



CDCC/PWG: A/83/3
Distribution: Limited
27 October 1983

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA
Sub-regional Headquarters for the Caribbean

AD HOC EXPERT GROUP MEETING OF PLANNERS IN AGRICULTURE



BACKGROUND AND MANDATE OF AD HOC WORKING GROUP
OF PLANNERS IN AGRICULTURE



UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA Office for the Caribbean

BACKGROUND AND MANDATE OF THE AD HOC WORKING GROUP
OF PLANNERS IN AGRICULTURE

The Second Meeting of Planning Officials held in Kingston, Jamaica, from 29 May to 2 June, 1980, proposed the formation of six Ad Hoc Planning Working Groups to cover Agriculture, Energy, Physical and Regional Planning, Transport, Manpower and Training.

It was envisaged that the groups would comprise officials and experts from the relevant government organizations of CDCC member countries and experts and consultants from relevant sub-regional institutions.

The concept of working groups was approved by CDCC Ministers at the Fifth Session of the CDCC, held in Jamaica from 4-10 June, 1980.

The Ministers decided that the Working Groups would comprise officials and experts from CDCC member governments as well as experts and consultants from Universities and multilateral organizations. The CDCC Secretariat was designed to service the Working Groups.

In accordance with one of the priorities identified for the Agricultural sector, that CDCC countries so plan their agricultural development to become self-sufficient in food, and bearing in mind the fact that the balance of trade deficit of Caribbean countries is almost identical with the food import bill (in 1981 the figure was almost exactly US\$700 million in both cases); the argument for food self-sufficiency would seem to be compelling.

Yet, the main economic developmental path being pursued by many Caribbean states is one of export-led growth. Bearing in mind the fact that the focus of the non-subsistence agricultural sector has been traditionally towards the production of export oriented agricultural production, agricultural planners now tend to be faced with the dilemma as to whether scarce agricultural resources should be focused on traditional export oriented activities or on the development, modernization and expansion of output for domestic consumption.

Faced with this conundrum it was judged to be timely to raise the issue for discussion among agricultural planners. A study entitled "Production of Food for Consumption and Export: the need to achieve optimal balance", has therefore been prepared and is intended to form the basis of the discussions within the Working Group. The central thesis of the paper is that the

Agricultural sector has suffered from a sub-optimal pattern of internal resource allocation. It is therefore hoped that the discussions and deliberations of participants will provide pointers to assist planners in the ongoing task of formulating Agricultural Development Strategy.

10-1-10