



A
National
Population
Policy
for St. Lucia

Prepared for the
National Population Council
by the
National Population Unit

National Population Unit
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FOREWORD

The Government of St. Lucia is interested in pursuing development programmes and strategies to create the environment to bring about a better standard of living and an improved quality of life for all St. Lucians.

This paper is intended to give a brief historical outline and features of several population issues affecting the standard of living and the quality of life.

It also attempts to examine the realities which confront us and presents possible strategies within the national development framework to achieve the goals and objectives of the National Population Policy.

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NATIONAL POPULATION CO-ORDINATOR

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PART ONE

THE NATIONAL POPULATION POLICY

THE NATIONAL POPULATION POLICY

What is the National Population Policy?

A coherent set of national policy goals and objectives for the future that sets forth national priorities in terms of optimal size and growth of the population, consistent with sustained social and economic growth and development.

This explicit population policy represents Government's intention and constitutes a strong commitment to support activities to achieve the policy's goals and objectives.

The National Population Policy will seek to:

1. Promote awareness of population issues amongst all relevant peoples, sectors and institutions - local, regional and international.
2. Assist in clarifying the Government's perceptions of the situation.
3. Set out explicitly the goals, objectives and strategies to be pursued to facilitate the development process of the country.
4. Identify and assign roles to all relevant individuals, institutions and sectors necessary to ensure a rational, comprehensive and co-ordinated approach in solving the many sensitive social, economic, psychological and religious issues involved in structured and orderly population control and development.
5. Advocate the inclusion of population issues in economic and social programme planning and development which will create the conditions for a better standard of living and an improved quality of life for all St. Lucians.

The population distribution indicates that the potential labour force is less than 50% of the total population. This, coupled with increases in the population at the extremes of life suggests that there will be a need to cater for more productive use of the non-traditional labour force.

The predominance of females in the mid and upper age range favours an increased involvement of women in the productive sector.

The present age structure shows a triangular configuration which suggests:

- (i) persistent high fertility in the face of declining infant mortality.
- (ii) high emigration especially among those in the working age group.
- (iii) a very high dependency ratio
- (iv) a heavy demand for social services (health, education, housing) and employable skills training programmes favouring the young.

Fertility Trends

Recent trends in crude birth rates and fertility rates especially over the last 5 years indicate a levelling off of these rates at around 24 live births per 1000 of population.

Age specific fertility rates over the past 10 years indicate that the women aged 20-29 years are the greatest contributors to the high fertility rate followed by the age groups 15-19 and 30-34 years. The other age groups make very insignificant contributions.

Family Structure

The proportion of births recorded as illegitimate in Saint Lucia (average of 85% per year over the past ten years) is the highest in the Caribbean, while the associated measure, the crude marriage rate of about 4 per 1000 - testifies also to the existence of

family forms which do not lend themselves readily to a classification in terms of formal marriage, widowhood and divorce.

The recognition of these three types of unions at recent censuses - married, common law and visiting - makes possible the sub-division of unions with no legal sanction into two groups. The dividing line relates to whether or not the couple share a common household.

If they do share a common household, then the union is classified as common law; if they do not share a common household, the female is classified as in a visiting union. Considering women within the child-bearing period (15-44) in 1980, we see that 40% are classified as married, 40% as common law and 20% as visiting.

One of the major aspects of the family within the Caribbean is the relatively advanced age at which marriage takes place.

Unlike the situation in European societies, where marriage generally signifies the establishment of a family, marriages in the Caribbean societies, especially among population with large proportions of Negroes, takes place after a certain proportion of the total family size is established. Thus, in the case of St. Lucia, the average age at marriage in 1980 stood at about 31.2, whereas the average at the birth of the first child amounted to 17.5 years. Thus the period between the birth of the first child and the age at marriage is 13.7 years.

Because of the movement from one union type to another as the woman moves through the child-bearing period, the determination of the fertility levels of each of the three unions presents many problems. The issue is further complicated by the fact that a selective process operates in the movement from one type of union to another. Thus, it appears that only after a large family is developed that women tend to establish their families firmly by endowing the union with legal sanction. But it seems safe to state that common law and married unions tend to have larger families than the visiting.

The implications of the existence of these three unions for fertility are complex, but it does not seem correct to infer that the visiting type is responsible for high overall levels of fertility. On the contrary, it may be argued that by its very nature it tends to exercise an element of control over levels of fertility.

Associated with the foregoing is the so-called teenage pregnancy issue which seems to dominate many of the discussions of fertility in the Caribbean. It is true that mothers under age 20 contribute substantially to total fertility in general. In 1980, this age group contributed 34% of total fertility, decreasing to 22% in 1988. However, the percentage remains unacceptably high. The distribution of family forms between married, common law and visiting unions among the women of childbearing age implies that:

- (a) most of our children grow up in illegitimate conditions while
- (b) many years of a woman's sexually active and maternal life are spent in legislative limbo.

Mortality

Ten principal causes accounted for 69% of the total deaths for the period 1985-1987. Among them, heart disease topped the list accounting for 21% of all deaths; Cancers contributed 12%. Cerebrovascular disease (ranked 3rd) and malignant neoplasms accounted for 11% of the total deaths. This indicates the need for closer monitoring of these conditions.

Causes of perinatal mortality, at number four, continued to remain a significant cause of death rising to 153, up from the 52 deaths recorded in 1981. Accidents and adverse effects accounted for 5.5% of total deaths, while hypertensive disease accounted for 4.7%. Pneumonia and related effects accounted for 3.2%. Diabetes Mellitus and intestinal infectious diseases ranked 8th and 9th respectively, together contributing 121 or 4.3% to the total deaths, with Chronic

liver disease and cirrhosis at number 10 with 48 or 1.9% of total deaths.

Deaths due to the five principal causes in Children under five during 1986 to 1987 totalled 238 or 77% of deaths in that age group. Conditions of perinatal mortality topped the list with 153 deaths or 49% of all deaths. Congenital anomalies was second with 28 deaths or 9%. Accidents and adverse affects was at number 3 with 24 deaths. Intestinal infectious diseases was in at number 4. Pneumonia and influenza ranked 5th with 15 deaths.

Migration

The natural increase of a population comprises the excess of births over deaths. Emigration is subtracted from natural increase to produce annual growth. Yet, despite our long history of net migration, our population growth remains high. Government statistics indicate that during the 1970's about 1200-1400 more people left the island than entered in any given year. Our growth from natural increase for ten years (1970-80) was 35,000 and net immigration was estimated at 15,000. Therefore, during that decade we experienced an overall estimated growth of 20,000. Can the carrying capacity of the island suffice to meet the needs of such an increasing population and yet achieve higher living standards?

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

A critical issue for us is the future growth of the population. Evidently, appreciable increments to the population are expected during the next twenty five years. If present trends continue, the population is expected to almost double by the year 2015, reaching a level of 290,908. If, however, the country were to decrease its total fertility rate from its present level of 3.5 children per woman to achieve the goal of 2.1 children by the year 2000, then the population change in 2015 would only amount to 206,697, representing a 39 percent increase.

These projected changes have important consequences for the size of the principal age groups as well as the resultant burden that could be placed on the country for the provision of adequate social services. If current demographic conditions remain constant, the pre-school age (0-4) population could grow by 90 percent to 42,951. Similarly, the school age population (5-14) would soar from a total of 43,225 to 70,437 children by the year 2015. Equally important is the current large proportion of youth (15-29) which would almost double by the year 2015. On the other hand, should fertility reach replacement level by the year 2000, the numbers in the 0-14 age group would actually decrease by 20 percent, while the increases in the youth group would only amount to approximately one quarter of the current total.

Changes in the number of women in the childbearing age group 15-44 has special significance for trends in the number of births. If current demographic conditions remain constant, the consequences of past high fertility will result in an increase in the female childbearing population 15-44 by as much as 111 percent by the year 2015. Given the constant fertility, this, of course, would result in a corresponding rise in the total number of births.

Even more alarming are the massive increases expected in the working age population (15-64) if present trends continue. The numbers are expected to increase by 127 percent, within the twenty

five year period. This represents a difference of approximately 93,663 additional persons over the 1989 figure. However, if declines in fertility, as stated above, are achieved, the change will only amount to a 94 percent increase.

These differential rates of growth imply that the resources required for the pre-school and school populations, in terms of maternal/childcare as well as the provision of educational facilities, would differ immensely depending on whether the population growth continued on its present course or achieved a decline. The greatest pressure will undoubtedly come from the population of working age, which will require an enormous increase in the creation of additional jobs to avoid a serious deterioration of the unemployment, underemployment and related problems.

The next 10 - 15 years will be critical in so far as St. Lucia's eventual population size and related socio-economic development are concerned. Emigration at recent levels cannot be relied upon as a means of alleviating growth problems. A rapid reduction in fertility is thus an important goal for the nation. Special programmes for the achievement of equal opportunities for women as well as the improvement of their status should also be given priority. It should also be noted that, after the turn of the century, the number of elderly persons are expected to grow significantly, leading to new demands on the social support system. Rapid declines in fertility could, of course, alleviate many of the problems facing the nation as it approaches the next century.

OBJECTIVES OF THE NATIONAL POPULATION POLICY

The ultimate objective of the National Population Policy is to determine and achieve a population size consistent with the nation's resources and to provide and sustain an improved standard of living and a better quality of life for all St. Lucians. The main components in realizing these objectives are:

- stabilization of the population growth to ensure favourable conditions for continuous development and to lower the existing unfavourable urban density ratio and assist in a more equitable population distribution islandwide.
- continue to improve the health and nutritional status of all, further lowering infant and child mortality and increasing life expectancy;
- realization of lower level fertility rate by the year 2000;
- improvement of the legal, social, economic and educational status of women providing them with the opportunity for full social and economic advancement;
- provision of improved and additional opportunities for education, employment, adequate housing and improvement of conditions of water supply, sanitation and the environment;
- development of agriculture, social services and industries;
- slow down internal rural/urban migration and ease the increasing urban density by improving rural infrastructure, services and income;
- make use of census data and population projections to plan appropriate health and social services for the very young and the elderly.

TARGETS/GOALS OF THE NATIONAL POPULATION POLICY - ST. LUCIA

Economic and social

To achieve and sustain favourable conditions for economic and social development in St. Lucia, the population must not exceed one hundred and eighty thousand (180,000) by the year 2000.

Health status

To promote continued improvement in the Health Status of the nation, achieving a life expectancy of 74 years by the year 2000.

Fertility

To achieve continued fertility (an average denoting the number of children per woman) decline to approximately 2.1 by the year 2000. To meet this target, St. Lucians of reproductive age must have access to quality medical care, be exposed to quality information and education that will prepare them for life and to contribute to the full recognition and status of women in our society.

Mortality

To continue improvement in infant mortality, thus achieving an infant mortality rate of no more than 15 deaths per 1000 live births by the year 2000.

Employment

To create new employment opportunities in the field of agriculture, manufacturing industries and other services to absorb some 3,000 new arrivals of labour force age annually. Self-employment schemes will also be encouraged in areas other than the traditional means of employment.

Development

To create conditions that will balance rural/urban development in keeping with the National Development Plan for St. Lucia, and to reduce the rural/urban population drift.

Basic needs

To continue to provide assistance in the provision of adequate housing facilities, access to safe water and electricity.

Education

Continued improvement and expansion of education opportunities to prepare the population for jobs, competence and self reliance, especially for girls, may have a positive effect on lowering the birth rate, by affecting the traditional tastes and appetite for large families.

Although goals and appropriate strategies are presented as separate sections, the degree of integration and the interrelationships between and among these sectors are so strong that effective co-ordination among all sectors is essential if optimal national development is to be achieved.

PART TWO

POPULATION POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

POPULATION POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Goals and Strategies

Population Policy Implementation involves the translation of population policy goals into social, economic and demographic programmes. The Population Policy aims at supporting improvements in the Social and Economic Sectors which affect demographic behaviour.

This section is presented under the following sub-titles:

1. Fertility
2. Economy
3. Education
4. Women
 - Education directly affects the status of women which helps in controlling fertility. As such, policy measures specifically geared for women have to be generated as soon as measures are put in place for 1 and 3 above.
5. Health
 - The system must be further improved so as not to cloud the gains which can be achieved from improvements in 1,2,3 and 4 above.
6. Family Planning
7. Mortality
 - Continued efforts at maintaining overall rates and further improving the Infant Mortality Rate.
8. Agriculture
9. Migration
10. Communication
11. Family Life Education
12. Information Systems
 - Given the cost of establishing an efficient information system which will impact on all of the above, it may be necessary to first put policies and systems into perspective, so as to maximize the benefits which can be gained from the use of an information system.

FERTILITY

The present high level of fertility (TFR) estimated at 3.5 in 1989 is a reflection of Biological, Behavioural and Developmental factors.

DETERMINANTS

Biological

The moderately high levels of nutrition coupled with the control of infectious and debilitating diseases such as Tuberculosis and Malaria, have contributed in great measure to the decline in sterility and the attainment of the full reproductive potential by both women and men. The decline in the age at which females experience menarche has increased the reproductive life of females.

Behavioral

Knowledge, attitudes, values and cultural practices together with physical and environmental influences, determine individual behaviour. Aspects of sexual behaviour such as frequency, timing and type of sexual intercourse, and the use of methods of contraception are important in determining fertility.

Developmental

Several development-related factors have been found to affect fertility behavior. These include education, employment, improvement of women's status, health and housing.

In the case of employment for example, this seems to reduce fertility by acting as:

- (i) an economic incentive
- (ii) by competing for available time, and
- (iii) by increasing the opportunity costs associated with child bearing.

These development factors will be discussed under separate sections. However, the following are some recommended programmes considered as important fertility intervention programmes.

RECOMMENDED PROGRAMMES

Health clinics, Youth Organizations and Community groups will all embark on supplementary education programmes for pregnant teenagers in particular, as a means of achieving the delay of subsequent pregnancies.

As regards unemployment, certain disincentives/incentives should be put in place.

- a) For unmarried women, after their second pregnancy and married women after their third, regular absences from work which can in any way be related to domestic arrangements may render them to be considered as not the most eligible for employment opportunities in certain areas. Special programmes in the form of work and community based childcare centers should be considered as a means to facilitate the contribution of women to the development process.
- b) Legislation should be introduced to provide a special tax allowance for employed and unmarried women for a maximum of two children and for the married women a maximum of three children.

Measures should be taken to facilitate the pursuance of post-secondary education and skills training for persons in the 19-24 age group, which contributes to the largest number of births. Young adults, especially females will be given a number of incentives for pursuing high academic and skills achievement. These incentives should exert both a short and long term effect on fertility.

To control family size, a woman can seek free medical advice after her fourth pregnancy on her own free will and accord. A similar situation holds for men with four children who volunteer.

ECONOMY

Economic Activity

The percentage and numbers of persons reported as economically active showed an increase. The percentage increase was more pronounced (9.3%) for females than for males (0.4%), during the period 1970 to 1980.

On the other hand, among the category reported as working at the time of the censuses in 1970 and 1980, despite an increase of 5,514 persons there was a decrease of 7.3% in the rate among the males and a small increase of 3.1 per cent among females over the intercensal period.

Among the different age groups, the greatest percentage of those unemployed, i.e. those economically active but who had not worked, was (41.4%) among the males 15-19 years while the smallest disparity was found in the elderly age group. The picture of increasing chances of employment with increasing age was true for both sexes, although less persons in the 65 and over group were economically active.

The trend of the youth being disadvantaged in terms of finding employment deteriorated over the ten-year period (1970-1980) especially for the females.

Meanwhile, the per capita (GDP) in 1980 was about 3 times that of 1970. Relative to the economically active population, expansions were seen in the occupational groupings of production (5.7%) services and clerical while reductions occurred in Agriculture. For the industrial groupings there was positive, although small, growth in manufacturing, mining, refining and quarrying while significant reductions occurred in commerce, community services, construction and installation. Women were again seemingly at a disadvantage.

THE ECONOMIC SECTOR

The role of the economic sector (of Government) is to ensure that goods and services (resources) are available in sufficient quantities to meet the needs of the population consumption requirements with perhaps a small excess to take care of debits and emergencies, and to allow for some growth (and savings).

The economic sector has the most crucial role in regulating the extent to which progress is possible, both within and in the international spheres.

Recognizing that:

- the efficiency and effectiveness of the economic sector (both private and public) is the primary limiting factor in all aspects of the country's national development.
- the level of income per family and in particular of women, have a regulatory effect on fertility (women status, health, and health services)
- there is immense political pressure to pursue 'capital widening' programmes while influential groups are demanding the pursuit of capital deepening programmes to enhance existing balance of payment positions.

And appreciating the existence of:

- an increasing 'informal sector' which makes significant contributions to the G.D.P. and in reducing unemployment.
- moderate to high levels of unemployment and under-employment which are on the increase.
- the disadvantaged position of women, children and the youth, especially females.

- continued good economic performances by the country over the years.
- the negative and positive impact of migration (especially of professionals/skilled persons) on the economy.
- the massive deficits in meeting the demands for housing, schooling and infrastructural facilities.

And further recognizing the need to:

- provide work that is socially satisfying
- decrease rural/urban migration and ease the increasing urban density
- plan strategies that capitalize on the country's comparative advantages
- develop strategies and co-ordinate activities that would allow complementary and not competing economic activities among the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States and CARICOM states in respect of regional and international markets.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The policy proposes that Government, in collaboration with the private and informal sector of the economy, embark on a programme of 'Structural Adjustment':

- As a first step, the Government, recognizing that we are deficient in capital and entrepreneurial capabilities and also the strong correlation between population policy and human resource development, will seek to establish the link between training and employment or the world of work. It is the Government's intention to use manpower planning as a tool to address our immediate problems by making more training opportunities available to our young population in particular.

- It is also extremely critical to provide the necessary institutional support to strengthen the relationship between the formal and informal sectors and improve rural infrastructure services and income in recognition of the extremely important role that it plays in alleviating the unemployment situation and rural/urban drift.
 - It is proposed that Government seeks to maintain a high degree of co-operation between social partners, that is, the Government, people, trade unions and employers as a means of inducing and encouraging external agencies to address "Structural Adjustment" programmes, thereby creating job opportunities for our people.
 - It is also Government's intention to introduce popular decision-making by planning on the basis of tangible indicators, emphasizing due felt needs as a means of ensuring basic needs.
- In its attempt to improve the Balance of Payments position, the Government will identify external lucrative markets for our exports as well as promote import substitution where possible. Also, Government is proposing to establish closer intra-regional links with its CARICOM partners on matters of trade with each country specializing (and not competing with each other) in areas where they have a comparative advantage.
- Special attention will be given to improving the efficiency of capital and the quality of production by providing adequate remuneration for suitably qualified and trained persons for high quality production, especially in the manufacturing industries and agriculture.
- As a consequence, the productive sector must be made highly effective and efficient. This implies modernization of industry, training and re-training of the labour force and improved marketing strategies especially in the leading economic sectors in order to achieve the desired income levels.

EDUCATION

Educational Status

In terms of the proportion of the adult population which has had no formal schooling, the 1980 census showed that 10% of St. Lucia's population have never attended school.

In terms of secondary schooling, St. Lucia is placed in a position with just under 14.31% having attended such schools.

With regard to University training, the proportion in the case of St. Lucia is less than one percent (0.55%). This is by no means low by comparison with other OECS countries. Studies from other nations indicate that there is an inverse correlation between education and fertility; those women with more education generally have fewer children. Thus, in addition to preparing the population for jobs, competence and self reliance, improved and expanded education, especially for girls, may have a positive effect on lowering the birth rate.

The average illiteracy rate for the population aged ten years and over stood at 33.29% estimated in 1981. However, there are definite improvements in the level and standard of education, and steps are being taken to reduce the level of illiteracy.

The Government, recognizing:

- (i) education as a tool for national development;
- (ii) the positive influence of education on fertility, responsible parenthood, income, "status", health, productivity (income) decision making (judgement).
- (iii) the role of the education sector to provide the country with the basic skills of communicating

(reading, writing and mathematics) and understanding the functions of existing systems; and

- iv) the need to reduce the level of illiteracy.

However, appreciative of the need to address issues of:

1. Structural adjustments in the educational system to foster greater economic productivity for the purposes of obtaining capital and resources to supply the needs of the population.
2. The educational needs of the special disadvantaged groups including women, children and the elderly.
3. Integrating education into all areas of planning for human resources development/and structural adjustment programmes.
4. The clarification of the roles of the Education Sector and other sectors influencing education in national development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following goals will be adopted and pursued through activities consistent with the relevant strategies.

- The Government, in recognition of the fact that education is a tool for development will seek to provide education in sufficient quantity and quality to meet the manpower needs of the society by continuing with the programme of free education to facilitate ease of entry in the education system. The Government will endeavour to subsidize the cost of school books as well as transportation for students.
- It is proposed that the Government will give urgent consideration to creating a window of opportunity in the

education programme, which will offer a second chance to young girls who, because of pregnancy, have had to drop out of the education system.

- It is proposed that Government will embark on the promotion of technical and vocational training in schools as a direct means of responding positively to market forces, thereby facilitating ease of entry into the job market upon satisfactory completion of training.
- Complementary to this however, is the development of relevant teacher training programmes as well as educational reform and apprenticeship schemes.

The establishment of junior and senior secondary comprehensive schools where there is an emphasis on technical and vocational subjects and the introduction at post primary level, together with teacher training at the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College will serve to realize this goal.

- It is Government's intention to provide sufficient school places and teacher requirements for the entire size of the school population, and as a result, achieve 100% enrollment of children between 6 and 17 years of age. To ensure that this objective is met, it would then become mandatory by law that all children between the ages of 6 and 17 are enrolled and attend school.
- The need to clarify the role of the Education sector and its impact on National Development, should be given special attention especially among the youth. Education should be emphasized as an equalizing factor, a vehicle to achieve social mobility and ultimately, improve the quality of life and the standard of living and thereby reduce fertility.

- There is also need for Government to examine what portion of its annual expenditure will be allocated to education and in what proportions, according to primary, secondary and tertiary levels in light of our short and long term needs.

- Of very great interest is Government's intention to introduce Family Life Education as an integral part of the school curricula to inculcate certain value systems to the youth as a means of promoting small family norms. A Certificate course in Family Life Education administered by the UWI School of Continuing Studies has been introduced to equip persons with the relevant skills. However, to ensure that the desired goals are achieved, it will be desirable to provide mechanisms to evaluate periodically the effects of the education system on national development and fertility. This will be undertaken by the Central Planning Unit in collaboration with the Private Sector, Youth Groups and Community Organizations.

WOMEN

Women have the potential to influence the orientation of society. Indeed they account for 51% of the total population and head 41% of all households in St. Lucia.

They are an important catalyst for sustained development of the country and the emphasis on the role of women by Government is due to the recognition that:

1. the behaviour of women in respect of their reproductive role is the most crucial social influence for fertility (and consequently population control);
2. the contribution of women to the productive sector although very substantial, has not been given sufficient recognition nor is it adequately rewarded. These two deficits have significantly contributed to the lowered status of women;
3. females contribute more to the number of years of life of the population and have longer life expectancies;
4. despite the better levels of health, education and training among women, they are still discriminated against in areas such as employment and decision making especially at management levels.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Appreciating that breaking the stereotyping of women's reproductive and productive roles will require (i) attitudinal changes at societal and individual levels; (ii) effective mechanisms for implementing relevant programmes, the policy seeks to address these issues through the following goals and strategies:

- to improve the (economic, legal, social, cultural and

political) status of women by developing manpower training on the basis of equal opportunity and not apportioned according to sex. To achieve this, there is need to facilitate the entry of women in non-traditional sectors thus paving the way to have more women involved in decision-making on matters affecting National Development. Also, legislation with regard to inheritance for women and children in common-law unions will be implemented.

- It is also proposed that there is need to break down the sex role stereotyping between men and women by ensuring the removal of all barriers by employers to facilitate the ease of entry into the labour force by women in the non-traditional sectors. In addition, the productive rather than the reproductive roles of women will be emphasized in recognition of their contribution to National Development.
- The Government will work towards the attainment of full equality of men and women by providing equal pay for work of equal value and having ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against women, in 1983, will seek to implement its provisions. To this end, a Women's Desk has been established in the Ministry of Community development.
- There is need also to ensure links between programmes to improve the status of women and those concerned with population and family planning by encouraging men to share fully with women, responsibilities in areas such as family life, child rearing and family planning.

HEALTH

The Government subscribes to the philosophy that Health is a fundamental human right and supports the Primary Health Care approach for achieving Health for all by the year 2000. Within this concept, health is defined as "the state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity".

Other rights recognized by Government include:

- the rights of individuals to choose freely the number of children they wish to have,
- access to information and family planning services which are affordable and acceptable,
- accessible opportunities for individuals to develop their full potential, with equal opportunities for development without the threat of environmental degradation.

Recognizing

- (i) the responsibility of the Health Sector for maintaining services and an environment conducive to the promotion and preservation of Health at a level that is socially and technically acceptable and accessible;
- (ii) the role of Health and Health Services in determining fertility, mortality and productivity;
- (iii) the implications of the present age structure for the demands for Health services;
- (iv) the special health needs of women, children and the elderly.

And appreciating

- (i) the present low level of total mortality except in those under 1 year of age;
- (ii) the already sizeable portion of G.D.P. consumed by expenditures on health;
- (iii) the existing numbers of women in the reproductive age group;
- (iv) the implications for health because of the low standard of public health practices in the communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Government proposes the following :

- Reduce perinatal mortality in recognition that it is a main cause of death by improving the nutritional status of women, as well as antenatal and perinatal services. These target groups would include all women within the reproductive age (15-49), pregnant and lactating women and new-born infants.
- Another area of concern is to reduce the number of unwanted pregnancies among the younger generation, 14-24 years of age. To achieve this end, there is need for increased education to increase the dissemination of information with regards to the availability of family planning services and information which can be obtained and where they can be obtained. Also there is greater need to strengthen counselling and guidance programmes in family planning and population control related matters as well as the formal introduction of Family Life Education in schools. The latter has been introduced in schools.
- The other six (6) principal causes of death - (1) Heart

Disease(2) Cerebrovascular Disease; (3) Hypertension; (4) Malignant Neoplasms; (5) Conditions of the Perinatal Period; and (6) Diabetes will be dealt with on a regional basis. Professional assistance will be provided to St. Lucian patients both within and outside St. Lucia (via Barbados, Jamaica and Martinique) on a regular basis until such facilities become available and are fully operational in St. Lucia.

- Encourage the Medical practitioners and other health professionals to take a more active part in primary and public health activities in the various communities, aimed at the development of the people to become more self-reliant with respect to their personal health care, defining the health problems, assessing the adequacy of the system to address these problems, and planning for the development of the resources (human and material) to meet the primary health care needs of the country.

FAMILY PLANNING

Family Planning Services have two main sectors:

- (i) Contraceptive Method Distribution; and
- (ii) Information and Education Services.

Contraceptives of non-surgical intervention types are available island-wide through public and private sectors, and are available to all persons. The Family Life Education Programme at present covers only a small sector of the population. However, the programme is soon to be introduced in schools and the U.W.I. School of Continuing Studies, have implemented a Family Life Education Certificate course to train persons in the area.

It is envisaged that this training will strengthen our resource base for the training of others throughout the country. This should contribute to the national efforts, and enhance initiatives concerned with creating awareness of the role of population control in the development process.

Recent studies on factors influencing contraceptive utilization in St. Lucia revealed that knowledge and availability of contraceptives were adequate, but the motivation and the proper (continued) use of contraceptives were at very low levels.

In light of this it is proposed that, high quality services including Medical, Information and Education services shall be accessible to all Saint Lucians, based on the principle that all individuals have the basic human right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children and to have the information, education and means to do so.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Specifically,

- (a) Family Planning Services will be integrated into all Government Primary Health Care services.
- (b) Special services will be designed for, and addressed to adolescents.
- (c) Co-operation and co-ordination will be strengthened between the Ministry of Health, and the Private Family Planning Association, and approved private service providers.
- (d) A review of existing family planning strategies and programmes, with particular emphasis on the linkage to the economic benefits, which would accrue to new acceptors in the long run.

A cadre of population programme officers will be established and will be responsible to the Population Planning Unit for:

- (a) The development, submission, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of population related programmes and activities within their respective Ministries, institutions and organizations.
- (b) Public relations activities, including information and data collection, processing and distribution, of the respective institutions on population related activities.

MORTALITY

Mortality plays a very important role in determining the population size and age/sex structure, not only by reducing numbers but by its influence on fertility, child spacing and mothers' health.

High mortality rates among infants tend to lead to high fertility rates because:

- (i) the loss of the temporary contraceptive effects of breast feeding - biological effect;
- (ii) the parental urge to replace the lost child - replacement effect;
- (iii) the fear that other losses through death may take place, thus the compensatory action to assume survival - insurance effect; and
- (iv) the innate desire to achieve satisfaction by succeeding - the psychological effect.

Despite recent declines infant mortality rates remain unacceptably high. On the other hand, it is recognized that the country has achieved such a low rate of mortality in all age groups except those under age 1 year, that the efforts for further reductions may prove difficult. The continued improved health status of the population will necessarily show an increase in mortality due to the 'Aging' of the population.

RECOMMENDED PROGRAMMES

The policy proposes that the Government will:

-Examine the role of retired return migrant nationals for morbidity, health and social services demands, and the contribution to the population structure and mortality. In light of the above, and the recognition that perinatal causes of death are the principal causes of death in those under 1 year of age (and also those under 5 years of age), and that among the known causes, the age related or chronic diseases are the main causes of death in the general population;

- ensure that a low level of mortality is maintained by increasing the level of both antenatal and perinatal services for pregnant women and lactating mothers respectively.

AGRICULTURE

The purpose of the Agricultural Sector is to feed the nation. This it may achieve with or without the aid of imported supplements. When supplements are necessary, the agricultural sector should produce 'excess' for the foreign markets in order to provide the required foreign exchange.

Thus, the Agricultural Sector may consider pursuing structural adjustments that could:

- (1) Control the size of its goal i.e. control the size of the population and consequently the amount of food to be produced.
- (2) Improve its productivity and comparative advantages.

The goals of Agricultural development are expected to be attained through:

- (a) Modernization and improved efficiency through utilization of:
 - (1) new technology which will have the following impacts:
 - (i) reduce the need for labor and thus reduce the need for population size;
 - ii) provide substantial income to increase the standard of living which is associated with fertility;
 - iii) improve the social acceptability and satisfaction of agriculture as a means of livelihood, especially to the youth and women.

iv) improve the quality of Agricultural produce to meet the marketing challenges and implications of Europe beginning in 1992 in the case of Exports.

(b) better trained and skilled personnel will be an incentive to the attainment of higher levels of education.

Increase foreign exchange earnings by (1) supplying markets for which (i) there is a comparative advantage or (ii) prices are at least satisfactory; and (2) reducing imports through the production of substitutes where the costs of production are not prohibitive i.e. economically feasible.

Thus, the explicit goals and strategies of the population policy on Agriculture are:

- To reduce the high labour intensity in Agriculture which is the main contributor to depressed wages. By merging small farms into large co-operatives, members will experience economies of scale by the introduction of new technologies. As a result, surpluses will be realized which can then be ploughed into other sectors where displaced workers can now be absorbed and compensated at more satisfactory levels than working in large crowds on farms and plantations.
- It is Government's intention to encourage persons to bring more land under cultivation for the production of food for local consumption. This will have the net effect of reducing its cost thereby making it possible for all persons to purchase sufficient food and variety to meet the minimum nutritional requirements.
- To grow food and to encourage diversification in non-traditional areas including traditional as well as non-

traditional crops, domestic foods and other non-foods in sufficient quantity and quality to secure and guarantee lucrative overseas markets. Generating foreign exchange thus increasing the purchasing power of both our nationals and the Government.

- It is the intention of the Government to train young persons in particular, in agro-processing skills, thus equipping them with knowledge to enable them to chart their destinies.
- Some assistance will be provided in obtaining credit for purchase of capital equipment needed to undertake the various projects.
- Government also intends to eliminate dietary under-nutrition by identifying "at risk" individuals and families, and by providing them with supplementary foods especially infants including those of school age, pregnant females and nursing mothers. Also information on dietary requirements and food preparation will be given some prominence.

MIGRATION

Migration can play a profound role in determining the population size and age/sex structure as well as employment and skill patterns through the following:

- (i) modifying the population age/sex structure of the society;
- (ii) relieving unemployment;
- (iii) altering the pattern and availability of manpower and skills within the country; and
- (iv) determining currency foreign exchange;

This has influenced policymakers to require more in-depth understanding of the trends and factors associated with migration.

The following are some factors requiring consideration:

- (i) the inadequacies of the existing data on migration and knowledge of its impact on the society. This is needed to shape migration policies;
- (ii) the poor return rate of those persons who migrate in search of higher education;
- (iii) the uncertainty of the future levels of emigration; and

- (iv) the high costs of imported 'professional' labour and the competition to nationals which this induces.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The goals and strategies proposed with respect to migration are within the framework of national development and include:

- The establishment of the necessary machinery to determine the level of migration, especially out-migration, and the factors associated with it. It is proposed that Government will seek the assistance of receiving countries in obtaining information on the characteristics of migrants in its effort to attract the professionals and other skilled persons to return to St. Lucia.
- It is also proposed that in order to determine the characteristics of migrants we will have to improve our data base collection at both air and sea ports.
- As a means of suppressing unemployment, the Government will request the assistance of countries which employ seasonal labour to increase St. Lucia's quota of seasonal workers.

COMMUNICATIONS

The successful implementation of the National Population Policy is dependent, to a certain extent, on the support and participation of all individuals in the public and private sectors as well as the wider community.

Awareness creation represents a vital prerequisite for support from various sectors of the community, foremost among which are politicians, policymakers, planners, statisticians, and finally the general public. To gain this support, it is felt that information on the relationships between socio-economic factors and population issues can assist in breaking down barriers of ignorance and indifference among the aforementioned groups. However, it should be noted, that information alone is not the answer. The way in which that information is communicated is of extreme importance if it is to go beyond mere informing into the realm of motivating positive activity.

Since the implementation of the population policy is broad-based, requiring cooperation and collaboration from various public sectors, private sectors, non-governmental organisations, and individuals, the audience to be targeted in the dissemination of population information is a very wide one. As such, appropriate messages and formats will need to be designed to meet the specific needs of different audiences. For example, a communications component will ensure that results of on-going research and data collection and analysis are made available on a timely basis to planners, enhancing their ability to integrate population issues in development planning. Also, appropriately designed messages and materials for educational purposes represent an essential communications element. Communicating the linkages between population and development to the general public is also a vital element since it is hoped that messages such as these would impact on the individual's decision-making process and so influence his

or her population- related decisions. Within this enhanced knowledge, a more receptive environment for family planning messages can also be created.

A vibrant communications network that will ensure:

1. awareness creation of the policy, its goals and general population- development links and
2. the appropriate dissemination of population information to planners, policy makers, leaders in the community and individuals,

is thus an important component and support activity in implementing the population policy.

In light of this communications requirement, the government proposes to implement the Information/Education/Communications component of the approved work plan through the National Population Unit, in collaboration with the Ministry of Planning, to achieve the goals of the National Population Policy.

FAMILY LIFE EDUCATION

The role of Family Life Education is to modify the sexual behaviour of individuals (and groups i.e. couples and families) by providing the knowledge, skills and practices for responsible parenthood.

Thus, in order to have the desired impact, Family Life Education, which is presently being taught in some schools and, to a very limited extent in community groups, must be sustained and adapted to the needs of target groups as well as have a minimal degree of coverage.

The University of the West Indies through its School of Continuing Education has introduced an outreach programme in Family Life Education leading to a Certificate. This course is intended to strengthen our resource base for training in this important area, and to support our initiatives towards population control and development.

In addition, it is recognized that motivation of the individual and provision of services are necessary support factors.

The services, covered under family planning services, comprise two major sections:

- a. Information, Education and Counselling;
- and b. Administering of Contraceptive Methods.

It is necessary that both sections provide services which are satisfactory, accessible and affordable. They should also offer a wide range of choices and a high level of efficiency.

The goals and strategies for this component have been subsumed under other sectors and have already been highlighted.

INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Information is an essential input into the decision-making process. The appropriateness of decisions depends on the quality, timeliness, relevance and suitability of the presentation of the information. However, information systems generally suffer from many constraints. These include:

- (a) Information systems are in the main little more than data gathering systems because:
 - i the collectors of the data are not the users nor do they receive any feed back, thus the process is an 'END' in itself;
 - ii the persons for whom the information was intended prefer to rely on subjective judgements rather than be influenced by hard data;
 - iii use of information systems have a threatening connotation to the uninitiated especially those in management positions;
 - iv the process is perceived as 'extra work for which no additional payment is granted;
- (b) Information systems are usually costly to establish even though an efficient information system will:
 - 1. reduce institutional costs
 - 2. improve the chances of increased benefits
 - 3. improve co-ordination (and supervision)
 - 4. facilitate training and education
 - 5. improve the decision-making process.

and (c) Most importantly, because information supplied by information systems are very often not used for the purpose it was intended if it is used at all.

The status of the information system with respect to the determinants and consequences of population trends, needs to be addressed generally in light of the preceding statements. And more specifically, according to the following goals, strategies and related information requirements:

INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

Economic

- Identify Markets
- Levels of Comparative Advantage
- Skills - Types, Distribution and Needs
- Training Facilities - Number, Type
- Distribution, Needs

Migration

Number of migrants (not immigration)

- age, sex, education, skills, destination, health status - reason for migration.

Internal Migration

- Per administrative district/region
Number of migrants - age, sex, education, skills
Reason for migration e.g. availability/accessibility, goods and services, employment, training, repatriation, marriage.

Fertility

- CBR, age specific fertility rates, family size, union status, average age and length of union status, percentage children per union status. Birth complications including deaths per age group.
- Contraceptive utilization/coverage - level of protection, age, sex, method and number of completed cycles, level of reduction.

Births (types)

- per women - age, sex, education, occupation, address, age of consort and occupation of consort, and relationship with consort.

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Essential for the implementation of any policy and especially one as multi-faceted and as embracing as a population policy, is the need for explicit guidelines to address the terms of reference, legislative authority, organizational structure, their roles and responsibilities and resources.

To enhance the success of the implementation process, the institutional arrangements should consider:

1. Location of the seat of decision making which would allow:
 - (a) the appropriate authority (ies) to undertake requested actions.
 - (b) Co-ordination and monitoring of programmes.
 - (c) Effective control of resources.
 - (d) Programmes to be designed and undertaken consistent with (each other and) National Policies.
- 2 The availability of resource (human and non-human resources)
- 3 The relevance of the programmes/activities of the institution in respect of the political, managerial and technical direction, i.e. the ability of the institution to effectively carry out the tasks entrusted to it.

In the context of our country, the institutional arrangements will be reviewed in terms of :

- a. The Policy/Directive/or Guidance Section
- b. The Management/Planning Section
- c. The Programming and Implementation assistance/Fund Raising Section

The Government of St. Lucia will be responsible for the Policy formulation, modification, promulgation and implementation of the National Population Policy through a National Population Council:

- (a) An Advisory body responsible to the Government of St. Lucia and consisting of multi-sectoral representatives including Religious and Private Sector.

The National Population Council will be under the chairmanship of one of the representatives on the Council and appointed by the Cabinet of Ministers.

- (b) A National Population Planning Unit under the guidance of the Permanent Secretary responsible for Planning and consisting of a National Population Co-ordinator, Research Officer, Communicator and a Stenographer will be responsible for the planning and development of programme activities that are population related in collaboration with all relevant sectors and agencies and in keeping with the population policy directives.

- (c) Several institutions including:

- . Government Ministries/Departments
- . Private Institutions
- . Religious, and
- . Non-governmental

which will be responsible for population programme implementation under the supervision of the National Population Planning Unit.

Each institution will have a designated Population Officer responsible for overall supervision of the institution's role in population activities.

The National Population Council (NPC) will have the role of advising the Government of St. Lucia on all population policy issues.

The members of the Council are representatives of:

- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Community Development
- Ministry of Labour
- Ministry of Trade
- Ministry of Agriculture
- Ministry of Planning
- Industrial Solidarity Pact (ISP)
- Chamber of Commerce
- St. Lucia Christian Council
- Department of Statistics
- Government Information Service
- National Youth Council
- Urban Development Co-operation
- Lions Club of Castries
- Rotary Club
- Kiwanis Club
- St. Lucia Planned Parenthood Association
- Representative of an Organization representing women

Specific Terms of reference for the National Population Council:

1. To provide advice to the Government of St. Lucia on all matters relating to population issues.
2. To provide assistance in the overall co-ordination of population policy implementation activities.
3. To monitor the implementation of population related sectoral strategies and programmes to ensure their compatibility with the population policy goals.

4. To advise on the inclusion of population-related activities in the development plans and programmes of both the public and private sectors.
5. To provide advice and general guidance to the Population Unit in the implementation of the Population Policy Work Plan.

The National Population Council will seek, through the specific terms of reference to :

- heighten the awareness and importance of the role of population in the planning and development process;
- reinforce the links which exist between population, resources and the environment;
- seek to bring about a sustainable relationship between population, resources and development, through the formulation and implementation of appropriate programmes;
- encourage the involvement of various segments of the population in the formulation and implementation of these programmes.

WORK PLAN - THE NATIONAL POPULATION UNIT

The Work Plan for the National Population Unit consists of the following components, with elements of specific objectives, activities and inputs to meet the objectives.

1. Training
 - To increase the understanding of population/development linkages among planners/policy makers.
 - To increase awareness among the political directorate.
 - To strengthen the capabilities of the Population Unit.
2. Data Collection/
Evaluation and Analysis
 - Collect, evaluate and analyze population-related data for input into Social and Economic programming in collaboration with the Department of Statistics.
3. Research
 - To expand the knowledge base for policy-making through the conduct of research studies.
4. Monitoring & Evaluation
 - To monitor population-related programmes and socio-economic and demographic indicators and evaluate achievement of population policy goals.
5. Status of Population
Development Integration
 - To analyze the incorporation of population factors/issues in planning past, current socio-

economic programming with a view to identifying gaps and preparing for further population and development integration.

6. Population Policy -

To up-date the National Population Review up-date Policy approved by Cabinet Conclusion No.1000 of 22/8/85

7. Institution Building -

To strengthen the institutional mechanisms for Population Policy implementation and integration of population issues in social and economic programmes.

8. Information/Education

To create an informed and Communication (IEC) motivated public which will become responsive to the objectives of the National Population Policy (NPP) and supportive of the strategies to realize these objectives.

To communicate the objectives etc. of:

- the National Population Policy
- the National Population Council
- the Population Unit

(who/what/when/how)

CONCLUSION

The magnitude of the effort required for fulfilling the goals of the National Population Policy demands the systematic development and application of new technologies, procedures, and approaches that will maximize the productivity of all available resources. Improving the planning and administration process will ensure control of the efficiency and effectiveness of the system.

Also necessary for the fulfillment of the purpose, is proper organization of the National Population Unit, including its relations with the public and private sectors to include other agencies; an effective approach to its financing system in order to improve the distributive role of the National Population Unit, and the participation of all sectors and agencies in the national effort to create the environment for an improved standard of living and a better quality of life for all St. Lucians.