



UNIVERSITY *of the*
SOUTHERN CARIBBEAN
Royal Road, Maracas, St. Joseph, Trinidad

USC Research Conference and Exhibition

March 14 - 15, 2012

Concept Paper

BACKGROUND

In June 2012, the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD), or Rio+20, will be organised in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, with the subsequent themes (1) green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; (2) the institutional framework for sustainable development. Also referred to as the Rio+20 or the Earth Summit 2012, as a consequence of the initial conference held in Rio in 1992, the objectives of the Summit are:

- (I) The securing of a renewed political commitment to sustainable development
- (II) The assessment of progress towards internationally agreed goals on sustainable development
- (III) The mechanisms for addressing new and emerging challenges

In May 2010, the First Preparatory Committee Meeting of UNCSD noted that for developing countries, inclusive growth remains the only known route out of poverty. Also, it is inadvertently linked to sustainable development principles, and the goals and targets for developing countries have been articulated through the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The Millennium Development Goals constitute a United Nations partnership initiative, aimed at eradicating extreme poverty and other forms of disadvantages and human crises by 2015. Some progress has been made, but major gaps exist, such as, in official development assistance, market access (trade), debt relief, gender equality, access to essential medicines, and access to technology. Universally, the global financial crisis, rising food prices and climate change, have significantly impacted achieving the MDGs. In the Caribbean, crime and violence and social exclusion have been somewhat prevalent within a paradigm in which the traditional education system has consistently under-delivered. Consequently, there is need for strategizing in international and local partnerships, so as to realise the MDG targets, and to consider what we need beyond them.

This conference will look at what needs to be done to ensure that we do not lose momentum as we near the midpoint of the MDGs. The key concepts of learning, innovation and partnerships will shape this conference; therefore, new ideas, success stories, challenges and solutions are invited. Importantly, it brings together a wide range of stakeholders, such as community representatives, academics, professionals from inside and outside the traditional development field, and the corporate sector. It will also include many others who may ordinarily not think of themselves as concerned with change-oriented development.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the conference include the following:

1. Innovation and reflection

Participants will share knowledge and perspectives to understand what the drivers and impediments to change are in various contexts. Emphasis is placed on new ideas and new angles, based on the principles derived from different perspectives and sectors.

2. Building on success

Participants will share success stories, best practices, and failures as learning points. The emphasis will be on keeping the momentum of achieved success and what learning can be gleaned from various contexts.

3. New partnerships for effectiveness

The conference will convene participants from across sectors and disciplines, and diverse communities – academics and students within and beyond the development studies core, development practitioners, business and policy makers. They will explore ways to make change happen in complex times, by forming local and global partnerships that can respond to current challenges, as well as carry forward the implementation momentum of the MDGs. The emphasis is on exploring innovative ideas and building new collaborations.

Call for Abstracts

FIRST CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

We now invite paper abstracts, poster presentation abstracts and other forms of practitioner submissions for the USC Research Conference.

Possible Themes

Submissions can be on any of the following themes, but they are not limited to those listed as long as relevance to the conference's objectives can be shown.

- Accelerating progress and looking beyond the MDGs
- Learning and teaching: Preparing the next generation for sustainable development
- Technology: Shortening the accountability chain
- Social inclusion and the MDGs
- Criminality and the MDGs
- Business and the MDGs
- Energy security and the MDGs
- Climate change versus the MDGs; setting agenda
- Perspectives on MDGs: Mid-term Gap Analysis
- MDGs within the Caribbean context
- Gender and the MDGs

- Human rights and the MDGs
- The effect of the MDGs in framing development within the Caribbean
- Any focus on specific MDGs

Key Dates

Deadline for final submission is the 16th of January, 2012.

Submissions that bring in new ideas or present ideas in innovative ways will be prioritised, as well as those that are submitted in partnership between two different sectors or two different disciplines.

Submissions can deal with specific MDGs or contribute to discussion on the goals as a whole. We also welcome submissions that will further opportunities and ideas for collaboration between sectors, with the express aim to achieve more effective development practices and research.

Successful submissions will be invited to be presented in any one of the following ways:

1. Innovation Avenue: For the duration of the conference, poster presentations will be displayed in meeting areas. These should visually demonstrate key learning, case studies or research. Authors will be given the opportunity to give explanations, in order to trigger reflection and generate lively discussion.

2. Concurrent/parallel sessions (short paper presentations): Some presentations will form the basis of a nominated theme, convened either by the author(s) of the submission or by the organising committee. These oral presentations will be held in concurrent/parallel sessions through fifteen (15) minutes of presentation, and five (5) minutes of discussions – a total allocated time of twenty (20) minutes.

Abstracts should include your name, institutional affiliation, contact details, preferred form of presentation, and should not be more than three hundred (300) words.

Abstracts should be emailed to Ms. Sadia Moore: conferencesecretariat@usc.edu.tt, with 'MDG ABSTRACT' in the subject line by Monday, January 16, 2012.

Applicants will be notified of acceptance by Monday, January 30, 2012 at the latest.

Please direct enquiries to:

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