; however, these successes have rarely been shared with education professionals in Member States and even more rarely replicated. The argument for replication is strong on grounds of efficiency and effectiveness. Significant benefits can accrue from the use of existing regional expertise, allowing the planning and implementation of initiatives to benefit from practical, "local" experience. Replication builds internal capacity within Member States and the OECS as a whole. The recent development and rolling out of the concept of the Child Friendly School (CFS) in several Member States where pilot schools are funded by UNICEF is an excellent example.

Leverage

The EDMU is already experienced in leveraging political support

for improvements and efficiencies in the education systems and outcomes for learners in the sub-region; however, much remains to be done. The EDMU needs to continue within this role and to support senior education personnel in Member States to implement the Strategic Imperatives of the OESS. Further influence and leverage needs to be exerted by the EDMU in securing donor funding through recognised and existing channels of the appropriate donor agencies.

The EDMU and OECS Member States will also need to exert their influence to develop public-private partnerships and develop outsourcing models that have the potential to improve efficiency and service standards and release funding for other OESS Strategic Imperatives. Additional funding will be particularly important for both the ECD and tertiary sectors. Service delivery through such links with the private sector might include, but not be limited to the provision of knowledge management systems, external review and the initial training and professional development of teachers and principals.

Sustainability

A key consideration in the implementation of the OESS is the long term sustainability of any specific action or initiative. Experience of implementing PPP clearly illustrates the dangers of over-reliance on specific funding streams which when removed, jeopardise the achievement of priorities if there is not adequate preparation for the Member States' assumption of funding responsibility.

A related concept is "scalability": any initiative/action within the strategy should be capable of being scaled upward or downward based on the size of an educational institution or national education system. Similarly, national initiatives should be scalable to the sub-regional or even regional level.

Central to the sustainability of the OESS Vision of "Every Learner

Succeeds" is the significant change in the responsibilities and accountabilities of School Boards, school Principals and other senior leaders. It is undeniable that the training of and support for this group will require initial funding. However, models for development and support need to be implemented in a manner that build capacity and expertise within the cadre of Principals and aspiring Principals in each Member State and across the OECS as a whole. Learning communities, both virtual and face-to-face, can be a particularly effective way of building both capacity and sustainability. These changes in the roles of School Boards and Principals will bring the responsibility down to the local level where education actually takes place and have the potential to make the greatest contribution to sustainable improvements in the outcomes for all learners.

Cost effectiveness including value-added

Cost effectiveness must form a central element of the OESS and the implementation plans at OECS and state level that flow from it. Systems need to be developed to analyse the relationship between financial and human costs of taking specific actions on the one hand and the impact in outcomes for learners on the other. Clear links exist here with the use of data, including labour market data, to evaluate the impact of development activities in the Strategy, as measured by the outcomes of all learners.
A vital element within the evaluation of cost effectiveness is the concept of "value added." The extent to which learners improve their learning or achieve other outcomes in relation to their starting points are the important measures. In raw data terms, a school that enables 90% of its students to gain five CXC passes including Mathematics and English at the end of secondary education might be seen to be highly effective; however, if its intake is from a highly privileged background, it may be adding less value than a school with an intake of learners from marginal or economically deprived backgrounds who enable only 50% of the learners to pass five CXCs including Mathematics and English.

This Strategy is not without risk. At a time when some of the problems such as poor achievement in literacy and numeracy are significant, the tendency is to address these in isolation for "quick fixes".

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Lack of capacity and resources of the EDMU – strengthening the resources in the EDMU is critical to initiating, driving, sustaining and evaluating OESS implementation over the 10 year period;

6.0 Risk Management

This strategy is not without risk. At a time when some of the problems such as poor achievement in literacy and numeracy are significant, the tendency is to address these in isolation for "quick fixes". The key risks to education system reform across the OECS can be identified in the following categories:

- Lack of political will – failure to secure political agreement to the "whole" approach results in piecemeal change, lack of clarity and direction and failure to maximise the benefits of collaboration and partnership;
- Restrictive legislation - limited delegated accountability structures and reduced capacity for front line responsibility for change;
- Fluctuating economic circumstances, including withdrawal

of funding and the failure to secure and sustain investment resulting in failure to deliver sustainable solutions will impact substantially on a medium or longer term change and on the ability to achieve successful outcomes at school or learner levels;

- Lack of capacity and resources of the EDMU –strengthening the resources in the EDMU is critical to initiating, driving, sustaining and evaluating OESS implementation over the 10 year period;
- Ineffective communication and advocacy – "buy in" at all levels across the system is required and failure to secure consensus early in the process will result in disappointing outcomes;

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- Inadequate levels of capacity at the national level - early investment in the capacity to deliver, capacity to monitor and evaluate and the capacity to effect change is critical as is sustained professional development linked to incentives;
- Environmental disasters – channelling funding away from education improvements and reform activities;
- Lack of investment in ICT - to support change, learner engagement with technology in learning and capacity building;
- Ineffective and inadequate monitoring and review - at institutional, state and regional level.

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GLOSSARY

Cross-cutting theme - Important educational priority that can be planned for and acted upon in conjunction with one or more of the Strategic Imperatives of the OESS.

Early childhood development (ECD) - A "...comprehensive approach to policies and programmes for children from birth to eight years of age, their parents and caregivers. Its purpose is to protect the child's rights to develop his or her full cognitive, emotional, social and physical potential".

Early childhood practitioners - Persons employed to teach or care for children in day care centres, preschools and other similar early childhood services.

Early childhood development services (ECDS) - Agencies providing care and education for children, including day care centres, home visiting programmes, preschools, infant schools and those family homes in which day care or after pre-school services are provided.

Goal - A broad statement of intent that influences and shapes plans within a sector.

Key performance indicator - A measure of progress toward meeting a Strategic Objective.

Knowledge asset - Any type of knowledge held by or used in an organisation.

Knowledge management system - An IT based system for managing knowledge in organisations for supporting the creation, capture, storage and dissemination of information.

Outcomes for learners - The skills, knowledge, values, attitudes and attributes resulting from the educational interaction.

Output - The result of deliberate action in moving toward a Target in a Strategic Plan.

Pastoral care - A holistic approach by which the school attempts to meet the personal, social, emotional and intellectual needs of every learner, in order that each might participate fully and gain maximum benefit from everything the school has to offer. The elements include personal, curricular and vocational guidance, a programme of personal and social education and development of a positive school ethos.

Policy - A statement of intent about a desirable state of affairs, accompanied by a set of objectives that a government would like to achieve and strategies for achieving those goals and objectives.

Policy framework - The policy statement, accompanied by the institutional structures for implementing the policy and for managing, monitoring and evaluating the policy implementation.

Regulatory framework - A system of laws and regulations that govern the operation of a sector. For example, in an Early

Childhood Development context, the system of regulations would include:

(a)   Formal standards for the operation of early childhood institutions e.g. the suitability of the physical environment, health and safety, learning resources, the quality of the child-caregiver interaction, record-keeping, staffing levels and the like.

(b)   Regulations establishing procedures for granting approval for the operation of early childhood institutions. Regulation is achieved through licensing systems that include criteria for the issuing of licenses and the revocation of same.

(c)   Systems and Procedures including the registration of institutions and the assessment of the eligibility of institutions to receive licenses and procedures for monitoring adherence to the licensing criteria once they have been approved.

Sector strategy - A high level strategic overview of a particular sector of the economy (e.g. economics, education, health, security) that sets out the priorities for development to guide planning.   A sector strategy provides the framework for Strategic Plans.

Strategic imperative - A critical area identified for attention in fulfilling the Vision and Goal for a sector strategy.
Strategic objective – A statement of the direction of activity that limits and defines what needs to be achieved; the end toward which effort and action are directed or coordinated in order to achieve the outcome required.

Strategic outcome - The expected result of activities undertaken to meet a strategic objective.

Strategic plan - A detailed document that amplifies and refines the strategic imperatives of a sector strategy, defining the outputs, outcomes, actions, and timeframes required to convert aspiration into action.

Target - A measurable end point of activities undertaken to meet a strategic objective.
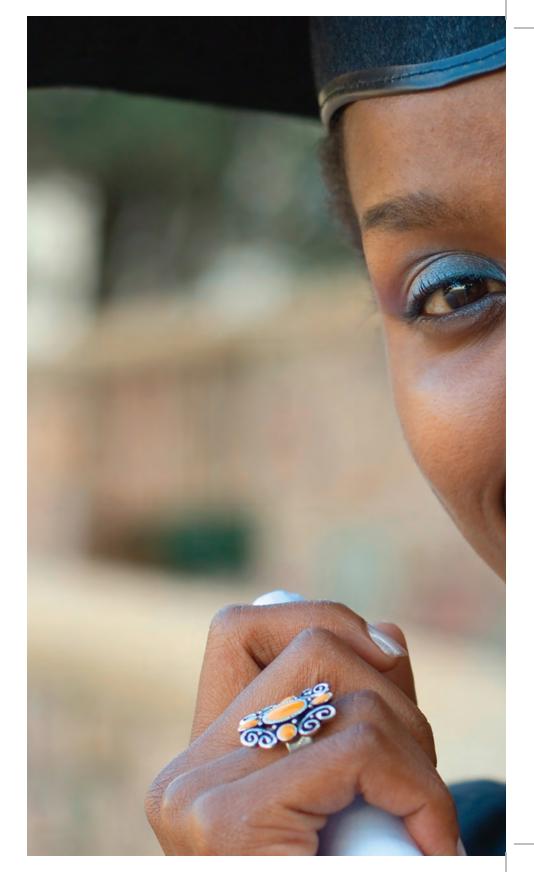
Whole school curriculum -Founded on a Vision to improve learning, the whole school curriculum engages school leadership, teacher skills, knowledge and understanding, curriculum leadership, professional learning, data collection and use, sharing and transferring knowledge and good practice, and the use and application of resources and ICT in a cyclical and iterative process.

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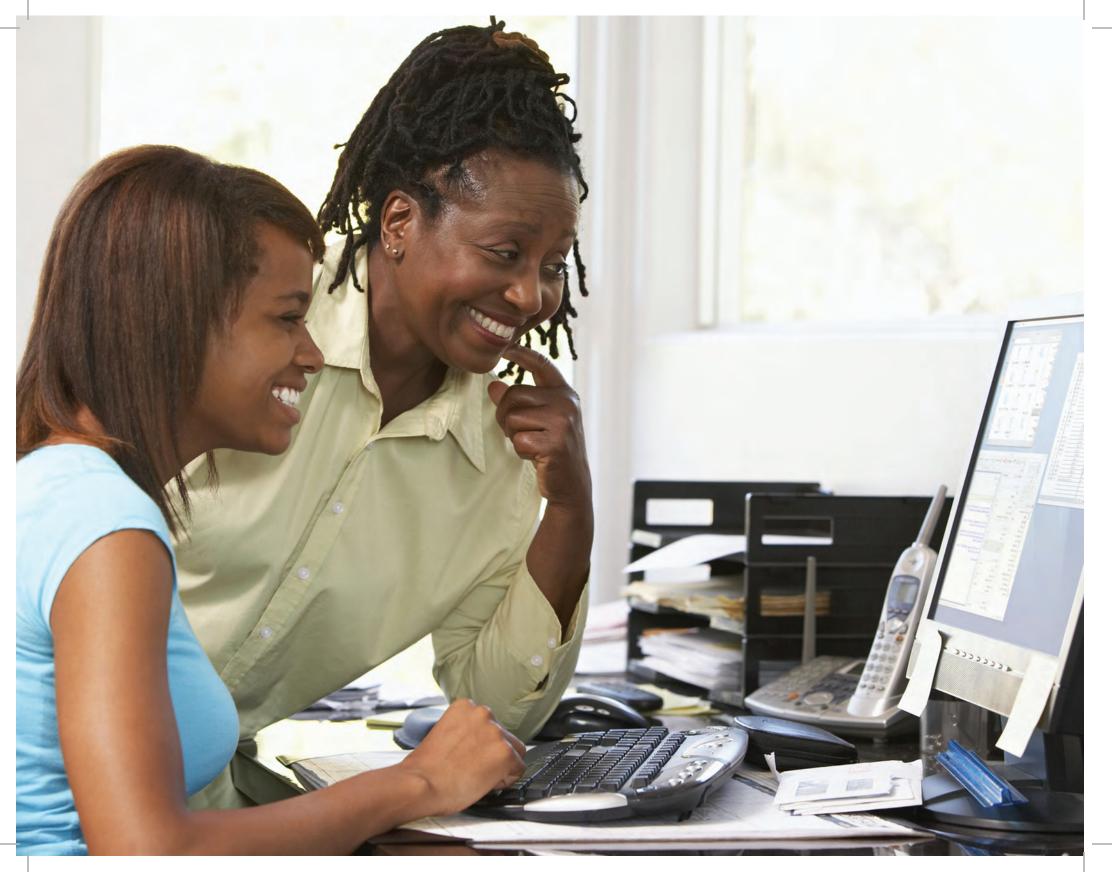27. Johnstone, Bruce et al. "Towards a New Strategy for Tertiary

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ANNEX 1: OESS STRATEGY INDICATORS AND MEASURES

3.5.1 Improve the quality and accountability of Leadership and Management

Strategic Imperative - Improve the quality and accountability of leadership and management in schools, Ministries and other education institutions.

KPI - Share of qualified education leaders at all levels in posts across the OECS by 2021
Share of education leaders reporting progress annually to oversight bodies and acting on feedback.

Strategic Objective	Outcome	Strategy	Output	Outcome Indicator
Objective 1 Improve leadership in the education system.	Qualified leaders are in place across the education system and are supported by Boards (where applicable) and governing bodies.	Establish a set of leadership standards and performance indicators	Professional leadership standards and performance indicators	Number of states approving and adopting professional standards
		Review school Principal appointment procedures	Standardised appointment process	
		Establish standardised criteria for self-evaluation and external evaluation of leadership and management	• Self-evaluation criteria and processes • Stakeholder satisfaction surveys including parents	
		Establish a framework for effective internal supervisory programmes	Supervisory indicators against professional standards	Number states adopting supervisory framework programmes

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Strategic Objective	Outcome	Strategy	Output	Outcome Indicator
Objective 2 Establish professional development programmes for school leaders across the region.	Education leaders and managers have access to continuing professional development.	Establish leadership development programmes for current and aspiring leaders against leadership standards, accountability requirements and performance indicators	High quality leadership and CPD programmes available across OECS face to face and on- line	%participation by education leaders in CPD annually and by sub sector
		Review entitlement and funding for CPD	Entitlements and funding in place to support CPD linked to terms and conditions of employment and performance	Number of states adopting entitlement structure linked to performance
		Support set up of communities of practice within and across member states	Communities of practice operating	

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Strategic Objective	Outcome	Strategy	Output	Outcome Indicator
Objective 3 Strengthen accountability, knowledge management and legal frameworks within which school leaders operate.	Revised legislation, knowledge management and accountability frameworks that devolve decision making to schools.	Review national legislative frameworks to allow appropriate levels of delegated authority and accountability	Legislative and accountability frameworks operating with appropriate delegated accountability at school level	
		Strengthen initiatives to set up School Boards, management groups and governing bodies	School Boards, management groups and/or governing bodies operating	% School boards operating, in primary and secondary
		Establish school inspection/ accountability structures	External inspection/ assessment operating	
		Establish data requirements and reporting procedures with relevant accountability frameworks	Regular regional and sub-regional reporting established	
		Develop appropriate legal, technical, and regulatory framework to support knowledge management across the sub-region.	Enabling environment at all educational levels within the sub-region to support a culture of knowledge management	Number of Member States adopting framework
		Establish standard specifications for various technologies and supporting facilities that allow for streamlining of procurement and support of educational technologies across the sub-region.	Legal, technical, and regulatory framework for educational technology – including benchmarks, appropriate policies, and guidelines	

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3.5.2 Improve Teachers' Professional Development

Strategic Imperative - Improve teacher quality, management and motivation
KPIs -   Share of qualified teaching staff in schools and colleges across the OECS
         Percentage increase in qualified teaching staff working in their areas of expertise in OECS schools
         Teacher Professional Standards established

Strategic Objective	Outcome	Strategy	Output	Outcome Indicator
Objective 1 Recruit and retain qualified teachers and teacher trainers/educators	Improved teacher quality	Develop a set of professional teaching standards for entry into profession as teachers and teacher trainers/educators	Professional teaching standards	Number of states adopting and implementing standards
		Revise and establish defined career path with relevant terms and conditions to differentiate salaries and incentives	Career path and revised terms and conditions of employment	Number of states adopting and implementing a teacher career path
		Establish incentives for recruitment of teachers to critical subject, skill and profile shortages	Critical shortages filled	Number of states with full complement of trained teachers by 2017
		Establish pre-service and/or improve initial teacher training programmes	Accredited teacher training programmes for pre recruitment	% trained teachers
		Establish programme to identify prospective teachers through careers advice in schools and tertiary	Careers guidance information for schools and tertiary	% of tertiary level graduates entering the teaching profession
		Establish succession plan to maintain high quality supply	Succession plan	

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Strategic Objective	Outcome	Strategy	Output	Outcome Indicator
Objective 2 Improve teacher support, training and development.	Pre-service training and professional development programmes are in place for all prospective and in-service teachers and teacher trainers respectively, relevant to each stage of their career.	Establish accessible CPD programmes to support improved outcomes for learners and student teachers and career progression	CPD programmes	% participating in CPD
		Develop entitlements to professional development as part of the appraisal system	Entitlements and appraisal system	
		Set up communities of practice on-line and face to face	Active communities of practice across all stages and subject	
		Establish timetable for upgrading existing workforce to trained status	Existing and new teachers and teacher trainers/educators trained	
		Develop a sub-regional curriculum for educational technology - including include a combination of online and onsite workshops, tutorials, mentoring, and scaffolding support.	Revised teacher technology preparation program.	Number of teacher colleges adopting new teacher technology preparation program
Objective 3 Improve teacher management.	Regular and systematic teacher appraisal operates, in conjunction with established teacher professional standards.	Develop common appraisal and performance management system based on teaching standards	Appraisal and performance management system	Number of states implementing teacher appraisal
Objective 4 Increase the numbers of qualified teachers operating within their field of expertise across schools in the OECS	Reduced numbers of out-of-field teachers In schools.			% of teachers working in their field of expertise

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3.5.3 Improve the quality of Teaching and Learning

Strategic Imperative: Improve the quality of teaching and learning at all levels using learner-centred experiences
KPIs -   Share of schools and classrooms at all levels of education across the OECS that demonstrate the use of learner-centred lessons.
          Percentage increase in learner achievement at all levels to match relevant benchmarks.

Strategic Objective	Outcome	Strategy	Output	Outcome Indicator
Objective 1 Provide differentiated approaches that engage learners in active and creative learning experiences.	Learners are engaged with all learning and their expectations are met.	Establish OECS framework of teaching and learning standards that supports learner centred approaches and inclusivity at all stages from pre-primary to tertiary.	Teaching and learning standards framework	• Number of states adopting framework
		Implement framework across all teacher training and CPD activity including pre-primary and tertiary	Teacher training materials and training programmes developed and delivered	• % teachers utilising differentiated approaches in the classroom
		Annual reporting of teaching and learning against framework	Annual evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning in internal and external reports	

Strategic Objective	Outcome	Strategy	Output	Outcome Indicator
Objective 2 Improve achievement for all learners and ensure all learners acquire core competencies in the key priority areas of literacy, numeracy and technology.	Achievement levels are significantly improved; all learners acquire required levels of literacy, numeracy and technological skills, and are equipped to use relevant competencies at school, at college, at home and for future work.	Establish and agree core skills strategy and plan for implementation	Core skills strategy and implementation plans	# of states implementing core skills strategy
		Establish attainment targets against revised learning outcomes and core skills strategy	Attainment levels published and meet international benchmarks	• Mean student performance in Literacy and Numeracy on G6 Assessment Examinations • % achieving passes in five CXC examinations including Math and English
		Adopt competency framework for Technology across OECS	Competency framework for Technology	• Number of states implementing framework

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3.5.4 Improve Curriculum and strategies for Assessment

Strategic Imperative – Improve curriculum and strategies for assessment to meet the needs of all learners at all levels of education
KPI - Percentage of learners at all stages of their education accessing a curriculum that meets their individual needs
    Percentage increases in attainment levels that match relevant benchmarks
    Percentage reduction in learner disciplinary incidents reported

Strategic Objective	Outcome	Strategy	Output	Outcome Indicator
Objective 1 Provide all learners with access to curricula that is based on clearly defined learning outcomes and assessment strategies that include competencies for personal growth and success.	Flexible, learner-centred curricula with assessment at each stage which includes a wide range of learning outcomes targeting academic, technical and personal development skills.	Review curriculum against agreed learning outcomes for knowledge, skills, attributes and competencies at each level	Outcomes based curricula and formative assessment developed in all key areas	% curriculum areas and formative assessments in use
		Develop standard curriculum and assessment guidance following review	Curriculum and assessment guidance materials produced and available	
		Develop delivery capability through targeted CPD for teachers	CPD and communities of practice established across all stages	
		Develop revised teacher appraisal and performance measures against inclusive learner -centred curriculum delivery requirements	Standardised teacher appraisal and performance measures	

Strategic Objective	Outcome	Strategy	Output	Outcome Indicator
Objective 2 Develop a regional education and skills strategy to underpin all curriculum development efforts and which meets the needs of individuals, communities and employers in 21st Century contexts	A relevant and comprehensive education and skills strategy operates nationally and across the OECS region with resulting curricula that are learner-centred and competency-based to meet the needs of all learners	Develop sector wide education and skills strategy	Education and skills strategy	National Training Agency/ TVET Council established and functioning Number of states implementing skills strategy
		Labour market intelligence collected to inform curriculum development	Labour market surveys lead to employer focused curriculum	% of students in post-secondary and tertiary institutions achieving recognised VQ
				% of students in secondary institutions achieving recognised VQ
		Develop guidance for use of e-learning materials in classrooms and within all areas of the curriculum	Access to guidance and CPD on e-learning and curriculum for all teachers/ institutions	% of institutions using e-learning methodology
		Support of programs for digitization of critical knowledge assets; and development of open educational resources and related digital products for use within an integrated curriculum.	Indexed collection of knowledge assets.	
Objective 3 Increase learner engagement and achievement, with levels of attainment matching international benchmarks	All performance measures for learner outcomes indicate improvement year-on-year at each stage and match comparable international benchmarks.	Develop common set of student performance measures for each level based on wider outcomes, qualification achievement and 'value added'	Student performance measures and targets for each stage based on range of outcomes	• % students who satisfy international performance benchmarks in literacy ,numeracy, science and technology • incidence of school violence • Repetition and drop-out rates

3.5.5 Increase access to quality Early Childhood Development (ECD) services

Strategic Imperative - Increase access to quality early childhood development services for children from birth to five years of age across the OECS

KPI - Percentage of all children entering primary school with prerequisite readiness skills
    Share of 0 to 5 year olds accessing ECD services

Strategic Objective	Outcome	Strategy	Output	Outcome Indicator
Objective1 Ensure exposure to stimulation for children birth to two and universal pre-primary education access for children ages three to five years, including the most vulnerable.	National operational plans developed and implemented to pre-primary education for all learners aged three to five	Develop Policy framework for ECDS for sector development across OECS including other professionals engaged with young children to ensure complementary and holistic approaches	Early Childhood Education Framework	Number of States adopting and implementing Policy Frameworks
		Develop, adopt and implement early childhood development standards and regulatory frameworks to ensure delivery of quality ECD services to all children including special needs and vulnerable young children	Legally binding, inclusive standards to meet the needs of all young children in a variety of settings	% ECD settings achieving minimum standards
		Develop and implement strategies and operational plans to increase access to pre-primary education for all learners, including vulnerable children	Strategies and operational plans for increasing access to pre-primary education developed, approved and implemented	% children in the 3 - 5 age cohort participating in pre-primary education
		Develop and implement strategies and operational plans to increase access to early stimulation for the 0 - 2 cohort	Strategies and operational plans for increasing access to early stimulation developed, approved and implemented	% children in the 0 - 2 age cohort receiving early stimulation support
		Develop and implement strategies and operational plans to identify vulnerable children and increase their access to high quality early childhood development services.		• % eligible vulnerable children receiving early stimulation support • % of eligible vulnerable children participating in pre-primary education.

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Strategic Objective	Outcome	Strategy	Output	Outcome Indicator
Objective 2

Improve the quality of formal Early Childhood Development Services, including teaching and learning, to meet the needs of all children from birth to age five, including the most vulnerable. | Formal Early Childhood Development Services meet required minimum standards | Develop training materials and accessible training programmes | Training materials and on-line and face to face programmes | |
| | | Encourage ongoing staff participation in training programmes | Successful completion of training programs by staff | % existing ECD staff with minimum qualification |
| | | Develop, approve and implement early childhood curricula for formal settings consistent with Caribbean Learning Outcomes for Early Childhood Development | Formal curricula available and in use in ECDS | % of ECD children assessed at-risk on early identification checklist |
| Objective 3

Improve funding for early childhood sector by developing and implementing a strategy that encourages public-private partnerships. | A sustainable funding strategy for ECD, supported by both public and private sector investment in place and operational | Develop a funding strategy that provides for contributions from public and private sources | Approved funding strategy | Availability of approved funding strategy |
		Formal adoption and operationalisation of public private arrangements for supporting early childhood development by relevant stakeholders	Funding available for supporting early childhood development	Number of Member States with formal public private funding arrangements in place
		Audit, retrofit and utilise available space in publicly owned buildings for use in ECDS	Increased access to ECDS	
		Identify and allocate requisite funding for participation of vulnerable children in ECDS	Funding support available for participation of vulnerable children in ECDS	
		Design and implement a financing mechanism to support the participation of vulnerable children	Financing mechanism available to support participation of vulnerable children in ECDS	

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Strategic Objective	Outcome	Strategy	Output	Outcome Indicator
Objective 4 Strengthen inter-sector, parent and community collaboration and partnerships.	Functioning inter-sector, parent and community collaborative mechanisms in place in all Member States made up of a variety of stakeholders (e.g. PTAs, advocacy and parent support groups, Early Childhood Associations/ Commissions).	Design and implement a financing mechanism to support the participation of vulnerable children	Financing mechanism available to support participation of vulnerable children in ECDS	
		Identify key stakeholders and establish inter-sectoral mechanisms for ECDS as per the provisions of the national Education Acts	Inter-sectoral mechanisms established as per the provision of the national Educational Acts	Number of Member States with functioning inter-sectoral mechanisms
		Encourage the establishment of collaborative parent and community mechanisms to support ECDS	Supportive relationships between parent, community and ECDS.	% of ECDS with functioning collaborative parent or community mechanisms.

3.5.6 Provide opportunities for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) for all learners

Strategic Imperative - Provide opportunities for all learners to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable them to progress to further education and training and productive employment
KPI - Percentage increase in relevant TVET programmes as sanctioned by employers and Government
        Increase in number and share of age range of students participating in TVET programmes

Strategic Objective	Outcome	Strategy	Output	Outcome Indicator
Objective 1 Provide introductory technical and vocational related experiences for students at the primary level	Primary school curricula, teaching and learning incorporate exploratory learning experiences that develop basic technical competencies and an appreciation for the world of work	Revised curriculum that integrates essential competencies and TVET related learning experiences	Revised curriculum	
		CPD for Primary teachers based on new curriculum approaches for TVET	CPD programmes and guidance for primary teachers	% teachers accessing training
		Work in partnership with employers parents and communities to secure appropriate resources and support to provide TVET experiences for primary children	Collaborative and active engagement with employers, parents and communities	% schools reporting partnerships and activities to support integration of TVET approaches

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Strategic Objective	Outcome	Strategy	Output	Outcome Indicator
Objective 2 Adopt, recognize and promote TVET through implementation of competency-based curricula linked to the Caribbean Vocational Qualification (CVQ) Framework within the aegis of CANTA and a National Training Agency (NTA) or equivalent agency.	Competency based curricula linked to the CVQ framework established across secondary and tertiary education and in all other educational settings in work and in community	Review, develop and establish a competency based curriculum that reflects the knowledge , skills and attributes that meet employer needs and can be used accessed by all learners whether on vocational or academic routes	Collaborative and active engagement with employers, parents and communities	% learners accessing competency based curriculum
		CPD for Secondary teachers based on new curriculum approaches for TVET	Curriculum review and implementation % subject areas with competency based curriculum	% learners achieving CVQs
		Work in partnership with employers and others to secure appropriate resources and experiences to provide high quality learning	Work experience and resources to support TVET approaches	•% learners offered work experience
		Promote and integrate the use of multi- media technologies to support the delivery of TVET in all settings	Software and multi media	
Objective 3 Create a Qualification Framework that enables learners to move seamlessly between vocational and academic qualifications	A Qualification Framework established that enables learners to move seamlessly between academic and vocational qualifications in formal and informal educational settings	Implement a regional qualification framework for establishing equivalence across academic and vocational qualifications	Qualification framework and level descriptors	• Number of states implementing Qualification framework • Number of states adopting CANTA CVQs
		Develop and implement a system for Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) which enables applicants from the workforce to gain credit for their relevant work experience at tertiary level	PLA guidance and processes	

3.5.7 Increase access to and relevance of Tertiary and Continuing Education

Strategic Imperative – Increase access to relevant tertiary and continuing education, and increase in research and innovation in the OECS

KPI - Percentage increase in access to tertiary and continuing education.
     Increase in research and innovation in the OECS

Strategic Objective	Outcome	Strategy	Output	Outcome Indicator
Objective 1 Develop and implement sustainable funding mechanisms for tertiary and continuing education institutions across the OECS	Sustainable funding mechanisms for tertiary and continuing education to meet the economic, social and labour market needs of the OECS and learners can access affordable routes to tertiary education	Conduct urgent strategic review of options for funding of tertiary and continuing education institutions including public- private; student fees and loans; dual track funding for students	Review completed and recommendations agreed	% institutions implementing recommendations on funding strategies
		Establish funding methodology for tertiary and continuing education	Funding methodologies established	% institutions receiving public-private funding
		Agree policy and implement phased methodology in line with any governance and legal changes required	Student loan /fee system in place	
Strategic Objective 2 Improve governance systems and processes that enable tertiary and continuing education to respond to the needs of the labour market and economic growth for the region and beyond.	Increased number of autonomous institutions to enhance the status, sustainability and outcomes of tertiary and continuing education institutions across the OECS.	Review existing governance arrangements and establish new arrangements that allow greater autonomy and incorporation of institutions within a strategic framework for the region	Incorporated institutions operating across OECS in tertiary and continuing education	%of tertiary /post-secondary institutions incorporated
		Governing bodies established with autonomous authority to set policies and operational plans	Self- governing institutions	• % institutions with autonomous governance structures

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Strategic Objective	Outcome	Strategy	Output	Outcome Indicator
Strategic Objective 3 Improve the quality and increase the diversity of programmes and research offered by tertiary and continuing education institutions and increase access to them for national and sub-regional applicants.	Accredited tertiary and continuing education institutions in and outside the OECS produce high quality relevant programmes and research results fostering creativity and innovations.	Establish a regional quality assurance body for tertiary and continuing education across the region within an appropriate legal framework	Quality Assurance Agency for tertiary and continuing education established	• Quality assurance bodies established • Number of accredited institutions operating within OECS Member states
		Establish a regulatory framework and identify body to administer regulation across the region	Regulatory Framework	
		Tertiary and continuing education institutions establish internal quality assurance systems overseen by a national quality assurance office to ensure the international comparability of standards for existing and prospective programmes.	Self -assessment reports	
		Establish arrangements for new or existing institutions to report against quality frameworks as a condition of operation in the region	QA reporting process and systems in place	
		Establish student support systems within all tertiary and continuing education institutions for learners transitioning from secondary education	Student support services in place	•% institutions with student support services operating
		Second chance and lifelong learning programmes developed and implemented established	Second chance programmes offered	
		Support participation of institution in OECS Research and Education Network (NREN)	Active OECS Research and Education Network (NREN)	• % of institutions that are members of OECS NREN

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