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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA
Office for the Caribbean

CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION COMMITTEE

AD HOC WORKING GROUP FOR MANPOWER PLANNING



REPORT OF THE FIRST MEETING OF
THE AD HOC WORKING GROUP IN
MANPOWER PLANNING

14-15 September 1981
St. George's, Grenada

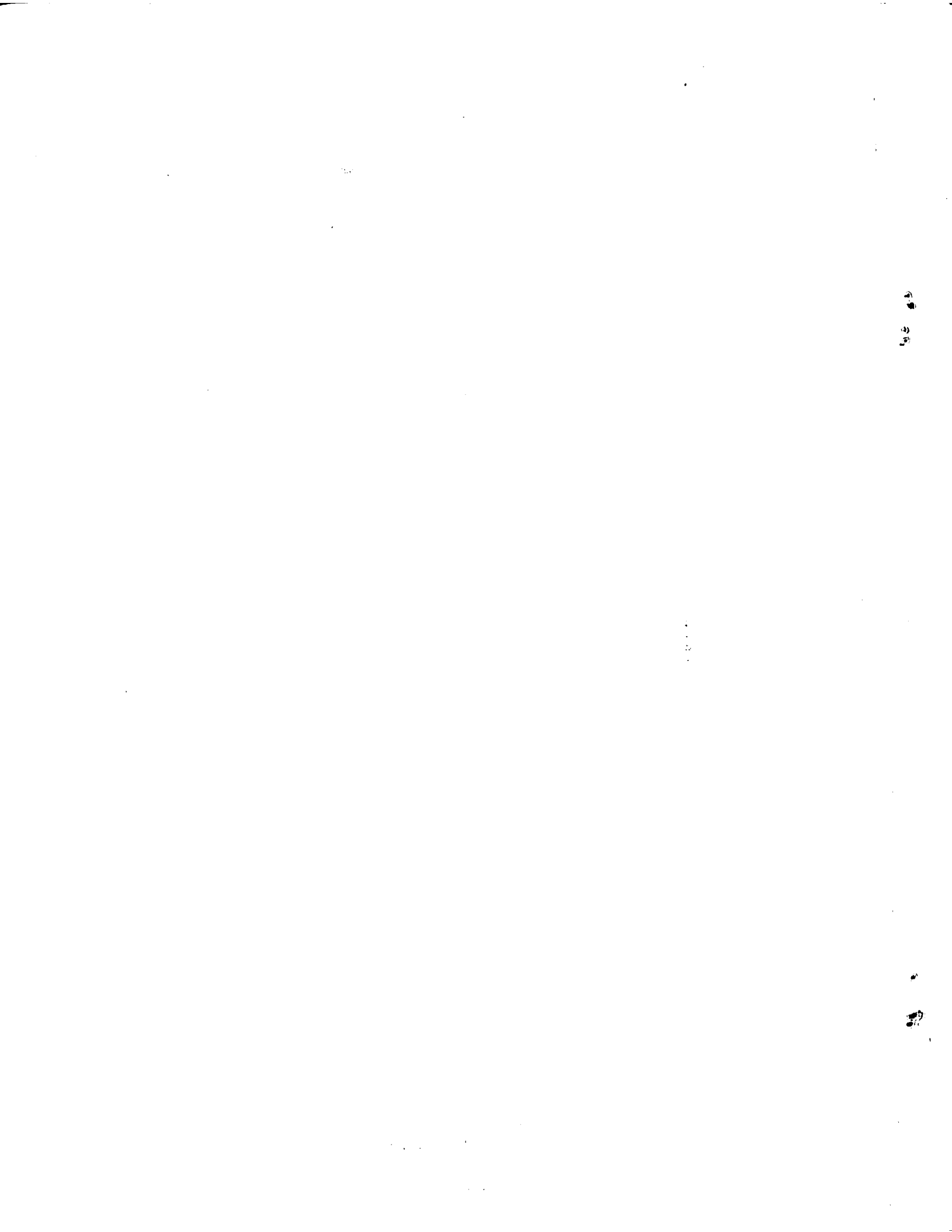


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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA Office for the Caribbean



REPORT OF THE FIRST MEETING OF
THE AD HOC WORKING GROUP IN MANPOWER PLANNING

1. The First Meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group in Manpower Planning was held in St. George's, Grenada from 14-15 September 1981, in accordance with the mandate provided by the Second Meeting of Planning Officials and endorsed by the Fifth Ministerial Meeting of the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee (CDCC) held in Kingston, Jamaica from 4-10 June 1980.

2. Representatives of the following CDCC member states participated:^{1/} Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica and Suriname. The following regional institutions were represented: The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat and the East Caribbean Common Market (ECCM). A consultant, Dr. Ralph Henry, specialist in the field of manpower planning at the University of the West Indies also attended the meeting and presented the conference document entitled "The Basic Situation in Manpower Planning in Caribbean Countries. His participation was financed by the ILO Office for the Caribbean.

3. The Meeting was opened by Mr. Anthony Boatswain on behalf of the Minister of Planning of Grenada.

4. A representative of the CDCC Secretariat thanked the Government of Grenada for its offer of St. George's as the site for the meeting and noted the consistent interest of that Government in the activities of the planning programme. Gratitude was also expressed to the ILO for its assistance in the implementation of the CDCC mandates.

5. Within the framework of the overall Work Programme in Planning as approved by the Fifth Session of CDCC the task of the Manpower Planning Working Group for its initial session, was outlined by the Secretariat as follows:

- (a) Discussion and evaluation of the report of Dr. Ralph Henry entitled "The Basic Situation in Manpower Planning in Caribbean Countries".^{2/}

^{1/} The list of participants is at Annex I.

^{2/} A list of the documents presented to the meeting is at Annex II.

- (b) Definition of the future Work Programme in Manpower Planning and the assigning of priorities for action;
- (c) Suggesting modalities for the operation of the Working Group;
- (d) Fixing a timetable for its activities.

6. Dr. Henry, in the presentation of his paper, reported that manpower planning must observe the economic and social system in the process of development. Given the characteristics of the Caribbean type economies (smallness, limited resource base, mono-cultural dependence) and in spite of differences of ideology, exports will continue to be the major engine of economic expansion.

7. In this context, he noted that manpower planning must reflect the flexibility and resilience required of an economy that has to be constantly seeking new and dynamic markets for the limited range of export goods it produces. Manpower planning must anticipate and be sensitive to the transfer of technology; it must aim at the constant up-grading and re-training of the entire labour force, in response to the changing economic environment. Having regard to all its implications and ramifications, manpower planning is best considered a multi-disciplinary exercise.

8. He suggested that CDCC countries are perhaps better advised to integrate the various approaches to manpower planning. The manpower requirements approach, which is very accommodating of models of comprehensive economic planning, has a major weakness in its tendency to ignore the importance of divergent wage rates in directing manpower flows and in the supply of effort.

9. Dr. Henry stated that CDCC countries, by and large, do already collect data that are useful to manpower planning even where no serious manpower planning is undertaken. The development of new data and modification in format of present data frames would aid manpower planning considerably. Here one includes national insurance data, tracer systems, job vacancy data, organized wage rates, work permit records and migration statistics; there is also need for co-ordinative action to eliminate duplication and to bring existing and potential users together with collectors of data.

10. After a discussion of the various models of economic development being pursued in the Caribbean, it was recognized that small size played a major role in constraining Caribbean economies to an open economy growth model, with its attendant vulnerability to external developments and the need to adopt a highly flexible and dynamic approach to the management of its human resources. This fact impinges on all the styles of economic development discussed in the Consultant's report.

11. While it was recognized that the openness of Caribbean economies required a highly sophisticated approach to the allocation of manpower resources, it was agreed that before reaching this stage, Caribbean people had to develop the physical and attitudinal infrastructure required for full participation in the international economy.

12. The Meeting acknowledged that openness also related to the movement of labour as well as to the other factors of production. Effective manpower planning in the Caribbean implied therefore carefully elaborated population policies which embrace the movement of skilled and unskilled workers both within and outside the region. The natural increase of the population as well as migration flows condition the allocation of local resources. The costs and benefits of migration flows needed to be carefully evaluated and could form the basis for future investigation both inside and outside the region by the Working Group.

13. The Meeting endorsed the proposals submitted by the Consultant relating to the more efficient use of existing data in the countries surveyed; primarily through greater co-ordination of the various agencies collecting manpower related data. In this aspect, as in other areas of manpower planning, advances realized by some countries could be transferred at little cost to other participating CDCC countries through a programme of TCDC activities. It was noted in this regard that the model of the Ad Hoc Working Group was in itself a TCDC exercise.

14. Stress was placed on the fact that the public service comprised a major portion of the labour force of Caribbean countries and, to differing degrees, played a major role as a buffer in absorbing structural unemployment. The phenomenon warranted further investigation as it related to the various styles of development followed in the Caribbean.

15. Participants provided their comments on those elements of the Consultant's report relating to the process of manpower planning in their respective countries and up-dated the corresponding section of the report. In these discussions mention was made by several delegates of the increasing participation of women and their changing occupational patterns in the labour force. Reference was made to programmes at the national and regional levels aimed at increasing women's participation in the process of development.

16. Discussions took place on the modifications in the day to day running of the communities, provoked by the introduction of deliberate re-allocation of human resources. It was seen that, particularly during the phase of implementation of programmes and projects aiming at up-grading the skills of actually employed persons, current social relations can be manipulated to assist in achieving given targets and objectives. For instance, in village communities, the aged have been instrumental in the release of primary female labour force for the period of time necessary for their training or re-training. Similarly, tradesmen have been in charge of classrooms for specific days, freeing primary school teachers for the same purpose.

17. The importance of tracer studies was underlined, but it was felt that in view of the resources available to the manpower planning units, the elaboration of these studies could not be granted priority. It was suggested that sectoral ministries carrying out training activities (education, agriculture, health etc.) should assume the responsibility of evaluating the efficacy of their sectoral plans in close collaboration with the manpower planning units. As far as the LDC's are concerned, it is recommended that steps be taken to up-grade their capabilities to elaborate appropriate manpower plans, before considering tracer studies.

18. Registration of wage agreements was seen during the discussions as an important source of data for manpower planning and should be treated in the

inventory of such sources. Discussions referred to the employment exchanges which should be examined with a view to revamping them and to increasing their ability to assist in the achievement of equality of opportunity, and in the implementation of manpower plans. This would also make them more reliable reservoirs of data for the planning process.

WORK PROGRAMME

19. Data

(a) The Working Group proposed that its first task would be to elaborate an inventory of all manpower related data, including the characteristics of the collecting institutions. An evaluation of the data would also be provided and proposals for change in the data to ensure its applicability to manpower planning would be made. The inventory would include a separate section on data relating to regional and extra-regional migration. It was agreed that the Secretariat would be provided with this information before the end of 1981 for circulation to the participating planning units.

(b) The Secretariat was asked, if requested by any LDC Government, to consult with the appropriate inter-governmental and international agencies in order to implement a similar project for an inventory of manpower data sources in that country. It was also suggested that the possibilities of harmonization of these data and of co-ordinating the producing institutions could be considered as an integral part of the project. Moreover, advice on the organization of a manpower planning unit should be provided for those countries who wished to establish one such unit, either through TCDC activities or by the provision of an appropriate consultant.

(c) It was proposed that work currently in progress by national and international institutions such as the ILO on a dictionary of job classifications (job analysis, profiles of occupation) should be made available to participating planning units. It was suggested that the

ILO expand its activities through the Caribbean in order to create a regional dictionary of occupations in view of widespread intra-regional migration.

20. Studies

The Working Group indicated that studies should be conducted by the appropriate institutions in the following subject areas:

- (a) Role of adult education and training in the up-dating and re-orientation of the skill of the labour force taking into account on-going technological changes;
- (b) Peasant agriculture and employment creation;
- (c) The economy of the urban informal sector and its ability to create employment;
- (d) Policies and programmes for manpower training in a changing technological environment;
- (e) Migration: intra- and extra-regional and its impact on the labour force;
- (f) Comparative wage structures and competitive industrialization;
- (g) Primary and secondary female participation, legal and social^{3/} barriers to wider participation of females in the labour force;
- (h) Contribution of export processing to qualitative and quantitative employment growth;
- (i) Labour market segmentation.

21. Elaboration of the Plan

The participating planning units agreed to provide information on manpower planning methodology currently being used to their counterparts for their consideration. The information would be available to those LDC countries wishing to engage in manpower planning. Alternatively, such countries may

^{3/} This matter was considered as being of high priority although it was recognised that similar work was being carried out elsewhere.

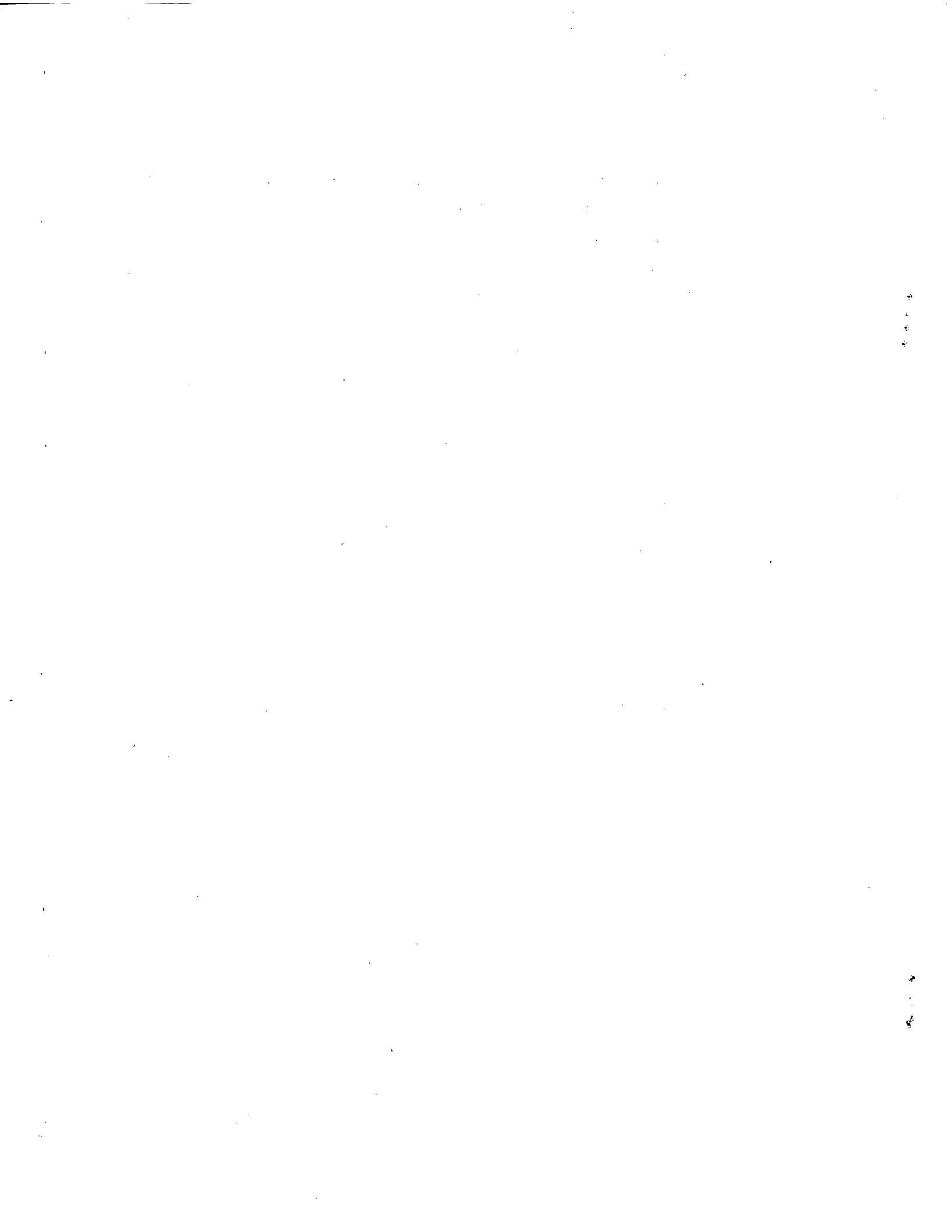
wish to consider the possibility of attachments of their personnel to planning bureaux with on-going manpower planning programmes. The exchange of information would also identify the need for further training for those countries having a longer tradition in this subject area. It was agreed that the information on methodologies would be sent to the Secretariat before the end of the year for circulation to participating units.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

22. The assistance of the ILO Office for the Caribbean was acknowledged with satisfaction by the Working Group which expressed the hope that it would continue to support the activities of the CDCC Work Programme in Manpower Planning.

SITE AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

23. The Working Group accepted with thanks the offer of the Suriname delegate to provide Suriname as the site of its next meeting and requested the Secretariat to hold it no later than the second quarter of 1982.



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LIST OF DOCUMENTS

<u>Document No.</u>	<u>Title</u>
CDCC/PWG:M/81/1	Provisional Agenda
CDCC/PWG:M/81/2	Background and Mandate of Ad Hoc Working Group for Manpower Planning
CDCC/PWG:M/81/3	Study entitled: "The Basic Situation in Manpower Planning in Carib- bean Countries" by Dr. Ralph Henry, Consultant
CDCC/PWG:M/81/4	Draft Work Programme for Ad Hoc Working Group for Manpower Planning

