Aid for Trade in Asia and the Pacific

Promoting Connectivity for Inclusive Development

Some thoughts.....

- Ram Bajekal
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Source: Prof Ross Guest, Griffith University, Australia
Poised to reap Demographic Dividend

Median age (yrs) of total population, 2010

Source: Prof Ross Guest, Griffith University, Australia
...the bottom line

Fiji and Pacific Island countries need not fear the ageing population facing advanced economies.

The PICs can look forward to demographic dividends that will boost growth and living standards for the next few decades.

Rising support ratios will boost GDP per capita and living standards by several percent over the next few decades.

Source: Prof Ross Guest, Griffith University, Australia. Presentation at the Pacific Conference on Finance and Investment, May 8-10, FNU Nasinu Campus
Aid for Trade – some thoughts…..(1)

• This only relates to the Pacific and particularly Fiji
• Looks more at future than past
• Focus on core strengths
  • Tourism (demonstrated)
  • Agri (potential)
  • People Talent (not commercialised)
  • MSMEs
  • Cooperation/collaboration
• Shipping
Aid for Trade – some thoughts on Tourism

• Tourism vulnerability; need for Risk Mitigation through expansion/diversification
  • Geography (Vanua Levu, other islands)
  • Type of Tourism (sports, health, adventure, eco, culture & history, ........)
  • Socio-Economic Categories
  • Diversifying modes (air, sea)
  • Diversifying source (e.g., China, India)
Spending by Chinese Tourists in Australia
Aid for Trade – some thoughts on Agriculture

• Post-harvest management (study food wastage)
  • Cold Chain
  • Food Tech Park

• Be careful where you facilitate. Don't lead producers to cutthroat retailers. Else, enhance bargaining power

• Be wary of certifications

• Use of Technology for:
  • Disintermediation / direct marketing
  • For empowerment with market info and extension services (e.g., linkage with Agri Unis for trouble-shooting, knowledge dissemination)

• Import substitution / Reduction of import dependence

• Pathways / Market access
Aid for Trade – some thoughts on People Talent

• Developing / channeling tradespeople thro quality education institutions (not just white-collar programs)
• BPO Services
• Commercialising Sports
  • Academies (Coaches, Players)
  • Sports Tourism
• Intra PIC mobility
Employment of Pacific Islanders in Papua New Guinea

- FSM: 1
- Tuvalu: 2
- Vanuatu: 5
- Samoa: 5
- Kiribati: 8
- Tonga: 24
- Solomon Islands: 53
- Fiji: 413
Employment of Expatriates in Papua New Guinea

- Philippines: 9,000
- Australia: 6,000
- China: 8,000
- United Kingdom: 1,000
- Indonesia: 2,000
- Malaysia: 4,000
- USA: 1,000
- India: 1,000
- New Zealand: 1,000
- Bangladesh: 500
- Fiji: 500
- Burma (Myanmar): 500
- Canada: 500
- Sri Lanka: 500
- Republic of Korea: 500
- Other: 2,000
Aid for Trade – some thoughts on MSMEs

• Focus on MSMEs
• Capacity Building:
  • Business counselling
• Producer centric vs Market centric
• Facilitate intra-regional trade amongst PICs
• Follow-thro to success (nurse an infant...)
• How much is enough?
• How do we ensure that it is does not become heroin?
• What is the trend?
Aid for Trade – some thoughts on Other Items

• Cooperatives

• Logistics
  • Shipping
  • Land Transport
  • Peripheral Waterways

• Where Regulated markets, Research on what exactly regulation is doing (innovation)

• Use of IT for delivery of Health Services
Vinaka vakalevu