

Latin American and Caribbean
Institute for Economic and
Social Planning

ILP

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y del Caribe de Planificación
Económica y Social

HIGH-LEVEL SEMINAR ON BASIC PLANNING FUNCTIONS (Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 5-6 October, 2000)

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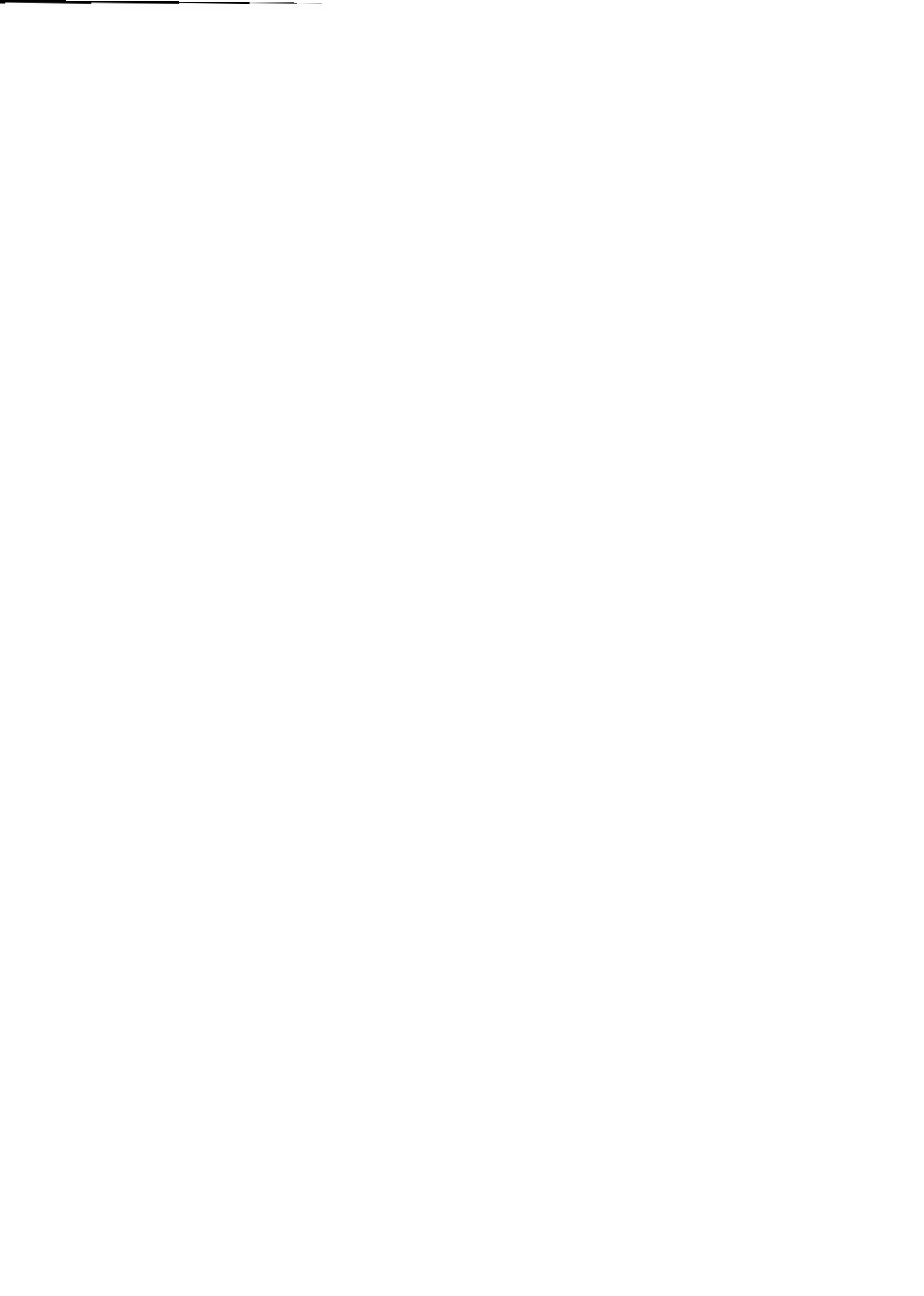
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The Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES) is a permanent body with its own identity within the system of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

It was established in the early 1960s to provide support to Governments of the region in the area of public policy planning and coordination through the provision of training, advisory services and research.

Currently, the Institute's activities are related basically to strategic State management and basic planning functions, which are developed and disseminated through training and publications.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The seminar was held on 5 and 6 October 2000 at Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago under the auspices of the Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES). It was held in collaboration with the Subregional Headquarters of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

Attendance

Representatives of the following Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) member countries attended the seminar: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, British Virgin Islands, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Netherlands Antilles, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago. The following special guests and consultants attended the seminar: Mr. Ivor Jackson, Mr. Hally Haynes, Mr. Eduardo Weisner, Dr. Javier Medina Vasquez, Mr. Leonardo Garnier and Prof. Andrew Downes. Ms. Maxine Harris represented the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). A list of participants appears in the Annex.

II. OPENING SESSION

Dr. Len Ishmael, Director of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, welcomed participants to the seminar. She observed that the main weakness in the nature of planning in member States was the lack of a development planning framework equipped with the mechanisms necessary for the effective coordination of the different planning functions at the national level. This was perpetuated by a basic assumption that medium-term planning (or development planning), related to economic issues, was the only planning undertaken in the islands. She noted that important aspects of planning essential to the socio-economic well-being of a nation were also undertaken in the areas of social policy formulation, physical planning and environmental management. However, attempts to coordinate economic and social planning were such that development tended to proceed in an ad hoc and somewhat uncoordinated manner. She therefore expressed the view that the meeting was an important forum at which to discuss models and strategies for the coordination of planning functions within the subregion. She expressed the view that the development of every country hinged on the planning process, at the core of which was the need to devise practical solutions and approaches to the issue of coordination. In many of the CDCC countries, coordination among the different forms of planning was entirely formal, and was hindered by, inter alia, a lack of resources, the absence of the perception of effective legal authority and committees ineffective in the coordination of the various ministries and departments of government. Member States were willing to search for approaches to development planning that would provide a better challenge to the problems of development that lay ahead. They were also willing to develop and implement a systematic and integrated approach to planning.

Mr. Edgar Ortega, Coordinator of ILPES and Liaison with the Office of the Executive Secretary of ECLAC, apologized for the absence of the Executive Secretary of ECLAC and Director of ILPES, Mr. Jose Antonio Ocampo, which was due to unforeseen circumstances. He informed the meeting that after the High-Level Seminar on Basic Planning Functions held in Santiago, Chile, in October 1999, the Director of ILPES had emphasized the importance of organizing a similar seminar for the Caribbean countries. Such an event would serve to promote ECLAC/ILPES activities in the subregion at the start of the new millennium. The seminar was therefore an excellent forum to discuss and share national development experiences that would eventually set the stage for new and innovative strategies for solving crucial socio-economic problems.

Mr. Ortega observed that as a result of national experiences the following lessons had been learnt:

- Planning had to be inserted into the decision-making process in the Caribbean subregion.
- We were beyond the stage where planning was considered as a purely technocratic task, isolated from its political and social context and directly linked to the major objectives of a society at a given time.
- Planning could not be left out of the important task of resource allocation and, particularly, out of the investment process; and
- There was no kind of long-term planning which could co-exist with and be closely linked to the major short-term problems.

He noted the importance of other aspects of planning, such as:

- The learning process of planning bodies regarding their national problems;
- The in-service training of personnel of planning ministries and offices; and
- Their innovative work of introducing new topics and approaches to deal with the development problems faced by the Caribbean.

Mr. Ortegon warned that with this in mind, and in light of the challenges of globalization, integration, privatisation and decentralization, the meaning of planning needed to be clarified. ECLAC and ILPES, in close consultation with the member countries, had agreed that the following three major areas should be the focus of planning in Latin America and the Caribbean:

- That there is a new sense of anticipation, which should give planning a much more urgent and imperative character than before. The Caribbean must anticipate the future.
- Planning must play a fundamental role of serving as a critical conscience for countries about national problems.
- The challenge of construction of a modern state. To create a new type of state. To this end, evaluation of State performance was crucial.

Mr. Ortegon expected that the seminar would positively contribute to the theory and practice of planning in the Caribbean.

III. TOPIC 1: EVALUATION OF PLANS, PROGRAMMES, STRATEGIES AND PROJECTS

Two papers were submitted

Mr. Eduardo Weisner, ECLAC Consultant, presented a paper on "The Evaluation of Plans, Programs, Strategies and Projects" and sought to offer answers to the following three questions:

- 1) What explains the scant utilization of the evaluation of results to assess the effectiveness of public policies in many countries in the region?
- 2) What seem to be the main restrictions limiting the use of evaluations?
- 3) What would be the strategy to strengthen institutional and policy instruments in the evaluation of results?

The paper also examined: the restrictions affecting the application of evaluations; factors determining evaluation capacity development (ECD); the supply and demand for evaluation; the role and purpose of evaluation; the strategy for the enhancement of evaluation capacity development; and policy implications.

The following were identified as the roles and purposes for evaluation:

- Evaluation as a heuristic exercise, that is, as a source of performance information;
- Evaluation as an incentive to reward policy effectiveness;
- Evaluation of results and the results of evaluations;
- Evaluation as a link to resources, to learning about objectives, targets, monitoring, budgeting and performance measurement;
- To use a demand approach to guide the supply response.

Mr. Weisner recommended the adoption of the following policy implications:

- To examine the macro-institutional arrangement;
- To conduct strategic evaluation to, *inter alia*, "unmask" and "positively" understand political economy restrictions;
- Institutionalize evaluation methodologies and incentives into budget-line ministries;
- Develop the supply side of evaluations and, in so doing, support independent academic and research institutions;
- That the difficulties of measuring results of public bodies not be underestimated; and
- To focus on institutions and on implicit or informal rules between organizations.

Dr. Deryck R. Brown, Project Officer, Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), introduced his paper as a tool to promote and broaden an awareness of the potential role of policy/programme evaluation in improving public sector decision-making in the English-speaking Caribbean. He stated that the thrust of current reform efforts demanded the introduction of a system for monitoring and evaluating results, outcomes and impacts, but noted that the actual practice and usage of evaluation was severely lacking across the subregion. He observed that very little systemic evaluation took place outside of what was mandated under the terms of financing agreements with donor agencies. Evaluation was perceived, not as an opportunity for reflection and learning, or as an accountability mechanism, but rather as a way of exerting punitive control over an executing agency.

After providing a working definition of evaluation, with its aims and origins, Mr. Brown highlighted four main uses of the evaluation process:

- As a means of providing feedback on ongoing or past activities that could inform future planning and policy development;
- As a day-to-day management tool to keep the focus on objectives and to assess the appropriateness of the activities undertaken and identify ways of improving the effectiveness of delivery or implementation;
- As an accountability function in the context of good governance;
- As an heuristic learning device.

In the English-speaking Caribbean, governance and public sector reform were central to the process of development. Donors such as the World Bank and the CDB now called for governance as a critical development priority, one that would monitor and evaluate whether policies and programmes were achieving their intended outcomes. Mr. Brown stated that while experiences varied across the region, outside of this stipulation to donor lending, there was generally no established tradition of systematically evaluating development policies, programmes and projects in the English-speaking Caribbean. This was due to the following:

- "Line item budgeting" has historically been the dominant approach to budgeting in the subregion;
- The high cost of systematic evaluation has made it difficult to justify because the benefits are not immediately tangible;
- The Caribbean's inherited system of Cabinet government perpetuated highly centralized decision-making power;
- The small size of Caribbean populations meant that there was a shortage of skilled, trained personnel to cover the ever-widening spectrum of activities for which the public sector was responsible.

Nevertheless, there was a measure of systematic evaluation taking place in the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), Barbados, Belize, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago.

In conclusion, Mr. Brown stated that there was a continuing need to accumulate knowledge about policies and approaches to improving evaluation capacity as a significant step towards improving overall policy and programme performance in the public sector of the English-speaking Caribbean.

In the discussion of the two papers, the participants agreed that there was an urgent need to identify budget allocations that efficiently evaluated and created necessary accountability at the level of government. However, there was a measure of uncertainty with respect to the method of actually implementing the system, especially in terms of downsizing the public sector and of establishing an Evaluation Unit within the governmental structure.

An explanation was sought regarding globalization and its role in evaluation. While it was noted that civil society could demand effectiveness from governments and, ultimately, demand evaluation, globalization and markets at the macro level were a source of demand for use in evaluation. If the public could not demand results, the markets would demand delivery. Any active society in the developmental process would vocally and persistently demand accountability from its government.

Highlighting the importance of evaluation systems was the issue of downsizing versus reallocation of resources. Several participants expressed the view that often there was the need for across-the-board downsizing of resources in order to realistically implement evaluations. However, a more appropriate solution was suggested to lie in the reallocation of existing resources and thereby reduce wastage and failure. Evaluations were in fact tied to resource allocation and not to a reduction in resources (downsizing) to more comfortable levels.

Associated with government transparency and accountability was the issue of clearly defining national priorities. The general admission was that as a group of nations, the Caribbean subregion had not clearly expressed its political and socio-economic agendas and this had led to difficulties in determining the national priorities of member States. The meeting saw as the economic responsibility of governments the need to be accountable and called for greater evaluation and assessment of performance/resource allocation.

The participants raised the question of the political and legal frameworks and through which specialized agencies the evaluation process could take place. While some of the larger Caribbean countries had established such specialized agencies, most of the others had no real legal framework with which to start the process of evaluation. The infrastructure necessary for the process, such as relevant data, methodologies and frameworks for evaluators was of critical importance.

The following questions were raised:

- 1) What is the best-practice evaluation?
- 2) What of qualitative evaluation as opposed to quantitative?

- 3) With respect to self-evaluation as a learning tool, how does one inject the highest level of objectivity, and how would the participatory process, as a tool of objectivity, be incorporated?
- 4) Almost all evaluation is concentrated within main budget programme/project activities. Nevertheless, the holistic approach would be to extend evaluation to off-budget programmes; that is, to develop and extend these programmes/projects so as to ensure that evaluation processes are accommodated and afforded.
- 5) There should be a balance between the need to reward performance and the need for State intervention. This should be a high priority area.

IV. TOPIC 2: PLANNING AND POLICY COORDINATION

Two papers were presented on this topic.

Mr. Garnier pointed to the internal conflicts that had developed in Latin America as a result of the push towards modernization from 1945 to 1975. He observed that in the rush to modernize or "develop", internal crises had developed and could be classified into four main areas:

- i) Financial restrictions, which resulted from an economic model that failed to produce wealth and savings, but resulted instead in high external debt and public borrowing.
- ii) Social imbalance, reflected in rising levels of poverty, social deterioration and growing inequality.
- iii) Institutional exhaustion, seen in the inability of established institutions to cope with the changes inherent in modernization and.
- iv) Changes in the political/ideological balance due to the failure of particular political movements.

Externally, the process of globalization, which introduced trade and financial flows at a hitherto unforeseen level of importance and dynamism, affected Latin America. It necessitated structural changes in the economies to accommodate this phenomenon. There also developed a situation in which the price of commodities within a country was being dictated by the external world. This global market strategy appeared to be less accommodating of political voluntarism; the strategy of globalization of the world economy was in effect becoming dominant over other criteria for social coexistence or environmental criteria.

The new circumstances led to an attempt to determine and form a balance among the elements of efficiency, equity and democracy. It involved a delicate, politically articulated system that attempted to enhance at the same time, economic, environmental and social issues. In essence, the issue that confronted society was how to utilize individual initiative for progress while guaranteeing the social cohesion necessary for the existence of civil society, that is, one of coordination. To proceed to this necessary coordination, one must understand that coordination was concerned with the integration of government's decisions and actions so that an overall vision and long-term perspective were borne in mind. The stages of this essentially political process required the following:

- **Establishment of priorities:** In this phase, one needed to define the priorities for national development and the policies and programmes. In particular, institutions like the planning ministries or secretariats could be useful in assuring that the long-term vision was kept at the

forefront while short-term objectives were being met. Any strategies developed must benefit from as much input from the populace as was possible.

- Delegation of responsibilities: This was necessary to ensure that tasks were distributed correctly, proper resource allocation took place and that accountability could be demanded from particular agencies. Responsibilities to be shared included those in the political (definition and negotiation of policy and global directives), financial (generation and allocation of resources) and operational (methods of implementation, success criteria and relationships) spheres.

To highlight the necessity of coordination as a central activity in political practice, a strategy for coordination among economic, social and environmental policies was examined.

At the economic level, one should consider not only policies and general macroeconomic goals, but also policies at the macroeconomic and sectoral levels in order to ensure that policies and practices at one level did not conflict with the goals and ambitions at another.

At the level of social policy formation, the seminar learned that in many instances social policies were divorced from the economic realities of the day or were influenced by lobbying groups with their own agendas.

To coordinate social and financial policies, one should be aware that each one was an essential element of the other, to avoid the situation that occurred in Latin America, in which the means used to boost economic viability served to exacerbate the poverty situation. Economic development required a social development that would enable the human resources to consolidate and expand it and the process of human development must be driven and sustained by the economic development of the society. The coordination of social and economic policy with environmental policy was realised in the concept of sustainable development. The base on which economic development was predicated and on which human survival depended was not to be compromised in the short term but utilized for the longest possible time for the greatest economic and by extension, social, good.

Mr. Garnier considered the issue of coordination and financial resources. He demonstrated the interaction between planning and the national budget. In this instance the following must be kept in mind:

- The national budget was both a technical and political instrument, attempting to implement economic policy, while, at the same time, bearing in mind the aspirations, needs and opinions of the general populace.
- There should be an institutional setting for the maximization of the budget potential. In Latin America the tendency has been one in which allocation of funds was dependent on relative strengths within the cabinet setting and a final decision by the President. The objectives of the institutional arrangements should always be kept in focus, namely:

- Income and expenditure levels should be conducive to macroeconomic growth
 - The use of public resources should correspond with democratically decided plans and priorities aimed at their efficient use.
- The budget as a tool for governance. It should be recognized that the budget had a certain amount of institutional inertia and any attempt to change the budget to provide more efficient collaboration was unlikely to be achieved without some degree of dislocation. However, the desired achievement should result in the building up of government priorities as a whole, it must generate incentives for individual and collective action and it must produce results. Further, it must work in an environment that had the ability to assess results for consolidation and perpetuation of the search for social efficiency in the allocation of public resources.

While the budget could be seen as a tool for distribution of resources, it was no less important to plan for the obtaining of the resources that financed the budget. Less attention had been paid to this aspect of budget financing, while certain methods of obtaining financing had remained rather intransigent, for example, imposition of taxes. It was essential that instruments used to generate fiscal revenue be appropriate from a fiscal point of view, as well as correct in terms of their impact on government's policies as a whole.

Coordination aspect of planning

In the changed situation of management of the public good, the coordination aspect of planning has assumed greater prominence. The coordination role may be seen in the types of management strategies that have been adapted in addition to the perennial public management strategies, namely, private execution of public policy, decentralisation and privatization of public services.

In an earlier period, government undertook the responsibility for various social and economic activities in order to expand its area of coverage and its quality, because of perceived limitations of the market system within the particular country. At the present time, the other three aforementioned methods of management had arisen to decrease costs and increase efficiency of the previous strategies. That should not imply a wholesale change from one paradigm to another but the pursuance of a reasonable and changing balance to assist in improving the allocation and utilization of public resources. Thus a relationship of mutual complementarity was sought, dependent on the particular conditions. In commenting on the various types of management strategies employed, the following points were made regarding public management, private execution, decentralization and the privatization of public services:

- **Public management:** In Latin America, public implementation will continue to be necessary in the management of financial resources, human resources and public investment. Within this system there must be a change to reflect cost control accounting, together with more economical and efficient implementation methods, assessment of results using pre-agreed performance indicators and social control in which the populace evaluates the public services. However, without political will and support, these efforts will have little chance of success. Further it must be remembered that some products cannot be easily measured, which should not decrease their importance. The same applies to some methodologies; therefore strategic evaluation is a tool and not a substitute for public policy
- **Private execution of public policy:** In this approach, the government still determines the allocation of resources, but a private agency is hired to undertake the tasks, in order to increase efficiency or productivity. It must be borne in mind that this type of public/private sector hybrid, which seeks to secure optimum value for money, should have attendant to it proper procedures for doing so, in order for its aims to be achieved. Further, adequate accountability is a necessity, an accountability that goes beyond the auditing processes of government.
- **Decentralization:** This is perhaps the most common method of institutional reform in Latin America at present. It is best seen as an attempt to relieve the central administration of overload and to avoid the atrophy and irrelevance of local administrative structures. One must guard against the tendency for local administrations to deviate from a democratically decided strategic vision, as well as the capture of the local administrative resources by power groups. Local administrations should also attain the technical competence to carry out their programs efficiently, while ensuring a process of increasing democratisation.
- **Privatisation of public services:** This is increasingly occurring but even though efficiency within the sector privatized has been increased, the lessening of costs to consumers is seldom seen in practice. Regulations that attempt to correct or prevent the situation have in many instances led to the proliferation of monopolies and lack of competition in the market. Experience has shown that ignoring a necessary political aspect of regulation has led to many untenable situations.

Regulations should have a political, technical and public aspect. At the first level, the capacity of the government needs to be strengthened to develop regulatory frameworks that ensure proper development, catering to the needs or aspirations of the stated development policy. At the technical level, regulatory agencies need a high degree of knowledge and are provided with clear lines of accountability to the government and the public. At the level of the public, there must be access to

information and bodies that represent the public interest. There must exist the assurance that public participation in the process of privatization is real and effective.

Coordination and the political environment

In Latin America, under the present circumstances, planning is more of an imperative, but the societies appear to be less equipped technically, politically and institutionally to meet the challenges inherent in the process.

In the present scenario, there is the need for a more intelligent integration into the global economy in a way that will enhance the social cohesion of the society rather than fracture it; the need for articulating diverse interests into a coordinated whole. There was need for a definition of priorities and concomitant responsibilities in the political, financial and operational sense with attendant accountability. The major areas of public policy to be considered were in the economic, social and environmental sectors.

The budgetary process should be adapted to become in fact "the meeting point for the forces of society". The budget process must generate incentives for individual and collective action and must produce results. As a result of the latter, a process or methodology for evaluation should be established. The end result should always be the pursuit of social efficiency in the allocation of public resources. In the utilization of public resources one should keep in mind the management policies of contracting to private parties, decentralization, privatization and governmental management, or a combination of the aforementioned methods. In the context of planning for this, the function of strategic coordination should be understood as a tool to advance the process of constructing the balance between economic efficiency, social equity and political democracy.

Finally, the incorporation of the middle classes in the process should be stressed since these remained the base for any development process that insists on national integration as a prerequisite to global integration and the restoration and operation of the democratic process.

The British Virgin Islands (BVI) and integrated development planning

Mr. Otto O'Neal delivered a presentation on the efforts of the BVI to change its approach to development planning through the use of a National Integrated Development Strategy (NIDS). The objective of the introduction of the NIDS was to balance development across geographical boundaries and economic sectors of the population of the BVI.

In the BVI the formulation of economic plans had been the dominant concept of development planning. In addition, there was no comprehensive strategy or framework under which those plans operated and many projects were disconnected, contradictory and loosely

coordinated. Further, the many disparate groups in the community were unable to focus their energies and resources to produce lasting change.

The NIDS attempted to democratize the process of developmental planning, involving all stakeholders and respective communities, which were given the opportunity to become partners in this people-centred development process.

Mr. O'Neal presented a country profile of the BVI, which stressed the following points:

- The BVI is a United Kingdom-dependent territory with constitutional responsibility for its internal financial affairs and receives no budgetary aid from the United Kingdom.
- Environmental management responsibilities were widely scattered among agencies with no real coordination.
- There was weak implementation and enforcement of legislation.
- High economic growth was occurring, averaging over 6 per cent from 1994- 1997 and there was a pattern of increasing revenue earning.
- Agricultural production was relatively small, and accounted for less than 5 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).
- Tourism was the main generator of revenue together with financial services and banking.
- There was a significant incidence of immigration, while unemployment and poverty were very low.

The national integrated development planning framework of the BVI

Mr. O' Neal outlined the situation that led to the introduction of integrated development planning in the BVI. In this context, he disclosed that the BVI was forced into the revenue-generating areas that remained valid today, because of its lack of natural resources to do anything else. The islands were further assisted in economic and physical planning by the United Nations.

Incrementally, following the foray into planning, major departments in the main social sectors were set up, followed by those in the environmental area, the latter due primarily to changes in global thinking. It was within the environmental divisions that the need for collaboration and an integrated approach to development was set in motion.

The planning process began with public consultations to determine national ideals and objectives. The constraints were then identified, strategies for dealing with them elaborated, policies developed, projects to achieve these policies were generated, and methods of implementation, monitoring and evaluation were designed.

To pursue this method of development planning a project was conceived with assistance from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS), during which period guidelines for the sectors of the plan, e.g. social, economic etc., were established. The participation

of the populace and all agencies were integrated and both the capacity for and an actual national integrated development plan were produced.

Formation and operationalization of the integrated development strategy

The approach used was the Integrated Development Strategy (IDS) which takes a participatory rather than a 'top-down' approach to planning. Development is seen as a multidimensional process and all factors that impinge on the quality of life are considered.

The National Integrated Development Plan (NIDP) was the main output from all these proceedings and was a document that articulated a vision, set goals, identified strategies and tactics and detailed actions needed to attain the vision.

The operational framework of the plan included a methodological framework that consisted of an operational phase with the following sub-phases, namely:

- Conceptualisation/planning
- Analysis
- Strategy formulation
- Approval
- Implementation
- Monitoring and evaluation and review

There was an ongoing process that consisted of a networking model characterised by continuing integration and interaction.

The institutional framework defined the following main actors:

- i) The public;
- ii) Public service professionals;
- iii) Public service managers;
- iv) Private sector and other non-government representatives;
- v) International organizations; and
- vi) The political directorate.

These actors got together in workshops/consultations, working groups/secretariats, sub-committees, a project management team, a strategic change team and the executive council. Unless mechanisms were put in place to support the work of the planners, the NIDP would have been ineffective in meeting its objectives; hence one needed to look at the institutions involved in planning. Thereafter, the political process had to be reviewed. This had implications for interaction between the ministers of the Crown, political parties, non-governmental organizations, interest groups and the general populace. Of great importance was the fact that the political process was complicated by the presence of the representative of Her Majesty's Government, the Governor, who is chairman of the decision-making Council of Ministers.

Within the bureaucratic process, one found that planning was characterized by the lack of a clear separation between the allocation and the administration of investment resources (budgeting) and the determination of priorities (planning). Thus, the budget or allocation process, giving the Minister of Finance exceptional control over the planning process, determined priorities.

It became evident that plan implementation, assuming acceptance of the process of integrated planning and participatory formulation, would have been constrained by institutional weakness within the public sector. Efforts were therefore made to strengthen the capacity of the public sector institutions, with special emphasis on planning capability. By appropriate training, the efficiency of administrative structures was enhanced and modern management techniques introduced, creating an indigenous capacity to carry out the necessary implementation. Major planning functions at the national level were achieved by creating a department of national planning with the following divisions:

- Economic and social planning;
- Physical planning;
- Environmental planning;
- Projects; and
- Information, statistics and publications.

The process of globalization, with its focus on increased transparency, global efficiency, production standards and international competitiveness forced the necessity of a long-term planning horizon. The increased agitation at the popular level for inclusion in the political and decision-making processes required politicians to plan and to collaborate not only with specific interest groups, but also with the local community. The maturity of the political process resulted in the planning officials being frequently called upon to assist and in some cases they usurped some functions normally reserved for the political representatives. To provide this service of planning and coordination, which could not be provided by the political directorate, and to enable implementation, a Planning and Project Advisory Committee (PPRAC) was formed. This was a multidisciplinary body of ministers, high-level officials and technical officials heading implementing agencies. The PPRAC provides the final stamp of approval in defining and formulating policies, agrees on the major operational policy guidelines, oversees programme implementation and evaluates results. The committee has both a technical and main committee, with the former concentrating on policy and strategy guidelines and the latter focusing on technical aspects.

Mr O'Neal drew attention to the necessity of political coordination within the IDP process. While it might appear to reduce effectiveness and efficiency in the short term, the necessity for political validation and approval of issues and strategies is indispensable. Further in the case of the British Virgin Islands, there is the further influence of the

United Kingdom and by extension, of the European Union (EU), the policies of which will influence what is acceptable within the territories. Political coordination also serves a function in the enforcement and arbitration in the event of conflicts between various government agencies. The Executive Management of the Public Service (EMPS) serves this function in collaboration with the aforementioned PPRAC. It is important within all these committees and agencies to assign specific roles and responsibilities to avoid conflict and overstepping of boundaries.

All these systems and persons must function within a monitoring and evaluation framework for any real progress to be made. Monitoring refers to performance management in terms of timing, costs and progress of plan activities, while evaluation focuses on the effectiveness of the plan, its policies, programmes and projects, especially in the long term. Under the latter would be considered any cause and effect relationships. Plan evaluation resides with the Planning Oversight Committee (POC) which reports to the highest political level of government.

Programmes/projects arising out of the national integrated development strategies

In order to improve the planning process, several initiatives in the form of programmes or projects have come or will come on stream. Specific initiatives in public participation included the use of regular business forums to obtain feedback on subjects of mutual interest. In addition, individuals are afforded an opportunity to provide input into the design of major investment projects and other policy and legal initiatives. In addition, major public measures or initiatives are taken to the public by way of discussions by the department of information and public relations on national radio and television to solicit inputs and in the support of implementation of the Strategic Management Framework (SMF). The SMF is a governance framework that has been designed to facilitate agreed roles and responsibilities of ministers and bureaucrats in the development and implementation of strategic plans and policies. The PSDP also takes measures to ensure that the public service is competent to implement the policies of leadership.

In the areas of financial management and ensuring the efficient delivery of public services, programme based budgeting and accrual accounting are being used. To assist further in financial management, each ministry is provided with personnel competent in finance and planning and in the capital budget process. Each ministry is required to put a project through a well-defined process of development, appraisal and approval before being submitted for approval. In the Sister Island Project, the quality of delivery of government services to the public in the "sister islands" is considered.

Strengths and weaknesses of NIDS and lessons learnt

The strengths of the IDP may be listed thus:

- The use of the participatory approach of communities and stakeholders, makes implementation easier and is based on the principle that the alignment of instruments and measures generates synergy.
- It strengthens the democratic process, recognizing that the people's choice is paramount, facilitates the inclusion of a wide range of ideas and traditional knowledge and is useful in conflict resolution.
- The allocation of resources encompasses more technical input while not neglecting the necessary political input.

In the course of development of the NIDS, the coordination process taught the following lessons:

- a) Patience, prudence and politics were necessary in making joint decisions;
- b) The international community can at times be a useful arbitrator between conflicting groups;
- c) The process encourages clear role and policy definition;
- d) Political presence and coordination give legitimacy to the movement of issues across bureaucratic boundaries;
- e) There persists the view that once the political representatives are informed further action is within the purview of the bureaucracy.

Within the bureaucratic process one learned that the IDP reduced the autonomy and independence of agencies and enabled them to see development beyond their respective areas of competence. In addition, successful implementation of the NIDS requires a high degree of reform in the structures, political management, institutional arrangement and operational procedures.

Observing best practices and the future of planning

Mr. O' Neal observed as best practices the participatory approach, the lasting partnership between government, the private sectors and NGOs, the presence of international partners, the sustainability, flexibility and openness to change of the process and the possibility of transference to other countries because of its simplicity and clarity. He specifically noted that the integration process should begin at the multidisciplinary, participatory level. He stressed that that the new planning entity should be one that had a combination of project management, public sector investment programming, policy development and research (statistics) skills. In its new role, planning would inevitably assume some of the activities previously reserved solely for politicians.

Mr. O' Neal concluded by stating that in the BVI it was accepted that the pursuit of goals for an improved quality of life should be guided by

a strategic vision of society that is globally competitive and socially cohesive. That vision:

- a) Should be able to satisfy the basic needs of its people;
- b) Should uphold the principles of equity, human rights and good governance;
- c) Should manage the natural resources of the territory in a sustained and integrated manner;
- d) Should generate self-confidence among the people and maintain the unique cultural identity of the territory.

In the discussion that ensued, the following comments were offered:

- In the context of the planning process, one needs to bear in mind that other issues, such as ethnicity, may play a part in the processes that regulate the budgetary allocations, planning or distribution of resources.
- Related to this is the coordination of the number of interest groups in the process. It was noted that a number of countries were contemplating using the "Barbados Model" of making a social contract between the government and the people, but needed clarification of just how the agendas of the various groups were accommodated.
- The meeting acknowledged that development could not be rigidly planned, but at the same time, criteria must be used to ensure sustainable development. For example, it has been found that economic growth tends to reduce poverty in many instances, but at the same time there are cases where increased economic growth has resulted in increased poverty. Thus there is a need to clarify the type of growth that one is interested in and put in place the relevant structures and processes to achieve it. The type of institution that is responsible for the type of planning necessary for sustained improvement must be given the "institutional space" within the government structure to continue work on the long-term vision. The institution might be placed within the Ministry of Planning rather than Finance, since the latter tends to have short-term goals. Moreover, there is usually conflict between the Ministry of Finance and others involved in the social sectors, so that there remains the need for an organization that can deal with the short-term necessities, while having a parallel system that keeps its focus on the long-term goals. By having a consensual type of countrywide vision, it then becomes less necessary for the Prime Minister to attempt to control the Finance Ministry, since the method of allocation of resources is already outlined.

The issue of the role of the technocrat was also raised. If planning and especially budgetary preparation were so much dependent on political processes, how did the technocrat fit into the system? In this context, the

marriage of sectors conceived within the BVI process provided a way out of the dilemma, but the problem still remained one of convincing politicians who were tied to the five-year cycle, of the importance and usefulness of adopting a new approach to governance. Within the BVI, the situation was assisted by the fact that the Crown (United Kingdom Government) had agreed to the institutional set-up and could also become an arbitrator or enforcer as the occasion demanded.

Due caution should be exercised when collaborating with NGOs since while public servants were bound by rules of confidentiality and discipline, NGOs were not. Information that could be detrimental to the collaboration process could therefore be released since the understanding of the concepts of openness and transparency might be somewhat different within the NGO environment, when compared to that of the public officials. Further, NGOs tended not to understand or, at best, were impatient with government bureaucratic processes.

Within the new globalization thrust and the accompanying technological revolution two issues became apparent; these were the changing roles and powers of institutions and the issue of economies of scale. There was however, the potential to use the new technologies to overcome the limitations imposed by size. There was also the possibility of a small country gaining prominence within organizations that allowed one vote per nation regardless of size, e.g. organizations in the United Nations system.

A query concerning the level of emphasis placed on urban planning was raised. The situation was highlighted in which uncoordinated policies had led to a burgeoning of motor vehicles in urban areas, but inadequate infrastructure to accommodate them. It was suggested that the approach should have been one in which the line ministry, under which transportation fell, should have developed a plan and presented it to the other ministries to ensure proper coordination of policies.

In the context of budgeting, innovative methods were suggested to avoid certain pitfalls of the normal budgeting process. The example cited was the one of "rush spending" when the ministry realizes that it has not spent its budget for the year and then attempts to do so quickly to avoid a reduced allocation for the next budgetary year. Several participants suggested that ministries be allowed to retain part of the money saved in any given year as an additional part of their funding for the subsequent year. Budgetary procedures in terms of reallocation of money during the year needed to be less rigid. Related to the budgetary methods of evaluation, a system was promulgated whereby an auditing committee, not necessarily in the ministry of finance, should overview the ministry's spending programme.

V. TOPIC 3: LONG-RANGE THINKING, INSTITUTIONAL DOWNSIZING AND ACTION

Two consultants made presentations on this topic. They were Dr. Javier Medina Vasquez; and Prof. Andrew Downes

Dr. Javier Medina Vasquez made a presentation on "The role of long-range thinking: institutional downsizing and action". Mr. Lancelot Busby of ECLAC assisted him in his presentation by providing simultaneous interpretation services.

Dr. Medina discussed the purposes and objectives of foresight, in the context of long-range thinking. He viewed foresight as offering an effective support to the decision-making process in Latin America and the Caribbean. It was a means of overcoming long-term taboos. He stated that there was a serious demand for long-term thinking, of which, conceptually, there were three basic approaches:

- Forecasting;
- Long-range planning; and
- Future studies

He explained that long-term thinking was different from long-term planning in that long-term thinking was not about controlling the future but of having a vision and creating different ways of thinking about the future. He explained that "the future" in terms of development planning was dependent on, and was influenced by, what was done today. In that regard, the academic community on account of its ability to incorporate that and other varying approaches accepted future studies. Mr. Medina took the participants through historical examples of countries that had institutionalized future studies and pointed that, up to the 1970s, it was closely associated with the efforts of a few individuals in academia. Currently, however, he explained that future studies have been gaining ground in several developed and a few developing countries and advised that Latin American and Caribbean countries should take advantage of the lessons learnt. In doing so, however, Mr. Medina pointed to several factors of which countries needed to take into account in order to improve their basic capacity to implement the process. They included:

- Activating the network between the individual and the State;
- Improving one's understanding of social change; and
- Breaking psycho-social and cultural barriers.

This, he explained, would help to achieve the following objectives:

- Identification of society's objectives;
- Elimination of "social schizophrenia" (essential distrust among members of the society);

- Exercise of truthful economics in which:
 - The market would not be idolized as an unfailing machine;
 - Human behaviour, ethics and culture would be taken into account;
 - The difference between growth and human development would be considered.

Foresight/future studies in the twenty-first century will therefore be more oriented to social construction. Dr. Medina predicted that long-term thinking would be used as a means of coordinating institutional change and that it would lead to the expansion functions. These are cognitive, projective, organizational and educational.

In his presentation, Professor Andrew Downes identified two major gaps in the planning process, namely:

- Identifying what is currently required for sustained and sustainable development
- Identifying what is required for small open economies like those of the Caribbean to survive.

He also stated that development plans were needed for long-term thinking and for identifying the role of future studies in long-term thinking and planning. Professor Downes pointed to the questions that were important to this process:

- Where do you want to go?
- What do you want to look like?

In answering these questions, he explained that it was necessary to explore a range of scenarios about the future and to ensure participation by soliciting the opinions of the population. Professor Downes reviewed development planning in the Caribbean from the 1940s to the 1990s and identified several features of this process. He explained that it was largely indicative in nature; that there was some experimentation that involved a greater role for the State. Development planning was complemented by short-term budgetary policies that were often not related to the planning policies. There was a tendency to focus on public sector investment programmes. He identified some of the problems of development planning in the region as being:

- Failure to control key areas of the economy which were necessary for effective planning;
- Lack of technical and managerial skills to manage the development process; (especially among the political directorate)
- Lack of appropriate organizational structures and failure to involve people in the process;
- Inadequate information base;
- Lack of clear vision of the future state of the economies/societies;

- Lack of clear understanding of the role of the State in the development process.

Pointing to the contemporary challenges facing the region, Professor Downes explained that the 1950s had been marked by protectionism, preferences and concessionary finance, while the 1990s had been marked by rapid technological change, new geopolitical relationships and globalization. This underscored the need for long-term strategic planning, especially given the fact that the problems of poverty and unemployment remained fundamental to the region. In this context, he suggested that the State needed to be less welfare oriented and ought to play a more developmental role. He also pointed to the need to develop private-sector capacity to contribute meaningfully to public policy. The solution therefore lay in institutional action and restructuring.

The participants debated the presentation made by Professor Downes. The utility of a five-year plan, given the rapidity of change in the region, was questioned. The panel was asked to suggest ways of bridging the gap between political reality and technical considerations, as well as to suggest how to share the vision of the planners with other public servants involved in its execution. A number of observations related to the nature of planning were made. These included:

- a) The challenge of having political leaders with the technical capability who could share the vision and help take the plan forward;
- b) The need for participatory planning since all solutions and ideas were not to be found in any one organization;
- c) The importance of culture in the implementation of the process.

Identifying an increase in people's social and economic situation as the basis for development planning, participants noted that increasingly the problem of partisanship had affected the ability of civil servants to do their job. The "moneyed class" was also identified as having inordinate influence on politics and policy-making, resulting in policies that were often implemented in the interest of the few, rather than in the interest of the majority. Eradication of this situation would occur only with the maturation of the society.

In the planning process there continued to exist the age-old debate about the tension between the "rational technocrat" and the perceived "irrational politician". Participants suggested that in reading budgets and development plans in order to understand the vision of the political leader as development planner, one might do well to read also the political manifesto of the government in power.

Another issue raised involved the kind of arrangements that ought to be put in place to ensure a smooth relationship between the need of Caribbean countries to plan individually and the need to plan as a region. Another issue involved the need of the region to create a vision of development that could be internalised by the population and towards which they could all aspire.

Both Professor Downes and Dr. Medina responded to the questions and comments of participants of the meeting. Dr. Medina underscored the importance of long-term thinking and future studies to the capacity of the region to develop and do things differently. Professor Downes suggested that participation could be achieved through a broad-based council consisting of the various organizations. Professor Downes concluded his remarks by advising the meeting "not to think within the box" but to find creative solutions to problems that might arise.

A panel of experts was selected to respond to the major issues that arose over the three preceding topics that had been the focus of the seminar. The panel comprised the following:

- Bentley Browne of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines;
- Joseph Howard of the Ministry of Planning, Trinidad and Tobago;
- Len Ishmael, Director, ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean;
- Ivor Jackson, Consultant;
- Edgar Ortegón of ILPES; and
- Luis Potter of the BVI

Ms. Ishmael informed participants that the presentations of members of the panel would shed light on planning structures and activities in the region. She noted that the lack of consultation and coordination between planners resulted in disjointed development that was neither integrated nor comprehensive. She noted that one should be cognizant of political considerations and impacts, given the differences between the planning and political horizons.

Mr. Bentley Browne, Acting Deputy Director of Planning, related the planning experiences in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines since the 1970s. Action was neither coordinated nor integrated in what was considered a watershed experience. He explained that amidst unemployment and ad hoc development, the Integrated Development Plan was applied. It sought community participation. Success was not immediate as the communities were divided along party lines. However, each interest group argued its case for the development of its geographical area. This assisted in solving many common problems. He stated that that was an indication that community participation had an important role to play but noted that in several instances bureaucracy had retarded development. He recalled that the success related could be replicated in other areas as each community was found to have a vision and was eager to participate in its own development.

Mr. Louis Potter argued that if physical planning were to play a role and gain respect as a discipline, planners should seize their place. In that regard he indicated that the BVI had developed a Physical Development Plan and was considering the development of an Economic Development Plan. As well, the planning unit staff had increased to 17 from four. In his estimation, he believed that in comparison with other OECS countries, the BVI was ahead in the planning arena. Having done

research on the activities of his OECS country counterparts his department was able to assemble in short order the Physical Development Plan, using for example, Local Area Networks (LAN) and Geographical Information Systems (GIS). He stated that all GIS were project-oriented and were used to organize information on properties in the BVI.

Mr. Potter pointed to the importance of connectivity and of comprehensiveness of databases in the planning process. The strong involvement of other planners, such as the development control planners and the long-term development planners, were specifically noted. The Physical Development Unit was set up to manage the planning process in the BVI and incorporated the social and development planners. Members from these four planning disciplines formed the coordinating body. He noted the importance of Mr. Otto O'Neal's portfolio as Head of Planning, because of his link to foreign agencies. That link was useful so that even if a plan or process was not locally approved, it persevered because of these connections. He reiterated the need for good information and agencies in the planning process.

Mr. Ivor Jackson, Principal, Ivor Jackson and Associates, Environment, Landuse and Tourism Planners, spoke of the experiences of Tobago over the last two years and noted that it was necessary to make the distinction between development plans and development planning. He noted that in Tobago there was a need to address the issue of mitigation of the impact of the public sector on the environment while pursuing a country's goals. He provided the example of the effects of structural development plans that resulted in the deterioration of Tobago's vegetation and thus such issues needed to be considered. He said that physical planning and economic development planning needed to be reconciled and noted the vast discrepancies between both where, for example, the economic and physical planning districts were different from the health and electoral districts. The issue of increasing traffic and increases in urban settlements and therefore, the protection of land cover with respect to the management of watersheds and food security were significant issues. The extent to which the rapid increases in land prices, due to purchases by foreigners for hotels and homes, impacted on the ability of nationals to purchase land were issues that needed to be addressed by tourist-oriented Caribbean islands.

Mr. Joseph Howard, Director, Socio-Economic Policy Planning, explained the nature of planning in Trinidad and Tobago and indicated that physical planning was undertaken by the Town and County Division now located in the Ministry of Housing. Previously it had been attached to the Ministry of Planning and Development. The meeting heard that physical planning was required by law regardless of the economic development plan in Trinidad and Tobago and a brief overview was given of the planning phases that tended to span five years, since 1958. During the early 1970s economic planning came to a halt and towards the end of the oil boom it was recognised that medium-term adjustment was needed, which then prompted a return to planning. With the start of structural

adjustment measures in 1983, which resulted in the removal of protection mechanisms, such as the negative list, a seven-year plan was devised for the period starting 1985. A medium-term planning framework was instituted alongside the International Monetary Fund's (IMF's) intervention during that period. Another seven-year plan was currently being prepared and a three-year planning document, basically a prescriptive framework document rolled over every year, was used alongside the budget in the planning process. In planning the seven-year programme, ministries were invited to make the proposals for the next year or three years, which had to be consistent with the medium-term policy framework.

Mr Edgar Ortegon thanked the participants for their valuable contribution to the success of the meeting and gave a brief analysis of the Latin American and Caribbean experiences with regard to planning. He noted that ILPES had advocated the importance of planning in the Caribbean over the previous 30 years and was therefore familiar with planning and its development in the subregion. Based on that knowledge, he gave his impressions of the status of planning in the subregion and outlined what he considered to be characteristics that impacted negatively on planning in the Caribbean. Some of these were small size, strong dependence on a few commodities and vulnerabilities to natural disasters. He noted that the Caribbean had excellent qualified economists as well as qualified institutions, such as its universities, regional and international organizations that assisted in forecasting and evaluation. He noted that while the Caribbean performed well in articulating objectives and at arriving at consensus, mainly due to its size and the availability of information, however, a problematic area proved to be in the execution of plans. The source of this problem was seen to lie in the lack of appropriate administrative and executing institutions in the implementation and management of project cycles. He cited a paper on AFROSIBER that had been written by Dr. Trevor Farrell and which highlighted several points to effective planning, with which he agreed. He pointed to the need to acknowledge two more points, however - the need for executing institutions and the existence of too many plans. He also felt that too much emphasis was being placed on project planning and lamented the inability to pull institutions together to implement plans. He recommended that the Caribbean should think of planning as a regional exercise while having a regional vision in focus within the context of globalization.

In the ensuing discussion, the Honourable Errol F. Ennis, Minister of State Planning in Jamaica, questioned whether there were any identifiable limitations to the development planning process which should be taken into consideration within the planning framework.

Mr. Ivor Jackson responded that there were no significant limitations but that there was need for a shift in approach to the allocation of resources for planning. He once again cited the Tobago experience.

Ms. Ishmael said that she did not subscribe to the notion that small size limited the ability to plan, however, she admitted that in the Caribbean the islands were guilty of not planning for their development in a comprehensive way. There was no acknowledgement of the domino effect of planning. Planning took place in a crisis mode and was, therefore, reactive. Examples were cited in those islands where tourism was the main engine for growth where foreigners, to the exclusion of nationals, were buying up lands. The purchasing power of the nationals was diminished because of high prices. An attendant social problem was the inability of nations to use local beaches. Another problem was the increasing traffic congestion caused by easy access to foreign used cars. This situation had developed without catering for extra roads for these vehicles, clearly a result of the lack of creative or dynamic thinking and planning, which did not take into consideration the ripple effects and implications of those decisions.

The Honourable Minister again asked for clarification of his earlier question that pertained to the limits of developmental capacity. He wished to know whether countries knew their limits. This referred to issues such as an identified number of cars that a country could accommodate, the amount of fishing that could take place before fishing-ponds or banks became over-fished or the amount of housing that could be constructed before this activity began to encroach on agricultural lands.

Mr. Jackson again attempted to give some clarification and intimated that the planning capacity was different from the State's threshold. He indicated that it was possible for planners to identify the number of cars that a country could accommodate. However, he drew attention to the fact that there were political considerations as politicians based decisions on the electorate, who perhaps for the first time, had the ability to purchase a car. In such a case, he believed that any submissions that a planner made on that issue would be overturned.

Professor Downes shared his opinion that planning required discipline and that there seemed to be a lack of discipline where the transport system in the Caribbean was concerned, when compared with those of the North. A properly functioning transport system would therefore negate the need for a car. He also acknowledged, however, that consistent with social values, a car signified a measure of social status. He wondered if the planning process in other Caribbean countries, such as the OECS, could provide lessons for other countries in the region.

Mr. Jackson noted the problem of perception with regard to the public transport system in the Caribbean, citing his own positive experiences in utilising public transport. He stated that negative perceptions resulted in parents forbidding their children from taking public transport in the Caribbean but allowing them to do so in North America.

Ms. Victoria Mendes-Charles, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Development in Trinidad and Tobago, observed that policy decisions resulted in the compartmentalisation of planning

and that the quality, and not so much the quantity, of planning should be appreciated.

Mr. Saïid Greene, Coordinator, Business Development, Ministry of Planning, Implementation and Public Sector Reform, Antigua and Barbuda, expressed the view that there was an incorrect definition of the Caribbean identity. That referred to the reality of the Caribbean with respect to small size and vulnerability that seemed to inhibit the attainment of the goal towards which the Caribbean had worked. He noted that industries in the Caribbean remained small because there was no planning for growth, which inevitably locked out entrepreneurial brilliance. This was in sharp contrast to the success being experienced in the United States' Silicon Valley where small companies were given the space to grow. He therefore recommended the removal of this "small and vulnerable" mentality in order to grow and plan for growth and long-term development.

Ms. Hilary Hazel, Senior Project Officer, Office of the Prime Minister, St. Kitts and Nevis, stated that her country concentrated on economic planning but saw the need for integrated developmental planning. She noted the difficulty of bringing the political directorate on board. During the last five years her country had experienced seven hurricanes, the effects of which brought home the need for more integrated planning. Physical development laws now integrated physical development plans and recently the process was introduced whereby civil society's views would be incorporated prior to the preparation of the budget document. She noted that, similar to the BVI, the need was identified to integrate planning with respect to projects and, therefore, a two-tier approach was devised consisting of committees at two different hierarchical levels, the latter being chaired by the Prime Minister. She also informed that land use development plans had been drafted with the assistance of the Commonwealth Secretariat. The greatest need identified was that of human resources for the implementation and enforcement of regulations arising from the plans.

Mr. Mervyn Haynes, Head, Projects and Development Cooperation in Grenada noted that planning in his country was similar to the experiences of the larger Caribbean countries. This was seen in his brief on Grenada's planning phases and the issues pertaining to land. He explained that through zonal councils public participation was ensured. It was seen that planning was compartmentalised, incremental and short term. From 1974 to 1979 planning was not done in a consistent manner over time, while from 1979 to 1983 strong central planning had taken place, leading to its first physical development planning experience. From 1990 to 1995 the focus was placed on structural adjustment to achieve fiscal balance and from 1995 to the present, while planning bore the characteristics of decentralisation, there had been movement toward integrating the major social areas under the Central Coordination Planning Agency. This agency was based in the Economic Unit. However, line ministries were still engaged in sectoral planning. Attempts had

been made to train persons within the public sector to assist in raising the level of sensitivity to social issues in socio-economic policy formulation. No formal approach utilizing that strategy had been attempted at the project design level to ensure that all cross-cutting issues were being considered.

Mr. Hally Haynes, Director, Barbados Youth Service, noted that, like the situational analyses undertaken with respect to youth and poverty in the region, a similar activity should also be considered with respect to planning to develop a template for processes for planning to inform future activities and the way forward. This approach should be integrated into the planning process.

Professor Downes commented that although present-day politicians were better educated and trained than their predecessors, politics still affected decision-making in the same old way. There was a need for this culture to be changed which would result in a reversal that would see education influencing politics and politicians.

The representative from Haiti made several comments that were translated for the benefit of participants by Mr. Paul Dekock of ILPES. Concerning information technology, he indicated that long-term planning had begun in 1985 with a National Foresight Committee, which comprised the public sector and university. The two worked together and consequently submitted a plan on information technology development for the next 15 years. In 1990, the main guidelines were set and prepared by government and, while today, both documents remained relevant, unfortunately the aftermath of two political upheavals curtailed their implementation. With respect to physical planning, in 1982 and 1983, a scheme for the re-ordering of the territory was prepared and a strategy document was devised for regional development.

Evaluation had also been a major challenge in Haiti. The 1980s saw the development of a national system of projects and their execution. In both cases, mechanisms were built and a procedure manual prepared to gauge their impact on development. The representative of Haiti commented, therefore, that the discussions over the last two days were useful but that his main concern was how to address the issues pertaining to his country's political constraints toward achieving its developmental goals.

VI. CLOSING REMARKS

Dr. Ishmael thanked all the participants for their valuable contributions and invited Mr. Ortegon to make his closing remarks in which he also expressed the view that the seminar was very useful and informative. He praised the work done by the Caribbean and Latin American consultants whose presentations bridged the gap in the discussions. He also thanked the delegates and ECLAC's Staff for their hard work and invited suggestions and expressions of successful planning experiences from the region to be forwarded to him.

Mrs. Mendez-Charles delivered the vote of thanks, to ILPES and ECLAC, on behalf of all the participants and the Government of Trinidad and Tobago for organizing the seminar. She observed that the discussions as they pertained to planning and the experiences shared on the planning process were invaluable and noted that this was her first experience at such a gathering of various planning experts and perhaps the first of its kind. The value of this type of dialogue among professionals, she noted, underscored the need for integration toward the development of coherent strategies to achieve the development goals as identified by the countries. Mrs. Mendez-Charles lauded the presentations as being rich, varied and a stimulus to the rich discussions over the period of the seminar. The need for strategic thinking after having gathered intelligence to shape economic responses was thus noted as well as the complex issues to be confronted, such as trade liberalization, decentralization and empowerment, all part of intelligence gathering. She intimated on behalf of the participants that they now looked forward to exchanging information on successful planning experiences in the region.

ANNEX

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