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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA  
Office for the Caribbean

CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION COMMITTEE

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC  
AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION (UNESCO)  
Division for Socio-Economic Analysis

REPORT OF JOINT CEPAL/CDCC/UNESCO  
WORKSHOP ON THE APPLICATION OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC  
INDICATORS TO DEVELOPMENT PLANNING IN THE CARIBBEAN

(12-14 June 1978, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago)



UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA Office for the Caribbean



## ORGANIZATION

At the Third Session of the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee (CDCC), held in Belize City, Belize, from 12 to 18 April 1978, the CDCC Secretariat reported to the Committee that in conjunction with UNESCO's Division for Socio-Economic Analysis, Sector for Social Sciences and their Applications, a project entitled "Application of Socio-Economic Indicators to Development Planning in the Caribbean" was being developed, and a workshop was being convened for mid 1978.

This technical consultancy took place from 12 to 14 June 1978, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. It discussed a two-year project aimed at creating socio-economic indicators for development planning and evaluation adapted to the sub-region, and at setting up working groups to deal with this subject matter.

## ATTENDANCE<sup>1/</sup>

Specialists from the following member countries of the Committee, in which a social research institute was known to be functioning, attended the workshop in a technical capacity: Barbados, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

In addition, a representative of the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) also attended, while a representative of the East Caribbean Common Market (ECCM) Secretariat was nominated to attend, but was unable to do so because of the ECCM Council Meeting.

United Nations bodies were also represented at the workshop: Joint UNEP/CEPAL Caribbean Environment Management Project, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the recently established UNDP/OTC Socio-Economic Development Planning Project in Dominica.

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<sup>1/</sup> A full list of participants is appended as Annex 1.

Specialized United Nations agencies and organizations represented were: International Labour Organization (ILO), and the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO).

### Agenda

The Agenda of the workshop comprised the following matters:

1. Presentation of the Social Work Programme of the CDCC, Work Programme of the UNESCO Division for Socio-Economic Analysis, and the project on Application of Socio-Economic Indicators to Development Planning in the Caribbean.
2. Current use of social indicators in Caribbean development planning, their usefulness for the formulation of sub-regional policies. The problem of monitoring changes in the social sector.
3. Methods and techniques in the search of social indicators suitable to the Caribbean circumstances.
4. Planning for Rural Development and the use of social indicators.
5. Recommendations on -
  - i) on-going research and mechanisms for co-ordination;
  - ii) areas to be explored through joint ventures;
  - iii) other researchers and planners to be invited; and
  - iv) eventual modifications to the draft project.

After the presentation by the Division for Socio-Economic Analysis of UNESCO and the CDCC Secretariat of the general framework for the project, several papers were discussed in five plenary sessions, while two working groups were established: one to deal with an Informal Caribbean Network of Researchers dealing with Specific Social Indicators for Development

Planning; and the second to deal with an Informal Network of Researchers dealing with Social Planning and Social Reporting.  
Statements of other United Nations agencies were presented.

#### Officers

The inaugural session of the workshop was chaired by:

Hamid Mohammed - Deputy Director, CEPAL Office  
for the Caribbean

The subsequent sessions were chaired by:

Leo Pujadas  
Norma Abdulah  
Susan Craig  
Betty Sedoc

The general rapporteur was the responsibility of:

Manuel Cocco Guerrero

The officers of the working groups were:

<u>Working Group I:</u>	C. Nurse	- Chairman
	G. Standing	- Chairman
	R. Chin-A-Sen	- Rapporteur
	K. Hyder	- Rapporteur
<u>Working Group II:</u>	P. Anderson	- Chairman
	E. Armstrong	- Chairman
	C. Davis	- Rapporteur
	E. Solomon	- Rapporteur

#### SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS AT THE PLENARY SESSIONS

The rationale for the CDCC Social Work Programme was presented. It was pointed out that in relation to the "non-social sectors" the Social Work Programme attempts to identify the necessary changes in social relations which are implied in the implementation of the

mandates given by the member governments. It appears that difficulties at the different stages of implementation of plans and programmes in the Caribbean are problems of nation-building. Therefore, the Social Work Programme aims basically at fostering social cohesion. Proposals related more specifically to the Social Sector tend to call for an increase in the knowledge of the Caribbean social environment and its dissemination. The workshop is part of the actions carried out in that direction.

In presenting the general framework for the project on the Application of Socio-Economic Indicators, the Work Programme of the UNESCO Division for Socio-Economic Analysis was discussed, and the different trends in what is known as the social indicator movement and their differences underlined. The System of Social and Demographic Statistics (SSDS) of the Statistical Office of the United Nations, as well as programmes on indicators of the OECD, UNRISD, ILO, United Nations University, and UNESCO were introduced.

The UNESCO programme, complementing the others, seeks at the international level to assist the advancement achieved in the field, at the regional level to evaluate the applicability of social indicators to planning and at the national level to promote the application of these indicators.

Different issues were raised in relation to the role of those affected by the planning process, the involvement of interest groups in the execution as well as in the interaction between planning and implementation. The necessity to analyze governmental structures for implementation and execution of plans, and to observe a balance between macro-and-micro-planning as well as the giving of due attention to comparison and standardization of indicators were also underlined. A note of caution was given with respect to an over-emphasis on social aspects to the detriment of economic ones. Finally, efforts related to the concept of basic needs were viewed as consistent with the search for collective self-reliance pursued within the framework of the proposed project on the Application of Socio-Economic Indicators to Development Planning.

It was suggested that the current use of social indicators should be distinguished from their availability. The use of social indicators is affected by the planning machinery, which is sometimes defective and by the conception of development held by planners. In any case, the general insufficiency of research on social indicators in the Caribbean was recognized. After the post-war emphasis on economic growth the central issue of planning changed towards the better use of human resources. Old conceptions of planning are nonetheless prevalent in the Caribbean sub-region, the basic approach is sectoral and not spatial, cultural factors are ignored, while indicators of labour force and labour market as well as health statistics are inadequate. Indicators on the quality of life were also found to be in a deficient state.

Reference was made to the existence of valuable data which are not collated, codified and systematically circulated. The need to revise the legal framework of confidentiality was also noted. Mention was made of the quality and reliability of data collected by government ministries for purposes other than development planning, and of the fact that it is often cheaper to look for new data (particularly through the use of sample surveys), than to utilize the mass of raw available data. Some participants however pointed out that sample surveys are often expensive and that in some cases they produce unreliable data because of the low level of experience and expertise of those who carry them out.

Certain topics were seen as crucial, such as participation of women and children in the labour force, infant mortality statistics, remittances by Caribbean migrants to their home countries, problems of measurement of employment, status of the unemployed, income data, wage structures, worker motivation and the effective use of existing resources. With respect to the problem of employment it was pointed out that the matter requires more sociological research in view of the poor state of knowledge on its particularity within the Caribbean area.

The need to apply measurement techniques for the evaluation of social, economic and political systems was acknowledged, and the technical and philosophical constraints in the construction of indicators recognized. Indicator analysis in the Caribbean is in its infancy and should be stimulated, since the impact of developmental programmes and other social trends must be assessed and monitored. Criteria for the choice of suitable indicators were analyzed and a set of them proposed. This set of indicators covers: resources, control of resources, sectoral allocation of resources, performance of resources and impact of economic integration on resources. These indicators may be capable of wide Caribbean use.

An on-going research project on levels of living in Guyana was described. It is being carried out on the basis of several methodologies where traditional approaches already tested in Latin America are combined in a variety of ways, with an innovative participatory approach involving an iterative process of reflection by the researcher and those researched at the village level. Minimum requirements for the level of living, cultural and structural indicators are gathered at country level, while at the community level, this information is coupled with specific studies on the processes of participation and utilization.

The discussions highlighted the need to attempt the measurement of on-going processes and to assess the resistance of different social categories, or their receptivity to development policies. It was also noted in studies on the impact of economic integration on existing resources that attention must be given to workers' migration, and other movement of people within the Caribbean.

In the set of indicators proposed for Caribbean studies, it would seem that factors more specifically social such as culture, education and health could receive more attention. With respect to education, one must also pay attention to new forms and techniques of educating the population, which are alternative to the use of traditional educational means. In relation to primary health care, the problem of delivery of services to rural areas is a very serious one, and

should be assessed, taking due account that attention is already being given to the matter by PAHO/WHO and the CARICOM Secretariat.

It was remarked that in studies on the Caribbean particularly, the question of racial integration and conflicts should be taken into account. It did not seem appropriate to use more general categories which do not give account of inter-ethnic relations.

A model for development of a Caribbean society, built upon the relationship between democracy and the total fulfilment of human personality was broached. Certain value objectives such as participation in decision-making, opportunities for the development of individual potentialities, equality in income distribution, were presented as requirements for rural development and indicators were seen as instruments to assess and monitor the achievements of the stated goals. It was suggested that the achievement of these goals imply a nation-wide effort to modify authoritarian tradition and other attitudes inherited from plantation societies, and to create a new Caribbean personality. The range of political and economic prescriptions deriving therefrom leads to the construction of suitable social indicators. Examples of indicators were drawn in the area of education, health, political and economic activities.

It was remarked that this sort of model should give due account of different forms of social pathology and to its evolution; problems of drug addiction and alcoholism were given as examples. Furthermore, elements of social defence and of human rights should not be overlooked. In this respect, it was also mentioned that the substantive contents of human rights vary from one society to another, while in certain contexts, it may be a problem of arbitrary imprisonment, in others human rights may refer primarily to the right to eat, to work, to the protection of elderly citizens, etc.

Problems of standardization and weighting of indicators for internationally comparative purposes were referred to and several methods developed at UNESCO headquarters were mentioned. Allusion was also made to work done in the field of human rights' indicators.

Remarks were made on the difficulty of applying a single model to the Caribbean societies. The value systems in the Caribbean are quite diversified. Together with capitalist ethos, one observes the emergence of various forms of socialism.

#### Report of the Working Groups

Two working groups were organized. The first one concerned itself with specific social indicators for development planning; and the second working group considered social reporting, social planning, and methods and techniques of planning.

The creation of an informal network of researchers in these areas was discussed in both groups. The objectives of the Networks would be:

- To articulate on-going researches through periodic reports (e.g. tri-monthly) which will be circulated by the CDCC Secretariat to all participants in the Network and UNESCO.
- To prepare a structure capable of absorbing eventual financial assistance and of disseminating the benefits of the research stimulated by this eventual assistance to all participants.
- To convene annually, in order to assess the progress achieved and to plan future activities.

It was recommended that the CDCC Secretariat should contact the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), to secure financing for the project on the Application of Socio-Economic Indicators to Development Planning in the Caribbean. The Secretariat should also contact UNESCO, other institutions and the governments in an effort to compile a directory of on-going research for circulation.

Report of Working Group I

In examining the objectives proposed for the informal networks, it was felt that in order to keep the information flowing with regard to on-going research, the following steps should be taken:

1. Research workers participating in the networks should submit quarterly reports on research, on methodology and on results to the CDCC Secretariat. In cases where there was no change or progress in research, the researcher should report this to the CDCC. The Secretariat would be responsible for circulating the reports to those working in the same field and to the UNESCO Division for Socio-Economic Analysis.
2. CDCC and UNESCO should organize annual meetings of researchers and planners in related fields to assess the progress achieved and to plan future activities.
3. The Secretariat should give special attention to the problem of confidentiality of data gathered by government agencies and their eventual use for research purposes.

The co-ordinating role played by the CDCC Secretariat was discussed at some length. By organizing the informal networks on the basis of on-going research the process of mutual assistance is set into motion which will ease the effort to secure external financial assistance. CDCC, UNESCO and other UN agencies interested in the exercise can play a complementary role in search for funds. Due attention would be given to the autonomy of decision-making of research institutions.

Topics for the search of social indicators were discussed, the following were agreed upon, as a relevant starting point:

1. Measurement of cultural/ideological identity:
  - problems of cultural dependency;
  - problems of individual needs: self-expression, sense of purpose;
  - problems of collective needs: public recognition of private life organization.
2. Measurement of social movements and mobilization:
  - geographical mobility;
  - participation in the labour force and occupational mobility.
3. Measurement of political participation:
  - voting behaviour;
  - political ideology.
4. Measurement of welfare:
  - economic: income distribution, social security, distribution and control of assets, etc.;
  - physical: food, water, etc.;
  - environment: human settlements, environmental health, ecology, etc.;
  - socio-cultural: education and training, information systems, recreation, etc.
5. Measurement of social security:
  - crime/rule of law;
  - social defence;
  - protection of human rights;
  - protection of vulnerable and/or underprivileged groups (e.g. children, women, racial groups, political minorities).
6. Measurement of national performance:
  - country participation in intra-Caribbean co-operation or integration processes;
  - utilization of available Caribbean resources including human resources, land and other productive assets.

Under the last item, it was underlined that in the case of societies where a given economic activity is clearly predominant, indicators should be designed to measure the social impact of such activities (for instance, tourism, extractive industries, production of sugar, etc.).

Indications were given to the Secretariat on researchers and institutions interested in several of the topics listed above and whose interests in organizing informal networks should be explored. It was apparent that in relation to the issues of labour force and welfare (basic needs), two sub-groups could be established in a short period of time. The Secretariat, with the assistance of UNESCO, should make all effort to initiate action in these fields.

In relation to the measurement of cultural identity, it was noted that future work should place the accent on the cohesiveness of Caribbean culture and cultural dependency. The issue of cultural identity should embrace racial, political and class identity.

With respect to political participation, social indicators should be designed to measure the achievement of the policy position of the governments. As for the measurement of welfare, it was underlined that ILO Basic Needs approach would provide a foundation for relevant future research. Several studies by UNICEF were also mentioned in view of their importance.

#### Report of Working Group II

##### Weaknesses Identified in Social Planning, Social Reporting and Data Collection

In most Caribbean territories, the official responsibility for data collection is divided between a Statistics Department and individual ministries. The Statistics Department is usually responsible for data collection on employment, income, production and

migration, while they rely on the Ministries for data on such social sectors as health, education, crime, social security, etc. This means that there is considerable room for variation in the scope and quality of social statistics and that often data are compiled in a manner that is not suitable for planning purposes. This problem must be addressed if there is to be improvement in the existing system of statistics, and the establishment of proper linkages between sectoral and centralized data collection systems. Similarly, due attention should be given at a Caribbean level to the problem of standardization of definitions and methods to measure the social phenomena.

Problems in data collection and availability are not confined to statistical data, but are part of the larger problem of the need for adequate management information systems for planning purposes. Here management is seen as the efficient and effective use of all available resources to achieve a designated goal. Hence, there is the need in the planning process for communication and co-operation among persons with different conceptual lenses - sociological, economic, physical planning, etc.

A clear weakness in much of current social planning and reporting is that it is very largely concerned with sectoral social planning (health, education, etc.), and does not extend to the delineation of broad societal goals. It is recognized that this type of societal planning rests on certain presumptions about the political goals and functioning of the society.

It also appears that in some territories there is a tendency for social planning to be dominated by the need to secure or utilize available sources of international technical and financial assistance. In these cases, social planning may be reduced to providing a rationale for projects which have already secured funding, instead of engaging in comprehensive planning.

It was noted that this negative influence has created many obstacles to the implementation of policies decided by the Government. At the same time, a favourable evolution is taking place in the Caribbean and in this respect, mention was made of several actions decided upon by the CDCC member governments which are being implemented with the participation of UNESCO. Similar developments are also evident in the work done by ILO in the sub-region.

In most territories, it also appears that there is a serious lack of data at the small-area level. Such data are essential in planning the location of physical facilities, employment opportunities and social services, but generally these decisions are based on out-dated information from the last Census. It was suggested that where it is not possible to obtain accurate and up-to-date information by means of sample surveys, planners should seek to utilize field officers, such as public health inspectors and agricultural extension workers, to obtain crude data such as information on population size and movements.

It was also agreed that a major weakness in regard to social planning is not only the lack of manpower but more importantly, manpower with adequate training in quantitative techniques and interdisciplinary perspectives. The need was identified for the establishment of short-term training courses in social planning for government planners and practitioners.

#### On-going activities and suggestions for improvement

There exists a nucleus of social reporting within the context of statistical reporting - usually of the economic and social kind. Sometimes there is a social section within a larger national report while in other cases there are social reports but, in all cases, these reports are of the social statistics type (as contrasted with social concerns and social policy type).

Recently, there has been increasing activity in the area of social research and social analysis on the part of universities and research institutions. Such activities are un-coordinated but the expertise being built up, when properly co-ordinated should prove of great value.

What appears to be deficient is the expression of clear social policy as a foundation for social planning. It was agreed that most of the elements needed for social planning were present but what is lacking is the demonstrated conviction of governments to come to grips with social concerns through a clearly stated social policy and social planning.

The need for co-ordination both at the national and regional levels, so as to involve both researchers and government officials in the same and in different countries was recognized. Such co-ordination might take the form of regular exchanges of information through documents and through meetings and support for key research activities which have a large audience.

The creation of an informal network was deemed to be a step in the right direction but it will be necessary, in the end, for governments to initiate and support social planning activities. Once government decisions are taken, national projects of governments could be funded through international sources on a case-by-case basis, but the decision to include social indicators and social planning activities in country programming is a political one.

#### Suggestions for modifications of the Draft Project

The objectives, activities and outputs should be stated more clearly and it should be especially pointed out that this sub-regional project is a "seed" project designed to facilitate country projects and proposals for action of important magnitude.

A training component should be added covering training in methods for using indicators in social planning. This should include both fellowships for training in-depth at the university level and short-term training programmes designed for government planners and researchers in specific fields.

In addition every effort should be made to ensure support for the development of facilities for training, including curriculum development and staffing in the Caribbean area, both at the university level and at the level of in-service training for officials and decision-makers.



Annex 1

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS



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BARBADOS

Cortez Nurse  
Chief Project Officer  
Ministry of Health  
Jemmott's Lane  
St. Michael

DOMINICAN  
REPUBLIC

Manuel Cocco Guerrero  
Universidad Autonoma de Santo Domingo

GUYANA

Carol Davis  
Senior Sociologist  
Ministry of Economic Development  
Brickdam and Avenue of the Republic  
Georgetown

Maurice Odle  
Director  
Institute of Development Studies  
University of Guyana  
P.O. Box 841  
Georgetown

Gordon Davis  
Research Fellow  
Institute of Development Studies  
University of Guyana  
P.O. Box 841  
Georgetown

HAITI

Chavannes Douyon  
Director of Vocational Orientation  
Centre and Research  
Department of Social Affairs  
Ministry of Work and Social Affairs  
Delma 20  
Port-au-Prince

Yolande Plummer  
Director of School of Social Work  
Chief of Service for Women and Children  
Department of Social Affairs  
Rue de la Révolution  
Port-au-Prince

JAMAICA

Vernon James  
Deputy Director  
Department of Statistics  
9 Swallowfield Road  
Kingston 5

Patricia Anderson  
Co-ordinator, Social Planning  
National Planning Agency  
Ministry of Finance and Planning  
39 Barbados Avenue  
Kingston 5

Kamala Hyder  
Research Fellow  
Institute of Social and Economic Research  
University of the West Indies  
Mona  
Kingston 7

GURINAME

Ollye Rita Chin-A-Sen  
Head of the Bureau of Manpower Planning (Sociologist)  
Bureau of Manpower Planning at the  
Ministry of Labour and Housing  
22 Wagenwegstreet  
Paramaribo

Betty Sedoc-Dahlberg  
Adviser in Social Planning of the National  
Planning Bureau  
Senior Lecturer in Social Planning  
Head of the Department of Sociology  
Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences  
University of Suriname  
Leonsberg 5  
P.O. Box 1464  
Paramaribo

Glenn B. Sankatsing  
Lecturer in Research Methods and Techniques  
at the Faculty of Social and Economic Sciences  
Institute of Economic and Social Research (IESO)  
Researcher at the University of Suriname  
Doekhieweg 18A  
Paramaribo

TRINIDAD  
AND TOBAGO

Norma Abdulah  
Research Fellow  
Institute of Social and Economic Research  
University of the West Indies  
St. Augustine

Susan Craig  
University Lecturer  
Department of Sociology  
University of the West Indies  
St. Augustine

Special Guests

Leo Pujadas  
Desmond Hunte  
Richardson Andrews

Inter-Governmental Organizations

Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)

Eric Armstrong

United Nations System

Joint UNEP/CEPAL Caribbean Environment Management Project

Elinor Gittens

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

Juan Fernando Aguirre

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Gregorio Feliciano

Miodrag Petkovic (UNDP/OTC Project)

International Labour Organization (ILO)

Zin Henry

Guy Standing

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Erwin Solomon

Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO)

Barry Whalley

CEPAL System

Jean Casimir

Lancelot Busby

Max B. Ifill

Elizabeth de Gannes

Annex 2

LIST OF DOCUMENTS



LIST OF DOCUMENTS

CDCC/SI/WP/78/1	Draft Project on the Application of Socio-Economic Indicators to Development Planning in the Caribbean
CDCC/SI/78/2	Notes on Activities Preparatory to the Workshop on the Application of Socio-Economic Indicators to Development Planning in the Caribbean and the Draft Agenda
CDCC/SI/78/3	Rural Development Planning in the Caribbean and its Social Indicators - Max B. Ifill
CDCC/SI/78/4	Levels of Living Research Proposal - Mike McCormack
CDCC/SI/78/5	Current use of Indicators in Socio-Economic Planning in the English-speaking Caribbean - Richardson Andrews
CDCC/SI/78/6	Social, Economic and Political Indicators of Change in the Caribbean - Patrick Emmanuel
CDCC/SI/78/7	UNESCO Secretariat Background Paper
CDCC/SI/78/8	Report of Working Group I
CDCC/SI/78/9	Report of Working Group II
CDCC/SI/78/10	Draft Report of Workshop on the Application of Socio-Economic Indicators to Development Planning in the Caribbean (Final Report No. E/CEPAL/CDCC/45)
CDCC/SI/78/11	Employment and Welfare: An Assessment of Data Requirements - Guy Standing

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