

EduLink NIU Project: Issues, Outcomes and Recommendations: the NUS perspective



National University of Samoa

Conceptualisation Edulink NIU

- **increasing vulnerability in the Pacific region due to changes in the environment & fragile economies & ecosystems**
- **increasing inability to respond to changes.**
- **PICs embraced SD initiatives international level**
- **Lack of capacity to implement these initiatives**
- **ESD -> pathway for the future**
- **ESD pathway/key to ensuring SD**



WHAT IS EDULINK NIU PROJECT?

- NIU project – network of 3 Pacific island universities USP, NUS & UPNG funded under EU- Edulink funding
- Proposed 3 year implementation
- Major objective of NIU (Network of Island Universities)
 - enhance institutional capacities to cope with challenges of SD by mainstreaming ESD



EduLink NIU project

- Specific objectives
 - To build institutional structures and mechanisms for infusion and mainstreaming ESD into the teaching and research programs of the 3 universities
 - To mainstream ESD in the university curriculum in different key priority areas of teacher education, sustainability education and community empowerment
 - To strengthen ESD/SD research outputs



EduLink NIU project Structure

- 3 major components
 - Management/Administrative Capacity
 - Academic relevance
 - Capacity building in Research & Technology.



Component 1: Management/ administrative Capacity

- ensure activities implemented within each member of the NIU and properly executed coordination
- Setup of 3 institutional advisory boards which in turn report to a Joint advisory board



Component 1

- ESD conferences
 - 1st and last year of Edulink project
 - Enhance inter-university collaboration –forum for dialogue on ESD
 - Common understanding of ESD – plan ESD activities
 - Disseminate research and outputs from project



Component 1

- **Implementation of the Pacific ESD Action Plan**
 - promote the five priority areas of the Pacific ESD Action Plan: Formal, non-formal, research, governance, and communication.
 - processes and methodologies used in mainstreaming ESD in the NIU partner institutions will be documented and communicated widely in the Pacific as a guide to future ESD work.

Component 2: Academic relevance

- 3 major elements:
 - 1) Teacher education;
 - 2) Sustainability education
 - 3) Community empowerment



Teacher education

- Provision of quality education through capacity building of lecturers through short term training & staff exchange
 - Observation visits to USP for marine research centre
 - Training for CISCO instructors



Sustainability education

- USP observation visit
 - Investigate structure of postgraduate programs
 - Advice on course offerings
 - Share experiences in postgraduate course development and delivery



Sustainability education

- Course development
 - development of courses towards postgraduate program in Science with emphasis on ESD and SD.
 - Reorient 2 courses
 - Disaster management
 - International seminar series in Environmental Science
 - Develop 4 new courses
 - Management of ICT networks
 - Management issues in ICT for development
 - Demography analyses
 - Experimental methods
 - Courses now ready for Senate approval once all courses for Postgraduate diploma developed

Community empowerment

- Aims
 - improve capacity of outside communities for sustainable practices
 - weave environment and SD thinking into the whole fabric of community education.
 - Make university more relevant to community
- At NUS – 2 projects identified
 - promoting community awareness of issues and best practices in areas of i) waste management & ii) disaster management



Community empowerment

- Year 1 disaster management workshop (Nov 20th 2009)
- Targeted private sector – 13 institutions
- Awareness and training in disaster management
- Development of disaster management plans for each institution – now incorporated into National Disaster management plan



Community empowerment

- Year 2 ESD awareness workshop for NUS staff and members of community – delivered by USP ESD specialists.
- Year 3 waste management workshop
 - In collaboration with MNRE
 - Private and public institutions
 - Develop waste management policies/plans



Component 3 Research & Technology

- Goals of collaborative research
 - Complement /support academic programs of component 2
 - Address regional issues in SD



Component 3 Research & Technology

- In areas of
 - Waste management
 - Regional application of negotiation skills and MEA capacity building to address major land use issues of the Pacific:
 - ESD leadership training
 - Sustainable Rural Development in coastal communities through Participatory Project Planning, Design and Implementation
 - Climate and Extreme Events in the Pacific: An Economic Analysis to Build Resilience
 - The Critical Roles of Teacher Education in ESD



Component 3 Research & Technology

- Specifically at NUS- 2 projects
 - The **development of a master plan for establishment of the Marine and Environmental Science Research Centre (MERC)** at proposed NUS Ocean campus (NUSOC)
 - Longitudinal study on numeracy of teacher education students



Component 3 Research & Technology

- The development of a master plan for establishment of the Marine and Environmental Science Research Centre (MERC) -NUS based
- MERC ensure sustainability by provision of facility for conduct of research in Marine and Env Science to inform best practice and to support academic programmes



Component 3 Research & Technology

- Activities/outputs
 - Observation visit to USP IAS and School of Marine Sciences
 - Development of 1st draft of master plan
 - Funding proposal, building plans, cost recovery plan
 - Includes first draft of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)



Component 3 Research & Technology

- Longitudinal study on numeracy of teacher education students
- Objective: to collate data that will indicate problematic areas in student numeracy and enable staff to develop effective remediation techniques to help alleviate the problem in mathematical numeracy



Numeracy

Outputs

- Remediation techniques/data to inform curriculum development and policy makers
- Publications in international journals



Issues & Challenges

- Communication & coordination amongst 3 partners - main challenge
- Communication and coordination within organisation
- Lead agency fulfilment of coordination role
- Staff turnover -> lack of continuity



Benefits

- funding opportunity
- Collaboration and sharing between 3 partners in all 3 areas
 - Quality assurance & accreditation
 - Collaboration in writing workshops
 - Sharing curriculum resources eg with UPNG & USP
 - Capacity building as ESD is the pathway ensuring SD



Recommendations

- Need for good coordination
- Transparency and communication between partners
- Staff continuity
- Robust financial control and audits

