The challenge of creating an integrated approach to green growth

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Integrated Approach to Green Growth

• “Involving local institutions in the process of defining and implementing a green growth agenda has proven to be crucial in ensuring a more effective and smooth local transition to the green economy.” (Enabling Local Green Growth, OECD/LEED Report 2012)

• Discuss seven critical steps

• Use examples from Michigan’s local green initiatives, primarily the Detroit Area Green Sector Skills Alliance
Green Jobs Partnership

- Detroit Area Green Sector Skills Alliance (DAGSSA) is a designated Michigan Skills Alliance, created to form **long-term partnerships between employers and service providers and engage community-organizing efforts**.
- The Detroit Regional Workforce Fund (DRWF) was selected by the Workforce Development Agency – State of Michigan to create this needed alliance.
- The role of the DAGSSA is to focus on **meeting employer needs and creating job opportunities and career pathways for workers** in areas such as energy retrofitting, deconstruction and turning brownfields to greenfields.
1. Recognize and articulate the need for the region to develop a green economy


- Detroit Area Green Sectors Skills Alliance: “the opportunity to reclaim their land and manufacturing legacies, and once again become a hub for the industry of the future while creating healthier and more sustainable communities.”
2. Involve all parties in defining and setting objectives toward a green regional economy

- SER Metro-Detroit (community-based organization providing workforce development services; lead agency)
- Wayne County Community College District (education and training coordinator)
- Detroiter Working for Environmental Justice,
- IBEW
- Detroit Electrical Joint Apprenticeship Training Center
- National Electrical Contractors Association
- Laborers’ International Union of North America
- Michigan Laborers Training and Apprenticeship Institute
- Detroit Workforce Development Department
- South Eastern Michigan Community Alliance
- Funds from several foundations, state and local government agencies.
3. Come up with a workable definition of a regional green economy and green jobs

- Definition needs to meet the needs of all engaged
  - Economic development agencies need to see this as advancing the regional economy, not simply rearranging (or redefining) the deck chairs, but identifying emerging sectors
  - Workforce development agencies need to know they are training workers for jobs in current demand and skills that lead to career advancement
  - Educational institutions need to know what skills are needed by emerging green sector businesses to design appropriate courses
  - Green sector businesses need to see themselves as part of the sector and not just tag along because they do something similar to a green economy business

- DAGSSA defines a green economy as a sustainable economy – or money-saving, health-promoting and natural resource conserving technologies
  - Energy audits, deconstruction, regional food systems, advanced battery manufacturing
4. Coordination and Alignment

- **Coordinating the engagement of businesses** involved in the emerging industries of the green economy is critical to ensure that their talent needs are being met.
- **Aligning resources** across workforce development agencies, economic development agencies, and educational institutions.
- **Coalitions of labor, environmental, business, faith and community groups** are working to promote inclusive economic development in Detroit.
- **DAGSSA partners with anchor institutions in neighborhoods** to discover what supplies can be the basis for developing local, community-member owned and operated businesses.
5. Strong awareness of challenges and opportunities of the local green economy

• Challenges
  – *Green markets are in their infancy* and need government stimulation and support to create a viable marketplace that is self-perpetuating (Detroit Regional Workforce Fund).
  – *Need local leadership to create credibility*. Effective organizing and outreach to local communities can help to accelerate the viability of a new sustainability-driven practice. “ (Detroit Regional Workforce Fund)

• Opportunities
  – “*With the support of innovative local partnerships, they can create economic opportunities and career paths* for local residents of diverse backgrounds, and support a healthy environment that provides quality food, water and air and creates desirable places to live, work and do business.” (Detroit Regional Workforce Fund)
  – “If successful, state and local stakeholders can *create a more resilient community, a more inclusive regional economy, and a healthier natural environment*. It is a winning proposition.” (Detroit Regional Workforce Fund)
6. Create or Align Needed Capacities

- State of Michigan Workforce Development Agency
- Detroit Workforce Development Department
- Detroit Economic Growth Corporation
- Wayne County Economic Development Growth Engine
- Funding from six large foundations
- Funding from the Michigan and Federal Governments
- Local community organizations
7. Monitoring progress of the green economy and green jobs

• Through DAGSSA, community stakeholders are establishing a common set of metrics, benchmarks and goals

• Creating dashboards to track these metrics to ensure that market-building and workforce development efforts are successful

• The state labor market information agency has developed definitions of green jobs and provides monthly statistics
  – Green job growth, the current and projected skill requirements of green sector employers, the wage and benefits ranges, and the education and training requirements

• Establish protocols for communications and metrics around energy efficiency program goals and results, along with metrics and standards for energy efficiency education and training programs in order to grow the energy efficiency industry and ensure a skilled labor pool in the region
Challenges

• “Green economy” not well defined—becomes a public relations effort and not a true identification of emerging or transforming sectors
• Markets too small and fragile—requires government support
• Workforce development out of sync with economic development—skills no jobs, or jobs no skills
• Lack of adequate funding
• Businesses not engaged—don’t understand why they are considered to be in the green sector
• Poor statistics and over-reaching expectations