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International Collaboration for Research, Comparative Analysis and Development of Best Practices in Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Centurion University of Technology and Management (CUTM) continues to engage with international universities, government representatives, industry partners, and global experts to review comparative approaches and promote best practices for advancing the(SDGs. In 2025 six key collaborations demonstrate these efforts. A major move in 2025 was to engage with the International Green Gown Awards supported by the Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges (EAUC) and supported by United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), International Association of Universities (IAU), Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI). **This global platform was developed to review and showcase international best practice for addressing the SDGs.** Together, these collaborations supported international knowledge exchange, comparative learning, capacity building, and the adaptation of practices relevant to the SDGs.

Table 1 summarises the six collaborations and their documented outcomes.

Partner (country)	Agreement or framework	Best practice reviewed or developed	Measurable 2025 outcomes	SDGs
Western Sydney University (Australia)	MoU, 1 July 2024, for evidence-based collaboration; active in 2025	Benchmarking of CUTM's SDG practice against the world's highest-ranked university in the THE Impact Rankings	All 17 SDGs reviewed; 4 priority areas identified; written strategy with recommendations, 11 November 2025	All 17
Indo-German Energy Programme (GIZ with India's Ministry of New and Renewable Energy)	TISA training initiative with the Skill Council for Green Jobs, 2025	Transfer of international agrivoltaic (solar-plus-farming) practice to Odisha	26 participants (12 from industry); 12 technical sessions; 22–24 February 2025	2, 7, 13, 17
International Green Gown Awards (EAUC with UNEP and IAU)	International awards and peer-review programme, 2025 cycle	Comparison of 2 CUTM sustainability programmes with university practice worldwide	2 programmes named international finalists; 1 Highly Commended award, 7 October 2025	4, 8, 13, 15, 17

Partner (country)	Agreement or framework	Best practice reviewed or developed	Measurable 2025 outcomes	SDGs
AIM-Q 2025 international conference partners (7 countries outside India)	International programme committee and speaker network, 2025	Comparative research on artificial intelligence and sustainable innovation	150+ abstracts; 84 paper presenters; 6 thematic tracks; 22 December 2025	8, 9, 12, 13, 17
Government of Zimbabwe (Presidential and National Scholarships Department)	Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), 11 November 2024; active in 2025	Adaptation of CUTM's skill-integrated training model for transfer to Zimbabwean vocational institutions	71 government officers in training in 3 sectors (March 2025); programme completed 24 July 2025	4, 7, 8, 9, 17
Rastriya Banijya Bank and the Banking, Finance and Insurance Institute of Nepal (Nepal)	MoU, 2 February 2024 (five years); active in 2025	Management development for Nepalese bank officers, with exposure to Indian community-enterprise practice	27 RBB officers trained, 16–20 June 2025 (20 in 2024); 6 executive programmes for 4 Nepalese banks in 2025	1, 8, 10, 17

How the Collaborations Meet Indicator 17.2.4

Table 2: Alignment of each collaboration with the three elements of the indicator

Collaboration	International collaboration and research	Comparative approaches reviewed	International best practice developed
Western Sydney University	MoU-based partnership with the world's highest-ranked university in the THE Impact Rankings	CUTM's practice compared across all 17 SDGs and indicator by indicator	Written strategy with best-practice recommendations, 11 November 2025
Indo-German Energy Programme (GIZ)	Training partnership within an Indo-German government programme	International agrivoltaic practice reviewed against Odisha's farming conditions	Odisha's first agrivoltaic training; 26 participants, 12 from industry
International Green Gown Awards	International review by EAUC, UNEP and the International Association of Universities	2 CUTM programmes compared with university practice worldwide	Highly Commended award; programmes published as international good practice
AIM-Q 2025	International programme committee from 7 countries	Approaches to AI and sustainable innovation compared across 6 tracks	150+ abstracts and 84 papers; selected papers under consideration for publication

Collaboration	International collaboration and research	Comparative approaches reviewed	International best practice developed
Government of Zimbabwe	Government-to-university South–South partnership	CUTM's training model matched to Zimbabwe's industrial priorities in 3 sectors	71 officers prepared as master trainers to replicate the model in Zimbabwe
Rastriya Banijya Bank and BFIN, Nepal	Bank and institute partnership under a five-year MoU	Indian banking and community-enterprise practice examined by Nepalese bankers	6 executive programmes for 4 banks; 27 RBB officers trained in June 2025

1. Western Sydney University (Australia): Benchmarking CUTM's SDG Practice against the World's Highest-Ranked University

Partner and agreement

Western Sydney University (WSU) was ranked first in the world in the THE Impact Rankings 2025, for the fourth consecutive year. CUTM and WSU signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 1 July 2024 to strengthen communication and identify joint project opportunities through evidence-based collaboration.

Comparative review and best practice developed in 2025

WSU delivered a comparative review of CUTM's performance across all 17 SDGs. It identified CUTM's strengths and priority areas where practice was not yet matched by evidence: SDGs 1,2, 3,7 13,14,15 and education for the SDGs under SDG 17.

The review gave CUTM a structured comparison of its SDG practice with that of the world's highest-ranked university in the THE Impact Rankings, together with an agreed strategy for strengthening its SDG work across its campuses.

Indo-German Energy Programme: Bringing International Agrivoltaic Practice to Odisha

Partners

CUTM's School of Engineering and Technology organised Odisha's first training workshop on agri-photovoltaic (agrivoltaic) technology, which combines solar power generation with crop production on the same land. The workshop was delivered with the Skill Council for Green Jobs under the Trainings in New and Innovative Solar Applications (TISA) initiative of the Indo-German Energy Programme, implemented by the German development agency GIZ with India's Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, and with EY India.

Comparative review and best practice developed in 2025

- **22 to 24 February 2025:** 26 participants, including 12 from industry, attended 12 technical sessions on agrivoltaic system design, installation, operation and maintenance, regulatory frameworks, procurement, business models and policy.
- **Application to local conditions:** Participants visited the 40 kW agrivoltaic plant at Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology to review how the technology performs under Odisha's farming conditions.



Figure 3: Participants and brochure of the Three-Day Workshop on Agri-Photovoltaic Technology under the Indo-German Energy Programme, 22–24 February 2025

International Green Gown Awards: International Review of CUTM's Sustainability Practice

Framework

The International Green Gown Awards are run by the EAUC in partnership with the UN Environment Programme and the International Association of Universities. Entries from universities around the world are assessed by international judges, and the finalists' projects are published as examples of good practice for the global higher-education sector.

Comparative review in 2025

Two CUTM programmes were named international finalists: Pollinators' Paradise, a biodiversity research park (Nature Positive category), and CUTM's Career-Ready Skill Programmes (Next Generation Learning and Skills category). Pollinator Paradise received a **Highly Commended International Green Gown Award**. CUTM was the only university from India among the ten international finalists.

Outcome

The awards benchmarked two CUTM programmes against university practice worldwide. Both are now published by the EAUC as international examples of good practice, and the judges' feedback identified specific measures for strengthening the evidence behind CUTM's skills programmes.



Figure 4: CUTM's Highly Commended certificate, International Green Gown Awards 2025 (Nature Positive), with the Pollinator Paradise team

AIM-Q 2025: International Comparative Research on Artificial Intelligence and Sustainable Innovation

Framework

CUTM's School of Management organised the International Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Sustainable Innovation: Next Gen Management in the Quantum Era (AIM-Q 2025) as a virtual conference on 22 December 2025. Its international programme committee included members from the University of Canberra (Australia), Pennsylvania State University and the Mayo Clinic (United States), Monash University Malaysia, Poznań University (Poland), Daffodil International University (Bangladesh), and industry experts based in France and Germany.

Comparative review in 2025

- **Thematic tracks:** Papers in six thematic tracks compared approaches to sustainable innovation and regenerative business models, artificial intelligence for food security and climate-responsive innovation, circular-economy practice, and ethical governance of artificial intelligence in the public sector.
- **Research submitted:** More than 150 abstracts were received from researchers and practitioners in Germany, France, Malaysia, the United States and Australia, as well as from ten Indian states, and 84 papers were presented.
- **Publication:** Selected peer-reviewed papers are under consideration for an edited book to be published by Taylor & Francis.



Figure 5: Brochure of the AIM-Q 2025 international conference, 22 December 2025

Government of Zimbabwe: Adapting CUTM's Skills-Training Model for Replication in Zimbabwe

Partner and agreement

CUTM signed an MoU with the Republic of Zimbabwe, represented by the Presidential and National Scholarships Department in the Office of the President and Cabinet, on 11 November 2024. Under this South–South partnership, CUTM trains mid-career Zimbabwean government officers in its skill-integrated education model so that they can establish and lead similar training in Zimbabwe.

Comparative review and best practice developed in 2025

CUTM reviewed its skill-integrated training model against Zimbabwe's industrial priorities and matched it to three sectors, so that the officers could adapt the model for Zimbabwean vocational institutions.

- **Training:** From January to July 2025, 71 officers trained at CUTM under Zimbabwe's Presidential Scholarship Programme in electric vehicle assembly, transformer design and manufacture, and apparel production. Each course combined workshop practice with production planning, quality control, low-waste manufacturing and enterprise planning for small and medium-sized enterprises.
- **Launch and completion:** The programme was launched on 7 March 2025 with a Zimbabwean government delegation and the Ambassador of India to Zimbabwe. The officers graduated on 24 July 2025.
- **Replication:** The officers are now prepared as master trainers to set up the same model in Zimbabwean vocational institutions.

Contribution to the SDGs

The programme builds Zimbabwe's capacity to deliver technical and vocational skills for employment and enterprise (SDG 4, Target 4.4), through scholarships for officers from a developing country (Target 4.b). Training in electric vehicle assembly and transformer manufacture supports clean transport and reliable electricity supply (SDG 7). By preparing trainers for small and medium-sized manufacturing enterprises, it supports productive employment (SDG 8) and inclusive industrialisation (SDG 9). As a South–South partnership that builds national capacity in a developing country, it contributes directly to SDG 17 (Target 17.9).



Figure 1: Zimbabwean government officers training in apparel production, electric vehicle assembly and transformer manufacture at CUTM, Jatni campus, 10 July 2025

Rastriya Banijya Bank and the Banking, Finance and Insurance Institute of Nepal: Sharing Indian Banking and Community-Enterprise Practice with Nepal

Partner and agreement

Rastriya Banijya Bank Limited (RBBL) is a government-owned commercial bank that serves all 77 districts and 7 provinces of Nepal. CUTM and RBBL signed a five-year MoU effective from 2 February 2024 covering training, education, research and consultancy. The MoU sets out a five-day international programme model at CUTM, combining 20 hours of exposure visits with 20 hours of course learning, in areas that include financial literacy and banking regulation, digital banking, corporate governance and social responsibility, and sustainable finance and rural-sector development. These hours count towards CUTM's 48-hour professional certification courses, which are delivered in Nepal with the Banking, Finance and Insurance Institute of Nepal.

Comparative review and best practice developed in 2025

Nepalese bank officers examined Indian banking and community-enterprise practice at first hand, for application to banking and rural-sector development in Nepal.

- **Programme:** From 16 to 20 June 2025, 27 RBBL officers completed a five-day Management Development Programme at CUTM. Sessions on banking and management were combined with visits to CUTM's Community Diagnostics Centre, the JC Kumarappa Rural Technology Park, the Saora Tribal Museum, and smart-agriculture and renewable-energy installations, showing Indian models of community service delivery and rural enterprise.
- **Growth:** The 2025 group followed a first group of 20 officers in September 2024, an increase of 35 per cent.
- **Wider programme:** With the Banking, Finance and Insurance Institute of Nepal, CUTM delivered six executive programmes for four Nepalese banks: Rastriya Banijya Bank, Nepal Investment Mega Bank, Prabhu Bank and Machhapuchchhre Bank. Between 86 and 92 per cent of participants rated the courses Excellent or Very Good.

Contribution to the SDGs

The partnership strengthens the capacity of Nepal's banking sector to widen access to financial services. RBBL is government-owned and serves all 77 districts of Nepal, including rural areas with limited banking. Training its officers in financial literacy, sustainable finance and rural-sector lending supports access to financial services for poor and vulnerable people (SDG 1, Target 1.4) and the capacity of domestic financial institutions to expand banking for all (SDG 8, Target 8.10). Exposure to CUTM's community and tribal enterprises gives bankers practical models for lending to underserved rural and tribal communities, supporting their economic inclusion (SDG 10, Target 10.2). As a cross-border partnership that builds institutional capacity in a least developed country, it contributes to SDG 17 (Target 17.9).



Figure 2: Officers of Rastriya Banijya Bank, Nepal, at CUTM and its Community Diagnostics Centre on the first day of the Management Development Programme, 16 June 2025

Summary

In 2025, CUTM reviewed comparative approaches and developed international best practice on the SDGs through six collaborations. Western Sydney University reviewed CUTM's practice across all 17 SDGs and issued a written best-practice strategy on 11 November 2025. CUTM adapted its skills-training model for 71 Zimbabwean government officers in three industrial sectors, preparing them to replicate it in Zimbabwe; the programme concluded on 24 July 2025. CUTM also delivered six executive programmes for four Nepalese banks, including training for 27 officers of Rastriya Banijya Bank from 16 to 20 June 2025, the second annual group under that

partnership. Under the Indo-German Energy Programme, CUTM trained 26 participants in agrivoltaic practice from 22 to 24 February 2025. In the International Green Gown Awards, two CUTM programmes were assessed against university practice worldwide, and Pollinator Paradise was Highly Commended on 7 October 2025. Through AIM-Q 2025, CUTM and its international partners compared approaches to artificial intelligence and sustainable innovation, with more than 150 abstracts from India and five other countries and 84 papers presented.