

A Business Model Initiative for Cipriani College of Labour and Cooperative Studies

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Cipriani College of Labour and Cooperative Studies has been for some time under the strain of poor student intake, outstanding debts to suppliers and unpaid utilities. was forced to set up a Business Model, that is fully owned by the college. This paper sought to evaluate the financial viability of this Business Model as stated in the draft 2017-2022 Strategic Plan. It is proposed that the Business Model will facilitate the revenue collection for various income-generation activities, from various non-academic income generating units, such as the main auditorium and playing field. The income generated will be classified by the nature of the activities: teaching, consultancy, short courses and special production units with clearly defined schedules for disbursement of the said generated income. It is hoped that Cipriani College of Labour and Cooperative Studies will be able to slowly get itself off the ground and move towards partial solvency. By diversifying its income-generating activities, improving its internal processes, better customer/client services and managing the relationship between CCLCS and its Business Model which is wholly owned by CCLCS.

Key Words: Business Model, Income Generating Activities, Strategic Plan, Cipriani, Cooperative Studies

Introduction

Revenues raise from industry and commerce are becoming an increasingly important source of income for higher education. These sources are gradually accounting for a larger proportion of the total income. The generation of this income, along with other activities, has been referred to as academic entrepreneurship. The evolution of academic entrepreneurship needs to be viewed in the context of the debate regarding the nature and purpose of higher education which has a long history (Martin 2012). On one hand it is the view that the purpose of higher education is education for education's sake and that research conducted in higher education should be basic in nature, or promoting knowledge for knowledge's sake.


According to Gibb (2013) entrepreneurial higher education institutions are designed to empower and support staff and students to demonstrate enterprise, innovation and creativity in research, teaching and the pursuit of knowledge across boundaries. They contribute effectively to the enhancement of learning and discovery in a societal environment characterized by high levels of uncertainty and complexity and they are dedicated to creating public value is a process of open engagement, mutual learning, discovery and

exchange with all stakeholders in society-local—national and international.

The role of higher education in the global economy is rapidly increasing (O'Connor 2012). Higher education institutions are being judged by the ways in which they respond to the social and economic needs of society, that is, how well they are facilitating social mobility and wider access to higher education for disadvantaged groups, how effective they are in enhancing graduate employability and in their short-and-long-term contributions to national economic growth and development.

Background

Cipriani College of Labour and Cooperative Studies has for some time continues to receive less financial allocation from the Central Government that the estimated expenditure. Higher education in Trinidad and Tobago is particularly expensive and is not sustainable within current resources.

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Cipriani College of Labour and Cooperative Studies will therefore have to reduce its dependence on the Ministry of Finance and diversify its sources, also, across all offices.

In an attempt to bridge the gap between Cipriani College of Labour and Cooperative Studies budgetary allocations and actual expenditures, Cipriani College of Labour and Cooperative Studies propose the establishment of a Business Model that is charged with the responsibility of promoting and coordinating income-generating activities in the college. In order to respond fully to this challenging situation, it will be therefore necessary to separate the management of income-generation activities from the mainstream teaching and research functions of the college, while ensuring that the income from these activities serves the core functions of the college.

Information from the final draft of the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan has revealed the dire need for a short term Business Model at the college. The idea of this Business Model creates a challenging situation that can be deemed necessary in order to separate the management of income-generating activities from mainstream teaching and learning functions at the college. As indicated in the draft Strategic Plan, the new Business Model will ensure its survivability in these turbulent economic times and secure its strong value proposition in the tertiary sector.

An implementable Strategic Plan must incorporate both the assessment of the internal operating environment and the potential impact of external (contextual) factors. In this regard, since the Business Model will be wholly owned by the college, which is a Statutory entity the impact of any government regulations and directives must be evaluated when formulating the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan. The 2017-2022 Strategic Plan must reflect the key elements of results based management, namely the mission, objectives, performance criteria and indicators and targets.

It is important to note, that the main thrusts of the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan must focus on stakeholder education on the need to intensify income-generating activities and the strategic value of short term programmes and degree programmes. The college's ultimate goal is to achieve these objectives.

Research has shown that the higher the success, the tougher the demands will be on CCLCS. The Strategic Plan (2017-2022) has identified the need for diversification of business areas; consolidation and expansion of existing programmes; corporate governance and image, and human resource-related issues. It also should reflect the key elements of results-performance.

The 2017-2022 Strategic Plan must incorporate both the assessment of the internal operating environment

and the potential impact of the external environment. The New Business Model will be owned by Cipriani College of Labour and Cooperative Studies, which is a Statutory entity and an arm of the Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development.

CCLCS New Business Model viability depends on the establishment of performance-based-management which focuses on employees obligations, intentions and responsibilities. A performance contract is an agreement between employee and employer. It comprises of two major components of determination of mutually agreed performance targets, review and evaluation of periodical and terminal performance. The 2017-2022 Strategic Plan must in some way relate to the key elements of performance management at CCLCS.

The mandate of 2017-2022 CCLCS Strategic Plan to achieve Financial Stability and Resilience:

- The development and improvement of financial and management processes
- Build capacity for sound financial management across all officers
- Generate new, viable education products that will grow revenue contributions
- Grow the market through improved delivery of programmes, enhanced access through online programmes to attract regional students
- Promote, coordinate and provide managerial services for income generating activities within the college
- Undertake consultancy work, research, production and other income generating activities and promote and facilitate such activities undertaken by all departments and other organs of the college.
- Provide research production and other income-generating activities for the college

Qualitative Analysis

The team used a Qualitative in research approach to prepare and develop the CCLCS 2017-2022 Strategic Plan. This entailed the use of both formal and informal meetings together with a three days retreat of all stakeholders. The team reviewed a number of pertinent documents, which included CCLCS first strategic plan and the CCLCS Act. The Qualitative analysis approach used Focus Groups/ Semi-structured interviews. Focus group is a group of interactive individuals who have some common interest or characteristics, brought about by a moderator, who uses the group and its interaction as a way to gain information about a specific or focused issue. The information coming out of these meetings created a conducive environment that will facilitate the

generation of the and the development of the Situational and Swat analyses.

Qualitative research is use to examine subjective human experience by using non-statistical methods of analysis (Borbasi and Jackson 2012). It is associated with naturalistic inquiry which explores the complex experience of human beings (Moxham 2012). Qualitative research can generate information that can help decision making at CCLCS.

The participants in the developmental of this paper, included all stakeholders of Cipriani College of Labour and Cooperative Studies. They are as followed:

1. Board of Governors/Strategic Planning Sub-Committee (3 meetings)
2. Executive Team
3. Strategic Planning Working Group (3 meetings)
4. Accreditation Working Groups – Student Support Services, Quality Management, Academic Affairs, HR and Administration
5. Students
6. Faculty
7. Staff
8. South Campus
9. Tobago Campus
10. Ministry of Labour and Small Enterprise Development
11. Cooperatives Development Division of MOLSMED

The analytic tools used to explain the study's strategic planning are all qualitative in nature. Situational analysis is the process by which the company develops a clear understanding of the individual market and then evaluate its significance to the company and for other markets in which the business operates (Doole and Lowe 2008). Associated with Situational analysis is SWAT analysis. SWOT is a simple framework that points to the importance of external and internal forces for the purpose of understanding the sources of competitive advantage (Barney 1995). According to Collin (2002) strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis constitute the general strategic planning process common to many models. SWOT analysis also prevails in strategic planning models in higher education (Alfred 2006; Dolence and Norris 1994). This tool helps look at the organization's or situation's current performance and the organization's future by accounting for the factors that exist in the external environment. SWOT helps decide whether the main problems facing an organization revolve around a need to revise strategy, a need to improve strategy implementation, or both (Chermacka and Kasshann 2007).

The Situational Analysis developed as part of the planning process to guide the development of the CCLCS Strategic Plan 2017 - 2022. The analysis

consisted of an external scan to assess political, economic, socio-cultural, technological, legal and environmental factors relevant to tertiary education generally, and labour and cooperatives education, specifically. The Scan noted, for example, the tremendous advances with the integration of technology in tertiary education which coincides with trends in the nature of work. In this regard, the Report points to the opportunities that the College must exploit to stay relevant to the workforce of the future. The Scan is based on the review of myriad documents, as well as interviews with key stakeholders. A guiding principle of the strategic analyses was relevance and readiness, in terms of current and trending practices and available resources that may be exploited to advance the strategic agenda of the College.

The Situational Analysis was then converted into a SWOT Analysis, and as part of the strategic planning workshop, stakeholder used the TOWS approach¹ to cull the strategic priorities for the College to 2022 from the nexus of strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats². Figure 5 summaries some of the high impact factors considered and discussed.

From the analyses, several issues emerged that were the focus of deliberations among stakeholders:

- a. Expanding teaching and learning to take advantage of current and emerging needs and opportunities
- b. Moving beyond (limiting reliance on) Government funding
- c. Proving the criticality of the College for improving labour relations and workforce competence nationally and regionally
- d. Restoring the satisfaction and trust among staff and students (motivation and engagement); thereby rebuilding the brand
- e. Re-establishing best practices from the past while embracing new opportunities and emerging trends
- f. Strengthening and leveraging stakeholder relationships
- g. Networking and strategic and targeted marketing of programmes
- h. Strengthening ICT and facilities to enable 21st century teaching and learning
- i. Building and optimizing global networks, through reviving MOUs and engaging in new, relevant ones to advance strategic initiatives, for example opportunities in the cooperatives sector
- j. Building the capacity for transformational leadership at all levels
- k. Building and leveraging diverse talents and contributions through effective partnering and cross functional work teams

Table 1. Summary of CCLCS Major Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

MAJOR/KEY OPPORTUNITIES	MAJOR/KEY THREATS
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rapidly changing job markets – evolving jobs, new jobs being created 2. Vision 2030 –with its focus on ICT development, business development, entrepreneurship, education reform and human capital development 3. Proposed strategy for local government reform which will use the cooperatives approach 4. Social mitigation initiatives of government to reduce negative impact of the recession, including retraining, retooling of workers 5. Sustained demand for tertiary education for career development 6. Relatively low-cost advancements in ICT in education 7. Growth in demand for tertiary education across Caribbean Region 8. CARICOM– free movement of people, goods and services 9. Entrepreneurial spirt among members of the population in face of recession 10. Sizable and relatively untapped cooperatives market 11. Sizable and relatively untapped civil society market 12. Access to international support for programme expansion through ILO, ICA 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Weak economy – persistent recession with significantly reduced funds available to state entities 2. Job loss 3. Difficult IR climate 4. T & T’s weak performance key international indices e.g. Global Competitiveness Index, Corruption Index, ease of doing business 5. Crime – persistent fear for safety among the public 6. Relative lack of preparation to manage recession – households severely affected by job loss 7. Highly competitive environment for tertiary education – reaching saturation of local market, shifts in GATE exacerbate the situation, easy access to highly ranked online programmes 8. Climate change impacts including increasing severe weather, flooding, property damage 9. Persistent poverty – 25% of population below poverty line 10. Severe impact of natural disasters and geo-political instability in the Region 11. Policy changes subject to political directorate
MAJOR/KEY STRENGTHS	MAJOR/KEY WEAKNESSES
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strong, mainly positive history in tertiary education 2. Sustained ‘monopoly’ in labour and cooperatives education 3. Strong, knowledgeable Board/Leadership with excellent networks 4. Committed, high quality staff 5. Current initiatives to fill key vacancies, improved staff remuneration, upgrade ICT infrastructure 6. Current initiatives to amend the CCLCS Act 7. Accessibility of programmes in terms of price, location, entry requirements 8. Strong stakeholder network –Unions, Ministry of Labour, International Labour Organization 9. Increasing levels of staff engagement 10. International relationships, e.g. ILO.ICA which can be leveraged for expansion 11. Adequate infrastructure which can be used to attract and sustain new business 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Subject to shifts in leadership and mandate with change in government 2. Relatively poor perception of quality of products compared with some other institutions 3. Limited funds to carry out turnaround 4. Urgent need for a curriculum review (Antiquated programme design included lack on online programme delivery options) 5. Challenges with existing processes and procedures – outdated, lengthy, limited ICT integration

The emerging issues highlighted the importance of *giving parity of attention* to developing the core business of the College alongside building the necessary institutional capacity of a premier 21st tertiary education organization.

Stakeholder Analysis

The strategic analyses certainly emphasized the importance of stakeholder relationships. Such relationships are requisite for the College to advance its strategic agenda generally, more so in challenging economic times. Fortunately, the College, has

developed, maintained and reclaimed, good partnerships with key stakeholders (See Figure 1).

The College cherishes its long standing, strong relationships with labour unions and the cooperatives movement. Over the years, these partners have been a mainstay client group for the College. Four of the nine seats of the Board of Governors are reserved for union representatives. There is a need to revisit and strengthen these relationships going forward to ensure

that the College’s offerings meet the specialized capacity development needs of these stakeholders.

The Government has been responsible for funding operations of the College, through the Ministry responsible for Labour. There are several benefits of this relationship, beyond access to resources.

CCLCS’ Key Stakeholders

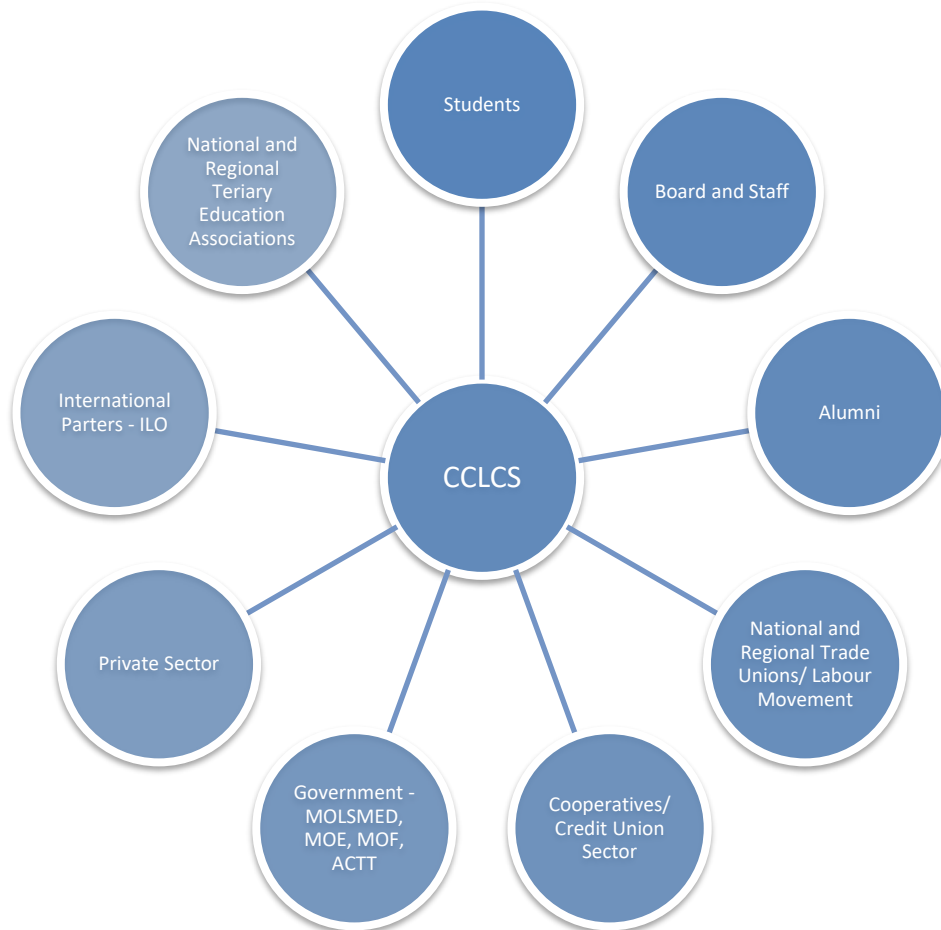


Figure 1: CCLCS’ Key Stakeholders

The central Ministry along with its various departments and agencies give the College access to expertise, as well as potential students (e.g. the Cooperatives Development Division, NEDCO, the staff of the Ministry itself). The governance arrangements of the College recognize key role of this stakeholder through representation of the Permanent Secretary (or their representative) on the Board.

Another important stakeholder relationship for the College is with the International Labour

Organization (ILO), which played a major role in the establishment of the institution and its focus on worker rights, education and protection. The College houses the ILO library for the southern Caribbean Region and maintains its Memorandum of Understanding with the Organization.

The Stakeholder Analysis at **Appendix 3** gives further details of the key issues and interests for these stakeholders in relation to CCLCS.

Going forward, the relationships become even more important. Practicing ‘cooperativism’, the College’s strategy is founded on collaboration and high-quality partnerships; drawing on the collective strengths of the community of stakeholders to secure the business. The Implementation Framework at Section 4 indicates the partnerships for strategic implementation. In addition, the framework names specific action to be taken to nurture these and other stakeholder relationships.

Possible Immediate Business Opportunities
(*emerging from the Situational Analysis/SWOT Analysis*)

Emerging from the Situational and SWOT analyses conducted to support the development of the College’s Strategic Plan 2017 – 2022, were several recommendations to address the immediate challenges/urgent needs to i) generate new revenue; ii)

increase ‘student’ intake; and iii) increase and prove the relevance of the College’s products and services. Table 2 which follows, captures from the discussions with stakeholders as well as the desk research, a range of potential products the College may offer in response to the demands created/being created by social, political and economic drivers impacting the national environment. These are summarized at column 1 of the table, with the College’s possible business response at column 2.

Pursuit of these recommended options may be the basis for developing an immediate/short term business plan for the College aimed at initiating the turnaround process. Moreover, these initiatives are enabling of/linked with other high priority initiatives for the College including:

- a) Revision of the CCLCS Act
- b) Review of the Curriculum
- c) Upgrade of the ICT infrastructure
- d) Resolution of existing HR concerns
- e) Strengthening of the Alumni

Table 2: Immediate Business Opportunities for CCLCS

Environmental Opportunities/ Threats	CCLCS' Business Response	Target Audience	CCLCS Readiness (Strengths/ Weaknesses)	Projected Outcome
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increasing unemployment as a result of the closure of public agencies/ departments ■ Ministry of Labour's strategies to support retrenched workers, SME development ■ National plan for social mitigation – services emanating from the Government's mitigation strategy ■ Need for State Agencies to prove value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Product 1 – Introduction to the Benefits of Cooperatives (e.g. evening webinar/seminar) b. Product 2 – Undergraduate and graduate cooperatives management studies (enhanced promotion/sales) c. Product 3 - Surviving Retrenchment/Job Loss Public Lecture Series d. Product 4 - 10 Saturdays 'Rebooted'³ e. Product 5 – Professional 'Retooling' short course (10 Saturdays, evenings) f. Product 6 – Customized 'retooling' based on Government's targeted sectors for economic diversification g. Product 7 – World of Work Lecture Series⁴: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Understanding the modern Work-Cycle – Principles and Practices of Retooling – Cooperative entrepreneurship as a solution for Local Government Reform 	<p><u>Client</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Staff of Ministries ⊙ NGO, CBO, FBO community agents ⊙ Union members ⊙ Cooperatives (local, regional) ⊙ HR manager and Officers ⊙ Retrenched workers ⊙ General public ⊙ Alumni <p><u>Partners</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Ministry of Labour ⊙ Ministry of Local Government ⊙ ILO ⊙ Unions ⊙ Alumni 	<p><u>Strengths</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Relationship with Unions, ILO and Ministry of Labour ✓ Expertise of Board, Faculty ✓ Unique market positioning ✓ Existing materials ✓ Relationship with international institutions ✓ Student-led research enabled through coursework ✓ Facilities for hosting seminars etc. ✓ Campus Locations <p><u>Weaknesses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Limited \$ for marketing/promotion ✗ Limited capacity to pursue international resources ✗ Limited capacity to provide online solutions ✗ Limited capacity to incentivize faculty to undertake research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in student intake for Cooperative Courses • Increase networking for CCLCS' staff and graduates • Development of new markets • Increased relevancy of the College's products and services • Increased income earning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ High costs paid out on matters in the Industrial Court ■ Improper HR practices in organizations ■ Increasing unemployment/IR matters as a result of the closure of public agencies/ departments ■ Poor IR climate nationally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Product 1 – Labour Relations for Executive and Leaders (short courses, Saturdays, online) b. Product 2 – Supervision (short courses) c. Product 3 – Undergraduate and graduate studies in HRM (IR specialization) (enhanced promotion/ sales of existing or revised programme) d. Product 4 –Lecture Series on Industrial Relations Practice in T&T (day/evening) e. Product 5 – Research/Papers on IR practices by lecturers or students⁵ 	<p><u>Clients</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ ECA ⊙ Chambers of Commerce ⊙ Private Sector ⊙ Public Sector Agencies ⊙ HR professionals ⊙ Supervisors, managers ⊙ Alumni <p><u>Partners</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Ministry of Labour ⊙ ILO ⊙ Unions ⊙ Alumni ⊙ International donor agencies 	<p><u>Strengths</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Relationship with Unions, ILO and Ministry of Labour ✓ Expertise of Board, Faculty ✓ Unique market positioning ✓ Existing materials ✓ Alumni <p><u>Weaknesses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Limited \$ for marketing/promotion ✗ Limited capacity to pursue international resources ✗ Limited capacity to provide online solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase student intake in Labour Relations Programme • Increase networking for CCLCS' staff and graduates • Development of new markets • Increased income earning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Limited research on labour issues, cooperative issues ■ International labour conventions and agreements ■ Highly dynamic labour environment (the future of work, jobs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Product 1 – Labour/labour market research for T & T and Caribbean Region b. Product 2 – Research on cooperatives in T & T and the Caribbean Region c. Product 3 – Academic Papers, Participation in Regional and International conferences d. Product 4 – Lecture Series (based on research) e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – In the future of jobs is the era of permanent employment over? – Addressing the new labour agenda in modern employment practices: e.g. telecommuting – Key skills for Labour leadership in the 21st Century 	<p><u>Clients</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Labour Leaders ⊙ HR professionals ⊙ Employers ⊙ Chambers of Commerce ⊙ Cooperative members ⊙ Academia <p><u>Partners</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊙ Faculty ⊙ Ministry of Labour ⊙ ILO ⊙ Unions 	<p><u>Strengths</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Relationship with Unions, ILO and Ministry of Labour ✓ Relationship with international institutions ✓ Expertise of Faculty ✓ Student-led research enabled through coursework ✓ Facilities for hosting seminars etc. <p><u>Weaknesses</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Limited capacity to incentivize faculty to undertake research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved public image of college • Increased relevancy of the College's products and services • Increased income earning

Conclusion

The paper has shown that the economic survival of Cipriani College of Labour and Cooperative Studies depends on an effective SWOT analysis as outlined in the draft Strategic Plan.. The accomplishment of the set objectives is of paramount importance to the college.

The SWOT analysis has identified some of the ways in which CCLCS can create a Business Model to respond to environmental demands in terms of income generation. This is generally an attempt by CCLCS to shift the locus of its resources dependence by engaging non-traditional sources of income. The new income earning regime entails CCLCS to devise both adoptive and altering strategies for income generation.

It is therefore reasonable to conclude that as a result of survival imperative, CCLCS, can no more treat its financial challenges as the responsibility of the government but rather as its own affairs. For this to occur Cipriani College of Labour and Cooperative Studies must adhere to the following:

- All stakeholders must develop a positive attitude towards income generation. Teaching and learning themes should be translated into market commodities and services in order to increase the relevance of the college's study programmes.
- Faculty should be encouraged, to relate their research and teaching into tangibles, which should be translated into transferables goods and service.
- Entrepreneurial culture with subsequent entrepreneurial undertakings should be made a permanent feature of the college.
- Very important, is the need for CCLCS to maintain accurate and complete sets of financial statements for informed decision making. Furthermore, to improve financial performance of CCLCS, the management organs of Higher Education institutions in Trinidad and Tobago should take radical steps to establish investment companies. These investment companies should be autonomous and independent and should operate in a private enterprise environment. They should be manned by efficient and well-trained individuals, who are also business oriented. Finally, it might be a bit ambitious at this time but the college may include corporate bonds issuances, private equity and most of all a profit-driven financial philosophy.

Notes

1. The externally-focused TOWS Matrix, helps planners think about the options that they could pursue strategically by matching external opportunities and threats with your internal strengths and weaknesses www.mindtools.com
2. Both the Situational analysis and SWOT analysis were working documents for the Strategic Planning Workshop. These documents were shared with participants in advance of the Workshop for their preparation and referred throughout.
3. Upgraded to respond to the public demand - what areas are persons interested in?
4. Potential for a radio series here.
5. Possible collaboration with Unions and/or ILO

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