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SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE SOCIAL SUMMIT
(A REPORT ON GUYANA, JAMAICA, TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO)

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THE SOCIAL SUMMIT AND THE SOCIAL SITUATION*

I: INTRODUCTION: SUMMIT OBJECTIVES

The **three** core objectives of the Social Summit are: the reduction and elimination of widespread poverty; increasing productive employment and the reduction of unemployment; and social integration. These objectives are believed to be "closely interwoven within a tapestry of values", without which neither individuals nor societies can truly develop. The fundamental policy concerns which arise therefrom, at both the national and international level, are: how to promote high rates of economic growth; how to translate this growth into job expansion; and, how to achieve balance between creating jobs and improving the quality of jobs. It is taken as axiomatic that in order to achieve these Summit objectives, an unprecedented degree of international cooperation will have to be forthcoming.

From the standpoint of the Commonwealth Caribbean, pursuit of the Social Summit objectives can be seen as driven by **two fundamental considerations**. **One** of these is how to promote the maximum possible consensus at the international level, on which policies should be adopted and pursued by the international community in order to set in train a process of sustainable human development, worldwide. For the region, this requires a conscious effort to moderate claims to uniqueness and also to modify inclinations toward "exceptionalism" and against "universalism". This would not be an easy task in a region with our intellectual traditions, and where the particular distinctiveness of its population, size, geography, cultural diversity and history is so obvious. However, the task of building global consensus and universalist values around an acceptable minimum package of international and national policies is very vital to the long term strategic interests of the region.

**Research assistance in the preparation of this document was provided by Ms Andrea Foo, Research Assistant, IDS, University of Guyana.*

The **other consideration** is how to translate this consensus when arrived at into "nuts and bolts proposals". That is, how to design proposals which are concrete and implementable, while at the same time providing the modalities for their monitoring, review and follow-up.

There are certain obvious similarities in the social situations of individual countries in the region and a sufficient convergence of long term outlook to support the thesis that a common regional position on the Summit objectives is vitally important to all countries. The similarities in the social situations are rooted in size, degree of openness and dependence, history, culture, outlook and characteristic forms of individual and social behaviour. They are also clearly reinforced in the joint endeavour of developing Caricom. **The search however, for common regional positions, should not be allowed to mask vital intra-regional differences.** Already in some quarters, there is a tendency to reduce not only the region, but all the countries of the South, into one or two basic typologies. This would inevitably lead to badly designed solutions.

In what follows, the social situation and circumstances of Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago are analysed and disaggregated with the aim of advancing "nuts and bolts proposals" for incorporation in presentations by regional representatives to the World Summit for Social Development.

II: THE SOCIAL SITUATION

In this Section the social situation in Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago is analysed in terms of **seven** classes of indicators, namely, population and geography; the standard-of-living; the social sectors; employment and unemployment; poverty; income distribution; and, governance.

A. POPULATION AND GEOGRAPHY

Frequently, it is not fully appreciated the extent to which for purposes of cross-country comparisons world-wide, the most fundamental descriptors still remain, **population and geography**. In relation to both, all three territories of the region would be classed as small on a world scale, as their combined population is just about 4.5 million persons, and the land area only about 231,000 square kilometers. Within these totals however, differences among the countries are quite striking (See **Table 1**). The population of Jamaica (2.5 million) is about twice that of Trinidad & Tobago (1.3 million) and about three and one-half times larger than Guyana (0.7 million). The land area distribution is also skewed. Guyana alone accounts for 93 percent of the total, with Jamaica having only 5 percent and Trinidad & Tobago the remainder (2 percent).

For most of the past two and a half decades, the population of Guyana has been on the decline; while in Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago, population growth rates have ranged between one and 1.3 percent (see **Table 1**). In all three territories, however, the rates of **urbanisation** have been high, including Guyana, where the population has been decreasing. At present, the urban population as a percent of the total, in Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago, is 35, 58, and 67 percent respectively.

Ethnicity and cultural factors within each territory's population also vary considerably. Guyana has seven major ethnic groups defined in its census: Negro or Black, East Indian, Chinese, Amerindian, White, Mixed and Others. It has more than the others, although Trinidad & Tobago with its Indo-Trinidadian, Afro-Trinidadian and French-Creole population, is more ethnically diverse than Jamaica.

Table 1
Population Statistics

Indicator	Guyana	Jamaica	Trinidad & Tobago
1. Population (million)	0.7m	2.5m	1.3m
2. Rates of Growth of Population			
A 1970-80	0.4	1.3	1.1
B 1980-90	-0.1	1.3	1.3
C 1990-94	-0.1	1.0	1.1
3. Rate of Growth of Urban Population			
A: 1970-80	2.0	2.7	5.0
B: 1980-90	0.6	2.6	3.1
C: 1990-94	3.2	3.0	0.7
4. Population per km ²	3.4	225	253
5. Population per hectare of Agricultural land	0.4	5.2	7.9
6. Area (km ²)	214,970	10,991	5,128
7. Agricultural Area ('000 hectares)	1,725	475	169

Source: Various Official Documents.

The **population-land mass ratios** also vary, with population per square kilometer being high by global comparisons in Jamaica (225:1) and Trinidad & Tobago (253:1), and low in Guyana (3.4:1). The **agriculture land area** also varies significantly between the countries, with Guyana having by far the largest agricultural area available, and because of its relatively small population, the lowest ratio of agricultural area to population (see **Table 1**). These ratios should be considered also in relation to the well established variations in natural resource potential among the territories. Guyana is well known for its biodiversity potential, forestry, mineral and hydro power resources, although the other two territories do have significant natural resource potential in bauxite (Jamaica) and hydrocarbons (Trinidad & Tobago).

Further, **the settlement patterns**, terrain and size of the island territories favour a far larger degree of integration among the population than is the case with Guyana. In these territories there is effectively total coverage for road, telephone and facsimiles, radio and television communications. But in Guyana, about 90 percent of the settlement is confined to a narrow coastal strip accounting for about 3 percent of the land area, alongside the pronounced inaccessibility of the hinterland and interior areas and communities. Because of the heavy concentration of the indigenous Amerindian population in these parts of the country (and as we shall see later, their poverty) the issue of social integration is consequently far more complex and difficult to address in Guyana than elsewhere in the region.

While the territories are all located in the same broad geographical region, Guyana's land location raises special **geo-political** concerns, which are complicated by the existence of border disputes with neighbouring countries. Despite combined efforts by all the parties concerned to resolve their differences peacefully, the mere existence of this situation complicates an already

complex situation in which border communities are plagued by smuggling and the narcotics trade.

On balance, the island territories appear to be more prone to **natural disasters** than Guyana. This is principally due to their location in the hurricane belt. There is also the longrun danger of earthquakes, given the geological formation of the islands. Guyana's principal threat is from flooding caused by heavy rainfall along the coastal strip, where most of the population is concentrated. This area is about six metres below sea-level.

In sum therefore, population and geography indicators reveal that the region as a whole is small in global terms, and made up of diverse ethnic and cultural groups, while being subject to significant population pressure on available land resources, and the ensuing competition which this generates. The picture is, however, not uniform, for considerable underutilization of natural resource potential exists in Guyana. Finding ways therefore of harnessing this potential would be crucial to the outcomes of regional efforts to eradicate widespread poverty and to promote social integration.

B. THE STANDARD-OF-LIVING

The most widely used and comprehensive statistical measure of development is the **United Nations Human Development Index (HDI)** which combines three variables: income, longevity (health) and knowledge (education). In relation to this index, **Trinidad & Tobago** is highly placed worldwide (**35 out of 173 countries**), **Jamaica** at **65** is in the middle range, while **Guyana** is low, **107** (see **Table 2**). This difference is partly reflected in the different values of real per capita GDP among the three countries. Trinidad & Tobago (US\$4049 at 1988 prices)

has a **per capita GDP 2.6 times as large as that of Jamaica and 6.3 times that of Guyana.** (Table 2).

All three countries have suffered from **significant decreases in per capita income since 1970.** The compression of income in Guyana, however, was longer lasting and more devastating compared to the other two countries. The recent turnaround of its economy, has also been the most striking, reflecting no doubt in part, the low base from which recovery started in 1992. (see Table 2).

The behaviour of the **exchange rate and consumer prices** (linked because of the openness of these economies) underscores these problems. Exchange rate depreciation and consumer price inflation have been particularly marked in Guyana. In Guyana, the local currency required to purchase one US dollar has grown by a factor of 38, since 1984. In Jamaica the growth has been by a factor of 10 and in Trinidad & Tobago about 2.5. At the same time, inflation rates in Guyana for each year exceeded 25 percent per annum in the period 1981-1993. For the other territories inflation, although significant, was not as steep. The years in which the official exchange rates were either floated or unified with the parallel rates have recorded exceptionally high rates of inflation, e.g., Guyana 106 percent in 1992 and Jamaica 51 and 77 percent respectively for (1992 and 1993).

Finally, the economic data show high, but varying degrees of external dependence. The ratio of exports of goods and non-financial services to GDP in constant dollars is about 80, 56 and 35 percent respectively for Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago. Similarly, the disbursed external debt of the three countries are: 2.1, 4.4, and 2.0 billion US dollars, respectively, with their respective debt services ratios being 25, 30 and 35 percent in 1993.

Table 2
Income, Price, and Openness Indicators

Indicator	Guyana	Jamaica	Trinidad & Tobago
1. Average Annual Rate of Growth of Per Capita GDP			
A. 1970-80	-0.2	-2.0	4.4
B. 1980-90	-3.7	0.3	-4.2
C. 1990-93	8.8	0.1	-0.7
D. 1994 ¹	8.0	-	4.0
2. GDP Per Capita for 1993 at US\$ Constant 1988 prices	644	1563	4049
3. UNDP: H.D.I. 1993	107	65	35
4. Average Annual Growth of Consumer Prices			
A. 1971-80			
B. 1981-90	10.3	18.5	13.2
C. 1991	33.0	15.1	11.1
D. 1992	105.9	51.1	3.8
E. 1993	26.0	77.3	6.5
F. 1994	7.0	22.0	10.8
5. Exchange Rate (local currency per US\$)			
A. 1984	3.8	3.9	2.4
B. 1989	27.2	5.7	4.3
C. 1994 ²	144.0	33.0	5.99
6. Index of Openness (1993)			
A. Exports of goods and services to GDP	80	56	35
B. External Debt Service Ratios	25	30	35
C. External Debt/GDP Ratios	271	150	31
D. Per Capita External Debt (\$US)	2800	1800	1500

Notes: ¹Estimate.
 ²End of year rate. For other years: period average.

Source: IADB, Annual reports, Government Statistics (various countries).

C. THE SOCIAL INDICATORS

Table 3 shows **ten key social indicators** for the three countries. The information portrayed there, conforms to the standard of living indicators presented in the previous Section. **Life expectancy in Guyana is about 65 years as compared with 70+ years in the other two countries.** Indeed the level for Guyana in 1992 is comparable with that which obtained in the other countries more than three decades ago. The **infant mortality** situation is equally bad. At a rate of 35 per 1000 births, **Guyana's rate is about twice that of Trinidad & Tobago and 2½ times that of Jamaica.** The **mortality rate for children** under 5 years old is even worse. At 65 per 1000 this is more than thrice the rate in Trinidad & Tobago and more than 3½ times the rate in Jamaica.

Data on the number of **population per physician and per hospital bed** also conform to the general health picture. Thus the numbers of population in Guyana are more than 5 and 20 times higher than those obtaining in Trinidad, respectively.

Finally, the data on **contraceptive prevalence** show a very low percentage for Guyana (28) as compared with the other territories. Because of the abortion situation and the rapid emergence of problems of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, this has serious implications for future health delivery.

The education indicators show comparatively speaking, high rates of literacy and school enrollment in all three territories. In recent years, however, there has been marked declines in the ratios of trained teachers to total teachers at all levels of education in Guyana. At the same time, repeat rates have risen and student performances in examinations have declined.

Table 3
Social Indicators

Indicator	Guyana	Jamaica	Trinidad & Tobago
A. Life Expectancy (years)			
1960	56.1	62.8	63.5
1993	64.0	74.0	71.0
B. Infant Mortality (per 1000 births)			
1960	100	63	56
1993	35	14	15
C. Child Mortality (Under 5 years) 1992	65	18	20
D. Primary School Enrollment (%) of relevant age group 1992	98	97	98
E. Secondary School Enrollment (% of relevant age group) 1992	58	74	74
F. Recurrent Education Expenditure (as % of GNP, 1992)	2.0	4.1	5.6
G. Recurrent Health Expenditure (as % of GNP, 1992)	2.8	2.9	2.6
H. Population ('000) per Physician	4.7	2.0	0.9
I. Population ('000) per Hospital Bed	4.1	0.3	0.2
J. Contraceptive Prevalence (%)	28	51	44

Source: Government Statistics (Various Countries), UNDP, 1994.

In all three territories, budgetary pressures on education have peaked leading to real declines in per capita government recurrent expenditure in education and the introduction of various forms of fees and cost recovery measures. The latter has not prevented a decline in the quality of educational services being delivered, and surveys indicate that this has impacted itself disproportionately on the poor.

In recent years, Jamaica has spent about **10-12 percent** of its recurrent budget on education. In Guyana, the 1995 Budget projects a rate of 13 percent and for Trinidad & Tobago in recent years it has been **12-14 percent**. As shares of GDP, this represents about 5, 4, and 6 percent respectively for Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad & Tobago. **Combined recurrent expenditure on health and education** in Guyana in 1994 as a percentage of GDP (8.5) was better than in Jamaica (7.0 percent) and about the same in Trinidad & Tobago (8.2 percent).

D. EMPLOYMENT/UNEMPLOYMENT

Jobless growth and unemployment are at the heart of the Summit concerns. Currently unemployment rates in the territories are **11.7 percent in Guyana, 15 percent in Jamaica and 20 percent in Trinidad & Tobago**. These overall ratios, however, conceal important variations.

Thus in **Guyana**, while 11.7 percent of the population is unemployed, **underemployment is massive**. In the 1992 Living Standards Measurement Survey (LSMS) and Household and Income Expenditure Survey (HIES) it was established that nationally, the mean number of days worked in a 30 day recall period was only 13.7 days. For farmers the mean was staggeringly low, 3.1 days.

When considered by **age group** the data also show that in 1992 the unemployment rate in the **15-19 years old age group is 37 percent** (see **Table 4**). **Table 5** shows the unemployment position by age and race. Overall, the rate among Afro-Guyanese was slightly higher than that for all races. In the age group 15-19 years, the figure reached as high as **44.4 percent**. **Table 6** shows the situation by sex and location. There it can also be seen that women predominate in the category of "domestic activities." Most of the unemployment was in the rural areas (about 54 percent of the total), followed by urban Georgetown (26 percent).

Table 4

Unemployment Rate by Age (Guyana)

Age/year	1970	1980	1986	1992
15 - 19 years	51.3	55.5	31.6	36.6
20 - 24 years	22.0	22.7	20.9	19.5
25 - 29 years	8.5	9.3	10.5	10.4
30 - 34 years	5.3	5.7	8.0	6.6
35 - 39 years	4.1	4.5	5.5	3.6
40 - 44 years	3.4	3.9	3.9	3.3
45 - 49 years	3.6	3.4	4.7	2.8
50 - 54 years	3.5	2.6	2.7	4.0
55 - 59 years	3.5	2.2	2.1	4.1
60 - 64 years	3.6	2.4	2.7	1.7
65 years +	3.5	1.8	4.3	2.2
Total	15.4	16.8	12.9	11.1

Sources: 1970 & 1980, Population Census Reports; 1986, Labour Market Survey; 1992, HIES.

While 11 percent of the labour force is unemployed, about one-half the population aged 14+ is working. The remainder (38 percent) is involved in domestic duties, school or are retired. About 40 percent of the employment is in the informal sector, while about 50 percent is in regular salaried or waged employment. The remainder (10 percent) represents casual labour. Only 22 percent of Indo-Guyanese women work, as compared to 30 percent for Afro-Guyanese, and 45 percent for Amerindian women.

Table 5

Rate of Unemployment by Age and Race 1992 (Guyana)

Age Group	East Indians	Afro Guyanese	All Races
15 - 19 years	36.1	44.4	36.6
20 - 24 years	17.6	24.4	19.5
25 - 29 years	9.7	12.3	10.4
30 - 34 years	6.4	7.6	6.6
35 - 39 years	3.5	4.2	3.7
40 - 44 years	3.3	4.4	3.3
45 - 49 years	3.0	3.3	2.8
50 - 54 years	3.0	5.3	4.0
55 - 59 years	4.2	3.5	4.1
60 - 64 years	1.9	2.3	1.7
65 years +	2.7	2.0	2.2
Total	11.5	13.6	11.1

Source: HIES, 1992.

Table 6
Population Out of the Labour Force (Guyana)

Characteristic	Seeking Employment (%)	Domestic Activities Only (%)
All Guyana	11.1	25.5
Sex		
Male	62.0	5.5
Female	38.0	94.5
Mean age	25.1	34.5
Area		
Urban Georgetown	25.7	15.1
Urban Other	14.4	10.9
Rural Coastal	53.8	66.2
Rural Interior	<u>6.1</u>	<u>7.9</u>
	100.0	100.0

Source: World Bank, Guyana (1994).

About 30 percent of the labour force is in agriculture, the highest percentage for the three countries. All services combined, including public utilities, transport, storage and communication totalled about 40 percent, the lowest figure for the three countries.

In **Jamaica**, between Independence and the early 1970's, GDP grew at about 4.4 percent per annum, yet unemployment rose from 14 percent in 1960 to 23 percent in 1972 - a striking manifestation of jobless growth. Between 1973 and 1980 the unemployment rate varied around 20-28 percent. Between 1980 and 1987, it averaged 25 percent. Since 1988, it has fallen to about 15 percent. **Table 7** shows the link between unemployment and poverty in Jamaica. Overall, the lowest unemployment rates occur in quintiles 1 and 5. The reason for quintile 1

Table 7

Unemployment Rates by Consumption Quintile, 1991 (Jamaica)

Location	1	2	3	4	5
All Jamaica	9.5	15.6	14.3	15.3	9.2
Kingston	20.0	22.0	14.0	12.0	6.0
Other towns	16.0	21.0	21.0	14.0	11.0
Rural Areas	8.0	13.0	12.0	17.0	13.0

Source: Dennis Brown, "The Socioeconomy of Poverty in Jamaica and Prospects for its Reduction," mss. (Kingston, December 1992).

being so low is that the low unemployment rate in the rural areas (8 percent) masks the existence of extensive low paid wage jobs, and subsistence agriculture as the main sources of livelihood. In Kingston where the latter phenomenon is not possible on the same scale, the highest unemployment rates occur in quintiles 1 and 2.

Overall, about one-quarter of the employed labour force is in agriculture, forestry and fishing. The next largest sector is services, not specified. If commerce, public administration, transport, public communications and public utilities are combined with this category, the total is just over one-half of the labour force.

Table 8 shows the unemployment rate in **Trinidad & Tobago** since 1980. The current rate is about twice as high as that which prevailed in the early 1980s. Although slightly down from the peak of 22 percent over the period 1987-1989, this does not warrant any optimism, as the trend since 1991 has been slightly upward, moving from 18.9 percent to 20 percent in 1993. The unemployment situation in Trinidad & Tobago is far more serious than the other countries.

For the age groups 15-19 years and 20-24 years the respective rates were 43 and 31 percent in 1992.

The labour force in agriculture was only 10 percent compared to the other territories. Services including transport, storage and communications and utilities accounted for as much as 60 percent of the labour force, significantly higher than in Guyana and Jamaica. Overall, the labour force participation rate was 60 percent. The female rate, however is only 44 percent. Women were 37 percent of the labour force.

Table 8

Unemployment Rate (Trinidad & Tobago)

Year	Unemployment Rate	3 Year Moving Average
1980	9.9	-
1981	10.4	-
1982	9.9	10.1
1983	11.1	10.5
1984	13.4	11.5
1985	15.6	13.4
1986	17.2	15.4
1987	22.2	18.3
1988	22.0	20.5
1989	22.0	22.1
1990	20.0	21.3
1991	18.9	20.3
1992	19.2	19.4
1993	20.0	19.3

Sources: Central Bank, Central Statistical Office, Ministry of Finance.

E. POVERTY

Using estimates of consumption derived from the LSMS/HIES surveys as a measure of welfare, the World Bank has calculated the three **Foster-Greene-Thorbecke (FGT)** indexes of poverty for Guyana in 1992. These are presented in **Table 9**, where the data also show the regional distribution of poverty. Overall 43 percent of the population is estimated to be below the poverty line. This ratio, however, ranges from 79 percent in the rural interior parts of the country to 23 percent in urban centres, other than Georgetown. In rural coastal communities, the head count index is 45.1 and for Georgetown it is 29 percent. Both the poverty gap and the FGT₂ indexes conform to this general picture. Because the Amerindian communities live principally in the hinterland and rural interior areas, this concentration of poverty among a particular ethnic community is of particular note. **The Amerindians are therefore, correctly portrayed as "the poorest of the poor,"** since of the poorest 20 percent of the population as much as one-third are Amerindians. Indeed the data show 87 percent of the Amerindians as poor. The lowest percentage is Indo-Guyanese (34 percent). This picture is better revealed in **Table 10** which shows poverty by ethnic group in Guyana.

The incidence of poverty by family structure is shown in **Table 11**. Significantly these data do not conform to the widely held view that single parent households, headed by females, are among the most vulnerable groups.

As serious as the situation presented above is, it should be observed **that if income is used as a measure of welfare the head count percentage rises to 66 percent.** (See Thomas 1994.B)

Table 9
Poverty Indices by Geographic Region (Guyana)

Region	Percent of Population ¹	Head Count	Poverty Gap	FGT ₂
ALL GUYANA	100.0	43.2	16.2	8.2
Urban Georgetown	21.0	28.9	8.7	3.6
Urban Other	11.2	23.1	6.3	2.5
Rural Coastal	56.0	45.1	14.7	6.3
Rural Interior	11.8	78.6	46.1	31.0
(1) Barima-Waini	3.5	78.9	45.7	29.7
(2) Pomeroon-Supenaam	6.7	55.0	23.8	12.6
(3) Essequibo Island-W. Demerara	10.9	45.8	14.9	6.4
(4) Demerara-Mahaica	39.8	32.0	9.6	4.0
(5) Mahaica-Berbice	7.5	56.4	18.8	7.9
(6) E. Berbice-Corentyne	17.0	37.2	9.7	3.3
(7) Cuyuni-Mazaruni	2.6	44.7	13.4	6.6
(8) Potaro-Siparuni	1.9	94.8	66.1	49.2
(9) Upper Takutu-Upper Essequibo	3.8	93.3	58.7	39.6
(10) Upper Demerara-Berbice	6.4	30.9	10.9	4.8

Note: ¹The distribution from the full HIES survey (including all four subrounds). Total population is estimated at 730,000.

Source: World Bank (Guyana), 1994.

Table 10

Critical Poverty Measures by Ethnic Group (Guyana)

Region	Percent of Population ¹	Head Count	Poverty Gap	FGT ₂
ALL GUYANA	100.0	27.7	8.9	4.2
Indo-Guyanese	45.9	33.3	10.3	4.3
Afro-Guyanese	36.7	43.0	13.9	6.0
Amerindian	10.3	87.5	53.9	3.6
Mixed	6.2	44.7	12.7	5.3

Source: World Bank (Guyana), 1994.

Table 11

Incidence of Poverty by Family Structure (Guyana)

Family Structure, Head of Household	Poverty Measures G\$47,500 Poverty Line			
	% of total HH	Head Count	Poverty Gap	FGTP ₂
Partner present, w/children ¹	53.2	46.6	18.2	9.6
Single parent, w/children	18.5	47.7	16.4	7.6
Single parent, no children	16.9	23.9	8.1	3.6
Partner present, no children	11.4	22.3	7.3	3.3

Note: ¹Classified as unmarried children.

Source: World Bank (Guyana), 1994.

Prior to 1992, the last detailed survey of poverty in Guyana was conducted as far back as 1971. In contrast, Jamaica has been well served with an excellent series of living conditions and labour force surveys. The integration of these two databases has provided an outstanding source of information to aid policy formulation, assess trends and facilitate targeted responses. The time series show **three broad phases in poverty trends in Jamaica** (see Table 12). **First**, there is the period from Independence to the early 1970s when poverty declined because of strong growth in bauxite and tourism. **Second**, from the early 1970s to the mid 1980s, poverty increased as per capita income and consumption declined with the end of the bauxite and tourism expansion.

Table 12

Consumption of the Poor, 1958-92 (Jamaica)

Year	Share of the poor		Index of per capita consumption (1988 = 100)		
	Bottom quintile	Next quintile	All Jamaica	Bottom quintile	Next quintile
1958	2.2	6.0	83	34	50
1971	2.0	5.0	110	41	56
1975	4.1	9.0	123	94	112
1984	4.2	9.5	102	80	98
1988	5.4	9.9	100	100	100
1991	5.8	10.5	99	106	105
1992	6.5	10.8	-	-	-

Source: World Bank (Jamaica) 1994.

Finally, since the mid-1980s the number of poor persons has fluctuated, with a tendency to increase overall. The estimate for November 1992 is that **34 percent** of the population was below the poverty line. The variation in poverty reflects the variation in GDP and consumption

growth in Jamaica. However, the estimates show that the severity of poverty has declined somewhat, perhaps reflecting better income distribution. (see **Table 13**) Thus the FGT₂ index in November 1992 (4.4) was the same as in May 1989, despite the overall increase in the percentage of poor persons.

For the purposes of social policy, the World Bank has estimated the responsiveness of the three poverty indexes to changes in mean consumption and the gini coefficient. These results are shown in **Table 14**. They suggest that poverty would decrease faster than increases in overall consumption, even if the prevailing degree of inequality was held constant. At the same time the reverse would hold true, poverty would increase faster than the decrease in overall economic growth, even if the degree of inequality remained unchanged. Since also the elasticities are shown to be greater for measures of the severity of poverty, growth which maintains the income shares of the poor has particularly favourable effects on the income shares of the poor.

Table 13

Aggregate Estimates of Poverty, 1988-92 (percentages) (Jamaica)

Indicator	August 1988	May 1989	November 1989	November 1990	November 1991	November 1992
Percent poor	29.8	29.2	26.9	27.9	38.9	34.2
Poverty gap index	10.0	9.8	8.8	7.9	13.7	10.6
Poverty severity index	4.7	4.4	3.9	2.9	6.6	4.4

Source: World Bank (Jamaica), 1994.

Table 14

The Effects on Poverty of Growth and Distribution: Jamaica

Indicator and location	Elasticity with respect to	
	Mean consumption	Gini index
All Jamaica PO headcount	-1.49	0.84
P1 depth	-1.93	2.26
P2 severity	-2.17	3.50

Source: POVCAL program and 1991 SLC data, as cited in World Bank (Jamaica) 1994.

The vast majority of poor households in Jamaica have at least one person employed, highlighting **the emergence of the phenomenon of the "working poor"**. This contrasts with the earlier periods when poverty and unemployment were closely joined. About 70 percent of the poor live in rural areas where the pervasiveness of poverty is greater. As a consequence the World Bank reports that:

"poverty elasticities show that one percent growth in rural areas is five times more effective at reducing national poverty than one percent growth in urban areas. Similarly improvements in rural inequality reduce national poverty more effectively than improvements in urban inequality" (**World Bank, Jamaica, 1994, P.18**)

The geographical incidence of poverty in Jamaica is shown for the period May-June 1989 in **Table 15**. On the head count measure, 10 percent of the households in Kingston was poor, 36 percent for other towns and 41 percent for the rural areas.

Table 15
Geography of Poverty, May-June 1989 (Jamaica)

Indicator	All Jamaica	Kingston	Other towns	Rural areas
Incidence of the poor PO headcount	32.7	10.0	36.1	40.7
P1 depth	10.7	2.2	11.7	13.9
Distribution of the poor PO headcount	100.0	7.0	23.0	70.0
P1 depth	100.0	4.7	22.7	72.6

Note: P1 is calculated as the income-gap ratio times the headcount measure. The distribution of the poor is calculated by applying population weights to the incidence numbers.

Source: Dennis Gordon, "Identifying the Poor: Developing a Poverty Line for Jamaica" (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 1989) as cited in World Bank (Jamaica) 1994.

A 1992 Survey of Living Conditions in **Trinidad & Tobago**, shows 22.5 percent of the households surveyed were living below the poverty line. This was significantly up from earlier estimates of 14.8 and 18.5 percent as calculated from the Household Budget Survey of 1988. While the two sets of data are not strictly comparable, because of the different methodologies used, the indication of a worsening poverty situation since 1988 is otherwise supported - reflecting in large measure, the initial outcomes of the stabilisation phase of the structural adjustment process.

The 1992 data show that while 23 percent of the households are female-headed, 29 percent of these are poor. For male-headed households the ratio is 21 percent (see **Table 16**). The geographical distribution of poverty is also shown in **Table 17**. The areas which are well above the national average are the Nariva/Mayaro and St Andrew/St David counties (39 and 37

percent respectively). Port-of-Spain has a ratio of 29 percent. Overall, the bulk of poor persons was concentrated in St George, Caroni and Victoria.

Table 16

**Gender Distribution of Poverty, 1992:
Trinidad & Tobago**

Gender Head of Household	% Poor	% of Poor
Male	21.0	71.3
Female	29.2	28.7
TOTAL		

Source: Survey of Living Conditions, 1992, as cited in IADB 1993.

Table 17

**Geographic Distribution of Poverty, 1992:
Trinidad & Tobago**

Country	% Poor	% of Poor
Port of Spain	29.2	5.5
San Fernando	18.5	2.0
Arima	23.1	2.4
Rest of St. George	21.1	29.9
Caroni	21.3	17.3
Nariva/Mayaro	38.7	4.7
St. Andrew/St. David	37.0	6.7
Victoria	23.3	17.3
Point Fortin	5.9	0.4
St. Patrick	24.6	11.4
Tobago	13.6	2.4
TOTAL	-	-

Source: Survey of Living Conditions, 1992, as cited in IADB, 1993.

Table 18 below summarizes the poverty measures for the three countries. Clearly the situation in Guyana is significantly worse than elsewhere. Paradoxically, however, both the strong recent economic growth and the long term natural resource endowments of the country already indicated, make it in several ways a better prospect for long term sustainable development. This contrast between potential and past performance ought to be a significant ingredient in framing policy responses. Certainly, it should encourage greater emphasis on medium to long term measures, compared to the present preoccupation with immediate "stop-gap and fire-fighting responses".

Table 18
Poverty Indexes, Region: 1992

Index	Guyana	Jamaica	Trinidad & Tobago
A. Head Count (percent poor)	43.2 (66)*	34.2	22.5
B. Poverty Gap	16.2	10.6	-
C. FGT ₂ (Poverty severity)	8.2	4.4	-

Note: *Using income estimate.

Source: Previous tables.

F. INCOME DISTRIBUTION

The discussion in the previous section and the various indexes of poverty summarized in **Table 18** above, support the view that poverty is at root, an aspect of the broader concerns of income distribution in society. Estimates of the percentage share of total income going to the lowest and highest quintiles, along with Gini coefficients, are presented for the three countries in **Table 19** below. The difference in the distribution is quite marked. The income shares going to the poorest quintile was lowest in Guyana, and the share going to the highest quintile, the highest in Guyana also. The Gini coefficient estimate in Trinidad & Tobago in 1992 was 0.592; and the time series data which is available for that country shows that this coefficient has risen since 1957/58 (**Table 20**).

Table 19

Income Distribution (Percentage Share of Total Consumption/Income) (Region)

Country	Lowest Quintile	Top Quintile	Gini Coefficient	Year
Guyana	4.3	56.9	42.3	1992
Jamaica	5.1	49.2	43.5	1989
Trinidad & Tobago	7.6	39.4	59.2	1992

Source: E. Greene (1994), World Bank (Guyana), 1994.

Table 20

Gini Coefficients: Trinidad & Tobago

1957/58	1971/72	1975/76	1981/82	1988	1992
0.430	0.510	0.460	0.450	0.468	0.592

Source: IADB, Vol. II, 1993.

G: GOVERNANCE

Three aspects of governance are referred to in this sub-Section; overall political stability, which is followed by references to organized crime with international connections, and locally sourced crime.

The wider Caribbean is the world's largest concentration of small and mini-states. The Commonwealth Caribbean, as a subset, shares a widespread attachment to the view that on a worldwide basis, **it exemplifies the tenets of good governance, political stability, multi-party political democracy, and racial, ethnic, cultural and class tolerance. Its well documented pre-independence history of unrestrained plunder, genocide, slavery, indentured immigration, and colonialism, clearly belies this view. And so too, does its less widely known, but significant post-independence history of instability.** In Trinidad & Tobago there have been two armed uprisings against the state since Independence: the "black power," 1970 uprising and the Muslimeem 1992 insurrection. In Guyana there has been an attempt to secede part of the country (the Rupununi revolt of 1969), and nearly two and a half decades of disputed elections and authoritarian rule which ended in 1992, with the first "free and fair elections" since Independence. In Jamaica, endemic political violence caused nearly one thousand deaths during the 1980 election campaign. **In so far, therefore, as political stability plays a role in social reform, the region still has considerable room for improvement.**

To this evidence of political instability should be added the widely acknowledged **penetration of these countries with elements connected to the international organized drug trade, smuggling, money-laundering, and other forms of white-collar crimes.** There are local spin-offs in these crimes in that there is evidence of increasing local use of drugs and the

practice of white collar crime.

Locally sourced crimes have also risen dramatically. Thus **Trinidad & Tobago reports of serious crimes have more than doubled since 1980**. These include attacks on women and children, both through sexual abuse and domestic violence. The number of persons committed to penal imprisonment and sentenced to death has also grown more than four-fold since that date. **In Guyana, indictable crimes reported have trebled since 1970, while convictions have doubled**. The rate of murder per 100,000 is 18 which compares unfavourably with less than 3 per 100,000 in Western Europe and 15 per 100,000 in the United States of America. **In Jamaica the murder rate is about 25 per 100,000**. Several economic reports on these countries have singled out crimes as a major deterrent to investment, a push factor in migration, and an impediment to the growth of certain key sectors of the economy, especially tourism and agriculture. In the latter case, praedial larceny is estimated to account for about one-quarter of farm production. Protecting persons and property has also become a fast growing economic activity. It is estimated that over 20,000 private security guards are employed in Jamaica, through some 200 firms. In addition, many buildings have physical and electronic protection, as well as guard dogs.

The net effect of the above circumstances is to underscore the importance of governance and security to the promotion of social reform for deteriorating law and order situation encourages migration of the skilled and better-off sections of the population and discourages both investment and savings because of the insecurity it fosters.

CHAPTER 3: THE SOCIAL SITUATION AND THE SOCIAL PROCESS

The data presented in the previous Chapter offered an empirical description of the social situation in the three countries, with reference to a number of important indicators. Such empirical information facilitates cross-country comparisons while offering a database for social engineering and the targeting of population groups. What is also required however, is an analysis of the processes at work in order to provide a dynamic and historicist appreciation of their operations. These forces are part of a continuum, for every society is historically formed, with the situation today linked to past developments, and containing the seeds of future developments as well.

We cannot pretend in this Report to be able to review all the various interpretations of the processes at work, which can be found in the literature on Caribbean society, as limitations of both time and space preclude this. Instead, what is offered in this Section is a synthesization of the author's own views and others. In the interests of brevity, these are presented in a highly condensed form. It should be stressed, however, that the analytical standpoint indicated here, informs the choice of policies recommended, and the suggested form of their implementation.¹

Six key elements define the essence of the processes at work:

- **First, the external environment** has played, and continues to play, a fundamental role in determining economic, social, political and cultural outcomes in the three countries. The Summit itself and the themes it addresses illustrate this, for it has played a major catalysing role in placing socio-economic reform so high on national agendas. Of course size, location and the historical manner of the region's insertion into the global system remains the underlying causes of this situation. **The relation cited here is, however, asymmetrical.** Taking the entire region as a whole, the countries are too small to exert significant reciprocal influences on the world system, even though, it is unquestionably true that at certain historical conjunctures, e.g., the Cold War, they have exerted influence disproportional to their size and "weight" in the world economy.

- **Second**, the **plural bases** of the region's culture, exemplified in the description of Guyana as a "land of six peoples" cannot be over emphasized, for this naturally places ethnic and cultural integration and security high on the priorities for social action.
- **Third, rigid institutional hierarchies** have characterized the historical evolution of the three countries. These encompass such "total" institutions as the plantation, slavery, indentured immigration, colonial rule and mineral producing enclaves. Overall, these institutions served and promoted a material logic in which external control of domestic production for external markets prevailed. Thus as Thomas (1974) described it, "the territories produced what they did not consume and consumed and what they did not produce." It is this underlying logic which has guided the use of natural resources, and determined the forms of production which has emerged, as well as, the development of science and technology, the translation of the societies' needs into the actual demand for goods and services, and the distribution of income and wealth.
- **Fourth, the institutional hierarchies had two principal features**, namely:
 - Groups, classes and the various social strata at the apex of the hierarchies, have traditionally enforced the exclusion and isolation of those at the base; and
 - Partly as a consequence, this has encouraged "confrontational" and "conflictual" modes for resolving differences.

These two characteristics explain the frequent references to the potentially "explosive" nature of these societies, and hints of a "social time-bomb" if certain social matters are not addressed urgently. This fact is underscored by the serious poverty and inequitable distribution of income revealed in the previous chapter.

- **Fifth, the "exclusion" of the "losers"** as referred to above, has three dimensions in it:
 - One is that it is **systemic** and not random and disorganized. It embraces discrimination along political, economic, ethnic and social lines. Worse still, it is internalised in the consciousness of many of the poor, as are tendencies to authoritarianism among those at the "apex" and of society.
 - It has also been **situational or conjunctural**, as can be seen from its recent manifestation during the stabilization phase of the current structural adjustment programmes.

- Finally, it has been **operational**, i.e., those affected are operationally excluded from significant participation in many fundamental areas of interaction in the society; markets, the political processes and social mobility.
- **Sixth**, it has produced overall a **four-fold typology of poverty**. One is the hard core of the **systemic poor**, that is those who are born poor and remain poor over their life time, mainly because of the manner of their insertion into the system of production and asset ownership. This group reflects historically underdeveloped characteristics of these societies. It includes those in low paying jobs (the working poor), those who are unemployed without any skills, landless labourers, and small farmers with inadequate access to land and credit and who therefore at best eked out a subsistence existence. As we saw, this latter group has become typical in Jamaica. However, all these groups have been excluded from the benefits and resources of the society.

Another group refers to the **newly poor, or structural poor**, i.e., those persons who while not being born poor, have become poor largely because of the stabilisation and adjustment measures being put in place. While this group may have had no direct responsibility either for creating the burdensome external debt, mismanaging the economy, or causing the external shocks which have befallen it, they have had to carry in a traumatic way the burdens of adjustments. Many in this category would not have been previously categorised with the traditional poor: public servants, teachers and members of the security services.

There is also the **transient poor**. The numbers in this group varies from year-to-year and season-to-season, reflecting in general, the ups and downs of the economy and its seasonality of production. The persons in this group would therefore vary significantly in terms of their number, form and content.

Finally, because the poorest of the poor is so heavily concentrated among the **Amerindian population in Guyana**, their special position as a cohesive ethnic and social grouping, as well as their historical and ancestral claims require that they be recognised as a distinct type. This category, like the systemic poor, have been victims of the on-going process of exclusion with its various clusters around the rigid hierarchies which have been formed.

Two further observations are pertinent at this stage. One is that the same historical process which has excluded the "losers", has served to institutionalize this factor in all the key structures of societies and in all dimensions of social life. This is well illustrated in the case of

the poor. They have not only been deprived of access to consumption of basic commodities and social services, but in one form or another, this is directly linked to their limited participation in the productive endeavours of society as well as its major social, cultural and political processes.

Further, for a long list of reasons, (including their recent history, underdeveloped institutional capacities, and a lack of the required human resources), none of these societies can presently achieve effective, multi-year, centrally directed and state-led social planning, if it were so desired. Policy recommendations therefore, have to be largely confined to **strategic planning and catalysing interventions**. We shall argue in the next chapter, that while everything is necessary, resources which can be mobilized will only be available for a very few. Critical importance therefore ought to be attached to priority assessment, plans for mobilizing the "excluded" in the process of social development and seeking to make policy interventions sustainable.

Based on this sort of analysis of the historical processes at work, the **primary task of social development then becomes two-fold**. **First**, to determine how best to set in train an inclusionary/social integrating process which reverses the historical rhythm of exclusion - isolation - alienation. **Second**, to seek to find ways of facilitating the movement from social inclusionary policies to those aimed at the active mobilisation of those traditionally excluded, as the central thrust of social policies and programmes. This two-fold approach to social development emphasizes its qualitative difference from social assistance, welfare and traditional notions of law and order, stability and good government.

From these perspectives, clearly the solutions are long term and will take time. But while recognizing this, the emergency aspects of the present situation should also not be underemphasized. The long term will not come into being, if the short-term is not simultaneously addressed. A good illustration of this nexus is in the case of unemployment. Its long term reduction is the ultimate goal but this should be combined with its short-term alleviation, since as we have observed time and again sudden unemployment can provoke irretrievable damage to the family unit or household, both in terms of its accumulated productive assets, and its investments in physical (health) and mental (education) well being.

CHAPTER 4: STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS

This Chapter will present some of the concrete recommendations and proposals which follow from the preceding description of the social situation and analysis of the social processes at work. In **Section I**, the analytical framework within which the proposals are made is presented. This is followed by a summary statement of the principal proposals now alive in the international community (**Section II**). **Sections III - V** look at the external environment, issues which stem from the present pattern of growth and structural adjustment, and the operations of safety nets. **Section VI** focuses on six priorities for domestic action (small scale farming, microenterprises, technical and vocational and training, the legal and institutional framework, and identification of the particularly vulnerable population groups).

I: TYPES OF INTERVENTION REQUIRED

The interpretation of the causes of persistent poverty presented in this Report stresses the linkage of poverty to a process of exclusion and marginalization, which in turn has ethnic, cultural and geographical dimensions. These circumstances combine to restrict the ability of the poor to join in mutually beneficial "exchanges" in the social, political and cultural spheres of the society, or even to share in its economic benefits. Accordingly, **poverty alleviation and reduction measures should be approached as integral elements of a far-reaching process of socio-economic reform.**

As previously indicated, the primary task of such reform is **two-fold:**

First, to ensure that the poor not only participate in the production and consumption of privately and publicly produced goods and services, but that they also share in the ownership

of assets and the distribution of rights, obligations and activities as citizens. **Second**, to create the means whereby those excluded can be mobilized for productive effort, thus forging the basis for a new thrust in development policies and programmes. The process of exclusion has been both institutionalized and internalized in the consciousness of the poor.

This approach articulates a definite relation between social planning and social development. Because, however, of the undeveloped institutional capacities of the three countries, their shortages of skills, and the multitude of social demands being placed on public, private and NGO institutions, all are **incapable of delivering effective multi-year, centrally directed and state led social planning**. It is recommended therefore, that **social planning be confined to strategic planning and catalytic interventions, involving all social sectors**. While every important social need should be met, we know that they cannot all be, thus attaching special significance to priority assessment and determining the scope for interventions which are sustainable.

Interventions which are strategic and catalysing, require certain features:

- One is to recognize that while **social development is qualitatively different from social compensatory policies, a balance between the two is essential**. Social development is long term and is concerned with promoting sustained social integration, ethnic security and democratic development in its broadest sense, which encompasses more than the traditional concepts of stability and good governance as it includes such notions as equality of opportunity. Compensatory policies are essentially of a short-term nature.
- Second, the **linkage and complementarities between socio-economic reform, macroeconomic performance, and changing production patterns are also fundamental**. The **dynamic interconnectedness of allocative efficiency through the market and distributive efficiency through socio-economic reform are integral**. The task therefore is to promote simultaneously the development of socially accountable markets and cost effective equity.

- Finally, such interventions should be designed to **blend lessons learnt from experiences elsewhere, with an appreciation of the distinct and concrete conditions in each country**. Such experience elsewhere indicates a number of important guidelines, as for example, the importance of a vibrant civil society and the inevitable pressures which socio-economic reforms generate in favour of a re-structured state. (See UNECLAC, 1994).

II: GLOBAL POSITIONS

The first chapter of this Report argues the importance of supporting the emerging global consensus on policy reforms. This consensus is represented here by way of a summary statement of the principal recommendations arising from the UNDP 1994 Human Development Report and the preparatory Committee meetings for the Social Summit. Although not reproduced here, these should be considered in relation to the principal guidelines for action, which have been prepared of the Second Caribbean Preparatory Committee Meeting for the World Summit on Social Development held on 6-8 December, 1994 (ECLAC, LC/CAR/G.431).

The **UNDP Report** advances a **six-point** action agenda:

- The approval of a **World Social Charter** "as a new contract among all nations and all people".
- A **20:20 compact** in which over the next ten years all nations pledge to ensure that 20 per cent of national budgets and aid donated will have human priority concerns.
- The establishment of an **Economic Security Council** in the United Nations to ensure protection of all people from social threats to their daily lives, poverty, unemployment, drugs, terrorism and so on.
- A **new framework for development cooperation**.
- A global **human security fund** sustained through various forms of global taxation.

- A **targetted reduction in global military spending** of 3 per cent per annum and a portion of the savings made available to a global human security fund.

The preparatory meetings for the World Social Summit have stressed the following **seven** priorities:

- Creating opportunities for small to medium-sized enterprises by appropriately framed incentives (training, credit, market research) and the simplification of regulations and procedures as they affect them.
- Reform of the legal and fiscal framework for governmental action, including a clear investment code, nondiscriminatory labour legislation and macroeconomic stability. Government's fiscal policies should encourage job creation along with growth.
- Support outward oriented industrial policies and maximum participation in the world economy.
- Facilitate the movement from agriculture to industry, to a dynamic service sector. Stress is laid on services arising from environmental protection measures, health care, personal services, travel and leisure activities.
- Improve labour markets through three means:
 - i) an all round emphasis on linking economic growth with jobs,
 - ii) paying special attention to public works projects, job-creating community development activities and the training of the work force to make workers mobile, and
 - iii) implementing ILO conventions to protect workers rights, promote occupational health and safety and prevent the exploitation of vulnerable groups e.g., child workers.
- Investment in education and skills promotion.
- Offering special protection to the vulnerable: women, children, youth neither at work nor school, the elderly, the disabled, the homeless and indigenous peoples.

All of these recommendations are in principle acceptable and non-contentious. Supporting them in the international community would reinforce the basic importance the Region attaches to productive and freely chosen employment in a sustainable process of social reform. Support for these positions should also be cross-referenced to other recent international and regional commitments which are directly related to social development, such as the SIDS conference positions and the Caribbean Health Promotion Charter.

III: THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

Not much requires to be said here except perhaps to stress the obvious: without an enabling international environment, there is no prospect for global attainment of the Social Summit objectives. The Summit itself is driven by concerns over globalization, which it defines as:

"the growing linkage of economic and social policies, trends, even modes of behaviour and consumer habits" (World Summit For Social Development, Backfounder 1).

The 1994 Regional Preparatory Meeting agreed that:

"Throughout its history the Caribbean has been shaped by the external world, from its early absorption into international mercantilist economic relations to the current uncertainties and dislocations aggravated by rapidly changing technologies, increasing competition in a globalized market and new forms of absorption into a more liberalized international economy. These relationships have left their marks on the social and economic landscape as they continue to influence the distribution of productive assets and therefore influence human welfare, including the nature and extent of poverty in the Caribbean. Cultural and social factors deriving from a past, which include the forced entry of Europeans into the Caribbean, bringing in its wake the marginalizing of indigenous populations where they survived; the enslaving of Africans in the Caribbean; and a sprinkling of other ethnic groups (Chinese, Javanese, Jews, Syrians, Lebanese, etc.). These historical factors, reinforced by socio-economic practices, have tended to cause cleavages along racial, ethnic, cultural, and class lines. These cleavages have sometimes proven to be inimical to development." (ECLAC, LC/CAR/G.431. P.11)

That the successful outcome of the Summit hinges on the prospect for international cooperation is therefore, beyond question. However, given the undeniable retreat of countries of the South from the positions advanced earlier in their calls for a New International Economic Order (NIEO), the lobby in support of global redistributive measures is to say the least, extremely weak. Yet the historical legacy of conquest, genocide, colonization settlement, and the widespread use of forced labour are as the document cited above observes, still very evident in

the Commonwealth Caribbean. It would appear then that exclusive reliance on the world market processes and the trickle down effect of their benefits would be foolhardy. The three countries do not participate in the world system on a level playing field. And, based on their present economic capacities, diplomatic, political and military leverage they cannot hope to obtain such a status in the foreseeable future. There is therefore a real, strategic interest in supporting appropriate measures aimed at some form of historical redress. **One such measure would be indemnification and reparations for the ravages of the slave trade and indentured immigration. The Summit, with its ethical and social focus, might well be an effective forum from which to launch such a sustained demand.**

Such a claim does not negate ongoing efforts aimed at debt relief, better access to overseas markets for domestic exports, enhanced opportunities for investment funds and improved access to scientific and technical know-how and training. It complements these.

IV: MACROECONOMIC BALANCE AND GROWTH

All three countries are in an adjustment mode, which is widely accepted as necessary. For those whose primary concerns are the reduction of poverty, increases in employment and improved income levels, the critical issue is therefore not whether a structural adjustment programme (SAP) should be introduced, but how measures to restore the major macroeconomic balances relate to the choice of development path and to the need for socio economic reforms. Matters pertaining to timing, sequencing and the design of policy instruments profoundly affect the distribution of the costs and benefits of adjustment.

Many people would argue that the separate two-stage implementation of macroeconomic and then compensatory measures has worked to the disadvantage of both. Structural adjustment has placed disproportionate burdens on those least capable of bearing them, and is one reason why migration offers a solution to so many households in the three countries. The paradox is, however, that those best placed to migrate have better than average access to productive assets, credit and skills. **The development of models and policies which integrate the postulates of economic behaviour with the variations of social structure, political and power relations** as they exist would help to give operational content to the simultaneous treatment of the most crucial macroeconomic and social variables.

Allied with this is the need to reconceptualize the linkage between macro, meso and micro activities and processes and that between the short-run and long-run. The process of learning and innovations would be best facilitated through building up the social partnership advocated elsewhere in this Report. In this regard it is recommended that a mechanism be established through which interested groups such as labour, business, NGO, consumers, the parliamentary opposition, and government can deliberate and advise on policy framework papers and related matters. While diverse interests exist, the search for a consensus on key matters should be pursued, especially in such areas as the development path, privatisation and external debt.

The existence of an appropriate mechanism for such consultation might encourage an independent and autonomous evolution of adjustment theory and practice, thus improving the standing of the region in dealing with external agencies and governments. As matters are now, the latter overwhelmingly research, conceptualize and design macroeconomic measures. While

this reflects their 'financial stake' in the process, it is also facilitated by the limited capacity of the region in these vital areas.

The shortcomings of present policies and the need to give the poor access to productive resources require that poverty reduction and income distribution are given more central roles in devising strategies and instruments. This is recognised by the World Bank which sees 'well targeted programmes for the poor' as the indispensable complement to sustaining growth. This needs to be stressed, since prevailing levels of inequality in the distribution of wealth could reduce the sensitivity and responsiveness of those below the poverty threshold to growth policies.

The pursuit of macroeconomic balances is not an end in itself. It has to incorporate the seeds of innovation, technical progress and diversification, into what is still exceptionally narrow productive bases for all three countries. Over the long run the poor have a vital stake in this outcome.

Finally, an emphasis on socioeconomic reform also invites the reconceptualisation of resources. In the three countries, **resources committed to social partnership, consensus, solidarity, democracy and other such elements of social energy grow and do not diminish with use.** These resources are derived from the self-mobilisation of people. They are to be encouraged and facilitated since they represent an inexhaustible resource, which has barely been utilised, hitherto, in society's endeavours. Linking the pursuit of macroeconomic balances and economic performance to a **socioeconomic reform programme could help to reverse the confrontational, hierarchic tendencies which have characterised the social history of the region.**

V: SAFETY NETS

There are two broad classes of safety nets in the three countries. Those which are locally controlled and may or may not be locally financed, and those which are more or less externally controlled and financed. Among the former there are three further types:

- Government operated, which include the traditional line ministries and new initiatives which are a direct outgrowth of increasing poverty and the adjustment process.
- Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) which span a wide range of activities.
- Social adjustment agencies like SIMAP in Guyana, which are externally financed but controlled locally through a Board which supposedly holds an arms length relationship to the government. This is a dedicated anti-poverty organization specifically established to cope with the negative social adjustment consequences of Guyana's Economic Recovery Programme.

In what follows in this Section we will seek to highlight the major limitations and weaknesses of existing safety net arrangements, since the removal of these impediments would constitute an obvious set of priority interventions in the promotion of objectives of the World Summit for Social Development.

Three features characterise their internal social safety nets. **One** is that much of their drive and energy is **reactive to the social distress** which accompanied the first phases of stabilisation policies. They were not originally integral to these latter policies. They were brought into existence in a **two-stage process**, after the social dislocation had become evident and compelling in its urgency. This intervention after the event has reduced the effectiveness of both the poverty alleviation (social adjustment) measures and the stabilisation policies (financial and economic adjustment) measures which preceded them. The **second** feature of note is that all the elements of the social safety nets are **underfunded** in relation to the needs of the

society and the demands which are being placed on them. **Third**, the capacities of these nets among the countries vary considerably, with Guyana's seemingly the weakest and Jamaica's the strongest, at least in terms of data availability and capacity for targeted responses.

All the **line ministries** which operate in the social sectors form part of the government's safety net provision. The ministries appear better suited to universal programmes than to such discriminatory programmes as would be required for specific targeting of poverty. Their financing is also insecure, which not only limits the capacity of the ministries to deliver, but ties up a lot of their human resources in intra-governmental competition for resources. Inflexible budget procedures further inhibit the capacity of ministries to implement their programmes. All the ministries suffer from shortages of trained staff. This is in part due to poor salaries, compared with what can be earned elsewhere, either locally or abroad. A history of political interference in job replacement and promotions in some departments has not helped. Allied to the shortages of human resources is the absence in some instances of both the hardware and software which goes with efficient social services administration. For example, in Guyana the physical disrepair of the capital stock is striking with some ministries not having enough funds appropriated to them, to provide for their routine 'other' expenditures. Finally, the low morale which is a consequence of all these factors has fostered a certain bureaucratic inertia.

In sum, the **experience since the adjustment measures of the late 1980s suggests that in quite a few instances ministries have not been flexible and adaptive enough to cope with the circumstances of heightened poverty and severe financial limitations. The ministries themselves appear to have lost direction during the 'lost decade'.**

In relation to the NGOs, the amount of data on the sector is unsatisfactory. Details on the levels of assistance received, number of beneficiaries, geographic spread of their operations, target groups and so on are not easily available. Many of their difficulties seem to stem from the scattered, undocumented and mushroom character of some NGOs, at the present stage of development. Inadequate networking takes place. For example, in Guyana there is no umbrella organization, not even a regular newsletter. And, because of the structure of party politics in the region, a frequent complaint in some quarters is that political elements have penetrated community based organisations. This is probably more the case for the more recently created 'community groups' than for the older and otherwise better established NGOs.

Despite the above, there is no reason why the widely recognized advantages of NGOs, should not be replicated in the three countries. The sector has enormous potential for strong "grassroot" links, flexibility, minimal bureaucratic overheads, and a highly motivated work force.

Unlike the line ministries, **SIMAP in Guyana** is not a specialised institution. It is a composite programme operating across large areas of poverty. **It is unique in the region, and so deserves further consideration because it is being promoted as a model form of a dedicated social adjustment agency.** Functionally, its activities have been classed as either infrastructural rehabilitation and construction, or the provision of social services. But, occasionally, both are combined in one location, if not in one project. The former covers a wide cross section: roads, schools, markets, health centres, sanitation, water supply, drainage and irrigation. The latter also covers a wide area: medical supplies, nutrition, food supplementation, education and training, as well as cash transfers to targeted groups such as low wage public

service employees, mothers and children who visit health centres, NIS pensioners and so on.

Its Executive Director has stated that since its inception in 1990 SIMAP has had two broad goals, namely damage limitation and the promotion of sustainable development for vulnerable groups and individuals. Damage limitation he says, refers to operations designed to mitigate the harsh consequences many people suffered from during the stabilisation phase of the ERP, while sustainable development refers to efforts to empower individuals, groups and communities to become self-providing.

At the time it was established, it was intended that the agency would operate from the bottom-up and be demand-driven, reacting quickly to the needs of the most vulnerable. Its focus should be on projects which it was intended would originate from local groups such as community organisations, NGOs, local governments, municipalities and regional administrations. The agency was conceived to be semi-autonomous in its operation, operating at arms length from government while at the same time serving as an outlet for external assistance arising from donor/government agreements. This structure, by-passing the traditional line ministries, reflected the delicate state of donor-government relations in Guyana at the time of SIMAP's establishment.

Although SIMAP is premised upon being a bottom-up demand-driven agency, the existing NGOs and community organisations have been so debilitated in Guyana that they are not as effective transmitters of community needs as they might be. The recent mushrooming of these bodies is in fact a supply response to the perceived availability of funds. And although its management has striven to be accountable and transparent, suspicion and doubts persist, for it is perceived by some as government's 'pork barrel'. Considerable effort is being made to

counter this negative perception, as it damages the agency's efforts. Further, several consultants have remarked on the agency's over-emphasis on engineering works. (The World Bank (Guyana), 1994 reports it employed only one economist and one community development specialist). They have also indicated that too much emphasis is being given to the provision of inputs and not enough to the delivery of outputs, i.e., the benefits actually received by targeted groups. This is important as the capacity of poor communities to deal with inputs and to convert them into projects differs widely.

Finally, as a result of data limitations, the scheme has so far largely operated in the dark. This has led to several difficulties. **One** is that lacking clearly identifiable targets, there is no way to measure output effectiveness and therefore monitor the agency's work. **Second**, the agency is not able to readily distinguish between the systemic and structural poor. **Third**, it finds it difficult to operationalise the distinction between its welfare 'damage limitation' functions and its contribution to sustainable development of communities.

Turning to the area of **external assistance for poverty relief and reduction** several weaknesses and limitations are also to be found:

- The assistance programmes of the various donors appear to be inadequately coordinated. This does not mean that individual donors do not evaluate other assistance programmes before agreeing to theirs, but the amount of coordination between organisations is limited.
- The donors differ significantly in the areas of project priorities, conditions for on-granting of funds, and other operational requirements. This lack of standardisation puts a great deal of burden on the front-line institutions. Additionally, each donor has its own standardised perspective of poverty measures within which it operates globally, and this may not be sufficiently sensitive to the unique circumstances in Guyana. Good examples of the latter are the ethnic differentiation of the population and the proliferation of the very poor in isolated communities, as in the case of the Amerindian population.

- There is insufficient involvement of recipients in the process, at all levels, whether it is the host country, the on-granting institution or the target groups. This leads to a lack of appreciation of the differing perspectives from which the problem has to be addressed.

It was indicated earlier that the capacities of the safety nets in the three countries vary considerably. In concluding this Section, it would be useful therefore, to refer to certain general considerations which affect the operations of the safety nets in all three countries.

The **first** of these is the **dominant role of international factors** in the delivery of social services, poverty alleviation and reduction measures in the region. Even institutions which are termed local, including those in the **NGO** and government sectors, are overwhelmingly dependent on external assistance.

The **second** is that the **complementary and dynamic linkages between social assistance, poverty relief and other short term measures, with the longer term dynamic considerations of sustainable development need to be better articulated**. As we have noted repeatedly, if short term distress is ignored family units in crisis run the risk of being broken up. Poverty generates life threatening situations and lead to unacceptable losses of previously accumulated investments, e.g., housing, which it would cost a great deal to reverse, even in the long run. This can produce social and political instability, loss of hope among important sections of the community, and negative expectations about the outcome of long run socio-economic reform.

The **third** point is that together, the various elements of the social safety nets are **inadequately conceptualized in relation to the task of economic reconstruction**. This is true for all participants, donor as well as beneficiaries.

Fourth, as a corollary of the above, **the causal factors in poverty are not**

conceptualized adequately and the social safety net institutions are therefore not always clear as to what are the root causes of the problem they have to deal with.

Fifth, in all these institutions, but less so in the case of the NGOs, the **role of recipients of poverty relief is not central**. This limits their effectiveness.

Finally, the negative impact of a limited data base has been considerable in the past especially in the case of Guyana, but far less so in Jamaica. The hope is that recent surveys will overcome this drawback and provide the basis for more precise targetting of groups, sub-groups, families and individuals.

The removal of the limitations and weaknesses identified among the various elements of the safety nets is an obvious priority for public policy.

VI: POLICIES FOR DOMESTIC ACTION

The proposals in this final sub-Section, are premised on the view, that the provision of employment opportunities and productive jobs paying a fair wage is probably the single most important way of confronting poverty and promoting social integration. The various surveys referred to earlier, reveal high levels of unemployment, underemployment and a proliferation of low productivity and low wage jobs in the three countries. Self-employment in the small farm sector also reveals a similar low productivity and low net returns.

The central role proposed here for productive employment is consistent with experience world wide and the emerging pre-Summit consensus. Clearly this goes beyond amelioration of distress and offers a means of sustainable escape from poverty. Additionally, it promotes other social benefits such as enhanced social mobility, along with increased geographic and occupational movement and differentiation within the workforce. This could contribute to the breakdown of the observed concentration of ethnic groups in particular occupations and regions in the three countries and so enhance social integration. Education and training of the labour force would also raise productivity and help internalize technological progress and diversification of the production structure. Simultaneously, it opens up the prospect for identifying and seizing economic opportunities as they emerge.

Several aspects of productive job creation will be briefly tackled in this sub-Section namely:

- A) Labour Market Organisation.
- B) Small Scale Farming.
- C) Microenterprises.

- D) Education (Non-formal, Informal and TVET).
- E) Legal and Institutional reform.
- F) Special Population Groups to be Targeted.

A: Labour Market Organisation

While it is generally acknowledged that government's intervention in the three countries' labour markets is minimal, this should not lead to the unwarranted conclusion, that the Government should keep out of the market. Hard times have thrown children and women on to the job market and they need to be protected. Furthermore, the existence of numerous unregulated and supervised job sites in the sweat trades, exporting processing zones, and in Guyana remote mining and forest areas, require that **national standards are laid down and enforced, particularly in such areas as child labour, occupational health and safety, working hours, and national insurance coverage.**

An effective and efficient **labour market information system** is also a high priority as existing arrangements, while varying in their efficiency has much room for improvement. For example, in Guyana there is a long list of data which are regularly needed but are not published. There is no accessing and publication on a timely basis of the socio-economic features of employment, occupational/industrial/wage and salary structures, projections of supply and demand, training needs, or in some instances, even a directory of occupations. There is also no national standard industrial classification system or classification of non-formal TVET arrangements.

There exists in the territories no national agency with the capacity to promote the level of public awareness, vocational guidance and counselling required by young persons about to enter, or already in the labour market.

The **minimum wage** set by governments in the region plays a key lead role in guiding wage and salary payments country-wide. Its influence is not confined to those who receive it. **Targetting the minimum wage to poverty lines and household composition data along with proper indexing** could therefore perform a useful function in approaching a fair wage standard.

Because of transportation difficulties and widely varying social conditions a special incentive system for workers in difficult locations should be promoted nationally. This could include fiscal incentives, preferential access to housing after tours of duty in "hardship" areas or salary and wage premia payments.

Finally, an urgent priority is **for each country to establish a precise timetable for ratifying all ILO conventions.**

B: Small Scale Farming

Survey data show that in all three countries, although of varying significance a number of major constraints prevent the sustainable development of the small farming sector. Many of these constraints have grown out of the historical predominance of plantation and large estate production in relation to small scale farming with limited resources. Among **the key ones** are:

- Land tenure and access. Problems of land titling and poor access of small farmers to land well located in relation to major roadways, the suitability of its terrain for farming, in terms of slope, soils and water access, and protection against praedial larceny are quite acute. In addition, there has been an historical tendency to land fragmentation.

- Poor water management and soil conservation facilities.
- A limited diversification of production lines.
- Low productivity because of low levels of technical competencies of the farming community and access to technology.
- Weak rural organizations.
- Weak research and extension services.
- Unwillingness of the young to enter farming.
- Deteriorated access roads and other such support facilities (e.g., markets and storage).
- Limited access to credit.
- Difficulties of marketing and pricing.

In general, these have resulted in either low farmer productivity, low net returns to total assets employed in farming, or high underemployment of farmers. These circumstances have reinforced the psychological unwillingness of young people to enter into farming, resulting in a major inter-generational problem as the farming population is on average, relatively aged.

Concurrent with the above, **structural adjustment measures have introduced new and important dynamics to this process:**

- Market liberalisation of major export crops.
- The elimination of the monopoly positions of state agricultural marketing boards.
- The progressive removal of tariffs on agricultural produce.
- The elimination of food subsidies.
- Divestment of state lands.
- Encouragement of foreign investment or management in agriculture, especially in traditional export crops like sugar.

These policies have impacted on the small scale farming community but not generally in a positive way, as it has tended to highlight the "survival" aspects of small scale farming. Thus, Newman and Le Franc observe from their study of an established small farming community in Clarendon, Jamaica:

"There are some more general conclusions to be drawn from this exercise and these have specific implications for possible development policy options. From the discussion above it can be seen that although well integrated into the formal productive sectors the small farm sector survives by functioning as 'informal' ones are often said to function. Guided by small principles of reciprocity, residence, and responsibility, the available factors of production as well as any other source of income such as remittances from abroad are manipulated so as to ensure some degree of individual survival and even advancement. Family relationships then become another resource which can be manipulated to a given end. The dark side of this is that longer term expansion or development into a large commercial operation rarely occurs." (Newman and Le Franc, 1994, P.180)

There are **four** major recommendations which flow from these circumstances.

First, and foremost, the small scale farming sector should not be treated as just a "sub-sector" needing welfare and state support. **The focus has to be on strengthening its capacity to participate effectively in both the local "free" markets being developed under structural adjustment and the outward orientation of the economy towards international competitiveness which is also being encouraged.** Indeed Newman and Le Franc's work clearly indicates that a poverty alleviating and safety net approach would not work:

"The main policy implication here is that if assistance is to be given to this sector, a simple 'poverty alleviating and safety net approach' which seeks to make life a bit easier until the benefits of Structural Adjustment take effect, is likely to yield little result". (*ibid*, P.181)

Second, to achieve this **result radical land reform measures** have to be undertaken or accelerated where this has already begun. Indeed in Guyana, a routine issue like land tilting

is considered to be one of the biggest obstacles in the small farm sector. Detailed proposals have already been made for such programmes e.g., the FAO proposals on Guyana, and what is required, the political will to implement them. Without improved access to production assets the small farmer will remain locked into poverty.

Third, publicly financed improvement in infrastructure and support services, particularly in such areas as water management, soil conservation, research and extension is a clear priority. While much of this will be dependent on external support, whether in the form of technical assistance or financing, national governments themselves have a duty to recognize this priority in their budgetary provision.

Finally, overall improvements in rural organization, as well as the skills, education and awareness among the rural population are vital ingredients for a successful outcome. Solutions in this area will be heavily dependent on self-help, cooperative and community based activities in various NGOs. Both in Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago, vibrant rural based NGOs have already been promoted.

C: Microenterprises

The contributions which micro and small enterprises can make to economic expansion with jobs are widely recognized, and do not require to be repeated here. Indeed, the Summit has already taken this priority on board recognizing also that this sector can be an important vehicle for social integration. The purpose for introducing it here is to stress certain aspects of this proposal which bear directly on the circumstances to be found in the three countries. Again it should be emphasized that the degree of importance varies from country to country, but

remains overall quite significant.

A number of observations about the microenterprises sector in the three countries can be made:

- Often it suffers in not having the macroeconomic, legal, regulatory and institutional environment sufficiently responsive to its needs as compared with large foreign enterprises. This frequently combines with official intolerance and unnecessary bureaucratic delays.
- It requires considerable upgrading of its technical, marketing and managerial know-how. The level and quantity of equipment in use is often not well suited or the best available.
- Lack of access to affordable and flexible credit is a critical deterrent to its improvement. This is partly related to the inadequate collateral held by the sector as it has little real estate, can find few who are willing to stand guarantor for its operations, and lacks a track record in banking.
- It suffers disproportionately from the break down of, or poor public utilities, as it cannot afford back-up supplies.
- Its operations are plagued with high cost and unreliable inputs.
- An important area of the microenterprises sector is the **street economy** in urban and commercial areas, which is one of the fastest growing areas of employment in Guyana. It is an important means of livelihood as well as an important learning ground for entrepreneurial development. There are instances, however, of official intolerance, based on the unproven assumption that operators in this sector are more dishonest than large businesses. There is a tendency also to underdue the fact that they fulfill real social needs, which is the basis of their existence. (Thomas, 1994.A.)

Following from the above a major policy initiative should be undertaking and/or updating surveys from which policy makers and activists in this sector would establish:

- Operational definitions and empirical descriptions of the sector in the three countries.
- The appropriateness or otherwise of the macroeconomic, legal, regulatory, and institutional environment in which these enterprises operate. There is some considerable evidence that many rules and regulations which are taken as

- necessary, are so designed as to inhibit the growth of this sector.
- The level and nature of the services which the sector demands.
- Available supply, and its likely evolution in relation to the demand.

The provision of "extension services" to this sector as well as the systematic involvement of development NGOs are already recognized priorities. It should however, be stressed that the very informal, under-institutionalized and highly variable character of microenterprises seem to make them particularly well suited for involvement with the bottom-up organizing principles of NGOs.

D: Education: Non-Formal, Informal & TVET

The crucial role which education and human resource development generally can play in an attack on poverty has been widely acknowledged in all the "prepcom" meetings for the Summit. This is also endorsed in this Report. The specific aspect however which is treated here is the role of *non-formal and informal* institutions in this process. This has been somewhat overlooked, but has a strong complementary role to play along with the formal structures in any sustainable attack on poverty.

There is a wide range of such **institutions** in the three countries. **Non-formal education** is a vital link between human resource development and socioeconomic reform, because it provides:

- learning skills beyond the scope of the formal structure and so helping to close the "job gap";
- mechanisms for extending skills and knowledge gained in the formal system;
- a means of countering distortions in the formal system;
- what is in some communities often the only available educational and training opportunities, and in others an alternate route for those who may for one reason or another (poverty, aptitude, wrong social attitudes) have become the "drop-outs" and "left-outs" of the formal school system;
- opportunities for innovation which the more structured formal system may fail to provide.

Informal training covers "on-the-job" type training and training for indigenous skills and handicrafts.

Thomas (1992.A.) lists seventeen major categories of institutions which provide technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in one form or another in Guyana. While several of these are in the non-formal sector, it can be found in all the main sectors and at all levels of education after the primary. Despite this large number, the system exhibits many limitations and weaknesses. It is complex, if not complicated, overlapping and uncoordinated. There is no standardisation of certification, course content, entry requirements, trainers qualifications, or even length of training. Furthermore, it is still perceived as "low status" education offered to those not bright enough to follow the mainstream academic programmes of the formal system. This is frequently combined with a strong gender bias against women pursuing certain "male" areas of technical skills.

A close assessment, however, shows that institutions providing these types of education have many un-recognized advantages:

- They are flexible in their financing arrangements, both as regards sources of financing these activities and the modes of payment for the services which they provide.
- They are also flexible in the length of time in which learning takes place, through wide and flexible variations in the intensity of courses.
- They employ flexible teaching techniques ranging from apprenticeship to long distance correspondence courses.
- They provide high individual returns for those utilizing their services.
- They have considerable scope for economic returns derived from better standardization of their curricula, methods of certification, course material used, teaching staff and teaching techniques employed.

- They are also flexible in the way in which they can be combined with other types of education.
- Finally, they can be sponsored by a wide variety of institutions, ranging from NGOs to the private businesses and government structures.

Based on the diagnosis given above the following recommendation is made:

The urgent establishment of a regional and **national facility to coordinate all forms of TVET** both industrial and in-plant. This recommendation has been made before, but not enough has been done. This facility does not have to be overly bureaucratic, but should bring together the major stakeholders: government, business, NGOs, labour, farmers, regional and international bodies. Its objectives should be to secure:

- curriculum reform, the upgrading of course offerings, and the introduction of new ones;
- a reduction in the ad hoc characteristics of the present system and a far greater consolidation of the wide range of formal, non-formal and informal arrangements;
- better linkages between TVET institutions and their users;
- the systematic training of TVET trainers;
- the rationalization and improvement of TVET training facilities and programmes;
- the integration and rationalisation of the needs of various sectors so as to avoid duplication and wastage.

E: The Institutional Framework

The types of strategic interventions recommended in this Report should be supported by at least **four** fundamental institutional changes which are indicated below. Although given separately they are all closely related, in that each contributes to the re-definition of state-society relations in a modern context, and accepts the principles of social development advanced in this Report. The proposed changes are:

- i) **The re-structuring of the state, its functions and modalities of operation.** This includes constitutional reform but embraces two further ideas. One is promoting the development of a participatory political culture which supports tolerance, trust and transparency in the conduct of public affairs and the other is the need to decentralize and "de-concentrate" the state.
- ii) **Mechanisms should be institutionalized to promote an effective social partnership among the key sectors of society.** This would bring considerations such as consensus building, equality of opportunity, and the special position of disadvantaged groups to the forefront and help to undermine the confrontationist and authoritarian legacies of the past. Thus regional initiatives like the Caribbean Social Charter should have definite legal obligations and permit resort to judicial processes to secure their enforcement.
- iii) To set social targets for institutions based on **time-oriented quantitative targets.** For example, stated percentage declines in unemployment, the Gini coefficient, mortality and morbidity, school enrollment and repetition rates, and budgetary targets for the social sectors. These targets should be based on catch-up principles and related to appropriately determined norms, defined in terms of actual achievements elsewhere.
- iv) Some of the weaknesses of the traditional public service in regard to poverty alleviation that were referred to earlier in the Report explain the consistent calls by all observers for more and better targeting of poverty relief, improved micro-management, more scope for local employment, more transparency and greater involvement of recipients in the design, implementation, and monitoring of "relief" and "developmental" programmes. Similar limitations have emerged in relation to macroeconomic management, as well as in relating to citizens whether as individuals or groups. As part of the various SAPs, a process of public service reform, to varying extent in the three countries, has started. There is, however, a special urgency in speeding-up this process and achieving more fundamental changes than those proposed so far.

F: Target Population Groups

In this final sub-Section our concern is simply **to draw attention to the particular population groups which are in need of special initiatives and programmes.** The principle behind this proposal is not new. Indeed it is already recognized in the three countries. Thus for example, in Trinidad & Tobago there are special programmes for youth, the homeless and drug abusers. In Jamaica, there are special programmes for small farmers, women and small businesses. While in Guyana, there are targetted programmes for the indigenous population, pensioners, and the disabled. Generally, these initiatives are focussed on ensuring the social integration of these groups in the society through the enhancement of opportunity to participate in society as groups with equal standing in relation to others. All these groups, suffer from special disadvantages and face the prospect of increasing marginalization in the economic, social, political and cultural interchanges in the society. Many of the proposals and recommendations made in this Report would have effects across all these categories. For example, employment promotion would cut across all population groups; targetted health and nutrition programmes for school children would affect both genders and all parts of the country; land reform and microenterprise promotion would help farmers, rural producers, urban entrepreneurs, the consuming public, and women groups.

Based on the survey of the current social situation already presented and recognizing that resources are not available for addressing all problems of all groups immediately, the suggested priorities are:

- **Women and children**, because of maternal and child health care concerns, particularly noticeable in Guyana, the stress being placed on women for caring children and as emerging entrepreneurs in periods of acute economic distress; and, the importance of an educated and skilled workforce based on a sound

system of education, adequate nutrition and a supportive environment for children to grow up in.

- **Youth**, because of the dominance of young people within the population structure; their limited roles in the key decision-making structures of the society; the disproportionate burden of unemployment which they carry; and, their exposure to, and significant involvement in, such regional pathologies as drugs, crime, sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancies and abortions.
- **Senior citizens**, who are a minority particularly traumatized by inflation depressed incomes, and retrenchments in the public sector, and the consequent erosion of their savings accumulated over a life-time of work, much of it spent in the first few decades of national independence.
- The **disabled**, who are a traditionally ignored group but whose plight, because of their personal and family circumstances, is often worsened through difficulties in accessing education, jobs and medical care. Estimates indicate a prevalence rate in the three countries of approximately 10 percent.
- The **indigenous Amerindian communities** in Guyana, because all three countries form part of their ancestral homes, and against whom genocide has been practised. The need for historical redress is compelling.

NOTE

1. This Section draws on Thomas 1994.B. See also Thomas, (1995).

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