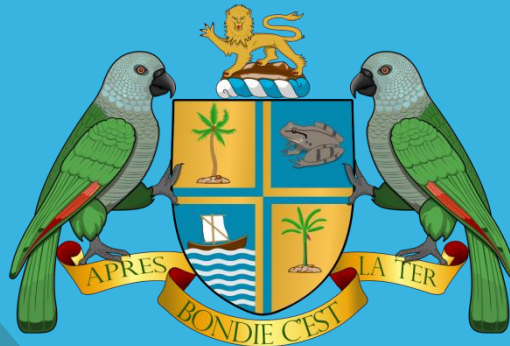


Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Caribbean

Planning for a Resilient Recovery in a post COVID-19 context



EXISTING CHALLENGES IMPLEMENTING THE SDG IN SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES

SIDS have always been challenged in implementing the 2030 Agenda. Some of these challenges have to do with:

- Resource allocation (financial and capital) – limited fiscal space
- Technical capacity to implement
- Continuous battle with socio-economic shocks and natural disasters most now as a result of climate change
- Competing national agenda (priorities, plans and programmes)
- Ability to mobilize valuable partnerships for the goals

PREOCCUPATION OF SIDS – POST DISASTER RECOVERY



THE SCOPE OF PLANNING

To make any sense, planning at the national and regional levels needs to now take on a completely different orientation.

In the Caribbean Region and in Dominica in particular, planning has catered to endogenous shocks (hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, Tsunamis, social unrest etc.) and exogenous shocks (external/global events which are likely to erode progress and growth.

Never before have we had to deal with a global pandemic!

PLANNING – DISASTER RISK REDUCTION (DRR)

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development places strong recognition for Disaster Risk Management and emphasizes the urgent need to address disaster risk with the aim for reduction through mitigation and adaptation measures.

Planning must therefore take on the central theme of DRR.

IMPACT OF COVID-19

“The world has seen many crises over the past 30 years, including the Global Financial Crisis of 2007-09. Each has hit human development hard but, overall, development gains accrued globally year-on-year. COVID-19, with its triple hit to health, education, and income, may change this trend.”

UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON PLANNING

The pandemic has clearly demonstrated that we have a long way to go to ensure sustained policy responses that can be successful in protecting households and businesses from the worst ravages.

Importantly, the SDGs need to reflect that shocks and crises will be the norm.

QUESTION 1 - RESPONSE

How has the 2030 Agenda and the SDG contributed to the emergency response and how do you think it will contribute in the context of post-covid recovery?

How the 2030 Agenda and SDG contributed to the Emergency Response [1]

SDG 3 – Good health and well-being.

The existing health system, having received much priority attention from Government of Dominica, was in a good position for response to CoVID. The integration of the 2030 Agenda into the National Development Strategy and Action Plan 2030, catered for the upgrading and smarting of all health infrastructure and improvement of services. Equipment and laboratory for testing viruses such as Corona COVID-19 was already in place and health personnel were trained.

How the 2030 Agenda and SDG contributed to the Emergency Response [1]

How Dominica approached the pandemic:

- Training of all health professionals and first responders
- Procurement of PPEs and PCR Test Kits
- Construction of isolation facilities
- Securing of quarantine facilities
- Certification of hotels and guesthouses for quarantine purposes
- Distribution of PPE
- Work from home programs ... Cont'd

How the 2030 Agenda and SDG contributed to the Emergency Response [1 cont'd]

How Dominica approached the pandemic:

- Daily press release from the office of the Prime Minister and Ministry of Health, broadcasted on all media houses with daily updates on the virus
- Public awareness / education
- Mandatory mask wearing with penalties enforced
- Limitations to mass gatherings with penalties enforced for non compliance

How the 2030 Agenda and SDG contributed to the Emergency Response [2]

SDG1, 2 and 10 – No poverty; Zero Hunger; Reduce Inequalities

With the advancement of the dreaded Corona Virus, Government moved to craft an emergency response plan which took into account vulnerable citizens (those already on social safety net programmes, the elderly, single parent households, the unemployed and those who had lost jobs from key sectors such as tourism etc.) Actions taken were:

1. The establishment of a Recovery and Response Committee to draft policy measures to address the pandemic. The Committee comprised selected individuals from the public and private sectors, including academia and civil society.

How the 2030 Agenda and SDG contributed to the Emergency Response [2a]

2. Implementation of initiatives for **loss of income, loss of livelihood, food security and support to private sector continuity**. These included rollout of support to farmers and encouragement for backyard gardening, income loss grants for 6 months through the Dominica Social Security, Cash Transfer Grants with the support of development partners (UNDP and WFP).
3. **Concessions** have been granted to the business community to support business continuity and the retention of staff as far as possible.
4. Expansion of selected **public support programmes**

How the 2030 Agenda and SDG contributed to the Emergency Response [3]

SDG 4 and 9 – Quality Education; Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure:

There was also the challenge of limited or no broadband internet connectivity to a few communities, including the Kalinago Territory. Efforts are ongoing in collaboration with service providers and the NTRC, to ensure equal access and equal opportunities. Government with the support of development partners and the private sector/individuals procured and distributed hundreds of computers and other electronic apparatus to reduce inequalities in the access to quality and affordable education. Schools are also provided with PPEs to manage and contain the spread of CoVID. In a number of instances, adjustments to infrastructure, both private and public have been mandated to encourage social and physical distancing. Government continues to regulate this process.

How the 2030 Agenda and SDG contributed to the Emergency Response [3a]

As with other Caribbean countries, with the increase in the number of cases of infected persons, the Ministry of Education was mandated to initiate **virtual learning and virtual classroom strategies (Google Classroom)**. The Ministry which was already at an advanced stage with the penetration of internet connectivity and computers in every school (free) and home, and the rapid uptake of cell phones and smartphones per capita to the vast majority of residents, was able to have continuing education with as minimal disruptions as possible.

How the 2030 Agenda and SDG contributed to the Emergency Response [4]

SDG 6 – Clean Water and Sanitation

An underlying theme to combating the pandemic has been proper hygiene and sanitation. Government has stepped up its game in ensuring that residents have access to public sanitation facilities. Standpipes in communities and urban areas, especially at high pedestrian traffic points, have been restored. Wardens have been positioned in the city to make hygiene supplies accessible and to encourage proper hand-washing. We continue to strength and enforce sanitation through education, information, improvement in waste management, regulations for business houses, public transport, events etc.

How the 2030 Agenda and SDG contributed to the Emergency Response [5]

SDG 8 and 11 – Decent Work and Economic Growth; Sustainable Cities and Communities

The need to provide employment has been a national priority. The impact to the SMSE sector, and an almost total shut down of the Tourism Sector has exacerbated the need for decent work and economic growth.

While some initiatives have been taken in construction and agriculture, the is the need to seriously consider economic diversification in the medium to long term.

Government continues to support the business sector. The reopening of borders on August 7, 2020 and encouragement of locals to patronize the hotel sector for staycations, events and functions have injected some life and activity, and consequently, some re-hiring of staff.

QUESTION 1 - RESPONSE

Do you think the SDG targets or its level of ambition need to be reviewed in light of the new pandemic and post pandemic scenario? Which targets should be reviewed?

DOMINICA SITUATION – PRE AND POST COVID-19

Dominica has suffered successive shocks over the last 5 years which have resulted in erosion of GDP to the tune of 226% with Hurricane Maria. On an annual basis, development financing has had to be re-scoped and re-purposed for disaster response. In the face of these challenges, the public debt has increased significantly leaving very little fiscal space to undertake development programmes. The public sector reliance of CBI inflows continue to be challenged by dwindling revenues due to global situations.

Revenue overall as a result of the pandemic is down by about 40%.

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The implementation of the SDG and the targets requires large allocation of state resources which to a large extent are not present. Trends have shown that over the years following the Global Financial Crisis, year on year there has been a diminishing of access to grants and concessional loans, which are often challenging to repay owing to the fiscal deficit and existing high debt level of SIDS.

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The reality is.....

We are in the middle of a socioeconomic crisis with no definite end in sight. What do we do?



The Sustainable Development Goals

The SDGs are part of the answer to strategically managing this crisis, however, there needs to be:

1. An assessment of the current situation at the regional and national levels through an inclusive (public sector, private sector and civil society) approach.
2. An analysis of the current resource (technical, technological and financial) needs of countries for implementation of the goals
3. A reprioritization of the goals that are critical and responsive to country/regional –(EC and LAC) needs?
4. Institutionalizing Goal 17 NOW – what strategic partnerships and alliances are required to enable SIDS to effectively respond not only to the current pandemic but to long term development needs of countries
5. Consider an extension of the timeline from 2030 to 2040 in view of the fact that goals need to be Realistic. Given the current trajectory, can we realistically achieve all targets by 2030?

Which Targets should be reviewed

Goal 17 – Highlight stronger and more practical need for global cooperation particularly in light of the fact that the countries more prone to disastrous climatic events are not the producers of the emissions of CO₂ and greenhouse gases / global warming, yet are victims to the impacts of climate change. There is urgent need to address this imbalance.

Thank
you!

