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A WHOLE-SCHOOL APPROACH TO MAINSTREAMING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Welcome to the manual on the whole-school approach to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – a transformative global agenda that holds immense significance for developing countries, providing a roadmap for sustainable development. This manual is designed to equip teachers and schools with essential knowledge on the SDGs, their relevance, and practical ways to integrate them into the educational curriculum and school activities.

The SDGs, established by the United Nations in 2015, encompass 17 interconnected goals addressing the world's most pressing challenges. While these goals are universally applicable, their relevance to developing countries is particularly profound. Here, we'll briefly introduce these goals and their importance in the context of developing nations.

No Poverty: Developing countries often grapple with high poverty rates. SDG 1 aims to eradicate poverty, ensuring that everyone, regardless of their background, has access to basic necessities and opportunities for economic growth.

Zero Hunger: Food insecurity remains a pressing issue in many developing regions. SDG 2 seeks to end hunger, improve nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture, addressing the vital needs of vulnerable populations.

Quality Education: Access to quality education is a cornerstone for development. SDG 4 underscores the importance of inclusive, equitable, and quality education, empowering future generations in developing countries.

Clean Water and Sanitation: Lack of access to clean water and sanitation is a significant challenge in many developing areas. SDG 6 strives to ensure universal access to safe drinking water and proper sanitation, enhancing health and well-being.

Decent Work and Economic Growth: Sustainable economic growth is essential for poverty reduction. SDG 8 focuses on promoting decent work and economic opportunities, fostering prosperity in developing economies.

Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure: Building resilient infrastructure and fostering innovation (SDG 9) is crucial for developing countries to advance economically, attract investments, and connect to global markets.

Reduced Inequalities: Developing nations often face stark inequalities. SDG 10 aims to reduce inequalities within and among countries, promoting inclusivity and social cohesion.

Climate Action: Climate change disproportionately affects vulnerable communities in developing countries. SDG 13 calls for urgent climate action, including mitigation and adaptation measures.

Life Below Water and Life on Land: Biodiversity loss and environmental degradation impact developing nations significantly. SDGs 14 and 15 focus on protecting marine and terrestrial ecosystems, preserving vital resources for future generations.

Partnerships for the Goals: Collaboration is key. SDG 17 emphasizes global partnerships and cooperation, essential for mobilizing resources and knowledge to support sustainable development in developing countries.

This manual will delve deeper into each SDG, providing insights, activities, and resources to help teachers and schools effectively integrate these goals into their educational programs. By doing so, we aim to empower future generations with the knowledge and skills necessary to address the unique challenges faced by developing countries and contribute to a more sustainable and equitable world.



THE SDGS IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Trinidad and Tobago has been taking steps to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into its national policies and initiatives. Here are some concrete examples of how the country has been working towards SDG integration:

- **National Development Strategy (Vision 2030):** Trinidad and Tobago's Vision 2030 is the country's national development strategy that aligns with the SDGs. It outlines the government's long-term goals, including economic diversification, social equity, and environmental sustainability.
- **Institutional Framework:** The Ministry of Planning and Development plays a central role in coordinating SDG implementation and reporting. They have developed an SDG Roadmap and established a dedicated SDG Unit to oversee progress and ensure alignment with the goals.
- **Data Collection and Reporting:** The Central Statistical Office (CSO) has been working on improving data collection and reporting for SDG indicators. This data is crucial for tracking progress and informing policy decisions.
- **Environmental Initiatives:** Trinidad and Tobago has taken steps towards environmental sustainability. For instance, the country has made efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, promote renewable energy sources, and protect its rich biodiversity (SDGs 7, 13, 14, and 15).
- **Gender Equality:** Trinidad and Tobago has implemented initiatives to promote gender equality and address violence against women. For example, it established the Gender and Child Affairs Division to advocate for gender mainstreaming and women's rights (SDG 5).
- **Education and Skills Development:** Investments have been made in education and skills development to enhance access to quality education and prepare the workforce for the future (SDG 4).

- **Healthcare Services:** The country continues to invest in healthcare infrastructure and services to improve the well-being of its citizens, including efforts to combat non-communicable diseases (SDG 3).
- **Poverty Reduction:** While challenges remain, the government has implemented social safety net programs to address poverty and reduce inequalities (SDG 1 and SDG 10).
- **Private Sector Engagement:** Trinidad and Tobago encourages private sector engagement in sustainable development. Many businesses in the country are aligning their corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives with the SDGs.
- **International Partnerships:** The country actively participates in international partnerships and forums related to sustainable development, fostering cooperation and knowledge exchange with other nations.
- **Youth and Civic Engagement:** Efforts have been made to engage youth and civil society in SDG-related activities and campaigns to raise awareness and promote active participation in achieving the goals.
- **Clean Energy Transition:** Trinidad and Tobago has explored clean energy options, including discussions on renewable energy projects and transitioning away from fossil fuels.

While Trinidad and Tobago has made progress in integrating the SDGs, challenges remain in fully achieving all the goals by 2030. Continuous efforts, resource allocation, and multi-stakeholder collaboration are essential to addressing these challenges and realizing the country's sustainable development objectives.

VISION OF THE PROPOSED PILOT PROGRAMME

The directed and structured incorporation of The SDGs into formal school settings have been identified as supportive solutions for countering many of the perceived and real de-evolution of ethics and pro-social behavior in schools today. While some have argued that such behavior is not new or overly widespread as compared to previous time – but rather given more publicity due to social media and accessibility, the issue remains that the news headlines paint a grim picture.

There are The SDGs Programmes in schools in Jamaica, our CARICOM neighbour. They also exist further afield in India and in countries on the African continent such as Kenya, Ghana and Liberia. Moreover, variations of I-Clubs (sometimes called Character Clubs) exist in schools in many countries throughout the world. The SC has noted that these Programmes, where they exist, have become avenues for the following:

1. Creation of a framework to inspire positive change through activities and programmes;
2. Assisting school authorities in achieving education aims and objectives;
3. Development of ethical leadership mind-sets among the young;
4. Strengthening the sense of patriotism and citizenship among students;
5. Getting students to hold themselves accountable for their work and developing a personal level of excellence.
6. Helping to build constructive relationships and thus reduce animosity in school populations and unite the school community.

Given the above, it is the view of the SC that a structured The SDGs Programme can have a notable impact on the secondary schools in Trinidad and Tobago by providing, inter alia, non-academic paths to positive affirmation and recognition and platforms where students can influence other students to change poor behaviour patterns.

The Goals of the Pilot: The goals of the pilot are to test and refine the The SDGs Programme before their widespread introduction in secondary schools and to demonstrate the value and benefit of the programme to secondary schools. In this regard, the Pilot Study will provide information in order to determine the following:

1. The most effective model/structure for implementing The SDGs Programmes in secondary schools in Trinidad and Tobago;
2. Activities which will help build student character and will make the The SDGs Programme attractive; and
3. The support (financial and otherwise) required from Parents/Teachers and the community so that the programme is sustainable.



A WHOLE-SCHOOL APPROACH TO THE SDGs

Raihani (2011), conceptualizes a whole school approach as the interplay and interrelationship between the elements of 1) a school's vision and policies which guide its 2) curriculum and teaching which is informed and influenced by the 3) capacity and culture of the school which plays a major part in the scope and breadth of 4) student activities which in many instances form the foundation on which the 5) collaboration with the wider community is built. Of course, this is all strengthened or weakened by the overarching 6) leadership and management of the school and administration.

In the Australian Research Institute in Education for Sustainability's (ARIES) report, 'Whole – school approaches to sustainability: An international review of whole – school sustainability programs' (2004), the authors also identified the commonalities that existed in successful whole-school approaches to sustainability, with the non-content specific elements being: school governance; policy development; whole-school committees; action plans; curriculum integration ; professional development; partnerships and networking; and monitoring and evaluation.



Fig1: Adapted Whole-School Approach (Raihani 2011)

The whole-school approach is growing in incorporation as the preferred methodology for the strengthening of supplemental learning to support the formal education delivery, especially with respect to concepts that are considered 'difficulty' to infuse, such as The SDGs.

The whole-school approach as a principle, promotes an environment that supports classroom learning by utilizing the entire school and its community as reinforcements of the learned concepts. Students, teachers, staff and parents therefore live what they learn and learn by living.

The UNESCO Associated Schools Network (ASPnet) as a stakeholder in the The SDGs Programme, has developed a tested approach to a whole-school approaches (specifically to Climate Change) that is proposed to form the central design of the programme.

“The whole-school approach to climate change means that an educational institution includes action for reducing climate change in every aspect of school life. This includes school governance, teaching content and methodology, campus and facilities management as well as cooperation with partners and the broader communities. The active involvement of all internal and external school stakeholders, namely students, teachers, principals, school staff at all levels and the wider school community such as families and community members in reflecting and acting on climate change is key to a successful implementation of the whole-school approach...”

Getting Climate Ready – A Guide for Schools on Climate Change



Fig 2: Proposed Whole-School Conceptual Framework for mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals

Figure 2 illustrates an adapted framework that combines some of the existing work on whole-school approaches and the published whole-school approach to mainstreaming Climate Change. The simplified version also contributes to easier communication within the school community and beyond, as such communication is essential in supporting a sustainable and integrated programme of action.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Knowledge and goodwill are rarely enough to achieve whole-school change. The experience of schools around the world suggests that projects are most likely to be successful when they are resourced with:

- A knowledgeable and committed school principal;
- Expertise, in the form of well-trained teachers and access to external experts;
- Dedicated facilitators to manage the process;
- Supporting materials and teaching resources;
- Adequate long-term financing.

Getting Climate Ready: A Guide for Schools on Climate Change



GETTING STARTED

Defining what sustainability means to your school is the first step along the path of mainstreaming. As the Principal, Vice-Principal or Teachers, you understand clearly that the 'school's' interpretation of values is a wide-reaching concept, that is informed by a wide range of stakeholders.

A Collective Vision of sustainability and the Sustainable Development Goals is one in which all stakeholders – administration, teachers, staff, students, parents and the wider community – have a shared vision for and belief in a society that prizes sustainability, and acts local while having a global perspective. Defining what sustainability means is a critical step in molding the school's vision. One school, for example, may see a Sustainability Programme as helping to create the type of leaders they want their graduates to be. Another school may view an Sustainability Programme as being a tool to fix immediate issues related to resource constraints or attracting financial support. A vision for sustainability, therefore, will have to be contextualized differently in each school environment, and therefore shape the on-the-ground implementation of the whole-school mainstreaming approach.

Coming up with this vision will necessitate understanding the views of all stakeholders and groups involved. As a first step towards setting a vision, simple surveys or focus groups can be held with students, teachers, administration and ancillary staff, teachers and members of the immediate community, to determine their thoughts and opinions on the SDGs and sustainability as a concept and the visions for it being put into practice in the school environment.

Using these multiple perspectives, the school should develop a vision, mission and values that encapsulate its focus on the SDGs. Most schools have some version of vision/mission/values that are often tied into the Ministry of Education, denomination or community based. The tying together of these principles with a greater focus on the SDGs insures that there will exist a constant point of reflection for all persons involved in the programme moving forward.

Once these principles have been set down and agreed to by all stakeholders consulted, they will form the basis of the school's own specific Action Plan for mainstreaming the SDGs.

Why Include Everyone?

Undertaking such a broad range of stakeholder consultations may seem very onerous. However, on careful reflection, we understand that such consultations do not need to be complicated or complex, but rather form part of existing mechanisms such as:

- Registration interviews, PTA meetings, After-school meetings and so on*

Getting everyone on board is vital to the success of any such mainstreaming effort, and is possibly the most important facet of a whole-school approach. The importance of such an effort is threefold:

- 1. The more people are bought into a concept, the greater their willingness to contribute to its success and secure their commitment;*
- 2. The more resources are made available to the programme to achieve its goals. These resources can be in the form of personal time, products, and even financial;*
- 3. The programme extends its influence far outside the traditional realm of impact of a school. Persons impacted by the programme will carry its influence into their own homes and communities.*

In ensuring that everyone has a role to play, we need to be sure that they:

- 1. Understand fully the issues*
- 2. Can see the impact their support and participation can have at the personal, school-level and national scale;*
- 3. Are empowered to see themselves as key champions for change.*

Table 1 shows some of the many different roles that members of the school community can play in mainstreaming The SDGs.

School Members	Possible roles
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and leading The SDGs Projects in their class and school clubs • Becoming involved in community action to support The SDGs outside the school • Becoming mentors and guides for younger students
Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching practical concepts of The SDGs through infusion where possible or through guidance/homeroom periods, supported by current timely events • Modelling the SDGs through out of class behavior and also through interactions relating to extracurricular activities
Administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being the most visual champion of The SDGs within the school community and beyond • Supporting teachers, students and other staff in leading and implementing projects related to The SDGs • Model The SDGs in behavior and other decisions that affect the school community
Support and Ancillary Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model behavior that supports the overall culture of the SDGs • Be active monitors and guides for student or staff behavior that does not correspond the school's vision for The SDGs • Take a leading role in school projects that support its action plan
Parents and families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active participation in parent training and resource events focusing on the importance on the SDGs as a value for their child • Volunteering and participating in the SDGs projects • Adopting practices relating to the SDGs in behavior at home
Community Organisations and members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take part in the school vision by displaying material related to the SDGs in shops, taxi stops, school buses • Participating in school projects in an active way through identifying local level problems related to the SDGs

Table 1: Roles for the school community



GET GOING ON AN ACTION PLAN

Many schools already have elements of activities, projects, clubs etc that contribute to a system of the SDGs. These elements range from the Scout programme, environmental clubs, to Social Studies to participation in activities such as the Model United Nations. A whole-school approach appreciates the multitude of activities on the ground and seeks to better create a framework within which they all contribute to the school's stated vision.

The development of an Action Plan takes the Vision/Mission/Values of the school, along with an overarching look at all the activities done within the school environment and maps them all together. The plan entails processes that focus on Planning and Design, Taking Action and Reflecting and Reviewing (Getting Climate Ready 2016).



Figure 3: Process for implementing a whole-school action plan



Plan	☐	Conduct a Self-Assessment A self-assessment gives a picture of the various activities and elements within the school environment that already promote the SDGs. This assessment will help showcase gaps, priorities, targets and what success looks like.
	☐	Develop an Action Plan The Action Plan will include the priorities and targets set by the self-assessment, specific activities that will achieve these targets and the time within which the activities will be done. A template is provided in Annex 1
	☐	Setting up the management of the Action Plan The management of the Action Plan can take the form of The SDGs Club, which will have overall responsibility for the design, implementation and monitoring of the Action Plan.
Implement	☐	Implementing the Plan The Action Plan's 4 areas should be implemented keeping in mind the engagement and support of all members of the school community.
	☐	Collecting Data and Information Understanding the effectiveness of actions are critical to the success of the interventions. Many types of information can be collected including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quantitative data from school level exam results Qualitative data from focus groups, interviews, anecdotal experience Mixed forms of data from focused surveys
Reflect	☐	Reflect on what worked and what didn't It is important that the management unit (The SDGs Club or similar) look at the targets for success and the information they obtained throughout the school year to determine the impact of the Action and what needs to be changed. It is important to note that this needs to be an honest reflection, and that 'success' may not be quick in coming.
	☐	Sharing and celebrating The results of the Action plan should be clearly showcased and communicated across the school community, as this builds the buy-in and transparency of the process. The celebration of successes, no matter how small, continues to build the social capital needed to promote the sustainability of the programme. This can be done at graduation events, bazaars, PTA meetings and any such event that brings together the school community.

Table 2: Checklist for a school's Action Plan

ACTION AREAS AND GUIDELINES FOR DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

As illustrated in Figure 2, the whole-school approach to mainstreaming The SDGs focuses on Teaching and Learning, School Governance, Culture and Community Engagement. While undertaking an Action Plan that incorporates all these elements is ambitious, the overall impact will be worth the investment.

Area 1: School Governance

Guideline 1: Establishing The SDGs Club/Teams

Treating the mainstreaming of The SDGs as a serious commitment needs a dedicated team of persons whose responsibility it is to coordinate, plan and monitor the success of the school's trajectory towards infusing The SDGs. The sharing of responsibilities across the school community increases the effectiveness of the activity, build buy-in and reduces the overloading of an already packed school day.

It is proposed that the governance of the school plan takes the form of 'The SDGs Club'. This Club will be structured around the familiar framework of a co-curricular Club but will focus primarily on the coordination of The SDGs Action plan. This may involve several meetings at the start of the school year to finalise and start the ball rolling on the Plan and then several meetings throughout the school year to monitor, adapt and reflect on the Plan's implementation.

The development of the Coordinating Club is critical to the success, credibility and sustainability of the Action Plan. As such, it is proposed that the following be important considerations in determining membership:

1. Include student representatives from diverse backgrounds and form levels;
2. Ensure that representatives are on board from the adult school community such as –
 - a. Teachers
 - b. Administrators
 - c. Clerical
 - d. Custodians/Security/Cafeteria
 - e. Parents
 - f. Key community members (shop owner, vendor, school bus driver, taxi driver)
3. It is very important to determine beforehand the level of decision making that is required so as to empower but not give false hope to members eg. Full decision making over projects design but not full decision making over external communications;
4. As much as possible, the members should be able to speak for their groups and not just nominated on an individual capacity.

While it is understood that the Principal/Vice Principal of a secondary school in T&T is overloaded, it is critical to the success of the Action Plan that they are the PRIMARY champion for the programme and that they are seen to be tangibly supporting the success of the programme.

Area 2: Teaching and Learning

Guideline 2: Teach The SDGs through infusion in selected subjects at the Form One level

Addressing The SDGs can be a complex task. With recommendations from the pilot school Principals, it is proposed that such a direct approach should be taken at the Form One level, which will then set the stage for their advancement into the higher forms. This is also advised in consideration of the ever growing demand for syllabus time on the higher forms. The SDGs can be taught within a classroom in a non-structured way (i.e. guidance periods or Homeroom), wherein the Form teacher can use a current event as a case study to discuss the concepts of the SDGs.



Suggestion box: Children and teenagers today are more exposed than ever to the culture and 'celebrity' of instant gratification and material indicators of success i.e. expensive cars and social media extravagant post. One such example is the recent news and social media blitz surrounding the death and subsequent championing of an infamous person who was often alleged to be involved in many areas of crime, but was well known on social media platforms for displays of wealth.

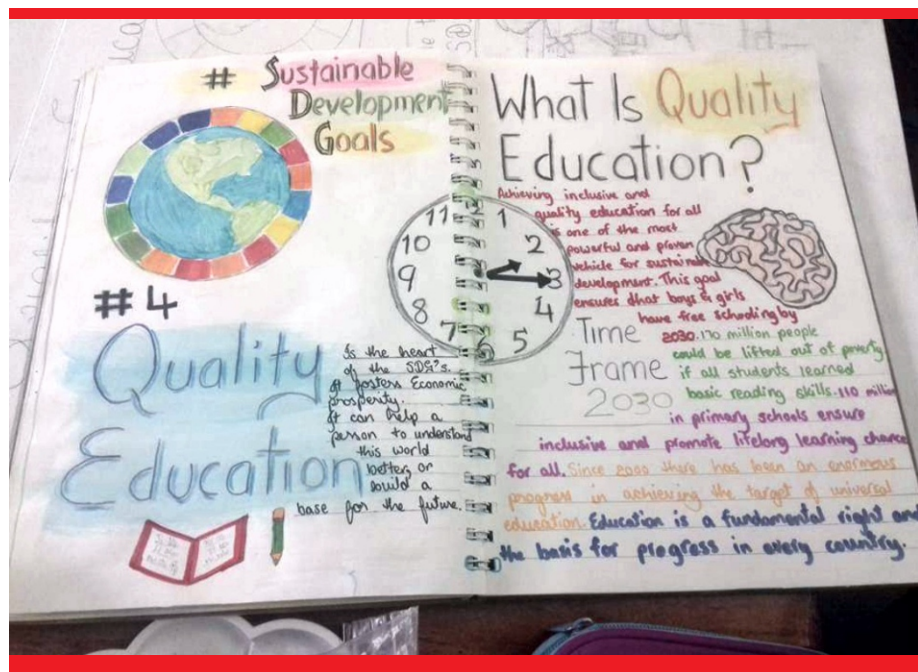
How do these social media influencers affect students' perceptions of success and hard work?

The SDGs can be included in several subjects, especially at the Form One level. Some suggestions are provided in Table 2.

The inclusion of The SDGs as subject matter also contributes to the monitoring and evaluation of the Action Plan by providing assessment data in the form of exam questions, project marks etc.

Subject	Examples
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use examples of data and figures from reports on revenue lost through corruption nationally in word problems Use data and figures to develop graphs on the cost benefit of bribes, corruption and non-transparent practices around the <u>work</u> <u>need</u>
English A/ English B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have students write a short story or poem about situations involving the SDGs Analyse a poem, text or piece of writing from an the SDGs perspective in the content
Integrated Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the concept of the scientific method to examine the need to be transparent, accountable and act with the SDGs in designing and reporting on scientific experiments
Social Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have students write reports or biographies on persons in the national sphere that have exhibited high levels of personal the SDGs

Table 3: Examples of subject areas for The SDGs infusion



Guideline 3: Encourage Critical, Creative and Futures Thinking

From a pedagogical perspective, it is not enough that students understand the concept of The SDGs on the page. Building critical thinking skills and futures thinking is essential for students for several reasons:

- **Problem Solving:** Critical thinking skills enable students to analyze complex problems, break them down into manageable parts, and develop effective solutions. Futures thinking helps them anticipate potential challenges and opportunities, allowing for proactive problem-solving.
- **Informed Decision-Making:** Both critical thinking and futures thinking empower students to make well-informed decisions. They learn to assess information, evaluate alternatives, and consider long-term consequences, leading to better choices in their personal and academic lives.
- **Adaptability:** In a rapidly changing world, the ability to adapt is crucial. Critical thinking and futures thinking help students develop a flexible mindset, allowing them to adjust to new situations, technologies, and challenges.
- **Innovation:** These thinking skills foster creativity and innovation. Students who think critically and consider future scenarios are more likely to come up with novel ideas and solutions, which are valuable skills in various fields and industries.
- **Global Citizenship:** As global citizens, students should be aware of and engaged with global issues. Critical thinking helps them understand complex global challenges, while futures thinking encourages them to envision a sustainable and equitable future for the planet.
- **Effective Communication:** Both skills enhance communication abilities. Students can articulate their thoughts and ideas more clearly, persuasively, and logically, making them better communicators and advocates for their beliefs and causes.
- **Empowerment:** Critical thinking and futures thinking empower students to take an active role in their own learning and in shaping their future. They become more self-reliant, self-directed learners who can set and pursue their goals.
- **Resilience:** These skills contribute to emotional resilience. Students who can think critically and consider the future are better equipped to cope with setbacks, uncertainties, and challenges, as they can strategize and adapt.
- **Ethical Decision-Making:** Critical thinking helps students consider ethical implications and dilemmas, fostering a sense of responsibility and ethical decision-making.
- **Problem Identification:** Futures thinking helps students identify potential problems and challenges before they become critical issues. This proactive approach can prevent or mitigate negative outcomes.

- **Long-Term Planning:** Both skills are essential for effective long-term planning. Students can set clear goals, develop strategies, and work towards their desired future outcomes, whether in their education, careers, or personal lives.
- **Citizen Engagement:** Students who possess critical thinking and futures thinking skills are more likely to engage in civic and social issues. They can critically evaluate policies, advocate for change, and contribute to the betterment of their communities and society as a whole.

Students can play a crucial role in engaging with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by applying critical thinking and futures thinking. These approaches empower students to analyze, question, and envision a more sustainable and equitable future. Here's how students can use these thinking skills to engage effectively with the SDGs:

Understanding the SDGs: Begin by thoroughly understanding each of the 17 SDGs, their targets, and indicators. Students should research and familiarize themselves with the specific goals they are interested in.

Critical Thinking

- **Analyzing Goals and Targets:** Encourage students to critically examine the wording of each goal and its associated targets. They can question the wording and scope to gain a deeper understanding of the objectives.
- **Identifying Gaps and Challenges:** Encourage students to identify gaps in current efforts and challenges faced in achieving the SDGs. Critical thinking helps pinpoint areas that require innovative solutions.
- **Evaluating Data and Progress:** Students can assess available data and reports related to the SDGs to evaluate the progress made and determine whether goals are on track to be achieved.

Futures Thinking

- **Scenario Building:** Engage students in scenario-building exercises. Ask them to imagine different futures based on the achievement or non-achievement of specific SDGs. This exercise can help them understand the consequences of various paths.
- **Backcasting:** Instruct students to work backward from a desired future state where the SDGs are achieved. This approach helps identify necessary actions and strategies to reach those goals.
- **Trend Analysis:** Encourage students to analyze current global trends, such as population growth, climate change, and technological advancements, and assess how these trends may impact progress towards the SDGs.

Problem-Solving

- Challenge students to identify specific local or global issues that align with the SDGs. Then, ask them to propose innovative solutions to address these challenges while considering the interconnectedness of the goals.

Collaboration

- Promote collaboration among students by assigning group projects related to the SDGs. Encourage diverse perspectives and approaches to problem-solving.
- Connect students with local organizations, NGOs, or community groups actively working towards the SDGs. This real-world engagement can provide valuable insights and opportunities for collaboration.

Advocacy and Awareness

- Encourage students to use their critical thinking skills to advocate for the SDGs in their communities and schools. They can raise awareness through campaigns, discussions, and presentations.
- Challenge them to critically assess the messaging and effectiveness of existing awareness campaigns related to the SDGs.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Teach students to critically evaluate the impact of projects, policies, or initiatives related to the SDGs. They can assess whether these efforts effectively contribute to sustainable development.

Long-Term Thinking

- Foster a sense of long-term thinking by asking students to envision what the world would look like in 2030 if the SDGs are successfully achieved. Encourage them to consider their roles in that future.
- By incorporating critical thinking and futures thinking into their engagement with the SDGs, students not only gain a deeper understanding of these global goals but also become active and informed participants in shaping a more sustainable and equitable future. These thinking skills empower them to question, analyze, and envision solutions, making them valuable contributors to the SDG agenda.



Area 3: School Culture

Guideline 4: Developing a School Charter

The School Charter for The SDGs can be an amalgamation of the compiled Vision/Mission/Values and the Action Plan for The SDGs Mainstreaming, that the school population and community officially subscribes too. By clearly outlining the direction that the school wishes to go down, the members of the school community engage themselves with living by the guidelines set forth.

The Charter as a simple document can be displayed in public areas, given to new students and parents and the community to showcase the communal movement towards making the school a model of the SDGs.

Guideline 5: Empowering Students to take Action

It is critical that students feel empowered to act with The SDGs in their own day to day lives, and not just see it as something to be done within school. Helping create this sense of personal responsibility, as well as advocacy for those within their peer and family group is vital to the success and upward expansion of the programme.

There are three key ways to engage students in empowering themselves:

1. Learning about action – students should better understand the wide range of tools at their disposal to make positive changes in their own lives and others. Constructive discussion on tools such as social media for positive change can be done in co-curricular clubs and homeroom periods, as well as by exposing them to local advocates who have been successful in creating change. By facilitating a school culture where students are empowered to speak up, take part in community action and advocacy, the school can foster a culture of standing up for one's self and others that will permeate beyond the school compound;
2. Learning through action – Students should also be encouraged to design and undertake projects (within the school's action plan) within the various school clubs and activities, that focus on the SDGs. Either way, remember that the goal is to empower students to use their learning as the basis for making positive change in their lives, schools, and communities. Therefore, what matters is not so much what goal is pursued. What matters more is whether the project comes from students' ideas, and whether you use these activities to help students develop the skills and resolve to take action;
3. Learning from action – Students should be encouraged to continually reflect on their actions and their experiences and be allowed to critically examine their decisions and how they acted.

Area 4: Community Engagement

Guideline 6: Create Community Partnerships for Teaching, Learning and Monitoring

In many areas of Trinidad and Tobago, the immediate geographical community still plays a vital role in supporting the activities and success of a school. In many cases also, the community plays negative roles in promoting spaces for criminal activity or activities that promote indiscipline.

1. Partnerships with the community can help create monitoring mechanisms for behavior that does not conform with the model of the SDGs that the students may demonstrate inside the school compound but leave behind at the gate. Improving the relationships with the community institutions like taxi drivers, shop owners etc can help give additional monitoring to behavior that can be addressed within the school environment;
2. Persons within the community who have demonstrated high levels of sustainability can be readily-accessible models of positive behavior can be integrated into the work of the SDGs club and project and activities that make up the school's action plan;
3. The integration of the community into the action plan takes learning outside the classroom. Simple elements like posters with elements of the SDGs or reminders to act in a sustainable manner in the village shop or by the taxi stand, continuously reinforce the positive messages that are being inculcated within the immediate school environment;
4. The community can also serve as an accessible area to do school based projects that build a sense of pride and citizenship eg. Helping a family struggling with poverty;
5. Community partnerships can also work to carry the school's message to the wider community and help contribute to a larger sense and appreciation for the importance of acting with the SDGs by the school being a hub for facilitating this information through consistent messaging at events such as
 - a. Bazaars
 - b. Film nights
 - c. Public school events
 - d. Sport Days

RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR THE TRAINING OF THE THE SDGS CLUB/TEAM AND SCHOOL-BASED ACTIVITIES

ANNEX 1:

Action Plan Template

[illegible]