ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA
Office for the Caribbean
CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION COMMITTEE

REPORT ON THE WORKSHOP ON
TECHNIQUES FOR EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION IN THE
CARIBBEAN INFORMATION SYSTEM - PLANNING (CARISPLAN)
(24 November - 5 December 1980,
Port-of-Spain, Trinidad)

Convened by the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee Secretariat (CDCC), United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America, Office for the Caribbean, with the sponsorship of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC).
Report on the Workshop on Techniques for Effective Participation in the Caribbean Information System – Planning (CARISPLAN)

(24 November - 5 December 1980, Port of Spain, Trinidad)

The Workshop completed the first phase of the development of the Caribbean Information System - Economic and Social Planning.

The project, which has as its objective the establishment of a bibliographic information system to strengthen Caribbean development and co-operation activities and the development of information services to planners, policy-makers and other technical personnel in the service of the governments of the region, is envisaged as developing into a decentralized system with self-sufficient national focal points able to contribute to and receive benefits from the System.

This has, therefore, required training of the information personnel and technical assistance to governments for the establishment or development of information centres in the national agencies responsible for planning.

The first training workshop was held in May-June 1979 and all member countries of the CDCC were invited to send representatives. Between August 1979 and November 1980 the Library and Information Training Officer has been on missions to all member countries of the CDCC, assisting in the development of the information centres in the Planning Ministries, and providing training at the national level.

A second workshop was held from 24 November to 5 December with the objectives of providing participants with enough information and guidance to enable effective participation in the Caribbean Information System and the beginnings of improved service to its users. It was envisaged that emphasis would be on the development of national information centres: acquisition of locally produced studies and reports, indexing and abstracting of material for CARISPLAN Abstracts, and
The Programme

The programme was structured to show a practical relationship between the theoretical aspects of information science, the global and regional developments and the present and proposed developments of the Caribbean Information System.

The focus of the Caribbean Information System is the provision of information services to members of the government services of the region.

A high priority is therefore identification and awareness of users and their needs; the government organization and structure and the activities of their users. The planning process in the Caribbean was therefore examined and the relationship between planning information and development was also related to the development of information services.

Acquisition, organization and dissemination of information were specially related to the locally produced socio-economic information which falls within the scope of the Caribbean Information System.

As the plans for National Information Systems of the region are at an embryonic stage, it was considered important that activities of the Caribbean Information System should in no way conflict with activities at the national level and consequently developments in the national information systems were taken into consideration.

In the development of the information facilities, in the Caribbean, an important consideration is the sources of funding for information services, and there was therefore a session on sources of aid.

The Director of the ECLA Office for the Caribbean described ECLA's role in the region and areas in which technical assistance is available. Representatives of IDRC and UNDP (Trinidad Office) also described areas of technical assistance which could be made available for library and information development.

In the final session of the workshop participants presented and discussed their work programmes for 1981 and in some cases for 1981-1985. These included participation in the Caribbean Information System and the follow-up activities which would be required from the national governments and from ECLA.
There were formal lectures with question and answer periods, discussion groups, games and practical sessions on indexing and abstracting.

A copy of the programme is appended as Annex I.

EVALUATION

In the last session of the workshop participants were asked to complete a questionnaire on:

1. Their backgrounds.
2. Expectations from the workshop.
3. Their understanding of the topics treated.
4. Their opinions on the organization and content of the workshop.

Answers were received from fourteen participants. Their expectations have been summarized above, and the other answers are given below:

1. Participants' understanding of the Topics:
   - The structure of the national focal points in the Caribbean Information System:
     
     50% Very good
     43% Good
     7% Fair
   
   - The planning process in the Caribbean:
     
     21% Very good
     43% Good
     29% Fair
     7% Poor
   
   - CARISPLAN Abstracts:
     
     57% Very good
     29% Good
     14% Fair
   
   - Identification of user needs and construction of user profiles:
     
     43% Very good
     36% Good
     14% Fair
     7% Poor
- Types and sources of planning information in the Caribbean:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
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<tr>
<td>7%</td>
<td>Very good</td>
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<tr>
<td>79%</td>
<td>Good</td>
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<td>7%</td>
<td>Fair</td>
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<td>7%</td>
<td>Poor</td>
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- CARBIB data base: structure and functions:

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- Classification schemes used in information processing in the Caribbean:

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<tr>
<td>14%</td>
<td>Very good</td>
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<tr>
<td>64%</td>
<td>Good</td>
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<tr>
<td>21%</td>
<td>Fair</td>
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- Budgeting for library/information services in the Caribbean:

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<td>14%</td>
<td>Fair</td>
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<tr>
<td>21%</td>
<td>Poor</td>
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- Cataloguing of documents using the CDC Bibliographic Record Card (BRC):

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<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29%</td>
<td>Very good</td>
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<tr>
<td>71%</td>
<td>Good</td>
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- Indexing of documents using the CDC Indexing Manual:

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<tr>
<td>21%</td>
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<td>79%</td>
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- Abstracting of documents using the CDC Abstracting Manual:

<table>
<thead>
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<td>Fair</td>
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- The value of indexing and abstracting tools:

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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>29%</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7%</td>
<td>Fair</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Potential of Computerized Information Systems in the Caribbean:

  21% Very good
  43% Good
  7% Fair
  29% Poor

- Education of users of Caribbean planning information:

  36% Very good
  36% Good
  21% Fair
  7% Poor

- My country's responsibilities for participating in the Caribbean Information System:

  79% Very good
  14% Good
  7% Fair

2. 100% of the participants responded that:

1. The organization of the lectures was satisfactory.
2. The coverage of the topics was satisfactory.
3. The working tools were adequate.
4. The working tools were relevant to their needs.
5. The content of the group discussions facilitated learning from other participants.

3. The number of the practical (indexing and abstracting) sessions was considered to be:

   Adequate by 29%
   Too large by 29%
   Too small by 35%

   There was no response from 7% of the participants.

4. The structure of the practical (indexing and abstracting) sessions was considered effective to satisfy the particular library situation of 57% of the participants while 29% considered it not sufficiently effective and 14% were uncertain.

5. 71% of the participants considered that the number of group discussions was adequate and 29% that it was not enough.
6. 21% of the participants would have wished to have other topics covered in the workshop.

The following were proposed:

1. Communication.
2. Other aspects of information work apart from the library.
3. Marketing techniques for library services.
4. Special libraries and the general public.
5. Methods of overcoming the information gap and encouraging public participation.

**ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE WELFARE OF PARTICIPANTS**

65% reported these as adequate
21% as inadequate
14% gave no response

There was a recommendation that other hotels be investigated for future workshops.

**The Future of the System**

As a result of the workshop, participants displayed a greater awareness of the value of increased services to planners, policy-makers and other technical personnel in the service of the governments of the region. In the plans for future action which were outlined in the last session, there were specific proposals for:

1. Developing collections of locally produced material.
2. Providing a more effective service to users.
3. Contributing to CARISPLAN Abstracts.
4. Utilizing the information produced by the system.
5. Training at the national level of personnel involved in operating various aspects of the system.

**Measures to improve the present situation:**

1. **Collections of locally produced information**

Each participant had examined the sources of locally-produced information in his or her country and the means of establishing or developing such a collection. This had been presented at an earlier session of the workshop and is to be used as the basis for identifying suitable material for the collection.
The problem of access to locally produced material was raised in several of the sessions and this seemed to be a common problem in terms of:

Knowledge of the existence of the material in view of the fact that many of these documents are unpublished and had not been formally issued.

Various guidelines were proposed for:

**Documents already issued**

1. Papers which had been submitted to Parliament and had been approved by the House are usually considered to be available for public distribution.

2. Reports emanating from Ministries or Departments can usually be vetted by the relevant Minister or Permanent Secretary, for a decision on release or declassification.

**Future documents**

3. As a method of streamlining future release of documents it was also proposed that there should be a system of classification - a modified version of that used by the World Bank, which could be assigned to each document and which would allow for a system of declassification to be operated.

The importance of declassification of these documents as a means of providing access to information on the development activities in the region was stressed, and there were several examples provided by participants and resource personnel of the duplication which might arise from the lack of awareness by planners, etc., of studies or reports which might have been undertaken previously.

All documents which relate to socio-economic aspects of development in the region, which have been produced in 1970 or later and which have been released for distribution will be entered into the system by the national focal points and the contributing libraries.

**Providing more effective service to users**

There was in the workshop an emphasis on the relationship between the users of information, the type of information which they
require on a long and short-term basis, and methods of satisfying these needs.

Participants had, in preparation for the workshop, identified the users of their information services and their characteristics. Detailed User Profiles, however, are still to be made, to ensure that the appropriate current awareness services and where possible a service of selective dissemination of information can be provided.

The Caribbean Documentation Centre will continue to provide the sub-region with Current Awareness Services of information generated locally and world-wide; the User Profiles prepared by each participating information centre will ensure that this service can be further expanded, while being more relevant to the current needs of the users.

**Contribution to CARISPLAN Abstracts**

Some of the national focal points and special libraries had been contributing to CARISPLAN Abstracts before the workshop.

The practical sessions, aimed at improving the participants' techniques in indexing and abstracting and standardizing the input to CARISPLAN, were also expected to increase the speed of input to the decentralized system.

Participants have agreed to submit entries regularly to the Caribbean Documentation Centre for entry into the data base, and finally inclusion in CARISPLAN Abstracts.

**Utilizing the information produced by the Caribbean Information System**

As a great deal of the material produced in the region will be relevant to the information needs of the users of the system, it is expected that CARISPLAN Abstracts and future products will be used by librarians in providing reference services.

In the group discussions on the cost-effectiveness of indexing and abstracting and the use of CARISPLAN Abstracts as a reference tool, there were some suggestions for ensuring that this first output of the system is more easily understandable to the users. The introduction of the next issue has therefore been expanded to provide more details on the use of the abstracting journal, its orientation and scope.
An important aspect of access to the information held is the delivery of the documents to the end users. The Caribbean Documentation Centre has been providing a service of document delivery to users. At the workshop, it was agreed that this service should be expanded to serve those countries not presently taking advantage of it. The documents will be acquired by the Caribbean Documentation Centre on a selective basis, and will be copied where required for distribution to participating countries. The service will be free of charge to all government and regional organizations in CDCC member countries.

Training of library and information personnel

It was generally agreed by the participants that specialized training in certain areas would benefit the information services in the region and facilitate the operation of the system. The specific areas were:

Abstracting and indexing
User education
Preliminary training of library assistants

Arrangements have been made to continue the training programmes and workshops will be held in:

Jamaica February 1981
Barbados March 1981
St. Vincent April 1981

The workshop in Jamaica and Barbados will be on abstracting and indexing and on preparation of entries for CARISPLAN and the one in St. Vincent will be for training library assistants working in government libraries. Similar workshops are planned for Guyana and other countries.

The Library and Information Training Officer will also help to organize the documentation centre which will serve as the national focal point in Montserrat.
It was generally agreed that there should be a newsletter to provide participating centres with news of the system. As a result the CDCC Focus—a bi-monthly newsletter produced by the ECLA Office for the Caribbean will be used to circulate information to members of the System.

**Evaluation meeting**

A meeting of representatives of focal points will be convened in late 1983 to examine the problems experienced by participating centres and to evaluate the system.
Annex I

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA (CEPAL)
Office for the Caribbean

CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION COMMITTEE (CDCC)

Workshop on Techniques for Effective Participation in the CARIBBEAN INFORMATION SYSTEM
24 November - 5 December 1980
Port-of-Spain, Trinidad

PROGRAMME

Convened by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America. Office for the Caribbean (as mandated by the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee with the sponsorship of the International Development Research Centre of Canada).
Monday 24 November

8.00 - 9.00  Registration of Participants
9.00 - 10.00  OPENING SESSION

Opening Remarks
Ms. Wilma Primus
Project Co-ordinator
Caribbean Information System

Welcome Address
Mr. Wilfred Whittingham
Director
CEPAL Office for the Caribbean

Introduction of Participants
Participants will be invited to briefly introduce themselves to the other members of the Workshop, to describe their functions at the national level, and their expectations from the Workshop.

Ms. Fay Durrant
Library and Information Training Officer
Caribbean Information System

General Outline of Workshop
Background information on the aims and objectives of course.

10.00 - 10.15  COFFEE BREAK

10.15 - 12.00  SESSION I

Chairman
Ms. Wilma Primus

CO-OPERATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF INFORMATION SERVICES

- Objectives of Information Systems
- Planning and Development of Information Systems
- International, Regional and Sub-regional Information Systems: their value to the information services in the region
- INFOPLAN - Information System for Planning in Latin America

Ms. Martha Stone
Associate Director
Information Sciences Division
IDRC, Canada

Ms. Luisa Johnson
Project Co-ordinator
INFOPLAN
CEPAL, Santiago, Chile
1.30 - 4.30  SESSION II

THE CARIBBEAN INFORMATION SYSTEM

- Its objectives, structure and development  Ms. Wilma Primus
- Relationship with other information activities in the Caribbean
- Participation at the national level

COFFEE BREAK

- Services provided by the Caribbean Information System: Present and projected
- Products of the Caribbean Information System: CARISPLAN Abstracts - examination, use orientation
- Data bases of the Caribbean Information System: CARIB CARCAT

CARIBBEAN CONGRESS OF INFORMATION PROFESSIONALS

- Brief presentation by Secretariat Ms. Wilma Primus
- Discussion and reports by participants of their governments' reactions to the Statutes

Tuesday 25 November

8.30 - 12.00  SESSION III

Chairman  Ms. Fay Ewart

NATIONAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS

- Presentation by each participant on the national information system of his/her country
DISCUSSION

10.00 - 11.00

COFFEE BREAK

and payment of subsistence allowance

- Planning and development of a National Information System - Trinidad and Tobago
  Ms. Yvonne Bobb
  Library Planning Unit
  Trinidad and Tobago

- Examination of plans for National Information Systems: Barbados, Jamaica and Cuba
  Barbados
  Ms. Nancy St. John
  Chairman
  National Council on Libraries, Archives and Documentation Centres
  Barbados

  Jamaica
  Ms. Hannah Francis
  Technical Information Officer
  National Planning Agency
  Jamaica

1.30 - 4.30

SESSION IV

Chairman

1.30 - 2.45

THE PLANNING PROCESS IN THE CARIBBEAN

- National development plans - design, preparation and implementation.
  Development projects - identification, project preparation and implementation.
  The type of information required for the planning process
  Ms. Joyce Alcantara
  Director of Economics and Research
  Ministry of Finance
  Trinidad and Tobago
3.00 - 3.45
- The relationship between Planning, Information and Development
  Ms. Carol Collins
  Chief, Information and Documentation Section
  CARICOM Secretariat

3.45 - 4.30
- The relationship between Planning, Information and Development
  Mr. Jean Casimir
  Social Affairs Officer
  CEPAL Office for the Caribbean

Wednesday 26 November

8.30 - 12.00  SESSION V

THE USERS OF INFORMATION

- The users of information at the national level
  Ms. Fay Durrant

- The use of information within government organizations

- Current and potential users of information

Presentation by participants of data related to their country:

1. National profiles
2. Government organization and structure
3. The users and potential users of information
IDENTIFICATION OF USERS NEEDS

- User studies
- User profiles
- Composition
- User profiles for planners and other technical personnel at the national level
- Strategies for satisfying users needs - Group discussions

Ms. Fay Durrant

1.30 - 4.30  SESSION VI

Chairman

1.30 - 2.30

DEVELOPMENT OF INFORMATION RESOURCES

- Relationship to users needs
- Sources of relevant material
- Producers of information
- Undocumented information
- Classified information
- Type of material available for libraries and information centres in the government departments
- Co-operative acquisition policies

Ms. P. Raymond
Librarian
Ministry of Finance
Trinidad and Tobago

2.30 - 3.30

- Leading issues in the determination of data sources and data banks - the case of the CDCC Statistical Data Bank

Mr. Lancelot A. Busby
Statistician
CEPAL Office for the Caribbean

3.30 - 4.30

SOURCES OF FINANCE FOR DEVELOPING INFORMATION RESOURCES

- Budgeting for acquisition
- Sources of aid for library materials

Ms. Carol Collins
Thursday 27 November

8.30 - 12.00  SESSION VII

Chairman

THE TREATMENT AND PROCESSING OF INFORMATION
- Classification schemes
- Comparison of the conventional schemes
- Their applicability to specialized technical libraries and information centres in the Caribbean

Participants' presentations on the classification schemes used at the national level, their usefulness and effectiveness

- Thesauri as classification schemes
- The Uniterm System

1.30 - 4.30  SESSION VIII

Chairman

THE CATALOGUING PRINCIPLES
- The Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules II: Principles

- The UNISIST reference manual for machine-readable bibliographic description - Principles

- The CDC manual for the processing of data for the bibliographic record card of the Caribbean Information System

Exercises in cataloguing documents by the principles of AACR II, and the UNISIST reference manual, using the bibliographic record card
Friday 28 November

8.30 - 12.00  SESSION IX

Chairman
Ms. Wilma Primus

COMPUTERIZED INFORMATION SYSTEMS

- Existing services
- Potential for the Caribbean
- Planning for computerization
- Organization and structure of computer files
- Relation of file organization to other operations of an Information Retrieval System - processing, services

COFFEE BREAK

- CARBIB data base: structure and functions
  Ms. Wilma Primus
- Exercises in cataloguing documents using the bibliographic record card
- Review of exercises

1.30 - 4.30  SESSION X

INDEXING

- Objectives and value
  Ms. Fay Durrant
- Vocabulary control
- Thesauri
- OECD Macrothesaurus
- Exercises using the Bibliographic Record Card
8.30 - 12.00  SESSION XI

ABSTRACTING

- Objectives Ms. Fay Durrant
- Types of abstracts: informative abstracts; indicative abstracts; informative/indicative abstracts
- Models of abstracts

SESSIONS XII - XVI are practical sessions in which participants will prepare bibliographic records for input into the Caribbean Information System. These sessions will be conducted by Ms. Wilma Primus and Ms. Fay Durrant

Tuesday 2 December

SESSION XII

- Group discussion of the value of indexing and abstracting to Government and Technical libraries: its cost effectiveness Dr. Wilson Aiyepeku

GROUP LEADERS

Ms. Martha Stone
Ms. Wilma Primus

Wednesday 3 December

SESSION XIII

- CARISPLAN Abstracts: use as a reference tool Dr. Wilson Aiyepeku
Program Adviser
IDRC, Ottawa, Canada

Thursday 4 December

8.30 - 10.00  SESSION XVII

USER EDUCATION

- The relationship between librarians and the user community Ms. Fay Durrant
- Public relations - Media
  Promotion of Caribbean Information System
- Orientation tours
- Current awareness services
- SDI services
10.00 - 10.15                      COFFEE BREAK

10.15 - 12.00                 Group exercises in User Education

SESSION XVIII

1.30 - 4.30
Chairman

SOURCES OF AID FOR INFORMATION AND PROJECT FORMULATION

- Aid from the International Development Research Centre of Canada, Project preparation, IDRC Projects
- The United Nations Development Programme

Friday 5 December

8.30 - 12.00  SESSION XIX

NATIONAL PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPING INFORMATION SERVICES TO GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

- Work Programme of individual institutions. The work programme will detail the plans for implementing a programme of information services to governments. This is a paper which participants will have begun preparing before the Workshop and which they will continue to develop in the light of their experiences and information gained during the Workshop.
1.30 - 4.30  SESSION XX

- Participation in the Caribbean Information System Responsibilities Benefits

Within the scope of the national proposals the activities of each focal point and of participating centres will be examined in detail with discussion on responsibilities and benefits of participants in the System

CLOSING SESSION

- Summary session and evaluation

Ms. Wilma Primus
WORKSHOP ON TECHNIQUES FOR EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION IN THE
CARIBBEAN INFORMATION SYSTEM
24 November - 5 December 1980

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

BAHAMAS
Ms. Bonnie Nguyen
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Assistant Documentalist/Librarian

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Documentalist/Indexer

Ms. Glenda Joseph
Indexer

Ms. Cathy Shepherd
Indexer

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WORKSHOP ON TECHNIQUES FOR EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION IN THE
CARIBBEAN INFORMATION SYSTEM
24 November - 5 December 1980

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