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**University of Wales Swansea
School of Social Sciences and International
Development**

**Poverty Reduction
in
Saint Lucia**

Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the Masters of
Philosophy in Development Planning and Policy

Anthony George
2001

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APPENDIX 3 : Specimen Layout for Declaration/Statements page to be included in Higher Degree Theses

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Summary

There are unprecedented global changes, which have radically reorganised the patterns of trade, economic relations and the politico-cultural systems among and within the nations of the world. These changes are directly affecting the economies and societies of Small Island Developing States, raising significant concerns over the increasing incidence and severity of poverty within these independent small states. As a response to these internal conditions of deprivation, the Government of St. Lucia, like many others, is developing and implementing a plethora of poverty reduction policies and strategies. Yet sufficient and conscious considerations have not been given to the overall framework within which conceptions, analyses, strategies, policies as well as institutional mechanisms for poverty reduction.

This research seeks to provide an overview and understanding of the above aspects of poverty reduction interventions. The research for this dissertation was completed over a one-year period, which included sixteen weeks of fieldwork activities in St. Lucia. The study explores the following key themes:

- Poverty conceptions, analyses and strategies, generally and in St. Lucia;
- Policy processes, systems and content in St. Lucian poverty reduction programmes; and
- Poverty reduction institutional frameworks, capacity and networking.

These are undertaken in an effort to make recommendations to policy formulators and managers for sustained poverty reduction. It must be stated clearly that this research paper is not simply a review of poverty conceptions and reduction strategies. Its objective is not even primarily to evaluate the projects, programmes and institutional frameworks, capacity and networking. All of these are secondary, and seen as essential, to the primary objective of exploring implications and recommendations for the reduction of poverty experienced by 25.1% of the Saint Lucian population and 18.7% of households (Poverty Reduction Report, 1995: 30).

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CHAPTER ONE



Poverty Reduction in Saint Lucia An Overview

Chapter One

Introduction: Poverty Reduction in St. Lucia

1.0 Context and Rationale of the Thesis: Tracing the International Challenges, Caribbean Realities and the St. Lucian Imperatives

The past decades have ushered significant changes for small states. It has marked the formation and increasing dominance of geo-economic blocs and political bases such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the European Community (EU), and the North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA) as well as the influence and monopoly of supra-national and super-national corporations and institutions. This continued transformation in the Capitalist system of production and, arguably, the emergence of a new global order has made the relative positions of countries at the periphery even more vulnerable.

In, After Lome IV: A Strategy for ACP-EU Relations in the 21st Century, a Paper presented at the World Bank-Commonwealth Secretariat Conference on Small States, Stevens et al (1999) contend that the status of small states in the global economy has changed significantly in the 1990s. This change, according to the authors, has been driven by the external dynamics in world trade, trade rules, pattern of aid and international private capital flows, and the costs of transportation and communications. In addition, a report prepared by the Joint Task Force on Small States of the Commonwealth Secretariat and World Bank (1999) summarised the relative disadvantageous positions of small states as follow:

"There are 49 independent states with populations of less than 1.5 million. Of these small states 42 are developing countries ... some of them located far from major markets-as with the Pacific islands. In addition, many small states are in regions that are highly susceptible to natural disasters (such as hurricanes) that

regularly cause severe economic disruption through infrastructure damage, production and export losses and forgone development opportunities. Moreover, most small states do not have sufficient institutional capacity to fully participate in international financial and trade negotiations - the outcomes of which can profoundly affect their economies" (1999:02).

1.1 Caribbean Realities: Swimming in Shark Infested Waters

Many Small Island Developing States within the Caribbean are subject to developmental hardships similar to these of the developing countries in general. However, the 1992 report of the Global Conference on Sustainable Development states cogently that "*they have their own peculiar vulnerabilities and characteristics so that the difficulties they face are ... particularly complex*". In sum, the report contends that such "micro states" may even require an entirely different approach to the problems of economic, political, social, cultural and even environmental management than that which is being advocated for the rest of the developing world.

The Caribbean region has a long history of a strong export orientation, having being integrated into the European economies during the sixteenth and seventeenth century. Since then, the islands have been traders of cocoa, coffee, cotton, sugar, petroleum, bauxite, alumina, labour, bananas and tourism. This tradition has lead a few key¹ academics to espouse the idea of a plantation cultural sphere to depict the interrelated factors which have brought about the basic institutions and patterns of socio-cultural interaction within contemporary Caribbean society. Wagley (1960) outlined six basic features providing a comprehensive and intelligible understanding of the societies. They are:

- 1) Plantation System and Monocrop as a form of dependent capitalism based on an agrarian production of a one crop system;

¹ Academicians who are of this persuasion include Wagley 1960; Beckford 1983; Mintz 1985; and Witter 1990.

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- 2) Rigid Class lines with the persistence of socio-economic classes which took their form from colonial days;
 - 3) Multi-racial or culturally plural societies brought together historically mainly by the economic activities of the plantation system;
 - 4) Weak community structures with low levels of community cohesion and loosely organised local communities;
 - 5) The rise and persistence of a Caribbean peasantry in which communities of cultivators produce for consumption and export utilising family labour; and
 - 6) Matrifocal family organisations and a high rate of consensual unions at the core of which is the mother-child tie.

The region has made tremendous strides and impressive successes in the socio-economic development of its people despite the challenges, constraints of the above features and the uncertainties of the global economic changes in trade and capital markets; the erosion of preferential market access increasing competition; the vulnerability of the tourism industries; and the decline in official capital flows from bilateral sources. However, poverty is still prevalent throughout the region with an approximate average of 38% of the total Caribbean population (World Bank 1996).

The characteristics of the poverty in the Caribbean have been identified by a World Bank Report (1996) as,

“The poor include the elderly, children, the disabled, small-scale farmers, unskilled workers, indigenous populations, and in some countries, female headed households and the underemployed or unemployed, many of whom are school leavers who have few skills with which to enter the labour market

... Common characteristics among poor households include large family size, low levels of education, overcrowded housing, and limited access to water and adequate sanitation facilities” (World Bank, 1996: vii, viii).

The 1996 Report also outlined that several complex, interrelated factors including “low economic growth, macroeconomic instability, deficiencies in the labour market resulting in limited job growth, low productivity and low wages in the informal sector, and a decline in the quality social services” (1996: viii) have all contributed to poverty in the Caribbean.

The West Indian Commission (1992) in its seminal Report engaging some of the regions most prominent academicians entitled, Time For Action outlined that the above factors were influenced by pressure of external events; the urgency of people’s needs within the region; and the failure to accrue the benefits of solving problems through integration (a single market and economy). Nevertheless, the recommendations of this Commission seem to have gone largely unheard as a result of other factors, which it identified within its literature as a deficit of ambition, strategic timidity and failing to follow through.

1.2 The St. Lucian Context: A Small Garden with Bitter Herbs

Located in the Caribbean, approximately 62 degrees west and 13.6 degrees north, Saint Lucia has a land area of 616 square kilometres (approximately 240 square miles). Its natural resources are its people, beaches, climate, scenic beauty, and its fertile valley. Saint Lucia epitomises many of the key characteristics of Small Island Developing States, outlined by Selwyn (1975), Persad (1979) and Wilson (1994). These distinguishing characteristics include:

1. *Small populations in absolute terms which make it difficult to generate economies of scale;*
2. *Limited resource endowments;*

- 7
3. *High population densities leading to increased pressures on already limited resources;*
 4. *Excessive dependency on international trade, leading to vulnerability to global developments;*
 5. *Vulnerability to natural environmental disasters leading to instability of incomes;*
 6. *Limited access to concessional resources and assistance because they are classified as better off than other developing countries in socio - economic terms;*
 7. *Development initiatives tend to be project oriented and dominated because of the perceived wider impact on a small spatial area;*
 8. *A high level of political interference and partisan politicisation of development matters;*
 9. *Scarcity of certain categories of skilled human resources;*
 10. *The Public Sector is one of the largest employers in the economy;*
 11. *Limited institutional capacity;*
 12. *Limited, underdeveloped or non-existent capital markets; and*
 13. *Weak, unambitious private sectors.*

The impact of such features is that it exposes the economic, social, political and cultural institutions of the States to a range of internal and external pressures and influences over which they can effect only limited control.

The small island has a colourful history in that the British and the French fought each other fourteen times for possession of the island with the former Imperial power finally gaining the pre-eminence. As a result of these battles ('seven times British; seven times French'), Saint Lucia has been dubbed, *"the Helen of the West Indies"* and has also inherited a rich mixture of English and French Creole through this colonial rivalry. The nation - state gained its independence from the United Kingdom in 1979 and is a member of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Commonwealth.

The population of Saint Lucia was estimated at 151, 972 in 1998 with a growth rate of 1.6 percent in recent years. During the aforementioned year, approximately 33.2 percent of the island's population was below fifteen years, while 5.9 percent was above 65 years giving a dependency ratio of 1:1.6. The number and percentage of females continue to account for a slight majority of the population being 77,626 and 51.1% respectively in 1998. Population density continues to increase and was evaluated at 731 persons per square mile being greater in the administrative centre of Castries at 1,900 persons per square mile.

The island's economy has been described as, "highly open and heavily dependent on foreign trade" (GOSL 1998:01). It was also characterised as a monocrop economy, with the cultivation of bananas. Since 1993, negotiations under the World Trade Organisation (WTO) have prompted a revision of the EU banana regime, pushing down quota allocations to cheaper African, Caribbean and Pacific producing countries. In the wake of a recent ruling of the World Trade Organisation, the system of licenses which ensured the Windward Island bananas farmers some preferential access will cease to exist and the industry will face increasing competition from the larger, more efficient banana producers such as Chiquita.

By 1998, there had been a steady fall in the number of active growers in the industry; a concomitant increase in the demand for higher fruit quality in the United Kingdom

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market and a simultaneous decrease in the banana prices. These three features posed serious consequences for this Windward Island banana industry, which absorbed 23% of the national labour force. The strong linkages between agriculture and a number of other key economic and social sectors led to a knock-on effect across the domestic economy and society. The Small Island, as a consequence, has been facing some critical social development issues including social disintegration, which threatens to destroy the social fabric of the society.

On March 23, 1999, the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) concluded the Article IV consultation with Saint Lucia. In its Public Information Notice (PIN) No.99/31 of April 8, 1999, the IMF observed that, over the five years period through 1997, economic performance in the island had weakened reflecting the erosion of preferential access to the European Union banana market, weather related problems and low productivity of the Saint Lucia Banana Industry.

The Executive Board, IMF identified that Government's policy, during the period 1993-97, relied heavily on tax incentives. This resulted in a lack of buoyancy of tax revenue, which together with large increases in current expenditure led to declining public sector savings. They noted further that as a result of the fall in the public sector savings and a downward trend in foreign grants, a large reduction in public sector capital outlays was produced.

The Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) in its Country Strategy Paper for Saint Lucia 1999 - 2001, although accepting the above factors identified by the IMF, proceeded further to document that inadequate adjustment to the global economic changes and a floundering manufacturing sector also contributed to an increase in poverty and unemployment. Moreover, CDB outlined that although steady growth in the tourism sector helped to mitigate the effects of falling banana and manufacturing incomes, further growth in this sector was limited by inadequacies in infrastructure, especially water and sewerage. Identifying the need to achieve increased efficiency in the banana sector, tourism and other services, CDB further indicated three areas as being critical:

1. Saint Lucia's ability to withstand natural disasters and external shocks;
2. Improvements in fiscal savings; and
3. Strengthening the institutional capacity in the area of project development and implementation.

There is some form of national optimism in the midst of the global pessimistic outlook. The macroeconomic policies of the Government of Saint Lucia since 1997 have been:

"To stabilise the economy, reposition Saint Lucia in the global economy so as to redirect the economy towards the path of sustained growth and stimulate the economy to generate a higher rate of non-inflationary growth and employment and reduce poverty" (Saint Lucia Annual Report 1997:01).

The Social and Economic Review for the period April 1998 to March 1999 reported that the economy, which was heavily oriented towards agriculture in the 1970's and 1980's, has made some progress toward diversification and the growth of the service sector (primarily tourism). Saint Lucia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita was estimated at US\$3808 in 1997. However, the Government of Saint Lucia notes that,

"In this new era characterised by the progressive liberalisation of international trade and the decline of aid inflows, the entire society and its institutions need to undergo major adjustment if it is to respond appropriately to the challenges and opportunities presented" (1998: 02).

The Medium Term Economic Strategy Paper (MTESP), 1998 - 2000 was developed by the Government of Saint Lucia in the wake of the challenges facing the economy and society. The MTESP seeks to facilitate economic diversification, the expansion of the tourism sector, informatics, small and medium-sized enterprises and an excursion into international financial services. Human resource development, flexible labour markets and the protection of the environment also features prominently in this strategy.

1.3 The Mandate for Poverty Reduction in St. Lucia: Eliminating the Bitter Herbs

One of the broad policy objectives of the Government of Saint Lucia for the period 1998 - 2003 is to reduce the high incidence of poverty, as the first step in ultimately bringing them to negligible levels. Therefore, the MTESP outlined that,

“Government in its commitment to sustained poverty reduction has undertaken the responsibility of designing interventions which would not only improve the access of the poor to key social services, but would also focus on income generating activities, particularly for women” (1998:64).

In order to achieve this objective, the Government of Saint Lucia has embarked upon a number of institutional mechanisms, programmes and projects to fulfil its commitments. These are usually undertaken jointly with donor agencies as well as financial institutions. However, despite the range of meaningful projects, programmes, institutional mechanisms and policy statements made by the current Government, poverty reduction activities seemed largely uncoordinated and/or scattered with weak institutional capacities to implement the respective programmes and projects.

It is within this context of global, regional and national imperatives that this postgraduate research topic was chosen. The Report of the Caribbean Ministerial Meeting on Poverty Eradication (1996) summarised the context and rationale for this study cogently when it noted that,

"The extensive changes in the political, economic and social spheres, including the globalisation of trade, finance and technology and the growing flexibilization of labour markets not only impact on the incidence and characteristics of poverty, but require a fresh consideration of strategies and

new thinking about effective policies and mechanisms for its eradication"(1996:xvi).

1.4 *The Nature of the Research Thesis*

The nature of this research thesis has evolved throughout its conceptualization and fieldwork activities to assume the classification of being exploratory. The purpose of this thesis is really to find out what is happening to reduce and/or eradicate poverty and to seek new insights or break new ground in the conceptions, analyses, frameworks and mechanisms researched. There is also the underlying intention to test the feasibility of undertaking a more carefully planned study at the PhD level in the area of poverty reduction. The following three dimensions of poverty reduction in St. Lucia are explored throughout the text:

- 1) *Processes by which poverty is researched, measured/ defined and explained within the relevant conceptual models of poverty and deprivation*
- 2) *Poverty reduction policies, intervention strategies, and institutional frameworks; and*
- 3) *Issues of collaboration, networking and participation among government agencies, poor persons and their communities, institutional mechanisms established for poverty reduction, and the poverty reduction activities of selected civil society organizations.*

These dimensions are explored in an effort to show their relevance to policy formulation and planning for poverty reduction in St. Lucia. An attempt will also be made to delineate a way forward for poverty reduction in St. Lucia.

1.5 Assumptions

The underlying assumptions of this study are:

1. The characteristic features of a Small Island Developing State such as Saint Lucia pose significant challenges for development planning and policy formulation especially as it pertains to the area of poverty eradication.

The complex issues of poverty and the implications of the internal and external dynamics upon the island necessitate that critical research be undertaken to review the framework utilised for the implementation of poverty reduction activities in Saint Lucia;

2. Poverty conceptions, analyses and reduction strategies are drawn from theoretical and methodological underpinnings. Models of poverty and deprivation advocate peculiar conceptions, analyses and diagnoses of poverty and its reduction.

The model of poverty that one subscribes to evidently determine the manner in which poverty is understood, measured, its causes as well as the strategies and policy prescription to reduce or eradicate the incidence of the phenomena; and

3. An integrated and sustainable approach towards poverty projects, programming and policy is more likely to reduce poverty in Saint Lucia.

The above approach should also be comprehensive in that it must be informed by an understanding of the economic structures and growth patterns; demographic and population issues; political parties and civil society; education and health issues; environmental management; social strata; gender relations; the institutional capacity and networking and the anthropology of the people within the society.

1.6 Objectives

The specific objectives of this research paper are fivefold:

- To outline and review poverty research, analyses, and reduction strategies in Saint Lucia utilising the physiological and social models of poverty and deprivation;
- To provide an analysis of the policy processes, systems and content for poverty reduction in Saint Lucia;
- To critically examine the institutional mechanisms established; and projects and programmes implemented in an effort to reduce poverty in Saint Lucia;
- To assess the nature, capacity and level of collaboration with and among selected civil society organisations in poverty reduction activities in St. Lucia; and
- To make recommendations for policy formulation, management and institutional change in an effort to eradicate poverty in Saint Lucia, a Small Island Developing State.

1.7 A Reflexive Consideration of the Methodology and Fieldwork Activities

The use of the term 'methodology' connotes the technique, tool, or even the approach of undertaking a course of action. Research methodologies are inextricably linked with one's theoretical orientation and issues of theory and methods are indispensable to the research enterprise. In her discussion of these issues, Charlotte Aull Davies (1999) contends that despite the perceptions of a flexible and indirect relationship between selection of topics, methods and theories, it is

"... Essential that researchers be aware of the theoretical perspective that underlies their approach and that their choice of topics and methods be informed

and answerable to their reflexive awareness of where they are situated both personally and theoretically" (1999:44).

The tools of investigation utilised in this research enterprise were that of more and less contextualised methods and qualitative and quantitative data (Booth et al 1998). The authors held that methodologies of poverty measurements and poverty diagnosis can be classified as contextual and non-contextual methods with the polemic dimensions of data being more qualitative and more quantitative (Booth et al 1998: 53).

The following methods/tools, which were utilised during the research exercise, are detailed in **Appendix 1: Methodological Toolkit** but can be short-listed as:

1. Content analysis of reports, project agreements and other official documentation;
2. A survey of the poverty reduction activities among forty-four (44) non governmental and community based organisations in Saint Lucia;
3. Twenty-one (21) semi-structured interviews with policy advisors and formulators and managers of key stakeholders' organisations;
4. Participatory local appraisals (PLA) within the three selected communities (Bouton, Palmiste and Baron's Drive);
5. Semi-structured group interviews among gatekeepers (public sector staff in Soufriere) and two professional associations (fishermen and social workers) and group discussions and meetings among residents within the three selected poor communities.

These tools were not utilised as single-stranded methods, rather great efforts were made to triangulate the methods. For example, a series of pre-tests to the survey were initiated with the NGOs and CBOs and relevant public service employees through group discussions. In addition, issues within secondary information needing greater clarity were

pursued during the semi-structured interviews. The challenge was to mix a variety of methods in an effort to successfully accomplish the objectives of this research degree.

The complex nature of the issues of poverty conceptions, analyses, reduction strategies and policy implications warranted that such an exploration utilise the wealth of as many methods as is practicable with time, finance, opportunities and the researcher's theoretical and personal predisposition. This eclectic approach was specifically adopted to provide depth and richness to the thesis. The methods selected also sought to deal with the issues of objectivity, validity, reliability, triangulation of research findings and the appropriateness of the tools used within peculiar contexts.

The use of the selected methods was premised on a reformulated theoretical framework of "dialectical synthesis" advocated by Johnson et al (1990). In their book, The Structure of Social Theory, the authors argued that despite the variety of competing theoretical prepositions, each endeavoring to represent itself as the sole, valid approach to an understanding of the social world, a dialectical synthesis attempts to provide a systematic means of recognizing the interconnecting paths which structure this thicket of controversy. They reinstate that all social theory seeks to elucidate two poignant questions: What is the nature of social reality and how best can we obtain knowledge of it?

Johnson et al (1990) argue that the investigation of social relations logically entails such theorizing whether the investigator recognizes it or not. Two basic assumptions, which have been grafted from this epistemological orientation, are:

- 1. The alternative realities that each of the models or competing schools of theory and methods identify have equal status; and*
- 2. None of the alternative elements identified by the models should be reduced to any other.*

²Fiona Devine and Sue Heath (1999) illustrated how the “choice of and use of particular methods and techniques shape the substantive findings of such research” (1999:1). Devine and Heath (1999) contended that the studies highlight the virtues of methodological eclecticism and show that the debate about the strengths and weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative data can become rather sterile. They argue that the more immediate practical challenge is to bring together the results of different methods and techniques. The authors concluded that despite the usual constraints of time, money and ones inclination, some of the best examples of sociological research have emerged from the ingenious fusion of a variety of methods and data sources.

1.8 *Fieldwork Experiences: Accomplishments and Constraints*

The research activities were designed to maximise participation and consultation with stakeholder organisations and gatekeepers from the conception of the research proposal. For this reason, letters seeking informed consent from the University accompanied with the research proposal and methodological toolkit were mailed to relevant agencies three months prior to the fieldwork activities. In this way, feedback was forthcoming from some agencies indicating their support for the research activities and comments on the nature and methods of the research proposal. More in-depth consultations and discussions were generated on the nature of the MPhil research during the first four weeks of fieldwork and culminated at a core group meeting of seven representatives from relevant agencies in St. Lucia. A Summary of the Core Group Meeting is outlined in Appendix 2.

The agencies embraced the research activities identifying the research thesis as being timely and well poised to contribute significantly to development planning and policy for poverty reduction in St. Lucia. The Ministries of Planning, Community Development, Health and Education documented that all assistance will be given in enabling the process

² In their book, Sociological Research Methods in Context, Devine and Heath (1999) selected eight first-class research studies, which utilised a variety of methods with six employing a mix of scientific quantitative and interpretative qualitative methods.

of research. They also provided invaluable assistance with the provision of significant feedback and contact personnel within their Ministries, a working desk, computing services and access to information and limited photocopying services. One Ministry even went to the extent of writing the other Social Sector Ministries requesting their support for and facilitation of the research exercise

The Staff of the Poverty Reduction and Basic Needs Trust Funds were overwhelmingly cooperative providing information and opportunities for interviews and discussions on programs, projects, policies and procedures. The quality of the interview and interaction at the James Belgrave Micro Enterprise Development Limited seemed overshadowed by issues of confidentiality, trust, and constrained rapport, which can only be attributed to the novelty of the agency and the widespread poverty rumble over the print and electronic media in St. Lucia. The leaders of community based and non-government organisations and local government authorities responded favourably to the objectives and methods of the research exercise.

The reception to the research activities within the communities was mixed since they held that too many agencies conducted research within the community and nothing had taken place. Progress reports, inquiries on proposed projects for the communities at the relevant agencies, making available copies of the previous studies conducted within their communities and constant communication with leaders of the communities on the ongoing activities of my overall fieldwork paid dividends and gained credits for the research activities. Overall the communities (Bouton, Palmiste and Baron's Drive) were exceptionally receptive and provided access to the lives of its members via meetings and visits to their farms, homes and community facilities.

There were a few, yet significant constraints and challenges experienced during the research activities. These included the identification of an appropriate sampling frame for the survey of the civil society; finances and constraints of time threatening to affect the conduct of the research exercises detrimentally. The constraint with the survey of civil

society organisations was the inadequacy of the record of such organisations, to make probability sampling credible or valid. I had to resort to a purposive sampling method of selecting the organisations from list the organisations identified as working among the poor by the various reports. The available lists were outdated being neither comprehensive nor reflective of organisations since many were dissolved or ceased to function.

Second, the cost of travelling throughout the island and spending evenings in Soufriere on a regular basis was very expensive and acted as a constraint to the research process and the constant follow up needed to gain the participation and commitment of community leaders and the professional staff. Return transportation to the town of Soufriere cost \$14 and since it is the “tourism capital of St. Lucia”, the cheapest room with basic amenities was \$65 per night. In addition, there were consultations and workshops, which required much more resources. These were reduced to half-day meetings; travelling to the communities in Soufriere was limited to once weekly towards the end of the period; and spending the evening in Soufriere was undertaken only if absolutely necessary.

Finally, the reality of running out of time became a major concern after two months of fieldwork. This consideration highlighted that the research enterprise was certainly influenced by the time constraints. My resolution in the wake of these challenges and constraints was to persevere in the conduct of the research exercises while keeping my priorities and objectives clear. The field research period was a deeply enriching and rewarding academic and professional activity to me. It proved to be difficult and challenging at times due to the mere physical fatigue of travelling through the island utilising the public transportation system and the accumulated weariness of fieldwork.

More details on my fieldwork experiences can be found in **Appendix 2 and 3: Reports of Fieldwork Activities to my Supervisors.**

1.9 Organisation of the Thesis

This thesis has been structured appropriately to reflect the scope and focus of its exploration. Seven chapters have been developed to reflect the pertinent issues and a logical framework for the dissertation. An outline is as follows:

Chapter One outlines the context, rationale, nature, objectives and assumptions of the study. It will also incorporate a reflexive consideration of the methodology and fieldwork activities and experience.

Chapter Two provides a literature review on the issues of poverty conceptions, analyses and diagnoses; policy processes and content in development planning; and the institutional mechanisms established for poverty reduction. An effort has been made to integrate the frameworks of pertinent international agencies such as the World Bank, United Nations Development Programme and the United Kingdom Department for International Development into the review.

Chapter Three examines poverty conceptions and analyses in St. Lucia by comparing, contrasting and analysing the context, objectives, methodology, summary findings and the focus of interventions of three significant poverty studies: Poverty Assessment Report (December 1995); A Socio – Economic Impact of Banana Restructuring in St. Lucia (1998); and a Social Assessment Study (2000). The Chapter then considers the conceptions, analyses and diagnoses of poverty from three communities (Bouton, Palmiste and Baron's Drive) researched by the author.

Chapter Four reviews the environment, content and processes of the policy goals and strategies formulated for poverty reduction in St. Lucia. It provides an analysis of the sectors, mechanisms and processes through which poverty reduction policies and strategies are developed as well as a case study of the recent attempt of formulating a Directional Plan for the Eradication of Poverty.

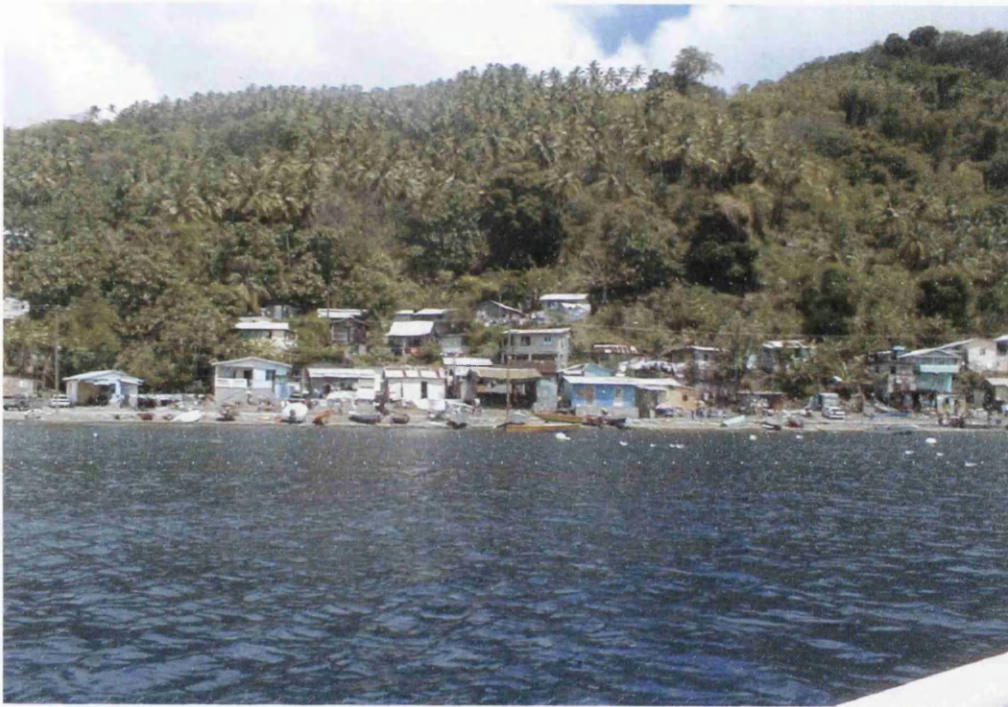
Chapter Five examines and critically assesses the institutional mechanisms (Basic Needs Trust Fund, Poverty Reduction Fund and James Belgrave Micro Enterprise Development Limited) established to specifically reduce poverty in St. Lucia under the thematic areas of Social Welfare and the Provision of Basic Needs and Social Development and Poverty Reduction.

Chapter Six explores the nature, capacity, and level of collaboration and assesses the poverty reduction activities of selected civil society organisations in St. Lucia. An attempt is made to delineate a more integrative and meaningful role for this Sector in the overall scope of poverty reduction in St. Lucia.

Chapter Seven engages in a discussion and provides some critical reflections and policy recommendations on poverty analyses, diagnoses, policy content and process and institutional frameworks. It highlights the need for greater understanding of poverty frameworks (conceptions, analyses and diagnoses) and institutional frameworks; effective management and coordination development planning and policy initiatives; and a vital partnership with civil society for the sustained reduction of poverty in Saint Lucia.

The Chapters are further divided into sections, themes, sub-themes and related components utilising a simplified reference system in an effort to facilitate easy of reference and reflection on the issues.

CHAPTER TWO



Poverty, Development and Policy

Chapter Two

Literature Review: Poverty, Development and Policy

2.0 Introduction and Outline

Poverty perspectives, methodologies, conceptions, analyses and strategies have been the subject of significant and voluminous debates over the past decades. The evolution of these debates throughout the past fifty years is instructive in shedding considerable light on poverty policies and intervention strategies vis-à-vis the dominant development paradigms of the period. An examination of the development thrust of the past five decades would reveal the preoccupation and dominant role of economic theory or an 'economistic vision of development'. Moreover, there seem to be a direct linkage between poverty analyses and diagnoses and the major tenets of economic growth and development of the decades.

Chapter Two provides a literature review on the issues of poverty conceptions, reduction strategies and interventions, policy processes and content in development planning and the institutional mechanisms established for poverty reduction. An effort will be made to integrate the frameworks of major international agencies such as the World Bank, United Nations Development Programme and the United Kingdom Department for International Development into the review.

Four thematic issues are developed within the text to achieve these objectives:

Section A: The Evolution of Development Theories and Poverty Conception examines the meaning of development and the influence of economic paradigms and the World Bank in the evolution of poverty conceptions. It also provides an overview of the contributions of the models of social development and the globalisation process to the poverty phenomenon and reduction strategies.

Section B: Understanding Poverty Models and Frameworks of Analyses provides an understanding of the physiological and social deprivation models of poverty as well as the vulnerability, sustainability livelihoods and gender analytical frameworks, which will be utilised in exploring poverty reduction in St. Lucia.

Section C: Policy Content and Processes differentiates between the inter-related aspects of definitions or substance of policy content from the methods and strategies of policy processes. The Section provides invaluable insights for policy analysis in St. Lucia.

Section D: Institutional Mechanisms for Poverty Reduction provides an overview of the origins, nature, functions, activities and structure of these social funds and programmes. It also examines the current debate whether these institutional mechanisms are emergency funds or long-term development institutions.

The entire Chapter is designed to provide the context or background information for the succeeding chapters. Chapter Two also provides useful tools for analysis, evaluation and potential direction for the reduction of poverty in St. Lucia.

2.1.0 The Evolution of Development Theories and Poverty Conception

The concept of development is inextricably linked with notions of advancement, progress, improvement and change. It is sometimes an elegant antonym for 'backwardness' and 'underdeveloped'. Then there are the criss – cross ideas of development as stages by which societies progress gradually from simple, rural agrarian forms to more complex, differentiated, industrialised, urban societies. However, it has been acknowledged that this transition can be attained through revolutionary mechanisms or events emphasizing the important notions of struggle and conflict. These two ideas have brought forward the distinction between evolutionary and revolutionary processes of development.

Hugo Slim (1993) provides some useful formulation of basic, yet essential ingredients for development. Slim (1993) held that development is about improvement and continuity, which makes sense to people and is in line with their values and capacity. According to Slim, 'Development must therefore be appropriate – culturally, socially, economically, technologically, and environmentally' (1993:64). Slim contends further that this is a complex process and "pressure for quick results has been the cause of many of the world's most inappropriate development initiatives" (1993:64). According to Slim, this pressure was induced by a widespread naivety about development founded on an over-confidence in technological and economic development, without sufficient regard for social and environmental realities.

It was Arndt (1981) who posited that *mainstream economists invariably used the expression of 'material progress' when they referred to development*. Thus Adam Smith (1723 – 1790), regarded as the father of modern economics with his liberal views of the dominant role of the invisible hand, competition and trade, spoke of development as the progress towards opulence and improvement. Karl Marx (1818 – 1883) a major opponent to capitalism held, in his materialistic conception of history, that the country, which is more developed industrially only shows, to the less developed, the image of its own future.

Michael Todaro (1992) expressed the view that development has traditionally meant the capacity of a national economy to generate and sustain an annual increase in its gross national product at rates of perhaps 5 to 7 % or more after being underdeveloped for a considerable period of time. The reduction of development to this uni-dimensional economic aspect became predominant during the early 1950s discourse and has influenced the evolution of poverty conceptions, analyses, reduction strategies and policies into the 1990s.

2.1.1 The Evolution of Poverty Conceptions and Economic Paradigms

Todaro (1992), Maxwell (1999) and Kanbur and Squire (1999) traced the evolution of thinking about poverty and their work will be utilized to explore the interactions of changing development paradigms and the progressive broadening of poverty conceptions, analyses and strategies.

During the 1950s and 60s, poverty issues were not prominent on the mandate of the international community though it was recognised as a persistent 'social problem'. The reality was that poverty reduction was relegated to a function of sustained economic growth. As a result, massive expansion in industrial production coupled by the development of infrastructure and technology were envisaged as significant keys to fostering economic growth, the benefits of which would 'trickle down' to the mass of the population. These were closely aligned to modernisation and Neo-classical theories.

However, the experiences of the 1950s and 60s, when a large number of Third World nations did achieve the overall International development targets agreed by the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development but the living conditions of the masses of people remained for the most part unchanged, signalled that something was very wrong with this economic phenomenon. These conditions may have led Ragnar Nurske (1952) to outline that these underdeveloped countries were trapped in two interconnected poverty circles of demand and supply. According to him, on the demand side, there were low levels of capital formation, which contributed to low levels of

productivity, small markets and little incentives to invest. On the supply side, Nurske held that low incomes resulted in a low propensity to save, lack of capital and low productivity.

Through the combined effects of these poverty circles, massive deprivation was constantly reproduced. One limitation of Nurske's arguments was that to break loose of these two vicious poverty circles, it was only necessary to achieve a significant expansion of market through massive and simultaneous investments in a whole range of industries. Nurske held that increased mobilisation of investible funds and a strong incentive to save were central strategies for poverty eradication. In addition to previous estimates of nutritional and other requirements advocated by Rowntree and Booth (1901), levels of income /consumption as in GNP per Capita (Pearson Commission and Partners in Development) were utilized as the 'conventional, objective' approach for measuring and defining poverty.

During the 1970s, an increasing number of policy formulators clamoured for the 'dethronement of the Gross National Product' and the elevation of direct attacks on widespread absolute poverty and rising unemployment. Todaro (1992) stated succinctly that 'distribution with growth' became the common slogan for development planners. Professor Dudley Seers (1969) pointed very quickly to the weakness of the measure utilised to assess development. He noted that although economic growth was an indispensable criterion to the process, development was much more besides such growth. He asserted that if poverty, unemployment and inequality have declined from high levels, then beyond doubt this has been a period of development for the country concerned.

This process of rethinking seemed to have been a matter of professional survival for the social scientists. Edgar Owens (1987) in his attempt to envisage, The Future of Freedom in the Developing World argued that development had been treated by economists as if it was nothing more than an exercise in applied economics, unrelated to political ideas, forms of government and the role of people in society. He stated that considerations must

be given not just to the ways in which societies can become more productive but also to the quality of the societies.

Similarly, Paul Streeten in his capacity as Director of the World Development Institute made some pertinent observation on the issue when he argued that,

“Development must be redefined as an attack on the evils of the world today: malnutrition, disease, illiteracy, slums, unemployment and inequality. Measured in terms of aggregate growth rates, development has been a great success. But measured in terms of jobs, justice and the elimination of poverty, it has been a failure or only a partial success” (Streeten cited in Todaro, 1992).

The era of the Basic Needs Approach and Welfare Economics dawned during this period and the State was identified as a critical agency for achieving the three functions of allocating scarce resources, redistributing public goods and the stabilisation of macro-economic policies in a predominantly market economy (Musgrave and Musgrave, 1975). Maxwell (1999) outlined that the definitions of poverty as relative deprivation and deficiencies in income/consumption were broadened to include a 'basic needs approach' (Robert McNamara, WB, Townsend, Runciman and ILO).

The 1980s would feature prominently as ‘the lost decade for development’ (Tarp, 1994:99) characterised by two major oil shocks, dramatic increases in global interest rates; third world nations debt traps and crises; the ascendancy of the renowned structural adjustment policies, curtailing social expenditure; the continuity of poverty and the emergence of the new poor. The decade signified the emergence of the Neo – Liberal paradigm with its emphasis on economic efficiency and the transfer of economic initiative to the Private Sector.

It was during this period that United Nations Agencies clamoured for Adjustment with a human face and subjective indicators of poverty status gained momentum as the

dominant poverty conceptions. These included non-monetary aspects of powerlessness, isolation, vulnerability, entitlement, capability, deprivation and gender analyses. The work of Robert Chambers, Caroline Moser, and Amartya Sen are all viable indicators of these poverty conceptions.

The 1990s marked a renewed interest in poverty reduction within the development community. This was signalled by the World Bank's 1990 World Development Report on Poverty (Moser 1998:2); the World Summit for Social Development (1995) and concerns over the issues of globalisation, development and poverty. This renaissance would induce a multiplicity of notions such as poverty reduction, sustainable human development, social exclusion, well-being and multiple deprivations. One of the prominent institutions influencing the conceptions, strategies and policies during the past decade has been the World Bank.

2.1.2 Setting the Agenda: The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development

The policy shifts of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank) on poverty alleviation throughout the past fifty years serve as examples of the evolution in the debates on development planning and policy for poverty reduction. The World Bank was established in July 1944 at the United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference in Bretton Woods, USA, as a post-war economic strategy for the resurgence of the economies of the North after the devastation of World War II. The strategy increasingly incorporated and is now arguably confined to issuing loans to Developing Nations.

Elling Tjonneland et al (1998) undertook a critical assessment of the World Bank's operational strategies for poverty reduction. The writers outlined that the assumption of the World Bank has always been to view, "development and poverty reduction as fundamentally an issue of economic growth. Poverty reduction was not originally a goal in itself, but rather an expected, albeit unarticulated, consequence of economic growth"

(1998:6). They held nonetheless that the specific growth policies pursued by the bank have changed over the years reflecting changes in economic theory and conditions in borrowing countries. The consultants documented that during the first thirty to forty years of the Bank's operation, the main focus was on the need to build up physical capital especially roads, railways, harbours and other infrastructure.

Diagram one provides a presentation of World Bank's policy shifts on poverty reduction developed from the work of Tjonneland et al (1998) but takes a view towards the 21st century.

During the first 30 to 40 years, the main focus was on the need to build up physical capital. During the 1970s, the typical channel for promoting growth was the project loan.

In the early 1980s, the focus shifted to macro-economic adjustment loans with an emphasis on programme loans and structural development operations. There was also a growing emphasis on attaching conditionalities to loans.

The late 1980s saw a growing emphasis on development of human resources. This was founded on the beliefs that the growth process itself would act to reduce poverty and an acknowledgement of the importance of basic services for poverty reduction and the need to moderate the impact of adjustment on poorer groups.

The 1990s ushered the three prong approach of (1) broad-based growth, (2) human resource development and (3) safety nets combined with the new realisation that borrower ownership and participation were important for achieving sustainability.

The Draft World Development Report 2000/1 – Attacking Poverty - seeks to elevate the analysis of poverty from *prongs to pillars* with a seemingly new but highly contested framework of *empowerment, security and opportunity by participants of the electronic debate 2000*.

Tjonneland et al argue that, 'The Bank's move in the 1980s to a stronger focus on poverty was gradual and characterised by controversies revolved around competing claims of social and economic objectives, between conservatives sceptical to broadening Bank interventions into "welfare objectives" and those focusing more on poverty and social issues'. These disputes persist even presently and were pivotal to the resignation of Ravi Kanbur, author of the World Bank Annual World Development Report in June 2000.

Though acknowledging that most major aid agencies now formally define poverty reduction as an overriding goal or priority, the consultants outlined that clearly formulated and operational pro-poor policies are, however, in most cases lacking. Tjonneland et al (1998) contended that the 1990 World Development Report formulated an approach to poverty reduction, which was later to become known as the three-pronged strategy. They argued that the strategy, "Operates at a general level and most development projects could easily be categorised into one of the three prongs. This in itself represents no renewed attack on poverty. Even the IMF can now lay claim to being poverty focussed through its role in promoting parts of the broad-based growth" (1998: 28).

The World Bank, during the period February 21 to March 31, 2000 convened an electronic consultation on its draft World Development Report on Poverty 2000/01. The final summary noted with delight the high number of subscribers totalling 1, 523 people from over 80 countries. Moreover, it outlined that during the aforementioned six-week period, 424 contributions were posted from people based in 44 different countries. This process of consultation represented the perceived 'sea of changes' inherent in the movement from prongs to pillars.

The consultative Draft builds its attack on poverty upon three pillars of empowerment, security and opportunity. It integrates the notions of economic growth with more dynamic elements of gender analysis, good governance, participation, assets vulnerability and pro – poor institutional structures and processes. Throughout the debate a number of the conceptions, the Bank's role, policy proposals and past activities came under

tremendous attack by participants but the framework was generally endorsed with recommendations for improvement.

Table two on the following page illustrates the Bank's policy shifts during the period reflecting changes in the dominant economic development paradigm, poverty conceptions and intervention strategies.

Tjonneland et al (1998) point out that the Bank pays scanty attention to inequalities and distribution of assets as constraints on growth and poverty reduction. This involves not only material inequalities but also gender relations and the distribution of political power and the ability of poor groups to influence public policy. It also makes several critical comments on the Bank's approach to cost recovery in the social sectors and the design of social safety net operations. Internal constraints of inadequate capacity, lending and disbursement pressures and a lack of local ownership are also identified which impinge on the Bank's ability to pursue poverty reduction. The report concluded that there still exists the need for greater dialogue, institutional development and implementation of poverty-reduction policies.

Table 2: Shifts in the World Bank's development policy and poverty conceptions and reduction strategies

<i>Period</i>	<i>1950s and 60s</i>	<i>1970s</i>	<i>1980s</i>	<i>1990s</i>
Dominant Development Paradigm	Modernisation and Neo - Classical Theories "Theories of Growth"	Development Economics and the Welfare State "Redistribution with Growth"	Neo - Liberal "Structural Adjustment"	Liberal Economics "Globalisation"
Conception of Poverty	Proxies of nutrition and levels of income as in GDP per capita "Absolute Poverty"	Income/Consumption poverty and Basic Needs Approach "Relative Poverty"	Non-monetary proxies of isolation, powerlessness, security, entitlement vulnerability, sustainable livelihoods,	Poverty reduction, Sustainable human development, Social exclusion, and well-being "multiple deprivation"
World Bank Policy	Economic growth and "trickle down effect"	Specified social development projects "lending/credit"	Structural Adjustment loans	Poverty Reduction's "Three prong approach"
Types of Interventions	Support for industry and infrastructural development	Financial assistance for rural development, education, health, housing and water supply projects.	Efficiency, currency devaluation, privatisation, public sector reform, cut-back on social spending, etc.	Economic growth, Human capital investment and Social safety nets

2.1.3 The Emergence of a new vision and international thinking on Social Development

The limited success of economic theories and growth to achieve sustainable and comprehensive poverty reduction approaches and improvements in the quality of lives of the poor led to the emergence of a renewed vision and international thinking on social development. Social Development has been conceptualised as a more people-centred approach to development, which facilitates changes in their socio-economic status and enhances people's overall well-being. Advocates of this orientation emphasize that it is not an alternative to the highly elevated economic development models but seek to highlight the importance of putting people first in development (Cernea 1985).

The notions of poverty reduction were fully expressed by the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, **World Summit for Social Development (1995)**. The Summit featured the largest body of representatives (118 heads of state and government) addressing the issues of social development in the history of mankind. It was identified that despite the fact that the total wealth of nations had multiplied six fold; international trade had increased immensely; advances had been attained in life expectancy, literacy and basic health services; the gap separating rich and poor nations had widened; extreme poverty, widespread unemployment, gender inequity and social exclusion of vulnerable groups also persisted.

It was within such a context that participants made commitments in four major areas including the:

- Creation of a national and international environment, which would make possible the achievement of Social Development
- Eradication of Poverty
- Increase productive employment and reduce unemployment
- Promotion of social integration

The Summit, according to the People's Alliance For Social Development (1996), constituted a new vision and a new international thinking on social development. On the issues of the eradication of poverty, the Summit agreed on a set of four strategies, which must be promoted to achieve this goal. They are the:

- Formulation of integrated strategies;
- Improvement in the access to productive resources and infrastructure
- Services for the basic needs of all; and
- Increase of social protection.

Associated with the new vision and thinking on social development, numerous models are advocated including residual and incremental models of social welfare as well as the state oriented and empowerment approaches. Sections 2.1.4 and 2.1.5 explore their implications for poverty reduction.

2.1.4 The Welfarist Models of Social Development

Welfarist models of social development have been disaggregated by the nature of the services provided as well as by the types of social welfare institutions providing this services (Hardiman and Midgley, 1989). Thus, along the nature of services provided, two approaches can be identified in the Residual (David Green, 1998) and Incremental/Institutional (Ian Gough, 1998; and Norman Johnson 1998) conceptions. Numerous social welfare institutions were also identified such as social philanthropy (Nicholas Deakin, 1998), and social work (Nick Manning, 1998).

Models from the Welfarist tradition have been criticized for perpetuating existing policies, responding to demand rather than needs, inadequate to address the full gamut of human needs and incapable of genuinely tackling inequality. The United Nations is certainly of this conviction since it outlined that development is about creating an environment in which persons can exercise choices, human rights and fundamental opportunities as well as having available opportunities to live tolerable lives. The

human development index (HDI) developed by the agency places emphasis on choices and opportunities to lead a long and healthy life, acquire knowledge (literacy), and attain a decent standard of living.

Table 1: A comparison of the Models of Social Welfare in Social Development

2.1.5 State Oriented and Empowerment Approaches of Social Development

Models of Welfarism	Underlying Principles and Beliefs	Scope of Interventions
Incremental or Institutional	The gradual expansion of existing social services by the state to its citizens.	Social spending in education, health and physical infrastructure; and monetary policies.
Residual	Neo – Liberal perspective favouring a competitive market economy and opposing an economic system planned and directed by the state.	Minimalist social welfare provisions through economic policies processes of the ‘trickle down effect’ and/or the provision of basic goods and services.
Social Philanthropy	Formally constituted organizations to enhance public benefits.	Service providers, campaigners, intermediaries, cooperatives and mutuals and self – help bodies
Social Work	A social arrangement that exist to meet the needs of individuals, families and groups and to tackle social problems.	Individual and family pathologies, care and provision for vulnerable groups and an understanding of human behaviour.

The debate over the preferred social development paradigm and increasing the capability of people to overcome persistent poverty has been perpetuated by Midgeley (1995) and Peter Oakley (1997). The social scientist sought to extend the boundaries of the

incremental and residual Welfarist models to add another continuum ranging from management-oriented and State-dependent to an Empowerment framework respectively.

Jeremy Holland (Lecture notes dated February 7, 2000) outlined that Midgeley's thesis of social development attempts to transcend the residual-institutional dichotomy by creating a more dynamic and universalistic framework for linking social welfare directly to economic development policies and programmes. Holland indicated that Midgeley's vision of social development, recognizing the weaknesses of the social administration approach due to its shaky dependence on the state, stresses the need for inclusive and universalistic intervention via a management oriented and Statist dependent, Incremental/Institutional Model.

Holland's intellectual affinity, however, seem to reside with Oakley's response for a more power-based framework with an appeal for progress from statism towards empowerment. Accordingly, the elements of Oakley's 1997 thesis asserts,

- Power through greater confidence;
- Power through strengthened social capital; and
- Power through greater access to resources.

2.1.6 Globalisation, Development and Poverty

The last decade has nevertheless been engulfed by the issue of globalisation as an all-encompassing, unstoppable deliberate construction sweeping across the nations of the world. This phenomena has been built on the foundations of typical liberalisation policies, including lowering trade barriers, raising interest rates, devaluing currencies, privatising state-owned businesses, eliminating subsidies and cutting government spending. The speed and likely impact of such changes was expressed succinctly by Professor Mark Pilisuk as, "Economic globalisation is coming like a hurricane, and ... it is useless to stand on the beach and shout to defy it" (Globalisation Electronic Conference, 2000).

In his introductory thoughts to the Globalisation E-Conference, the Director of the World Development Movement, Barry Coates, held that the case for liberalisation is often made on the ground that the policies promoted are 'sound' economic policies that any competent government would adopt. He stated that the policies had certainly been successful in achieving some of their main goals, including reducing inflation, balancing government budgets and ensuring that there are sufficient funds available to service international debts.

Despite Dollar and Kray (1999) assertion that openness to trade and investment contributes to increasing a country's per capita growth trade and investment and that such growth is good for the poor, Coates (2000) held that the overwhelming evidence suggested that these policies were failing the poor: costs for the poorest have dramatically risen in most countries, as subsidies on basic goods have been removed, interest rates have increased (often dramatically) and the poor are required to pay for services, previously provided free of charge by the state (even for basic health care and primary schooling).

This perspective was shared with numerous contributors from developing countries including Egypt, Jordan, Ukraine, Peru, Mexico, Tanzania, Malawi, Ethiopia, India and Thailand. These participants to the electronic conference (2000) illustrated their arguments that globalisation contributed to increasing poverty among the poorest 40% of the population with from national studies, community perceptions and personal observations.

Coates outlined that liberalisation policies have been distorted under WTO agreements, bi-lateral investment treaties and structural adjustment programmes in favour of the powerful elites, multinational or and transnational corporations; the policies preceded regulation and market failures have not been addressed; and has promoted corporate profits over people's rights and values, locking the poorest countries into underdevelopment. In addition, policy-makers have relied on trickle down growth rather

than targeted poverty reduction; and national governments have failed to act in the public interest. Coates concluded that there was no factual premise for the claim that globalisation is delivering benefits to all but surmounting evidence display that millions of poor and vulnerable people have been adversely affected.

2.1.7 Conclusion

Section A revealed the progressive broadening of poverty definitions and measurements from the 1950s to 2000. Simon Maxwell (1999) outlined quite cogently that poverty, throughout the decades, has inherited a rich, yet complex, vocabulary of definitions and measurements. These concepts as outlined by Kanbur and Squire (1999) include income or consumption poverty; human (under) development; social exclusion; ill being (as in well-being); lack of capability and functioning; vulnerability; livelihood unsustainability; lack of basic needs and relative deprivation.

This Section has also revealed the importance of economic and social development models to our understanding of poverty conceptions as well as the influences of the World Bank and globalisation in affecting policies and strategies for poverty reduction. We will now explore models and frameworks of analysis in Section B.

Section B: Understanding Poverty

2.2.0 Models and Frameworks of Analysis

In 2.1.1, we observed that poverty definitions and measurements were increasingly assigned a multi-dimensional nature. In addition, following the decade of the 1980s when poverty considerations were either neglected or subsumed under structural adjustment priorities, the reduction of poverty reappeared as an overriding development priority of the 1990s. Significant affirmations of this trend came from the World Bank (1990), UNDP (1993, 1997), ILO (1995) as well as major bilateral donors including the UK's Overseas Development Administration (Chalker 1992). A development consensus has emerged regarding the imperative of reducing poverty. But what is poverty?

Addison (1994), acknowledging the innumerable conventions, summits, and development assistance agreements, argued cogently that, 'If governments and development agencies do not produce significant progress for the poor, then history will view the debates of the 1990s as nothing more than rhetoric disguising inaction' (Addison cited in Michael Askwith, 1994:1). The debate has flourished not only among governments and international aid agencies but may have also been fuelled by academics and researchers sometimes only in an effort to 'make a living, establish a reputation and build an empire' (Bevan 1997). Certainly, if all measurements of poverty identified the same persons as being poor, one gets the general impression that none of this debate would be as important.

Soniya Carvalho (1994) illustrated this multi – dimensional nature of poverty when in response to the question of 'Who are the poor?' noted that it depends on how we define poverty, i.e., which indicators of well-being or ill – being are being utilised: income, consumption, social indicators or multiple deprivation. An important and underlying issue is that policy formulators, regional officers, project managers, academicians, development agencies and the poor themselves may differ in their understanding of

poverty and its causes. Moreover, conceptions of poverty are integrally linked to and provide useful insights into the proposed policies and diagnoses of poverty.

2.2.1 Two Approaches to Understanding Poverty

Consider the approaches elucidated by the academician, Shaffer (1996) and the manner in which the Consultant, Shaffer (1998) adopted three conceptions in a review of poverty reduction strategies for the United Nations. Shaffer (1996) examines the methodology, epistemology and ethics underlying the income/consumption and participatory approaches of poverty whereas Shaffer (1998) places these approaches within conceptions and reviews their definitions, analyses and intervention strategies. Shaffer's work as an academician and consultant is particularly interesting and worthy of special consideration since it provides great clarity on the issues of understanding and reducing poverty. Some of these key issues are outlined in this Section but greater explanation is provided in **Appendix 4**.

In "Beneath the Poverty Debate: Some Issues", Shafer (1996) highlighted that two different approaches increasingly gained prominence within the development circles: the income/consumption and participatory approaches. According to the academician, the income/consumption approach defines poverty in terms of "basic needs-deprivation resulting from inadequate command over commodities, proxied by income or consumption levels obtained from household survey data" (1996:31).

The participatory method, on the other hand, builds its foundation on "a broader definition of deprivation resulting from a much diverse range of factors, determined through an interactive-internal-external-process involving the Participatory Poverty Assessment facilitator and participants" (1996:26). Tables 1 and 2 in **Appendix 4** display the underlying differences of methodology, epistemology and ethics between the approaches.

Shaffer argued that in addition to the practical and methodological underpinnings and shortcomings of both methods, reasons for the divergent findings are also related to underlying philosophical differences in their epistemology and ethics. Shaffer (1996) noted that, “these approaches generate conflicting results to both identification of the poor and prescription of poverty-related policy” (1996:33). He is convinced that it should not be flabbergasting that the two methods generate conflicting results, since the underpinnings of the income/consumption approach is grounded in the naturalist methodology and ethics whereas the participatory approach upholds its allegiance to a critical hermeneutic methodology and discourse ethics.

His conclusion is that, ‘no technical tinkering can adjudicate between conflicting results. The problems are philosophical not technical. The real issues facing policy makers relate to the insignificance accorded to the discursively generated priorities and knowledge of the poor. These types of issues should be faced squarely and not left to a quick technical fix’ (1996:33).

2.2.2 From Frameworks of Understanding to Conceptions for analysing Poverty

Shaffer (1998) displays graphically throughout the review of poverty reduction strategies of selected Bretton Woods Institutions and United Nations Agencies that one’s preferred model determines conceptions, analyses and anti-poverty strategies. He draws on the work of Jodha (1998) and Lanjouwa and Stern (1991) in two Indian villages of Rajasthan and in Palanpur respectively; Glewwe and van der Gaag (1990) in Cote d’Ivoire; Lachaud (1995) from Benin; Anand and Harris (1994) from Sri Lanka; as well as his own 1996 analysis of national household survey and participatory poverty assessment data on gender and poverty in Guinea.

He observed, ‘the data suggest that different conceptions of poverty/deprivation identify different groups with different characteristics as poor and that conceptions, indicators and proxies of poverty and deprivation matter a great deal for identification of the poor’

(1998: 9). Diagrams 1 and 2 in Appendix 5 display Shaffer's conception of Physiological and Social Deprivation Models respectively.

The Physiological Deprivation Model is based on an underlying analysis that in order to escape poverty, the income of the poor must be increased through processes of production, exchange and distribution. These processes operate at two levels: primary including the productive and/or the exchange of goods and services and secondary processes of distribution referring to income, wages and public expenditure. It follows therefore that from this analysis interventions will seek to address the factors of production: land, labour, capital, technology, public transfers via social sector expenditure and social safety nets.

The Social Deprivation Model, on the other hand, examines the conception of poverty from the more integrative approaches of human poverty, social exclusion and participatory components. It should be observed that both models adopt the analysis that in order to reduce poverty, social mobility must be induced either through the efforts of the state/state agents or facilitated through a bottom up participatory process.

The Social Deprivation Model draws its analysis from the sources of well-being framework but integrates the sources of income conceptions. This is extremely important since poverty reduction conceptions, analyses and interventions without significant emphasis on economic growth can be likened to St. Lucia without the banana industry. The focal analytical point of the model is impacting changes in the social structures and human relationships through the combinations and dynamic interplay of capital assets.

Shaffer (1998) held that the focus is institutional and attempts to capture their complexity and diversity to effect social changes and poverty reduction via empowerment and sustainable livelihood outcomes. Note that the interventions place emphasis on mobilising civil society organisations. It also captures a broad base of human experiences and introduces frameworks for poverty analysis such as vulnerability, capabilities and entitlement.

Shaffer's approach renders itself as being systematic and appealing to our senses for rationality and order. However, our knowledge base of the social world; methods of investigation; and poverty analytical frameworks are all much more complex, diverse and messy than that presented by the academician and consultant. The models, nevertheless, remain potentially relevant in providing us with an analysis of St. Lucia's poverty studies in Chapter 3.

2.3.0 Frameworks of Analysis

A number of alternative analytical frameworks have been proposed for understanding and analysing poverty. These can be assessed as being similar yet emphasizing their own peculiarities. It must be noted that most current frameworks tend to build on the foundations of previous conceptions discussed in 2.2.2 but also seek to strengthen the deficiencies of the conceptions. The analytical frameworks considered below are vulnerability (2.3.1), sustainable livelihoods (2.3.2) and gender (2.3.3).

2.3.1 The Vulnerability Framework

The concept of vulnerability may be described as much more dynamic than the income/consumption or basic needs conceptions of poverty discussed in 2.2.2. The vulnerability framework emphasizes the importance of changing experiences in socio-economic status relating this to survival, exposure to risks, shocks and stress, defenselessness and self-respect. The vulnerability framework of Robert Chambers, Jeremy Swift and Caroline Moser will be examined.

Robert Chambers provides some worthy and candid insights on the terms poverty and vulnerability, which he held are utilised as synonyms in the lexicon of development. Chambers (1989) contends that poverty and vulnerability are fundamentally different for the latter does not mean lack or want, but defenselessness, insecurity, and exposure to risks, shocks and stress. Chambers (1989) proceeded to outline that,

“Vulnerability has thus two sides: an external side of risk, shocks and stress to which an individual or household is subject; and an internal side which is defenselessness, meaning a lack of means to cope without damaging loss. Loss can take many forms - becoming or being physically weaker, economically impoverished, socially dependent, humiliated or psychologically harmed” (1989: 1).

The editor outlined that in recent years, while conditions have improved for some people, millions have become more vulnerable through greater exposure to physical or political disaster or threats; higher costs of meeting contingencies such as health expenditure; or loss of assets through individual or widespread disasters which have used up their reserves. These have reduced their ability to cope with future needs and crises. He states cogently that programmes and policies to reduce vulnerability - to make more secure - are not the same as programmes and policies to reduce poverty - to raise incomes.

Chambers (1989) advocates for a more participatory approach in the attaining important perspectives of vulnerability and coping mechanisms and their implications for policy. He concludes with the confession,

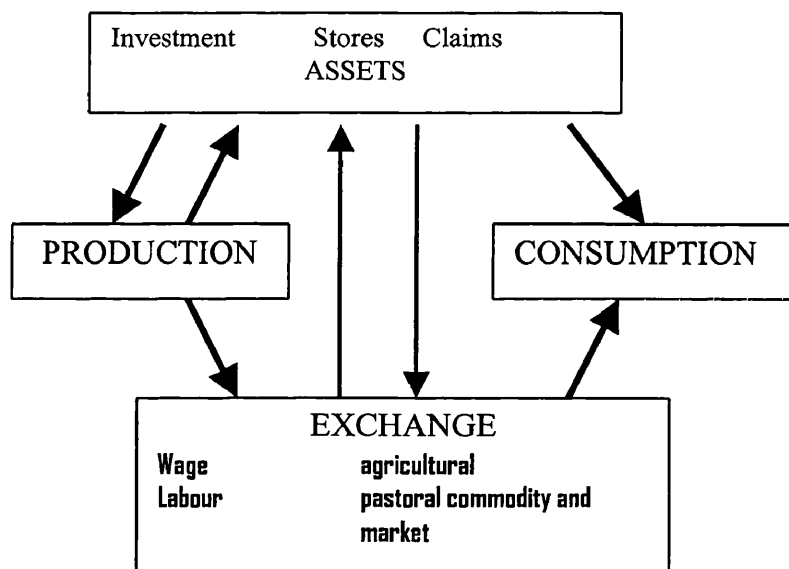
“How ignorant and sometimes wrong, we in the development profession have been ...The lessons for the future is to enquire and question, doubting what we think we know, and learning from and with those who are vulnerable and poor ... and to do this not once, not in one locality, and not for one group only, but again and again, in each place, and for each sort of person’ (1989:7).

Despite Chambers’ contribution, we are still left without an understanding of the processes contributing to vulnerability. To investigate these we will examine some thoughts from Jeremy Swift and Caroline Moser.

I. Investment, Stores and Claims and the Vulnerability Context

The emphasis of the analytical framework developed by Jeremy Swift (1989) is concerned with the theme, ‘Why are poor people so vulnerable to famine?’ The model provides some intuitive formulation of the measure and processes, which relates to the concept of vulnerability. Swift’s observation of the role of the proximate variables of investment, stores and claims, “offer a way of classifying and understanding how vulnerability is created and maintained, and possibly how it can be reduced” (1989:8). Diagram one illustrates the notions introduced by Jeremy Swift.

Diagram one: The significance of channels to assets in production, consumption and exchange



Source: Swift (1989:11)

The essence of Swift’s framework is that though assets create a buffer during production, exchange and consumption crises, it is the individual’s and households’ control and access to investments, claims and stores that are important in the wake of such crises. It is critical to this conception that we understand that Jeremy Swift (1989) is concerned with the channels or access to assets and not the assets themselves.

The potential policy areas identified by Swift in his conclusion are also pertinent and include **early warning systems** with low asset status in rural communities as a particular good indicator of vulnerability; **exchange interventions** in the wage labour market (through employment guarantees) and in commodity markets (through price support) to reduce vulnerability; **improving stores and claims** starting with a clearer and more effective view of government responsibility and the legitimacy of claims against it but extending to and including systems of local community support.

Building on the framework advanced by Swift (1989), Caroline Moser and Jeremy Holland (1997) examined household responses to poverty and vulnerability in Chawama, Lusaka, Zambia, and developed subcategories of assets as claims, investments and entitlements. Moser and Holland (1997) acknowledged that the asset – vulnerability framework must be contextualised at varying levels of organization (individual, household and community) and in the context of dynamic environmental factors (shocks, trends and cycles, which can either be induced internally or externally).

The authors found that claims were made upon household, community members, government and the international community. Investments were directed in productive capital, social and economic infrastructure. Stores were secured in food, money, valuables and common resources. In addition, Moser and Holland (1997) outlined that labour was the most important asset of the poor people; human capital including health status, skills and education determined returns to labour; land and housing were of particular importance for poor urban households; household relations represented a mechanism for income – pooling and sharing consumption; and the reciprocity within communities and between households based on social ties drawing on social resources.

II. The Importance of Assets to the Vulnerability Framework

Caroline Moser in her work, 'The Asset Vulnerability Framework: Reassessing Urban Poverty Reduction Strategies' deviates from the emphasis of channels or access to assets and focuses on the assets themselves. Moser (1998) categorizes the assets of urban poor

in terms of a fivefold asset vulnerability framework. These include well-known tangible assets such as labour and human capital, less familiar productive assets such as housing, and largely invisible intangible assets such as household relations and social capital. According to Moser,

“The poor are managers of complex asset portfolios ... asset management affects household poverty and vulnerability ... this framework contributes to the development of more appropriate analytical tools to facilitate those interventions which promote opportunities as well as removing key obstacles, to ensure the urban poor use their assets more productively” (1998:1).

Moser revealed that there were significant diversities and complexities inherent in the asset-vulnerability conception along the thresholds of gender relations, age, marital status, household composition, structure and cohesion, social and economic infrastructure, ownership of assets, coping strategies and strategy sequencing, norms, values, security of persons against crimes, domestic violence, child neglect and alcohol abuse and the ‘stock’ of social capital. In its relation to policy, Moser concluded that,

“The importance of shifting from ‘top down’ blueprint recommendations – such as the popular 1990 WDR three-fold poverty reduction strategy identifying what can be done for the poor—to more flexible, ‘messy’, diversified interventions based on the poor’s perceptions as to the assets prioritized for consolidation” (1998:16).

The vulnerability analytical frameworks of Chambers, Swift and Moser have not only emphasized the importance of the productive assets but have also shown how access to a wide range of assets, complex and diverse factors, processes and relations can reduce the vulnerability of individuals, households and communities.

2.3.2 The Sustainable Livelihoods Approaches

Sustainable livelihood approaches also purport to display the dynamic interplay of environmental context, assets/capital, transforming structures and processes, and local adaptive strategies in determining sustainable livelihood outcomes. The approaches seem to derive their origins in the work of Robert Chambers and Gordon Conway (1992) who outlined that,

“A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living: a livelihood is sustainable which can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation; and which contributes net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels and in the long and short term” (Chambers and Conway (1992: 7-8 cited in Carney et al 1999:4).

Farrington et al (1999) elucidated the context, which gave rise to the development of the sustainable livelihoods approach as a dissatisfaction with the physiological model of deprivation; the need to understand the capabilities of communities; and engender their participation of the in the decision making processes while Carney et al (1999) suggests that there are similarities among the sustainable livelihoods frameworks adopted by DFID, UNDP, Oxfam and CARE. The writers noted that these four Donor agencies share much in common, notably their focus on assets and the importance of micro – macro links; modifications of the definition advanced by Chambers and Conway (1992); and flexibility of application. Five key characteristics among the approaches in their review include:

- *All agencies adopt an asset- based approach.*
- *There is a somewhat different understanding of sustainability between the agencies.*
- *All agencies stress a need to understand and facilitate effective micro-macro links.*

- *Different agencies place a different level of stress on empowerment.*
- *UNDP is the only organisation that explicitly stresses technology in its framework.*

A closer examination of the work of Carney (1998), Carney et al (1999), Farrington et al (1999) and Scoones (1998) seems to show that such approaches are currently receiving considerable attention as popularized and developed by two key agencies, DFID and UNDP.

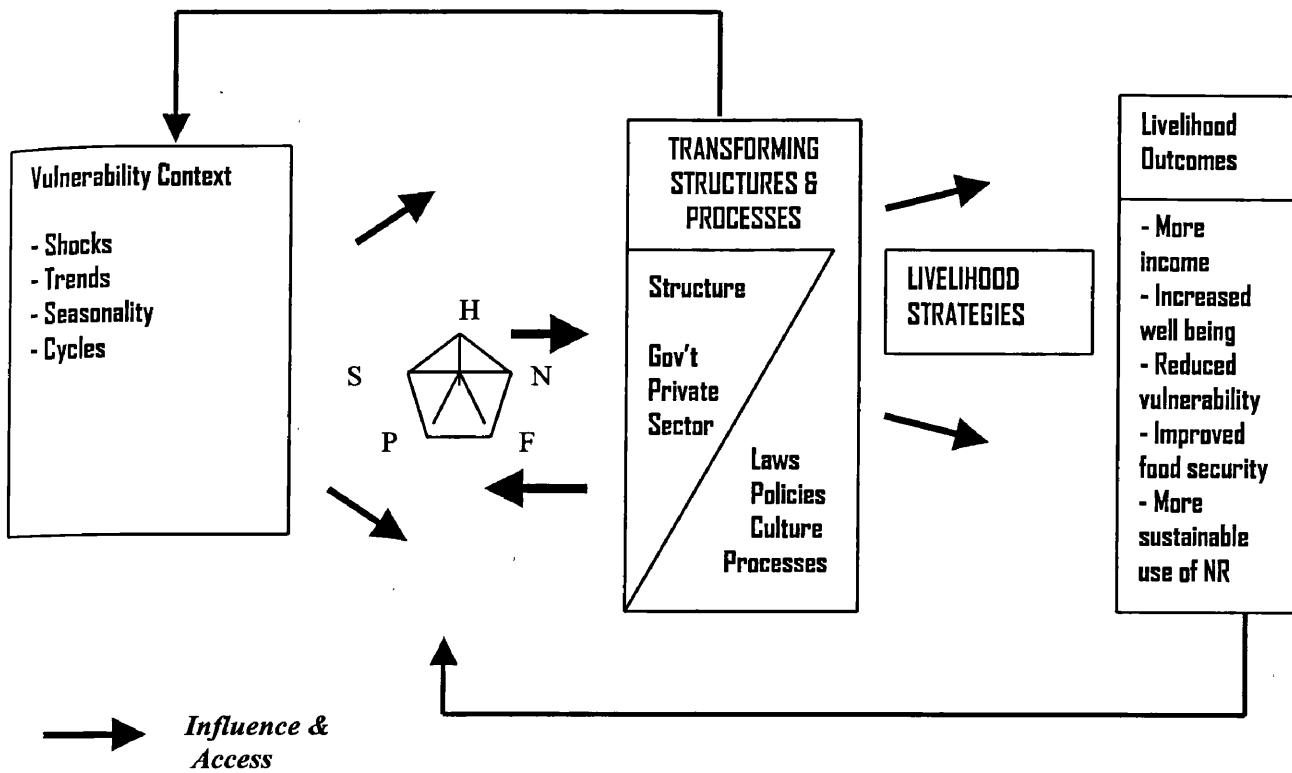
i. DFID Sustainable Livelihoods Approach

The United Kingdom Department for International Development adopted the sustainable livelihood approach as part of its overall poverty eradication goal declared in its 1997 White Paper on International Development. This approach, according to Carney et al (1999), represents one of three specific objectives designed to achieve the desired goal of the elimination of poverty. The framework is utilized to provide greater understanding of the conditions, structures and processes that affect the livelihood strategies and outcomes of individuals and communities. The conditions include shocks, trends, seasonal variations, institutions/structures, policies and cultural factors. Farrington et al (1999) outlined that,

“In aggregate, these conditions determine their access to assets and livelihood opportunities, and the way in which these can be converted into outcomes. In this way, poverty, and the opportunities to escape from it, depends on all of the above” (1999:2 –3).

Diagram two displays the dynamic correlations inherent in Farrington et al (1999) explanation above.

Diagram 2: The Sustainable Livelihoods Framework of DFID



Capital assets: S, H, N, P, and F

S – Social capital: networks, membership of groups, relationships of trust, access to wider institutions of society

H – Human capital: skills, knowledge, ability to labour and good health

N – Natural capital: land, water, wildlife, biodiversity, and other environmental resources

P – Physical capital: transport, shelter, water, energy, communications, production equipment and means

F – Financial capital: savings, supplies of credit or regular remittances or pensions.

Source: Carney et al (1999:)

Carney et al (1999) argue that DFID operationalizes its livelihood approaches in many different contexts through direct support/access for the effective functioning of structures and processes. It is contended that if people have better access to assets they will have more ability to influence structures and processes so that these become more responsive to people's needs.

ii. UNDP Sustainable Livelihoods Approach

The UNDP sustainable livelihoods approach differs from the DFID model on a number of grounds. These range from the status accorded to the approach within the agencies to the types of activities, their evaluated strengths and organizing principles. According to Carney et al,

“As one of UNDP’s five corporate mandates, sustainable livelihoods offer both a conceptual and programming framework for poverty reduction in a sustainable manner. Conceptually, livelihoods denote the means, activities, entitlements and assets by which people make a living” (1999:14).

This approach emphasizes the need to create links between micro and macro levels, integrate policy environment and governance issues and to maximize utility of the local community in terms of their adaptive strategies, assets, knowledge and technology. Its entry point is at the level of community assessments and analysis and programme strategy, which differs markedly from DFID, whose starting point is access to assets and transforming structures and processes.

One tool employed by UNDP in its approach is to assess through participatory methods, the technological options that could enable individuals, households and communities to improve the productivity of their assets. In addition, unlike the other approaches, it is not uncommon for UNDP through its aim at empowerment to incorporate the political capital of the poor in their portfolio of assets.

The agency has learnt a few lessons including: it takes a long time to design sustainable livelihoods programmes; it is not feasible to conduct linked micro-macro analysis of all policies; and involvement of all stakeholders in the process outlining their rights and responsibilities upfront is critical. They note, however a significant limitation is that, from the onset, gender analysis and intra-household issues were appearing to be somewhat neglected in the agency’s work.

Despite their differences, some of the fundamentals of these two approaches for policy conclusions, which should be highlighted from the work of Scoones (1998), Carney (1998), Farrington et al (1999) and Carney et al (1999) are:

- 1) The approaches help bring together different perspectives on poverty and integrate the different skills and sector contributions towards the elimination of poverty. In this way, the framework forces policy formulators and practitioners to think holistically rather than in sectors about the basis of people's livelihoods (people do not live their lives in sectors).
- 2) It places a high priority on understanding the profound effects of the vulnerability context (shocks, trends, seasonality and/or culture) upon livelihood assets and transforming structures and processes in determining livelihood strategies and outcomes;
- 3) It builds on the positives, which people already have in their grasp as opposed to an analysis of needs, deficiencies and weaknesses. It, nevertheless, helps to identify the underlying constraints to improved livelihoods and the means to overcome these constraints.
- 4) The framework explicitly links the micro and macro level understandings of poverty and emphasizes that policy and institutional analysis must take place at all levels;
- 5) The portfolio of assets depicted in the five axis pentagon and their linkage to the transforming structures and processes asserts that there are multiplier effects to be gained from building up core assets and helping to develop policies and institutions which provide people with choices; and
- 6) It embraces the fact that rural people's livelihoods are very diversified and complex and that they are intimately connected with the livelihoods of urban

dwellers and that the prospect for advancement may not always lie in the sectors with which they have traditionally been associated (forestry, agriculture and fisheries).

It must be reiterated that all the writers emphasize the need for flexibility, negotiation, discussion, meaningful inter-agency collaboration and partnership, reflection and learning during implementation and tradeoffs in the wake of conflict and dilemmas. Scoones (1998) argues that planning for and implementing a sustainable livelihoods approach is necessarily iterative and dynamic. The active participation of all different interested parties is needed in the process of defining objectives; analyzing linkages; identifying options; and ultimately, deciding on what to do.

Farrington et al (1999) concluded that despite the fact that the sustainable livelihoods approach may appear excessively micro-focused, time-consuming and complex, it has tremendous potential to enhance the search for poverty-focused solutions across the sectors as long as it is regarded as an approach and not as a panacea.

2.3.3 A Gender Analytical Framework

Any evaluative analysis of the term gender would reveal that the relations between men and women are not randomly structured. These relationships are clearly underpinned by economic, political, social and ideological arrangements. In her book, Gender Planning in the Third World, Caroline Moser (1989) argues succinctly that most authorities responsible for development planning have reluctantly recognized gender as an important issue since decision making powers continue to remain not only male dominated but gender blind.

The United Nations in its 1995 Human Development Report documented that wide income disparities and gender gaps stare us in the face in all societies. It is held that the recognition of equal rights for women along with men and the determination to combat discrimination on the basis of gender are achievements equal in importance to the abolition of slavery, the elimination of colonialism and the establishment of equal rights

for racial and ethnic minorities. However, Moser held that it has proven remarkably difficult to graft gender into existing planning disciplines.

Caroline Moser (1989) identified that *women perform a tripe role*, which is not recognized since they, unlike men, are severely constrained by the burden of simultaneously balancing those roles of production, reproduction and community management. Further, by virtue of the exchange values, only productive work is recognized as work because the other roles are seen as 'natural' and non-productive. As a result, they are not valued in the highly monetarised economy. This has serious consequences for women, the sexual division of labour and poverty.

Moser (1989) adopts the extremely useful dichotomous variables of *strategic and practical gender needs* in an effort to enable practitioners to translate gender awareness into the development planning and policy framework. According to her, strategic gender needs are those needs, which are formulated from the analysis of women's subordination to men. Maxene Molyneaux (1985), the neologist of these key variables, identified the following as constituting strategic gender needs: the abolition of the sexual division of labour; the alleviation of the burden of domestic labour and childcare; the removal of institutionalized forms of discrimination such as the right to own land or property or access to credit; the establishment of political equity; freedom of choice over childbearing; and the adoption of adequate measures against male violence and control over women.

On the other hand, practical gender needs are developed from concrete conditions women experience in their endangered position within the engendered division of labour. Their practical gender interest in such a situation is, according to Moser, the need for human survival. Unlike strategic gender needs, these are designed directly by women in their positions rather than through external interventions. Building on these premises, Moser identifies that these needs presently exist in the employment sectors; human settlements and housing; and basic services including nurseries and transportation services.

Such needs have been identified within the Caribbean region among scholars who express the need to make gender central to the mainstream of development thought, analysis, policies and programmes. In their research, Women in the Caribbean Project, Elsie Le Franc et al (1986) highlighted what they referred to as 'fruitful contradictions' within the region pervading gender needs. Table 6 outlines these disparities reported by the 1986 report.

Table 6: A Gender Analysis of Gender relations in the Caribbean

The Caribbean woman:

Proceeded through the educational system without many hindrances;

Frequently the breadwinner in the household;

Places a high value on her economic independence

Able to provide for her children

Content with her current union status

Confident in her ability to control effects on her life

The Gender Analysis showed that:

Male and female perceptions about each other displayed distrust and suspicion;

Women are still confined to traditional occupations and skills; Women's educational achievements are not always reflected in their labour market success;

Women's legal status inferior to men in family, loans and inheritance

Low female participation in formal organizations and political office

Source: Developed from the Women in Caribbean Project (1986)

The female scholars concluded that traditional stereotypes of women persisted in educational and literary works, musical commentaries, official statements and included the perception that women in the Caribbean continue to need and desire economic reliance on men. The project serves to illuminate the links between the economic, social, cultural and political aspects of Caribbean life and development.

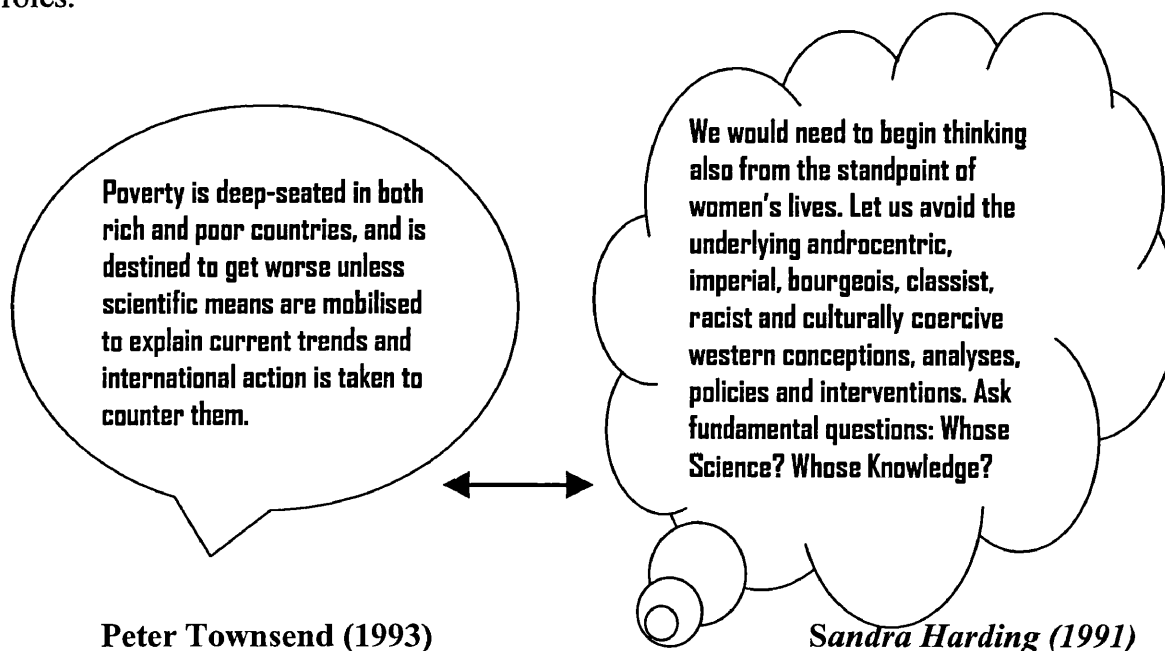
Further investigation of these issues have led Peggy Antrobus (1989) to write along the theme of, 'Crisis, Challenges and Experiences of Caribbean Women'. Antrobus (1989) outlined that in the wake of the global economic crises of the 1980s, governments of the region introduced 'Structural Adjustment Policies' which have spelt even greater

hardship for the poor people of the Caribbean and especially for poor women. Antrobus is convinced that these policies are actually grounded in a gender ideology, which is *'deeply and fundamentally exploitative of women's time, labour and sexuality'*.

Messiah and Gill (1984) observed that most of the programmes and projects over the past decades were predominantly designed to address the practical gender needs of women without consideration for the underlying problems of gender subordination. They advocated that strategic gender needs must be supported and encouraged by all to effect holistic, sustainable and self-reliant development. Diagram 7 below provides a discourse among the poverty elites and feminists and advocates for a greater sensitivity to poverty reduction strategies and policies. It seeks to highlight the earlier arguments of male dominated and gender blind development policy and planning.

Diagram 7: A Feminist Discourse with the Poverty Elites

Five policy approaches to gender and development identified by Moser (1989) include Welfare, Anti-poverty, Equity, Efficiency and Empowerment approaches. The central tenet of these policies is that any kind of analysis, planning and development goal is fundamentally flawed by its failure to make allowance for the implications of gender roles.



Advocates for a gender based development paradigm argue that the full participation of women is paramount to the type of holistic and self-reliant model of development, which is usually assumed to be our goal.

Famines in the Third World could, and often did, take place where there was no production failure, or where food was readily available. Failures in the exchange or market mechanisms are key cause of famine among poor people. When this happens, poor people starve, not because there is no food available but because they cannot afford to buy food.

Amartya Sen (1981)

Pardon me but, development planning have reluctantly recognised gender as an important planning issue since decision making powers continue to remain not only male-dominated but gender blind. There is need for Gender Planning in the Third World.

Caroline Moser (1989)

Integrating a gender analysis in poverty analyses and reduction strategies and policies is likely to reveal that women's concerns are not peripheral but central to development policies and programmes.

In the analysis of poverty, conventional empirical research seeks the norm. In contrast, qualitative – contextual investigation, recognising local complexity, seeks to complicate and diversify rather than standardise and simplify links and relationships. As a guide, therefore, utilise participatory approaches and methods.

'We have been brought up in an intellectually limited universe. Our dilemma is that all our major concepts, our ways of seeing reality, our willingness to accept proof, have been shaped by one dimension – one sex – rather than by two' (1988:2). A practical guide would be Non Sexist Research Methods!

Magrit Eichler (1988)

Robert Chambers (1997)

Gender analyses attempt to provide greater explanatory power to the differential impact of development on the roles of men and women and help make the contributions of women to development more visible, public, official and valued.

Section C: Policy Content and Processes

2.4.0 Understanding Policy Content and Processes

In Section B we examined the approaches for understanding and analyzing poverty. The attempt was made to highlight the policy implications of the poverty conceptions, analytical frameworks and the international agencies relevant to this thesis. It is necessary, however, to gain greater insight of the interrelated components of content and processes of policies in this review.

Hill and Bramley (1986) make these distinctions when they outlined that, “within the process orientation, the concerns may be more about the determination of policy or more about its implementation” (1986: 18). On the other hand, policy content analysis seeks, “explanation, an attempt to identify mechanisms of cause and effect, and prescription, where normative recommendations are about what ought to happen” (1986:19). Despite the co-authors precision in delimiting these variations, they are persuaded that policy analysis should always contain a lively awareness of both aspects.

2.4.1 Policy Content: Definition and Substance

The term ‘policy’ denotes a variety of meanings including a label for a field of activity; an expression of general purpose or desired state of affairs; specific proposals or formal authorization of government; or output and/or outcome. Policy can also be conceptualised as a philosophical principle exemplifying an ideal or thought; a process which emphasizes change; and/or a framework for action which includes decisions and procedures. In a real sense, these connotations of policy are valuable because it becomes necessary to understand the multi-dimensional nature of the term.

Jenkins (1978) adopts the approach that policy is a term with multiple definitions. According to him, the term ‘policy’ is,

“A set of interrelated decisions taken by political actors or groups of actors concerning the selection of goals and the means of achieving them within a specified situation where these decisions should in principle be within the power of those actors to achieve” (Jenkins (1978:15) in Hill and Bramley, 1986).

A number of concepts can be deduced from this definition including the importance of decision-making and invested rational legal authority; the political and contextual nature of policy; linking policy with available resources to avoid its association with ambition; policy as process and desired outcome; and the viability or workability of the policy concerned. I would like to contend that policy will be regarded as a set of related decisions (not a single stranded edit) and doing nothing, for example, may very well constitute a policy position. Furthermore, though the viability/workability of policies may affect by the substance, methods, strategies and techniques utilized in its formulation, implementation of the policy is quite distinct.

Michael Hill and Glen Bramley (1986) contend that policy ‘is the actions and positions taken by the state as the overriding authoritative collective entity in society’ (1986:2). They stress the publicness or collectiveness of matters that relate to members of society. To the co-authors, the state is the only legitimate body/authority of enforcement in that policy is seen as a state action/agenda, in which it chooses to share the decision making process with major stakeholder agencies such as community based organizations, non government organizations, the private sector, affected persons/residents and other social groups.

Hill and Bramley (1986) account of three traditions in social policy, is instructive in providing an overview of the domain of policy content and its linkages to poverty and poverty reduction activities. It is interesting that the authors also identified contradictions in the manner in which governments perceive the issues of inequality and poverty. They outlined that many of these problems emerge as a result of the mismanagement of the economy yet social policy is left to ‘mop up’ the consequences.

The three traditions examined are Social Administration, Welfare Economics and Political Economy. These traditions seek to outline the underlying tenants of social policy content and are interrelated to our earlier discussions of Welfarist, State-oriented and Empowerment approaches of Social Development in 2.1.4 and 2.1.5. Although the attempt here is to examine the policy content as distinct from the related theory, there is an inextricable linkage. Ian Gordon et al (1997) argued cogently that the analysis of policy content examines ‘the origin, intentions and operations of specific policies ... content studies engage in value analysis and shows social policies as institutionalizing social theories’ (in Hill (ed) 1997: 6,7). An appreciation of these approaches is therefore vital.

1. Social Administration Discipline

This tradition *emphasizes the idea of the ‘Welfare State with the provision of social services as its most characteristic aspect.* Advocates of this view include T.H. Marshall and Richard Titmuss. The intention of policy in this tradition is envisaged as *a positive attempt to promote the well being of individuals or society and include compensation for ‘diswelfares’ imposed by the economic system* including the division of resources toward the care of dependent groups subject to specific contingencies of life; general redistribution of resources according to moral criteria; and the promotion of altruism and community. Marshall (1975) argued that the tradition examines the policies of government with regard to action having a direct impact on the welfare of citizens by providing them with services or income. He outlined that the central core consists of social insurance, public assistance, health and welfare services and housing policy.

2. Welfare Economics Model

This model gains its foundation from the discipline of economics and concerns itself with the triple role of the state in a highly regulated market economy. It should not be confused with the provision of social services as with the social administration tradition but emphasizes the general conception of well-being. Thus, the state is seen as fulfilling

the roles of allocation of scarce resources; distribution of public goods; and stabilization of macroeconomic policies (Musgrave and Musgrave, 1975). Musgrave argued that this tradition embraces the policies of distribution of income, welfare, insurance against the uncertain contingencies of life that create dependency (unemployment, sickness and disabilities) and other endowments in the form of services. However, it includes certain types of interventions such as the regulation of monopolies created by economies of scale or the key role of particular professions and the maintenance of certain values and relationships within the society.

3. The Political Economy School

The essential teachings of this School are *aimed at explaining and interpreting policy content as a political process strongly influenced and conditioned by economic processes and interests*. The Marxist/Critical School, which forms a major class in this School, defines the operation of policies as the use of state power to support the reproduction of labour power and to maintain the non – working population. According to one of the theorists, Gough (1979), policy comprises of principles, services and benefits, which serve to secure the reproduction of labour power over time; human services whether these serve the function of reproduction or control; and the support of the unemployed population.

The entire debate on policy content, therefore, seeks to circumscribe the scope and definition of policies as well as elucidating the underlying ideologies or intentions, which provided motivation for the policies and policy formulators. The results of such critical elements of analysis will prove to be useful in understanding policy processes and policy making in St. Lucia. The next issue, however, involves an examination of the making of policies.

2.4.2 Policy Process: Methods and Strategies

According to Ian Gordon et al (1997), this debate examines the actual decision -making process, which includes inputs, the environment, and the constraints and transformational processes. The political system is central to this process since policy-making is seen as “an inescapably political activity into which the perceptions and interests of individual actors enter at all stages” (Gordon et al, 1997: 7).

Three approaches to the analysis of policy processes as examined by Bill Jenkins (1997) were outlined by Suranjit Kumar Saha (Lecture notes dated October 10, 1999) as follows:

- Policy as a rational and/or logical path – *initiation, information, consideration, decision, implementation, evaluation and termination*;
- Policy as an input-output system operating inside a political system with four essential components of policy *demands, decisions, outputs, and outcomes or impacts*; and
- Policy is examined as a more complex system in which the policy environment is disaggregated into *socio-economic, physical and political variables*. The *political system* comprises two components of *decision system* and *organizational network*.

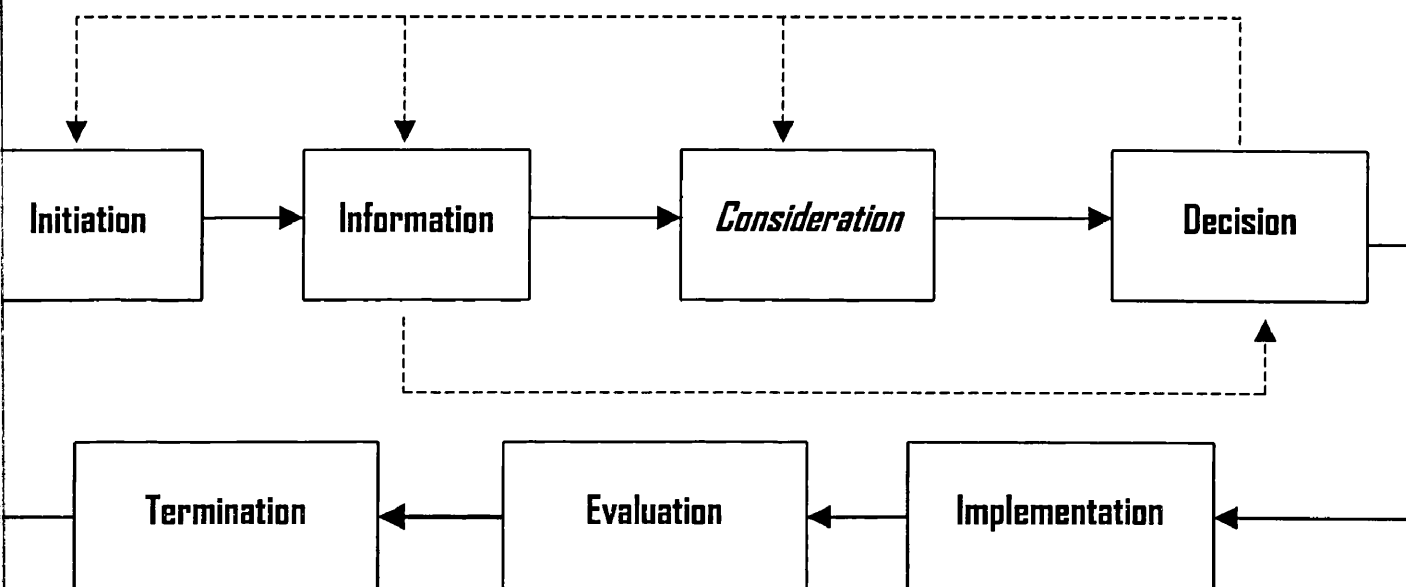
Let us examine these three approaches under the broad themes of the Ideational, Systems and Neo-Systems Models of the policy process.

i. Ideational Model

The characterization of the policy process as a logical and rational sequencing of decisions and procedures from one stage to another provides the semblance of an orderly process devoid of dynamism, constraints and the display of power and conflict. Bill Jenkins outlined that,

“It assumes that policy moves through the political system in a processual way from point of entry through decision and implementation. Few who offer this model would consider it as anything but an ideal representation of reality and that political behaviour ever takes place in such an ordered fashion” (1997: 31).

Diagram 8 provides a schematic representation of the Ideational model of the policy process.



Source: adapted from Jenkins, 1997: 32

This slightly modified diagram above depicts the policy process as a linear progression from initiation to termination, at which stage it becomes cyclical, feeding back into the first stage again. Note that it highlights the importance of information for decision-making. There is, however, a notorious absence of any environmental constraints, influences and factors, which are taken up by the Systems and Neo – Systems models.

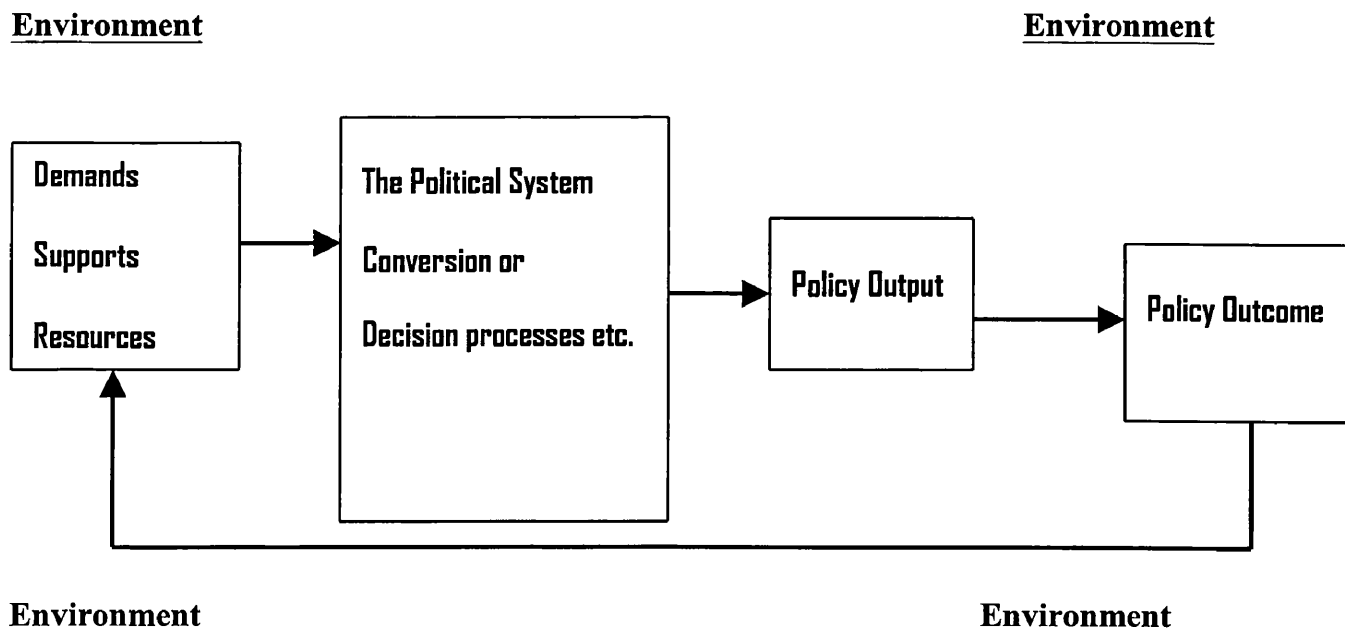
ii. Systems and Neo – Systems Models

These two models conceive the policy process as an ‘adapted input-output model of the political system’ inherited from the work of David Easton. The key notions of these approaches, outlined in Diagram 9 and 10, are the underlying complexities, diverse

procedures, networks of influence, display of power and authority in a highly varied and constraining environment. Jenkins stated that *four components are differentiated within the Models:*

- a. *Policy demands*: demands for action arising from both inside and outside the political system;
- b. *Policy decisions*: authoritative rather than routine decisions by the political authorities;
- c. *Policy outputs*: what the system does but not restricted to the tangible output of goods and services; and
- d. *Policy outcomes or impacts*: consequences intended or unintended resulting from political action or inaction.

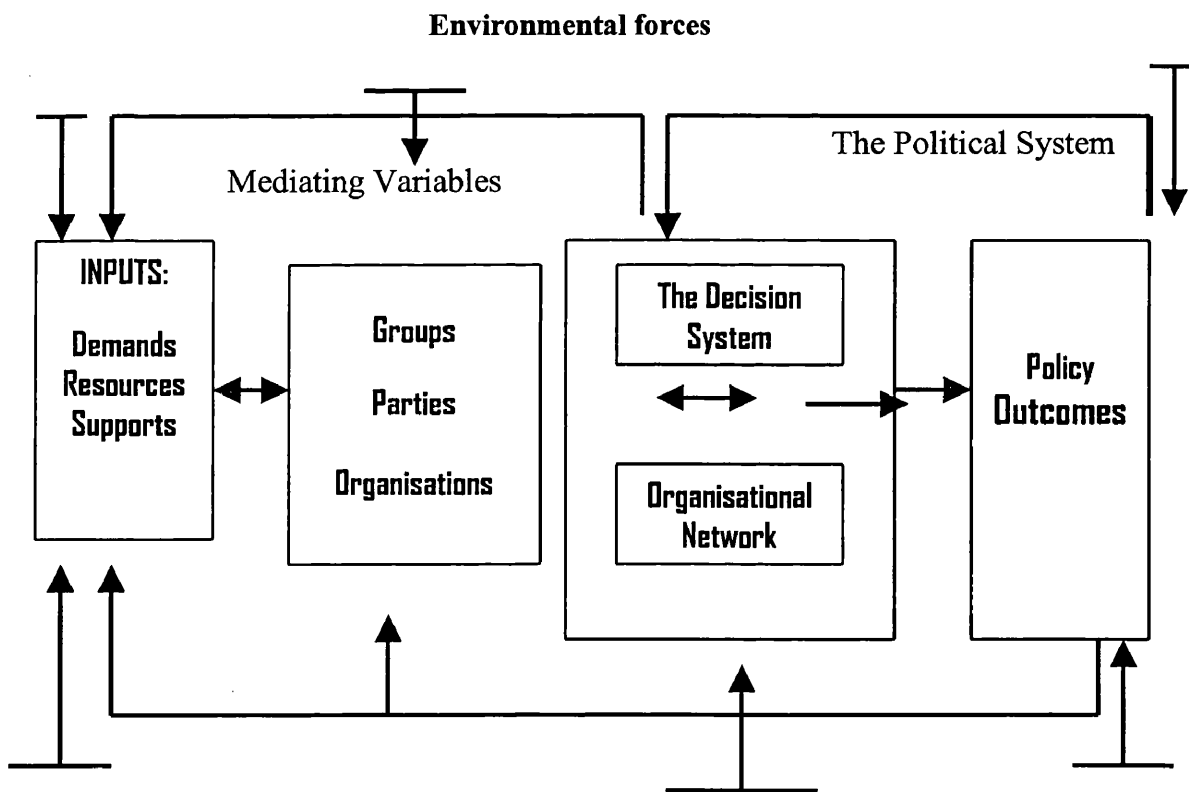
Diagram 9: provides a systems approach to policy process as conceived by David Easton.



Source: Jenkins (1997:33)

Diagram 9 also recognizes that the environment includes social, economic and political influences on inputs, systems variables, policy outputs and outcomes. Jenkins, however, recognizes the limitations of this model and the need for an extended perspective. His contribution attempts in the **Neo – Systems Model** is to detail how the political system is sustained and evolves to meet the demand and pressures in a highly variable environment. He acknowledges the simplifications inherent in the policy environment and political system of his revised systems model and advocates that it be considered as a guide to thought.

Diagram 10: An Amended Systems Model advocated by Jenkins (1997)



Source: Jenkins (1997:35)

The links that Jenkins offers for the sustenance and adaptation of the political systems can be observed in his separation of powers between the decision making body and the organizational network. He also creates another intermediate organ to mediate between the Inputs and the Political system – the Mediating Variables. Jenkins recognizes that public debates, organizations and groups (elite, pressure, political, etc.) influence the

entire policy process and the environmental variables vary over time in an effort to capture all interests groups and the prominence given to development concerns.

2.4.3 The Decision Making Process within the Political System

Despite their valuable contributions to policy processes, all three models fail to give any detailed consideration to actual decision making within the political system. Decision-making is an essential component of the political system and it implies handling consensus and conflict among actors. Two models have examined the relationship among the variables of decision-making and power within the political system: rationalistic and incrementalist.

a) Rationalistic Model of the Decision – Making Process

This approach presupposes that there is a logical process of selecting alternatives to certain goals within the political system. The object is to maximize outcomes through a process of analyzing alternatives, options, and consequences; evaluating them against each other; and making the decision with some elements of re-evaluation.

Gilbert Smith and David May cited Etzioni as observing that, 'Rationalistic models are widely held conceptions about how decisions are and ought to be made. An actor becomes aware of a problem, posits a goal, carefully weights alternative means, and chooses among them according to his estimate of their respective merits, with reference to the state of affairs he prefers' (1997: 164). Smith and May also identifies five major criticisms of the model:

- I. It neglects heterogeneous political variables and relevant vested interests
- II. It is utopian forsaking numerous unanticipated consequences of policy implemented

- III. It is value biased towards rationality, a quality prized in varying degrees
- IV. It is too rigid, drawing sharp distinctions between ends and means, values and decisions, and facts and values
- V. It is neither practical nor cost effective to weigh the benefits of all the facts, issues, values and means to attain the desired ends even with increasing aid from computer technology.

b) Incrementalist Approach

As a result of the severe limitations and detachment of the rationalist approach to decision making, C.E. Lindblom contended that decision-making should be considered as a process in which change and decisions are made in a piecemeal, incremental manner. To Lindblom (1964) this was nothing more than 'muddling through or disjointed incrementalism'. Smith and May (1997) argued that his approach differed from the previous conformist model in that it promotes and allows for a continuous and reciprocal relationship between means and ends rendering problem solving, analysis and evaluation as a more manageable endeavour.

A number of criticisms have also been made of this model including that it is conservative; seeks only remedial and short-term changes reinforcing inertia; favours the interests of the most powerful and systematically under-represents the interests of the underprivileged and politically unorganized; and it risks greater cost to the system by its failure to explore all alternatives to existing policies.

Smith and May contend that despite all these attempts, the debate over the rationalist and incrementalist models remains 'artificial'. They observed that the two models purport to serve both explanatory and normative purposes yet they seem to contend with what ought to be and how they should behave. The co-contributors held that there is greater flexibility, negotiations and compromise in the relationship between policy and politics

and the actors do take the latitude to exercise these privileges. Policy content and processes seek to provide us with an understanding of the underlying values, means and actors influencing decisions and the actual outcomes within a dynamic environment. We can now examine one of the major policy strategies of governments for poverty reduction.

Section D: Institutional Mechanisms for Poverty Reduction

2.5.0 The Origins of Social Funds

In Section C, we discussed various variables, which determine and explain policy prescriptions including the environment, systems, inputs and values. Social funds have originated as outcomes of such environmental processes and variables. An understanding of the institutional mechanisms established for poverty reduction can be situated within the context of social policy and development models during the last decade. Major emphasis within the development literature of the 1990s on institutional mechanisms for poverty reduction has been on the emergence of Social Investment Funds as emergency funds or long - term development institutions.

Despite this focus, social funds had already been instituted from a Statist, Incremental Welfarist approach. The pressure which unemployment, poverty and the absence of physical and social infrastructure placed upon societies necessitated the gradual expansion of the role of governments to provide demand-driven, labour intensive and short term employment programmes for its citizens. These interventions took the form of social action programmes or funds. In addition, these funds represent a significant element of the World Bank's three-prong approach discussed by Tjonneland et al (1998) in 2.2.1. The emphasis on social funds in this section is to aid our exploration in Chapter Five of three similar institutional mechanisms established by the Government of St. Lucia to reduce poverty.

The conceptual origins of the social funds have been traced to Bolivia (1986) when a Social Emergency Fund was established to confront the negative social impact effected by financial and institutional adjustments (Glassner et al, 1994; Al-Iryani and Al Qubati, 1998; Bagio, 1998). Al – Iryani and Al – Qubati (1998) argued that,

“The success of the Social Emergency Fund paradigm in Bolivia and its evolution into an investment and development fund promoted the model in other countries

and encouraged the support given to it by the World Bank for implementation of economic and institutional adjustment” (1998:1).

The authors highlighted that the conditions which fostered the initiation of social funds, their nature, objectives, programmes and mandates have evolved over time and experience in accordance to the political, social and economic conditions of the nations and continents where they are established.

2.5.1 Understanding Social Funds

Despite these variations in the origins of the Funds, Soniya Carvalho (1994) provides invaluable inroads into the concept of social funds, their characteristics, financial and institutional arrangements. Carvalho has outlined that,

“A Social Fund is a mechanism through which resources are channeled, according to pre-determined selection criteria, to demand-driven subprojects proposed by public or private organisations... A Social Fund is not a substitute for fundamental financial or institutional reforms in the economy. Economy-wide reforms that increase the efficiency and equity of public spending and improve the poverty orientation of central and local institutions are necessary for sustained growth and poverty reduction. They can also enhance the effective implementation of a Social Fund.”(1994: 1).

In addition, R. M. Katabaro (1999), Finance and Administration Manager, Tanzania National Income Generation Programme (NIGP) provides additional depth to the definition of Social Funds as,

“Quasi- or semi-financial intermediaries that finance projects in multiple sector; mobilize funds from both donors and government budgets; and aim for the rapid disbursement of their funds to community-based organizations (CBOs), non-government organizations (NGOs) and government agencies” (1999:1).

2.5.2 The Potential Advantages of Social Funds

A number of academicians, practitioners and consultants (Mawenya, 1999; Carvalho, 1994; Katabaro, 1999; Bagio, 1998; Al – Iryani and Al Qubati, 1998; and Glassner et al 1994) have outlined the potential advantages of Social Funds, which can be summed as follows:

1. **Institutional Flexibility** to serve different purposes, strategies and mandates (from short term employment creation funds to long term sustainable development programmes) contingent upon time, and the social, political and economic needs of the territory (Katabaro, 1999);
2. **Social Participation and Partnership in Development** is engendered in that social funds capitalize on the energies of a wide range of development partners: the public and private sectors, NGOs and CBOs. SIFs have been capable of utilizing the comparative strengths of each agency/organization to coalesce them into an integrated whole (Mawenya, 1999 and Bagio, 1998);
3. **Sustainable Strategies for Service Delivery and Development in poverty reduction** have been pioneered by social funds reinforcing the functional linkage between the State and beneficiary communities. They have accomplished this element with a high degree of efficiency through advocacy, awareness and sensitisation within the local communities; participatory local appraisals; community ownership of the process; and development of human resources of residents while safeguarding against unsustainable utilization of environmental/natural resource (Bagio, 1998; Glassner et al 1994; and Al – Iryani and Al Qubati, 1998).
4. **Effectively Targeting/Reaching the Poor** is seen as one of the features of social funds. It is argued that SIFs target geographic areas where poor categories and marginalized groups are widespread. They have been credited for being more sensitive to the issue of poverty and for successfully serving the poor and local

communities not benefiting from national investment programmes or other social safety nets (Bagio, 1998; Al – Iryani and Al Qubati, and 1998 Glassner et al 1994).

5. **Maintaining Independence and Transparency** has been assessed as positive features of social funds. Being autonomous or parastatal, legal entities, social funds possess significant authority and independence from government bureaucracies with respect to finances, policy, administration and implementation of its programmes and projects. They are also featured by clear and open procedures and transparency in decision-making and seek to develop meaningful and effective channels for direct communications between the fund, partners and beneficiaries (Al – Iryani and Al Qubati, 1998; and Glassner et al 1994).

2.5.3 Activities of Social Funds

The programmes, projects and activities undertaken by the Social Investment Funds are diverse and include a number of short term labour intensive projects, micro enterprises, credit programmes, support for social services as well as other income and employment generation activities. Carvalho (1994: 3, 4) identified a comprehensive list of activities supported by most Social Funds. The writer captures these under three main categories and elaborates accordingly in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Activities of Social Funds

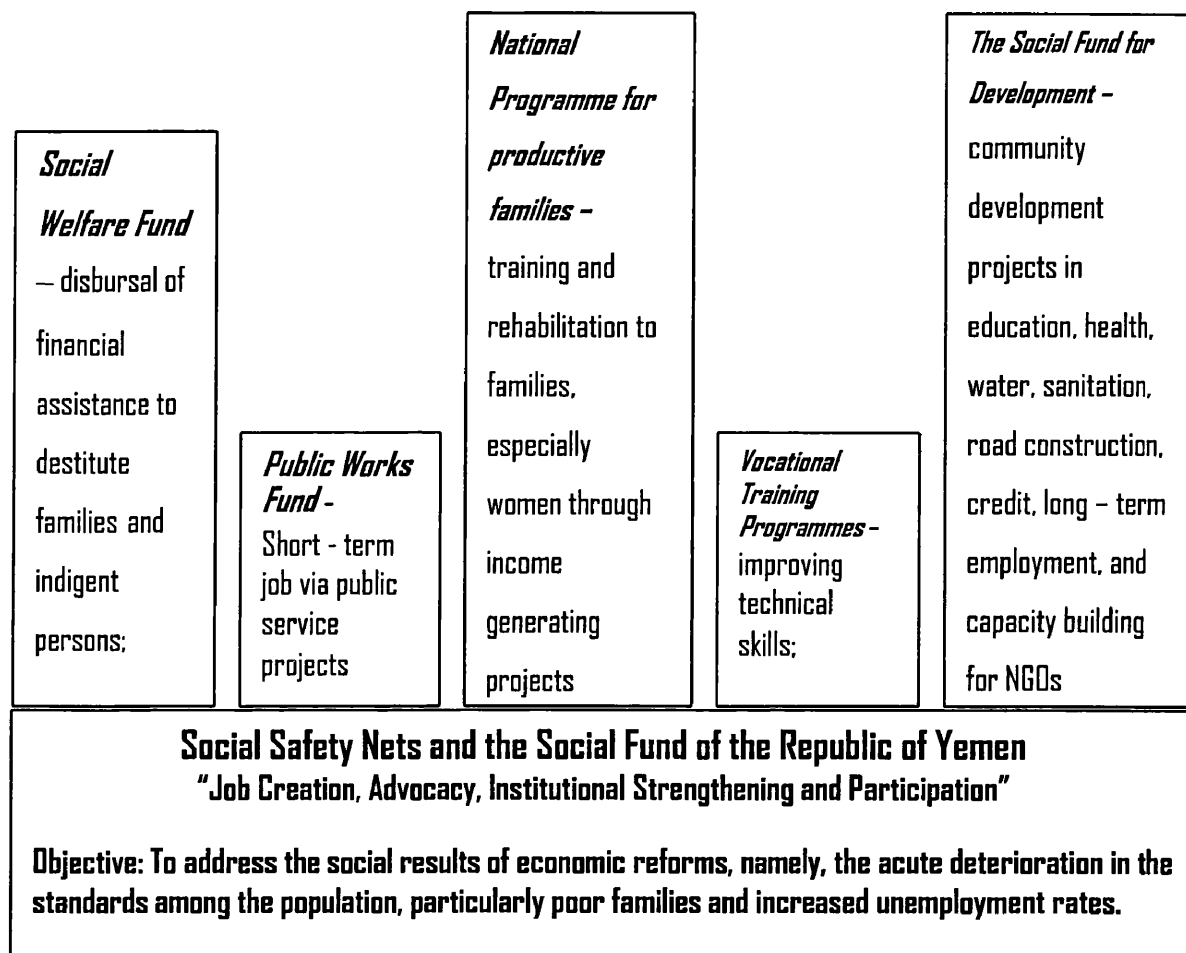
Employment Creation	Income Generating Activities	Support for Social Services
<i>Economic Infrastructure</i>	<i>Micro Enterprises</i>	<i>Education</i>
- Roads construction and rehabilitation	- Technical Assistance	- Construction and Rehabilitation of Schools
- Irrigation Works	- Training	- Provision of Teaching Supplies
- Erosion Control	- Micro Credit	Health
- Pavements and Market Improvement		- Construction and Rehabilitation of Health Facilities
		- Provision of essential medicines and equipment
		Water and Sanitation
		- Construction and rehabilitation of water supply facilities
		- Solid waste disposal
		Housing
		- Construction and rehabilitation of dwellings

Source: Developed from the work of Carvalho (1994)

Al – Iryani and Al Qubati (1998) in their examination of the Social Fund of the Republic of Yemen stated that it performed significant roles as an emergency fund by creating employment opportunities, mobilising the local communities, strengthening the capacity of NGOs within the region and facilitating the meaningful participation of all major stakeholders. The authors contend that the Social Fund has the potential of making an

invaluable contribution as a long - term development institution. The structure and activities of the Social Fund of Yemen is displayed in Diagram 11 below.

Diagram 11: Structure of the Social Fund of the Republic of Yemen



Source: Developed from the work of Al - Iryani and Al Qubati (1998: 9)

All of the writers identified that the implementation experiences of Social Investment Funds have varied from one region to another but they have assessed most to have performed remarkably creating the potential that their scope should be broadened to incorporate such institutions as long term development agencies.

Glaessner et al (1994) outlined a number of issues pertinent to the implementation experience of and lessons learnt by the Social Funds in Latin America. The writers

highlighted the significant activities undertaken in employment generation; the funding of an overwhelming number of small social and economic infrastructure projects; provision of credit for informal sector businesses and/or small farmers; the stimulated levels of community involvement; promotion of decentralization by strengthening the capacity of municipal governments; and the rapid and efficient execution of these programmes compared to line ministries with the same level of funding.

Glaessner et al emphasize the fact that participation and partnership is critical for the success of the Funds. In addition, they noted that social funds may not even be appropriate in every country nor should anyone expect that one size and type to fit in every locality. They highlighted the need to allocate more resources to supervision and the intensification of project monitoring and evaluation. According to the 1994 World Bank Team,

“The most important factors in the design of social investment funds are: having a board of directors that represents the full spectrum of those involved in or affected by the funds’ activities; allowing special rules that permit the funds to recruit managers and staff at private sector salaries and to use simplified procurements and disbursement procedures; using a standardized menu of projects; employing simple, but effective, methods of targeting; using computerized information systems; and undergoing frequent audits to ensure transparency of operations and accountability” (1994: xiv).

In examining the future prospects of Social Funds in Latin America, Glaessner et al pursued the option of allowing such institutions to formally ‘takeover’ the functions of line ministries in areas where they certainly possessed the comparative advantage but identified the need to avoid the funds becoming bureaucratized and politicized. They contended that more social funds should focus on health, education, water and sanitation and cautions that social funds are not a panacea for the eradication of poverty.

Chapter Two surveyed some of the most relevant sources of information to the issues explored in this thesis. We began with an overview of development theories and their influence in the evolution of poverty conceptions, strategies and policies. Our discussions of models of understanding and frameworks for analyzing poverty provided greater scope for exploring poverty dynamics in St. Lucia. In addition, the literature relating to policy content, processes and outcomes will be significant for our examination of the policy goals, strategies and social funds in St. Lucia 's attempt to reduce poverty. We will now begin our exploration of poverty conceptions and analyses in St. Lucia.

CHAPTER THREE



Poverty Conceptions and Analyses in Saint Lucia

Chapter Three

Poverty Conceptions and Analyses in St. Lucia

3.0 Introduction and Outline

A central tenet of Chapter Two is that the conception of poverty espoused and methodology utilised are integrally linked and provide useful insights into the measurements, indicators, causes, analysis, policy statements, plans and reduction strategies. Although this thesis does not focus its attention primarily on the definition and conceptualisation of poverty, it seeks nonetheless to examine the linkages among the variables of poverty conceptions, analyses and diagnoses. In an effort to examine these linkages, this Chapter explores the poverty conceptions and analyses of poverty in St. Lucia under two main Sections.

Section A will compare and contrast the context, objectives, methodology, summary findings and the focus of interventions of three significant reports. The reports are the Poverty Assessment Report (December 1995) commissioned by the Caribbean Development Bank; A Socio – Economic Impact of Banana Restructuring in St. Lucia (1998) commissioned by the European Union; and the Draft Final Report of the Poverty Reduction Fund Social Assessment Study (2000) commissioned in partial fulfilment of loan conditionalities of the World Bank. These reports along with the latest Population and Housing Census (1991) Data Bank constitute the major secondary sources of information referenced on poverty in St. Lucia.

Section B considers more dynamic and context specific conceptions, analyses and diagnoses of poverty from three communities (Bouton, Palmiste and Baron's Drive) obtained by more contextual research methods during the author's fieldwork activities in St. Lucia.

Section A: Conceptions and Analyses of Poverty in three St. Lucian Poverty Reports

3.1 Context, Objectives and Methodologies of Poverty Studies

3.1.1 The Poverty Assessment Report (1995) examines the macro-system of St. Lucia by discussing key influences and determinants of the society and polity. These include population and the labour force; the development of human capacity through education and the macro-economic contributions of the Government, Private and Informal Sectors. It assesses the significant contributions made to the “small, trade dependent economy” by a “tripod of Agriculture (mainly the export of bananas), Light Manufacturing and Tourism to generate the foreign exchange which is the basis of the relatively good macro-economic performance” (1995: Volume 2, 35).

The Report then provides an understanding of the genesis of poverty as a result of decreasing competitiveness in the banana industry and manufacturing sector in the mid-1990s, which in turn contributed to increasing levels of unemployment and inequitable geographical distribution of economic benefits. The report outlined further,

“There are social pressures that conspire to keep groups locked in poverty from one generation to another, one cause precipitating another, but generally exacerbating conditions of poverty e.g. teenage pregnancy, drug abuse, limited educational participation, and poor housing” (1995: Volume 2, 35).

Having laid this context, the overall objective of the poverty assessment was to identify policies, strategies, programmes and projects that would reduce the extent and severity of poverty and improve the overall quality of life in St. Lucia. The assessment also sought to identify the factors, which generate and maintain conditions conducive to poverty and existing responses to the poverty situation.

The Poverty Assessment Report (1995) adopted the tools of the Income/Consumption approach (explained in 2.1.1) utilising four key poverty measures:

1. The poverty line (measured by the monetary value of the minimum food and non-food items);
2. The Head Count Index (represents the proportion of the population whose monthly per capita falls below the poverty line);
3. The Poverty Gap (measures the aggregate disparity in the incomes of the poor compared to the poverty line); and
4. The FGTP2 Index (measures the severity of poverty in the population).

In an effort to arrive at these estimates, the minimum cost daily food and non-food basket for a family of four was calculated from available survey prices from the Central Statistics Department, the former being measured from the required calories intake. The assessment exercise subsequently consisted of two components:

- *A National Survey of Living Conditions* aimed primarily at developing a national poverty line; national estimates of poverty; demographic data with respect to the nature and causes of poverty; and living conditions of the poor; and
- *A series of Community Level Situational Analyses* comprising of a survey of selected communities, focus group discussions; participant observation and transect walks by the Regional Technical Team. These sought to obtain information that would assist in the development of programmes at the community level for the eradication of poverty and provided insights into the mechanisms and processes operating at the community level, which contributed to, sustained or reduced poverty of households.

From the above activities, processes, formulas and analyses, the findings of the study were generated.

3.1.2 The Socio – Economic Impact of Banana Restructuring in St. Lucia (1998)

described the economy of St. Lucia (its structure and trends), as being, “open and dependent in nature, with a large proportion of GDP accounted for by the import and export of goods and services” (1998: 11). The study placed the major emphasis on the agricultural sector but outlined the complementary role performed by the light industries and tourism sectors. The study then provided a synopsis of the triangular effects of substantial population growth, relatively high levels of unemployment and the knock-on effects of low income in positioning banana-growing families accurately within the “poverty continuum in St. Lucia” (1998: 13).

The Report identifies the key social issues of job losses (2000 farmer) and a further displacement of (an estimated 2000-3000) banana farmers as a result of their incapacity to qualify for the banana certification programme, all within the 1992/3 period. It notes astoundingly,

“It has been estimated that over the period 1992 – 1997, 49% of St. Lucian banana farmers ceased production. In this sense the social fallout from the banana downturn has already happened on the island” (1998: 17).

It elaborates on the need for education, training and employment; the sexual division of labour; and the persistence of traditional gender roles in the family. Other problems identified include social dislocation, psychological changes which lower self esteem; mid life crises associated with insecurities, loss of employment, income, status and the current inability to meet family and personal expectations as a result of the economic down-turn.

The Study outlined cogently, “The critical social development issues the country has been facing include: growing social disintegration which threatens to destroy the social fabric of the society” (1998: 14). These include crime, substance abuse, disintegration of

the family unit, discrimination and marginalisation of some socio-economic groups; and the need for a re-orientation of value systems. Social problems directly associated with changes in the banana industry were increased use of alcohol and other drugs, domestic violence and child abuse.

The overall objective of the Socio –Economic Impact Study on Banana Restructuring in St. Lucia was therefore necessarily outlined as,

“To establish what effect these changes are having on the banana growers’ households and communities and in the light of these findings to prepare appropriate policy and investment responses” (1998:5).

The study identified significant information gaps about farmer farms, households and communities correlated with key socio-economic variables, trends in the banana industry and the social problems created and the ways in which they can be resolved. On this basis, it develops a justification for a survey of grower households and focus group discussions in grower communities. As a result, single visit interviews were conducted among 507 farm families and 120 labourers (head of households or responsible adult) in ten banana-growing communities. It was intended that one labourer would be interviewed for every three farmers to provide labourer information as distinct from farm families. However, there was a six percent (6%) shortfall.

The Central Statistical Department was contracted to undertake the fieldwork and data/entry validation tasks. The Study detailed the difficulties experienced in identifying an appropriate sample frame similar to my fieldwork experiences detailed in 1.8. However, the researchers utilised a single stage stratified sampling approach after manoeuvring the challenges of an appropriate sample frame selection. It further documented the difficulties experienced by enumerators in locating respondents and the hostile and suspicious reception and sometimes refusal to complete questionnaires. It identifies tax related fears; use of data for the Farmers’ Association for purposes other

than that stated and a general weariness over the conduct of “yet another survey when others in the past have not appeared to produce any benefits to the farmers” (1998:31).

Twenty (20) focus group discussions, interviews were conducted with farm families (five case studies) and other stakeholders. Themes and issues developed were similar to those outlined in the research objectives. Key informants were used from the communities and professions such as teachers, agricultural extension, forestry and police officers (!). Most focus groups were held on evenings and ranged from 30 – 120 minutes.

3.1.3 The Social Assessment Study (2000) utilises as its point of departure the Poverty Assessment Report (1995) and the St. Lucia Medium Term Economic Strategy (MTESP) 1998 – 2000 (May 1998). It replicates the poverty ratios and the minimum costs of food and non - food expenditures (indigence and poverty lines) and proceeds to outline the overall aim of the MTESP which was discussed in 1.2. The Study (2000) further documents the broad policy objectives of the MTESP and its piecemeal consideration to significantly reduce poverty and the attendant human and social suffering and loss of economic potential.

The purpose of the Social Assessment Study was then enveloped in the objectives of the Poverty Reduction Fund as set out by the Act of Parliament, No. 7 of 1998 and its postage stamp paid by the Learning and Innovation Loan of the World Bank to the Poverty Reduction Fund. It outlined that the study is a component of the Design Phase of the Learning and Innovation Loan conditionalities of the World Bank. The desired objectives were:

“To conduct a comprehensive study of poor and vulnerable communities in St. Lucia; to evaluate their resources and needs; and to elicit the views of the poor on their problems and the most effective ways to address issues of poverty and development.” (2000: 1).

The methodology of the Social Assessment Study is peculiar in its emphasis of a transfer of knowledge and skills among the participants and institutions including the Consultant firm, National Research and Development Foundation, Poverty Reduction Fund and the Ministries involved in poverty reduction. This transfer of knowledge was undertaken through two training programmes as well as through practical experience/participation in the fieldwork activities of the study. The interview (focus groups and individual) was the main form of data collection method utilised in this Study. This process was initiated by a pilot phase of testing the instruments and a site survey phase to gather information from key informants (development activists and government services providers).

Community focus groups were then held among sampled households (male and female) and from poor and non-poor households. 'Vulnerable Group interviews' were also conducted among older persons, unemployed youth, homeless, disabled persons and children in difficult situations. The Study also added the component of 'institutional key informants interviews' to discuss with key ministries the results of the research and the implications for action in poverty reduction and culminated with its analysis, stakeholders meeting, final report editing and meeting with the World Bank to reformulate its findings.

3.2 Summary Findings and the Focus of Proposed Interventions

3.2.1 The Poverty Assessment Report (1995) examines poverty in relation to a deficiency of resources at the household level. It developed an indigence line to denote the minimum food requirements necessary for existence. It engaged in a discourse with the concepts of absolute and relative poverty measurements as well as structural, chronic and transitory poverty types and concludes that, "in this regard, poverty relates to the absence, not so much of food, but rather of other goods and services that are deemed necessary for functioning in a society" (1995: 2).

Having calculated the poverty line at \$156.37 and the indigence line at \$83.55, the analysis of the data from the National Survey revealed that 18.7% of households or 25.1% of the total population were poor on the basis of expenditure on food/non-food

items. On the other hand, 5.3% of households and 7.1% of individuals were extremely poor in that their level of average monthly expenditure was not high enough to satisfy their food requirements.

Using the Foster, Greer and Thorbecke Index, the poverty gap for the entire country was 8.6%, which implied that some 8.6% of the average consumption would need to be transferred to the poor to bring them above the poverty line. The urban-rural differences were evident since the gap for the urban poor was 6.1% compared to 9.9% for the rural poor. The FGTP2 Index for the entire country was 4.4%, which reveal moderate disparities in poverty and inequalities relative to other Caribbean countries (Trinidad - 3.7% and Guyana – 8.2%). Again the index for urban and rural regions reveals 3.1% and 5.1% respectively reinforcing the previous notion of greater severity of poverty and inequality in the rural areas.

In the report, the typical characteristics of poor households were outlined as those who “possess fewer earners and have more children; have lower labour force participation rates and higher unemployment levels; are more likely to be male headed; education levels are seldom higher than primary; and poor males are usually employed in agriculture and poor females in manufacturing” (1995: 17). Summary Findings of the Report are presented in Box 3 overleaf.

Box 3: Poverty Profile of St. Lucia

- *The Poverty and the Indigence Lines were estimated at \$156.37 and \$83.55 respectively*
- 18.7% of households and 25.1% of the population were poor
- 5.3% of households and 7.1% of the population were indigent in that their expenditures were inadequate to cover dietary requirements
- 17.4% of male heads and 20.4% of female heads were poor
- 16.3% of the urban population and 26.6% of the rural population were poor
- The poverty gap for the country was 8.6% but 6.6% for the urban population and 9.9% for the rural population
- The working poor were concentrated in Agriculture and in Manufacturing. The poor involved in the Agricultural Sector, particularly the Banana Industry. A stagnant Manufacturing Sector also presents some concern among the urban poor employed in this sector
- High levels of teenage pregnancy exist in St. Lucia and this exacerbates poverty
- 51.6% of those leaving home continued to make a contribution to the household
- Most heads of poor households had access to primary school education but the heads of households in the higher quintiles had a higher level of education
- Poor households were less likely to have their children enrolled in pre-schools, thereby setting the stage for differential educational attainment very early in life
- The poor did not seem to be specifically favoured by the arrangements for educational subsidies
- The anthropometric data suggest that St. Lucia has achieved almost universal immunisation of children in respect of tetanus, polio, tuberculosis, measles, and diphtheria; but a number of under five children were afflicted by diarrhoea
- While family planning services were available in a number of communities, they were not fully utilised by the poor
- Garbage and human waste disposal were major problems in a number of communities
- There is a general lack of proper toilet facilities and potable water supply in most poor communities
- While the poor lived in their own homes, the quality of housing was very inadequate in terms of the amenities available: 20.8% of households in the lowest quintile had no form of toilet facilities and 29.2% of the lowest quintile were dependent on kerosene for lighting
- 21% of the poor owned land. A higher percentage of the rural poor owned land as compared to the urban poor.

Source: Poverty Assessment Report (1995: 30)

The Poverty Assessment Report develops a reduction strategy under the broad themes of: *Crisis Management, Attitudinal Change, Consensus Building and Data Base Management*. It identifies that within the context of economic uncertainties; the volatile political situation (1995); uncoordinated efforts of NGOs, CBOs, GROs, the Trade Unions, the Private Sector and the Government Agencies; the need for the compilation of critical data for monitoring the poverty situation on the island, the quartet themes were key to effecting change. In its programme to address the poverty situation, the Report outlined that,

“Poverty is the result of a nexus of social, cultural, economic and political factors. Action on one front alone will seldom reduce poverty” (1995:57).

It then pursues a somewhat differentiated but conventional World Bank three-prong approach (2.1.2) by outlining the necessities to:

- Generate income and employment for the poor in key productive sectors of agriculture, tourism/eco-tourism, manufacturing and services;
- Expand early childhood, primary, secondary, technical/vocational training (adult education) and post secondary education; providing high quality primary health, secondary and tertiary health care systems as well as an emphasis on environmental health; infrastructural support in housing, potable water, electricity, roads, land, communications and campsites;
- Provide social services as protection and care for vulnerable groups utilising the safety net system, NGO collaboration, special services for older persons, disadvantaged women and children; equipping youth with skills and a job market; promoting gender equity; and developing the capacities of communities for mobilisation, discussion and action (community empowerment).

The report notes that in the final analysis, poverty reduction is about the generation of resources and the development of the nation's physical, human, and institutional capacity.

3.2.2 The Socio – Economic Impact Study provides us with a more qualitative assessment and analysis of human poverty (examined in 2.2.2) as a result of the banana restructuring in St. Lucia. It paints a nostalgic picture of a deeply worried, loss-making, distrustful, resigned, ill informed and heavily indebted smallholder banana farming population (1998:2). The main findings of the survey were outlined (1998:54) as:

- A widespread lack of education and training in the farming population
- Relatively high unemployment among youth aged 15-25
- No strong gender dimension in poverty or certification but gender disparities are marked in terms of family size, land access and proportion working in bananas
- Very few farmers have health insurance or pension arrangements
- Certified farmers generally use more land, labour and credit than non-certified farmers
- The prices and availability of agricultural inputs are worrying
- General pessimistic view of changes in the industry in the past five years and the past three years are seen as the worse in terms of income

Some of the thematic issues coming out of the Focus Group Discussions were:

- The main reasons for staying in banana production were a lack of choice, loyalty and tradition, whereas others did not stay because of a lack of profitability, high cost of inputs, too much work for too little pay and the lack of respect for farmers;
- Banana farmers felt that whereas the industry was profitable in the 1980s, it was no longer so in the 1990s. There was the widespread perception that only farms that depended on family labour could be profitable;

- Farmers were generally apprehensive to alternatives to growing bananas and alternative crops and activities differed across region from cocoa, vegetables, livestock and food processing. It was held that their limited skills, education and training adversely affected their alternatives;
- Many cited an absence of protected markets, access to affordable credit and the inability of other crops to provide a weekly income as the main constraints to alternative work;
- Their perception of government revealed the need for greater transparency, public education and access to information about programmes;
- Their perception of the Banana Farmers' Association was that the organisation was useless, overstuffed, ineffective, robbing farmers and uninterested in the welfare of farmers; and
- Their perception of their major problems was unemployment and drugs and the solutions were to reduce the cost of banana inputs, provide lower cost credit, establish a pension fund for farmers and provide feeder roads for transporting the fruit

The Study summarised its findings with a grim reality of the profound social problems that are occurring. It outlined that,

“Farmers who have had respectable earnings for years are now the butt of other people’s jokes. The loss of dignity and solvency manifests itself in such conditions as alcoholism, involvement in drugs, partner and child abuse, impotence, and occasional suicide” (1998: 2).

To mitigate such widespread economic stagnation and social decadence, the Study proposes a comprehensive Social and Economic Recovery Programme to focus attention on the imperatives among banana farmers, their businesses, households and communities.

The programme of intervention include:

General Areas of Support: improved inter-agency coordination; improved public education and communication; and provision of services from the Poverty Reduction Fund

Social Areas of Support: adult literacy and education; pre-school and day-care centres; abuse counselling and care; drug control; care and support for older persons via pensions or the State; and support for rural women; and

Economic Areas of Support: skills training and employment; agro-tourism linkages; agro-processing, alternative trade networks and organic farming; legal and financial planning (sale of assets and debt management); farm access roads; land reform study; and other NGO initiatives.

3.2.3 The Social Assessment Study (2000) provides a candid confirmation that,

“The local definition of poverty was consistent in all the communities studied, and for most of the gender-income groups. It was described as the inability to provide some or all of the basic needs for themselves and their families. These needs are food, housing, clothing, education and transport” (2000:10).

The poverty signs identified by the study included: unemployment or low paid jobs; housing in shabby conditions (cracked walls, leaking roofs, rotting floors, no house to stay in); no food to eat; not being able to send children to school (no money for meals, transport); and children in shabby, torn or dirty clothing.

Having laid the argument that 'poverty signs' were often confused with 'poverty causes', the writers stated that all respondents held that the main cause of poverty is unemployment and low paid employment. Poor women included lots of children and single parenthood whereas non-poor men infused the variables of lack of ambition, bad savings and spending habits. This seems quite logical that if poverty is defined as an inability to provide basic needs then residents can justifiably claim that being out of work or not being paid enough is the source of their predicament. Poverty definitions and conceptions will invariably influence the poverty analyses and diagnoses.

The concept of well being was also introduced as the 'angelic image' of its 'evil twin' (poverty). Local perceptions of well being included possessing the basic needs of housing and employment. The writers contended that, "for the majority of informants, the level of existence is such that their aspirations are barely above the most basic needs for subsistence" (2000: x). An examination of the perceptions of vulnerable groups displayed that the most common indicators of well being were ability to afford food, proper housing, having a job or being employed and having parents (family) or a partner. For older persons, the key determinant was companionship and the visually impaired identified freedom from abusive relationships as fundamental to them as the key issue of well being. The profile of the poor conceived by the Study was that,

"The poor emerged as persons with low levels of education (primary school or below), unemployed or with low paying jobs, that cannot meet their expenditures for basic needs beginning with food, education and transport (for education and jobs), clothing and house maintenance. They are found in rural and urban areas, throughout the country" (2000: 12).

None of this was novel to policy formulators and technocrats but it was the interpretation of the coping strategies that produced the shocker to a few. The report outlined that the coping strategy of most persons was to ask for help from family members, friends and neighbours. The next most frequent alternative was simply to say and do nothing. In rural areas, the most extreme coping mechanism was to gather and eat "boiled bananas with a

little salt. Those who could afford it would add chicken backs, and a little coconut to make a curry, and some dasheen gathered from the land” (2000: 13). In urban areas, however, extreme coping mechanisms included stealing, selling drugs, prostitution of women, and going into “rages” (enduring frustration and anger).

It is from these findings that the writers interpreted that poverty was much more severe in urban areas than in the rural regions. This was contrary to findings, analyses and interpretation of previous studies for after all the implications of the Banana restructuring had just set in and created such great devastation among the banana growing rural communities.

3.2.3 The Social Assessment Study (2000), much to its credit, reveals a surmounting body of literature on the poverty issues in St. Lucia. It reiterated existing concepts of the physiological deprivation model and provided greater latitude for poverty conceptions by presenting additional indicators for the poverty debate in St. Lucia. The latter poverty concepts presented included poverty (ill being), well being, vulnerability (disadvantaged), coping mechanisms/skills, priorities of the poor, vulnerability groups’ needs, perceptions and priorities and social capital (a sense of community). It reported the needs of the poor in order of priorities as housing, water, roads, toilets and drains although it purports that persons held that roads and drains could not be detached from each other.

The Social Assessment Study, in its proposed intervention strategy, focussed heavily upon what the Poverty Reduction Fund should do to effectively target the poor and meaningfully collaborate with Government Agencies and service providers, NGOs, CBOs, GROs and the Private Sector in reaching the poor. It identified the need to utilise existing community channel and networks to facilitate and sustain project implementation, monitoring and evaluation. It also developed a matrix to assist the Fund in understanding the agencies involved in the provision of the priority needs of the poor (suggesting a desired role for the Fund). It outlined the relevance of the Study to other institutions and outlines recommendations for their meaningful collaboration.

3.3 A Summary Analysis of the Studies

The studies have performed a significant role in developing conceptions of poverty applicable to St. Lucia. They have each provided an understanding of what is meant by the term, 'poverty'. The studies outline that poverty must be understood from the standpoint of 'deficiencies' or 'inabilities' or 'incapacities' and even 'vulnerability'. Poverty is also juxtaposed with conceptions of 'well being' and 'capability'. The dominant and overwhelmingly popular conception of poverty, however, has been inherited from the Poverty Assessment Report (1995) and remains within the conception of poverty as an inability to meet basic food and non-food items. This definition has engaged many in the debate over the adequacy of 'the poverty line' and its applicability in relation to strategies to overcome poverty on the island of St. Lucia. However, because of its quantifiable characteristics, the poverty line does remain an easy tool for use by planners, policy formulators and practitioners alike.

The prevalence of this income/consumption conception is an underlying notion inherent within all three studies reviewed. However, the Socio-Economic Impact of Banana Restructuring in St. Lucia (1998) and The Social Assessment Study (2000) seek to transcend a solely physiological conception of poverty by identifying sources of ill-being to include income, sources of entitlement, social relations of production and exchange, employment conditions as well as other sources of security, autonomy, self respect and dignity. The Reports also foster the meaningful integration of qualitative research methods with recommendations to invest heavily in human development, providing social safety nets and social recovery programmes. Nevertheless, their analyses are still heavily built on the premise of a basic needs foundation.

From the analyses developed by the studies, they do not seem to translate easily into well being analyses detailed in 2.2.2 and Appendix 4. The studies tend to feature poor people's lives as being simplistic, resigned and without the capability to move beyond the prescriptions of just basic needs of housing, water, roads and drains, transportation, toilets, proper garbage disposal facilities, electricity, health, education, and above all

particular economic activities. There is not the dynamic element of understanding poor people's lives from the vantage point of social structures and relationships nor the calculated exchange, sequencing, timing of a repertoire of capital including economic, social, cultural, political, coercive and environmental detailed in the asset vulnerability frameworks (2.3.1) and the sustainable livelihoods approaches (2.3.2).

The Studies seem to omit the dynamisms engaged in communities among poor persons. A number of mechanisms are adopted by the poor to overcome their conditions and are not featured in the studies including community activism and making politicians accountable (even if it means only once every five years). A wide assortment of positive survival mechanisms are utilised by performing a multiplicity of tasks/small jobs and diversified means of investments. The complexities and significant roles of positive culture, spirituality, values and beliefs, community consciousness (social capital – positive and negative) and perceptions of system injustices are not even alluded to or outlined.

An evident mechanism, which is also overlooked as a coping strategy is the phenomenon of migration (movement to the nerve centre(s) either permanently or for the working week) in rebellion to social exclusion and economic isolation. It is not unusual to enter a community to conduct research to find most of its residents away and be faced with what is almost a 'ghost town'; upon visits on the weekends one finds that human activities have returned to expel the ghosts. Poor persons are not merely acted upon by their conditions. They employ a diverse arsenal of strategies in their quest to make sense of their realities, to cope and attempt to transform their lives. Some expressions of despondency must also be understood within the context of their stores as weapons to mobilise action.

In addition, there is an apparent dilemma pervading the studies undertaken that despite their depiction of complex multi-variant forces and process creating a nexus contributing to poverty cycles, poor persons seem to be requesting 'just basic needs' and 'not just basic needs first'. When the analyses transcend the realm of basic needs, they seem to be

injected from the professional stance of 'this is what we can/should do to help the poor'. There are, however, qualitative differences in the studies as they conceptualise, analyse and propose strategies in reaching the poor or to help the poor.

The Poverty Assessment Report (1995) provides us with a conception of poverty drawn from a highly physiological deprivation model of income/consumption measurements integrated with the basic needs approach. This is in harmony with its support for the establishment of the Basic Needs Trust Fund. This conception of poverty draws its analytical powers from the proposition that 'sources of income' are generated from primary and secondary analyses of social mobility, which include the production or exchange of labour and product markets and the distribution of public and private transfer (as considered from Shaffer, 1998 in 2.2.2 and Appendix 4).

In addition, the methodology differ and not only are the poor deficient in their analysis and understanding of their complex realities, they must also be helped or reached – a general 'naturalist', 'Welfarist' and 'top-down' approach. Conventional social scientific research methods were utilised with little room for manoeuvring by the poor. Conceptions and frameworks are being proposed and justified with very low levels and degrees of interaction but no real attempt to allow the poor the opportunities to explore, interpret and critically examine conceptions and relate their realities within that critical element of the participatory poverty assessment.

The Socio-Economic Impact Study (1998) captures the vulnerable situation and some elements of what is currently referred to as the 'new poor' within the banana growing rural communities. The overwhelming analysis stems from a broader conception of ill being and incorporates the economic, social and psychological elements as well as issues such as the absence of security, autonomy, self-respect and dignity examined in 2.1.2.

The Study (1998) slightly captures the interplay of a number of different types of capital including economic, social, physical and political capital but does not pursue the line of inquiry to formulate any potent explanatory framework. It furthermore addresses the

volatile conditions within a human poverty approach that includes but surpasses basic needs recommending consciousness and awareness raising, organisation mobilisation and support for NGOs.

It also borders along the realm of the social administration approach within the social policy framework (explored in 2.4.1) advocating for the provision of social services, insurance, pensions, drug control, care and support for older persons, abuse counselling and care etc. This study also portrays a strong variant of the social development perspective, which facilitates changes in the socio-economic status of people while enhancing their overall well being.

The Social Assessment Study (2000) situates itself from its methodological underpinnings within the parameters of more contextual research methods. Its preoccupation with the interview (focus groups and individual) provided the context for a greater internal/external interactive process involving the facilitators and participants. Its quest to achieve an understanding of people's own conception of poverty, well being, their causes and effects, individual, household and community priorities, coping skills and strategies was overwhelmingly a fresh enterprise. However, it gave very little consideration to issues of security, opportunities and empowerment. Since these are some of the critical tools of analysis emerging from its Sponsors this may be a significant oversight.

The 2000 Study also draws its interventions in part from the human poverty approach addressing a deeper understanding of poverty, coping mechanisms adopted by the poor and the local priority interventions. It also sought to integrate some gender analysis within the Study identifying that the situations of men and women are not the same, neither are they necessarily similar in different income group. The Study adopts a more social development perspective highlighting the features of a more people-centred approach to development. It demonstrates the importance of putting people first in development referred to in 2.1.3.

These observations provide us with the ingredients to effectively analyse St. Lucia's poverty reduction approaches further. But before proceeding with this activity, let us examine the more contextual community research methods and analytical conceptions emerging from the research activities undertaken as part of my fieldwork activities in Soufriere, St. Lucia.

Section B – Findings from the More Contextual Research Methods

3.4.0 Distinct Community Perceptions of Poverty

It will be observed that the analyses discussed in Section A do not take into consideration the depth of understanding and perceptions of the poor that can be obtained through participatory and more contextualised research methods. In an attempt to fill some of the gaps in the existing poverty studies, the author undertook research activities within the communities of Bouton, Baron's Drive and Palmiste, Soufriere. The research was undertaken over a period of twelve (12) weeks with a total of 24 visits to the communities (Bouton [8], Baron's Drive [9] and Palmiste [7]) during that period. These visits included initiation meetings creating awareness and developing rapport among key informants/gate keepers, other community leaders and the residents.

This Section attempts to summarise the findings of this work and analyse the communities' conceptions of poverty. A process of reflexive awareness featured prominently during the research activities in an effort to critically examine and evaluate poor people's conceptions of poverty and deprivation. This reflective process was undertaken through continuous dialogue between the researcher and participants with a view to empower the poor.

The very first observation and finding, which unveiled itself during the initial weeks of interaction, exchanges and reasoning with persons from the different communities was the peculiar nature of their situations. The communities, although all of them were confined within a relatively small geographical region, were qualitatively different from each other with respect to several variables. These included community organisation, levels of participation (proactivity) and political divisions; economic activities and coping strategies; attitudinal and motivational characteristics. Two communities (Baron's Drive and Palmiste) portrayed the much alluded to "unique psychology of Soufriere people". However, before demonstrating some of these differences, a fundamental premise emerged, similar to, but extended beyond the scope of the studies already examined.

The poor identified their deficiencies of and need for the provisions of basic needs.

This premise emerged during the transect walks within the communities. The needs identified included roads, water, drainage, garbage disposal facilities, laundries, bathrooms, toilets, retaining walls, footpaths, housing, productive employment, recreational facilities, telephones, community learning and information centre, skills training, creation of economic activities, markets and the provision of credit. These basic needs were summarised during meetings with the participants of the transect walks subsequent to the activity. An example is captured in Box 4 – Priority areas identified by participants of the Bouton transect walk. The order of priority on the basic needs was revisited by community residents (the poor) but it provides a comprehensive guide to the expressed priority needs of the communities.

Box 4 – Priority Areas identified by Participants of the Transect Walk in Bouton

1. Activities for generating productive employment

- *Vendor's Stall at Quart Chemin*
- *Nature Heritage Tours and Lookouts*
- *Production of craft from indigenous material*
- *Access to Credit Cooperative*

2. Public Health Issues

- *Garbage Disposal, Regulation and Clean-up Campaign*
- *Sanitation of Water Troughs*
- *Security of Water Tanks*
- *Provision of Public Facilities: bath, toilets and Change room*
- *Doctor and Community Health Aides Visits*

3. Communication Networks

- *Surfacing of Roads*
- *Provision of Telephone System*
- *Construction of Retaining Walls*

4. Child Survival and Development

- *Community Learning and Information Centre*
- *Children's Recreational Park*
- *Provision of Additional Water Tanks*

5. Community and Youth Recreational Facilities

- *Establishment of Multi-purpose Sports' Complex*
- *Upgrade of Playing Field*
- *Furbishing of Community Centre*

(Field notes, dated May 9, 2000)

On such a premise, a researcher may hasten to adopt and apply the narrowly formulated physiological deprivation model with its emphasis on income/consumption and the basic needs approaches. However, underlying these essential human needs, the poor expressed greater concerns over their perceptions of vulnerability, isolation, human poverty and the need for social protection.

Some of the graphic scenes of the communities needs were captured with the use of a digital camera since photography is the most culture-relevant imaging utilised throughout the island. The images are displayed below to review the more basic needs of communities.

3.4.1 Perceptions of the residents in the Community of Bouton



There was evidence of soil erosion and landslides, which drew the attention of participants to identifying some areas in need of retaining walls. These areas were predominantly uninhabited but served as feeding areas for small herds of goats, sheep and cows as well as the cultivation of vegetables, dasheen, yams, corn, peanuts, potatoes, bananas, coconuts, an assortment of fruits and even charcoal making (Fieldnotes, May 9, 2000).



The provision and security of adequate water supply was an issue of concern for the residents. They highlighted that since hurricane Allen in 1980, their water supply/reservoir had been affected detrimentally and has not recovered sufficiently. It was alleged that the main spring was also affected during the construction of the West Coast Road (Fieldnotes, May 9, 2000).

Four unsecured 600 gallons plastic water tanks, most of which were partially empty, have replaced the previous reservoir. The Basic Needs Trust Fund supplied these. The residents reveal that they are compelled to seek water in the river on Doctor King's Estate during the dry season. According to them, this is a whole day's activity since the distance is far. They attempted to show me the area from our location. It was certainly a considerable distance!
(Fieldnotes, May 9, 2000).



An issue, which has been a feature of community life for Bouton over a long period and would not be taken for granted by the residents, was the deplorable condition of the road. This significantly limits transportation, access and communication with the community and acts as an impediment to the development of the community. Public transportation no longer service Bouton because of its bad roads. Two school buses transporting students to and from the Soufriere Comprehensive School are the only consistent regular public buses going to the community. Participants described the ordeal of having to walk the ascending lonely route on their way to conduct their business and it does not matter how tired or how much they are carrying, buses would not trespass the two miles of degraded road. This factor is significant in rendering Bouton as a community isolated from the customary activities of the region. It serves to severely affect the provision of services and public goods to the community.



Photos of some of the worse roads identified by the residents of Bouton in need urgent repairs to facilitate travel and the provision of valuable services (Fieldnotes, May 9, 2000).

The UNICEF Study (1998) outlined that, "Bouton is very isolated, accessible via a very long road only by 4 wheel drive vehicles or by foot" (1998: 5).

3.4.2 Perceptions of resident in the Community of Palmiste

The residents of the community of Palmiste identified their basic needs priorities as drains, toilets, laundries and bathrooms, housing, footpaths, roads, public health and sanitation issues and employment/jobs. Some areas, which they depicted as critical are displayed below. The residents stated that one of the most basic needs, which need addressing was the high level of unemployment and teenage pregnancies within the community. They held that these factors significantly affect the poverty conditions of the community. Most of the older persons are outraged by the phenomenon that young and strong young men just sit on the side of the streets and within the community smoking marijuana and causing problems within the community.



The Palmiste settlement, according to the residents, originated after the Soufriere fire in the 1965. These concrete blocks of apartment houses were built and leased to the residents. According to representatives of the Palmiste Tenants Association, they have now become inadequate and living conditions are below acceptable standards for human beings. In addition, they noted that persons are extending their apartments in every possible direction that they can find space because of the increasing population of their families and extended family members as well.

The leaders, residents and staff of the Environmental Sanitation Department all verify that residents dump human waste (garbage, shit/excreta, urine) and almost any and everything in the drains, which can develop into a severe health hazard for the community. They all identify that physical facilities are inadequate but a programme of awareness, public education and a change of attitude and practices is also needed. The photos provide a graphic view of living conditions within the Palmiste community (Fieldnotes, May 16, 2000).

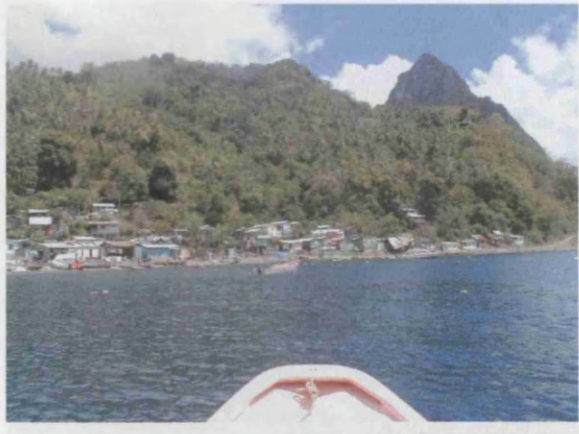


Above is an infrastructural project funded by the Poverty Reduction Fund (PRF) in Palmiste. Men and women alike were employed to construct a drainage system for the community (Fieldnotes, June 27, 2000).

The situation in Palmiste was summarised by the United Nations Children Fund, Caribbean Area Office's (UNICEF/CAO) Report of the Community Baseline Surveys (1998) accordingly, "The community has very bad roads, poor sanitation – the toilets and bath facilities are non-functional, and there are serious garbage disposal problems. While the primary school is within walking distance, there are very few other facilities in the community. There is no community centre, and no recreational facilities. Unemployment is high, there is evidence of drug abuse and the level of teenage pregnancy is high. There are incidents of incest..."(1998: 5).

3.4.3 Perceptions of residents in the Community of Baron's Drive

This community is located directly on the shores of the Soufriere Bay. In 1998, the UNICEF Study reported that, "Many of the residents are fisher folk, and more than 50% of the households are female headed. The community has very few private toilets, and the public facility has obviously been in a state of disrepair for many years. The Bay is therefore used for toilet purposes. The community is clearly impoverished; many persons are unable to afford day care or pre-school. Other problems include unemployment, drugs and teenage pregnancy" (1998:5).

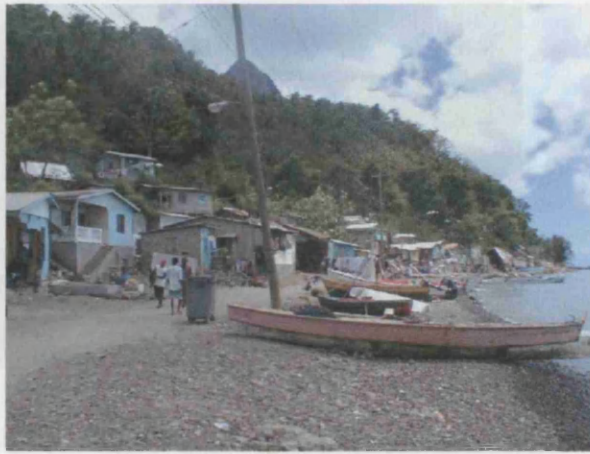


Sea Views of Baron's Drive showing the remnants of the reconstructed homes and activities after the passage of Hurricane Lenny in 1999. Fieldnotes, May 1, 2000.

A total of 49 households out of an estimated 88 households (UNDP, 1999) with an average size of 4 persons were severely affected by Hurricane Lenny, of which about thirteen households resorted to emergency shelters. A Summary Discussion Paper prepared by the Ministry of Development, Planning, Housing and the Environment, subsequent to the disaster and after considerable research, meetings and consultations with the affected residents, outlined that the Baron's Drive area represents a poor community with all the attendant characteristics:

- Low levels of employment among heads of households and the residents generally
- Low levels of income
- Poor quality of housing stock
- Above average household size (i.e. above 4 persons per households)
- General high level of dependency on Government
- A high ratio of dependents within households
- Low levels of ownership of property (especially land).

Some of the areas of grave concern to the residents were the issues of environmental health and sanitation especially the disposal of garbage and access to toilets and shower facilities.



Above are scenes of shattered homes and livelihoods captured on May 1, 2000 about six months after hurricane Lenny, Fieldnotes, May 1, 2000).

Persons were still in residence at the emergency shelters and at the homes of families and relatives even at the time of my departure upon completion of fieldwork in July 2000. Many are incapable of restoring their lives after such a disaster and are totally dependant on Government for assistance with the donation of land and the construction of their homes. Members of the community have evidently set basic priorities of housing, employment, public facilities and sanitation, security of livelihoods and peace of mind.

During one of the group discussions among the residents affected by the hurricane in the emergency shelter, one single parent mother related that, "All I want right now is just peace of mind; I have not had a proper sleep for one night for the past six months. I just want some peace of mind". This reverberated in my mind for days and it was I who did not have much peace of mind! I wondered at that point whether these sessions made any immediate significant contributions to the lives of these individuals given the time, rest and opportunities that my research activities perhaps took away from them. I was encouraged though that these meetings were being channelled into the development of a proposed plan for their relocation, an idea with which they were delighted. Many of the residents as well as regional officers, expressed their appreciation of the research process.

Some of the areas of grave concern to the residents were the issues of environmental health and sanitation especially the disposal of garbage and access to toilets and bathroom facilities.



Above are scenes of children and adults bathing in the sea, which serves a central role in the life of the community. It is a source of livelihood to many fishermen and their households; bathing facility and recreation; the unhealthy activities of toilet and waste- water disposal (drain, laundry and slaughter house) and a fascinating occurrence that a piq was being reared/tied in the sea for weeks, (Fieldnotes, May 1, 2000).

The poor in all three communities were not merely concerned about issues of physiological deprivation. They seek to make sense of their existence and outlined fundamental issues of security, access and channels to resources, physical isolation and/or social exclusion, self respect and dignity, community and regional networking and organisation, the decadence of values and norms, vulnerable nature of their existence, the need to halt the great migration of youth away from their communities, the role of politics, power, belief systems and spirituality in reducing/reinforcing poverty cycles and the perceived injustice of the system as among the important aspects of social deprivation.

These individuals were conscious that their lives were being reconstructed and were desirous in determining the processes, outcomes, benefits and costs. Boxes 5 and 6 outline some reflections of residents and professional staff on development planning and poverty reduction within their communities and region.

3.4.4 Perceptions of the Poor

Box 5 – A Few perceptions of the poor on Poverty Reduction and Development Planning in Soufriere

"It seems like political favours that are being given with the Town Council and other agencies. An absence of leadership prevails within the system and persons are ill equipped and unqualified for the positions. There is no one to see that things are done right in Soufriere and an absence of research to understand the effect of projects on the community. People build houses anywhere and even the police are a problem. This is why organisations such as ours must take the initiative to do the work" (Reds, a community activist, May 16, 2000).

"Dem fellars [Government] don't care about us, the little man on the streets! So many tourists come to Soufriere yet things so hard by us. I have a little boat there doing water taxi but things really bad sometimes. The system really doesn't work for us. It is Jah who provides for us all the time" (Ras, a tourist vendor, May 1, 2000).

"Planning, there is no development planning taking place in Soufriere! What that happen is always as a result of disasters. Palmiste was built after the Soufriere fire and it take Lenny to move the poor people from Baron's Drive. Thank God for Lenny! You eh hear the calypso? Nothing is we business until it reach crisis" (Goldie, a seemingly pensive resident of Soufriere, May 16, 2000).

The poor residents within the communities highlight the fact that a few persons owned Soufriere – the lands, hotels, and botanical garden and the tourist industry. These few individuals wielded considerable power and influence in making decisions through the Board of Directors of the Soufriere Development Foundation. They relate these issues to a 'conspiracy' to maintain ownership, power and control over people's lives in Soufriere in just a few hands. The restaurant (owned by Ebien-bon, a poor resident within a community studied) where this 'conspiracy theory' was most fervently advocated, was shut down within the next two weeks.

When I met Ebien-bon within the community and asked why, he responded, "I told you but I am sure you did not believe me". He then related that the tourists came to Soufriere mainly by boats, got onto the buses from the dock; went to the botanical garden, Sulphur Springs and designated hotels; returned to the dock and left. Ebien-bon argued that there was little or no business for persons like him despite so many efforts to get the 'powers

that be' to address the situation. He could not continue to run an unprofitable business so he had to close it down. He challenged me to 'research' the process that he had outlined. I did observe and confirmed the process with the bus drivers and professional staff but was unable to verify the 'conspiracy theory'.

3.4.5 Elite Perceptions of the Poor

Box 6 – Some Perceptions Professional Staff in Soufriere on issues of Poverty Reduction

"The residents of Soufriere are very aristocratic in their behaviour; desirous to be consulted on every activity or development; emphasise that decisions taken for the community should stem out of a participatory process. They are opinionated, misinformed and pessimistic (everything won't work) and rumours spread as gospel ... Whereas these characteristics may generally apply to a wide cross-section of persons living in Soufriere, the communities of Bouton, Baron's Drive and Palmiste are distinct in their levels of community organisation and activities. The community of Bouton was much more receptive, organised and cohesive than the other two you are studying ... Of all the communities, Palmiste is the most difficult and challenging. The community is heterogeneous, possess a strong political divide and there are persons with a defiant mentality. Unemployment, drugs, crime and even the harbouring of escaped prisoners are all know within Palmiste. Approximately 75% of all court problems in Soufriere come from Palmiste" (Destiny 's Child, May 8, 2000).

"Parents' belief systems and mindset when their children are displaying any maladaptive behaviour is that a referral must be made to the 'gardeur' before any thing else. I am not allowed to counsel the children, at home before the visit but resort to collaborating with the schools. The parents would subsequently report to me that the child was doing much better a few weeks/months later and are convinced that it was the trip to the 'gardeur', which worked reinforcing their belief systems and superstitions." (Exorcist, May 16, 2000, N.B. The 'gardeur' is the traditional healer or herbal doctor, who is associated with casting out evil spirits).

"There is a unique psychology prevalent in Soufriere, which is detrimental to integrated development planning in the region. This psychology seemed to be the birthright of persons within the region and is rooted in the historical isolation, culture and belief systems and political division of the region" (Raju, May 16, 2000).

"If the District Representative wants to address any issue with me, a telephone call or convening a meeting at his office in Castries would be the preferred options. Officers lose credibility and the communities' support for their work in Soufriere when they are identified as having any affiliation with the politicians... These political issues did not merely find expression in the work and relations of public servants in Soufriere. Community based organisations and ... Council, in particular, had a rapid turnover of its leadership/executive roles because of political issues... The communities are so divided politically and Soufriere people have never elected anyone to serve them for more than one five-year period" (Pudgie, May 27, 2000).

Throughout the fieldwork activities in Soufriere, there was hardly a conversation with residents in which they did not address/make reference to the political representation of the poor. Furthermore, many would draw reference to a 'web' of relationships and alliances, structures and institutions, family names and individuals who determined the

flow of business, especially tourism and had a monopoly of power, influence, access and opportunities.

3.4.6 Analyses of Poverty

It was evident from the research undertaken that the poor also analysed their poverty situations from the sources of well-being derived from social structures and relationships and the calculated exchange of different types of capital be they economic, social, political, coercive and environmental capital. They sought to understand their realities and the interplay of their vulnerability context, institutional processes and organisational structures. They seek access, channels, markets, credit and opportunities and a few attempt to maximise their returns on investments and opportunities. They emphasise the need to know and to be informed; the necessity of participating in the processes that affect their lives and to gain some degree of autonomy, independence and control while maintaining their dignity and self respect.

In addition to the coping strategies outlined by the Social Assessment Study (2000), the poor adopted coping strategies/mechanisms such as migration, sale of drugs and drug organisations (drug lords); retreatism and defiance to authority (hoodlum); and alternative belief systems and (Rastafarianism, obeah and 'deep spirituality' from elements of retained African beliefs and cultural expressions) even if these may be undesirable by development planners, researchers and the non-poor (by their failure to recognise these phenomenon in their work).

It seemed exciting for the Team Leader of the Social Assessment Study (2000) to report at the Consultation and document in the Final Draft Report that women go into 'rages' and men 'scrunt' (which were both verified) but the stark realities at the street corners (in communities where focus groups interviews were conducted) of young unemployed men sitting or 'chilling-out' on the block throughout the day, smoking and selling marijuana (and who knows what more that they were unwilling to reveal since they first thought I was a policeman in plain clothing) without a care of police presence were not captured.

Studies tend to downplay some of these elements by compacting them into the issue of unemployment but these are also rationalised or philosophised by the poor as ‘making sense of their lives’ (an escape, retreat and ‘defiant sub-culture’).

Moreover, the poor, isolated and vulnerable within the three communities also engage in a multiplicity of economic activities to ‘make ends meet’ in an effort to sustain their families, livelihoods and retain their integrity, self respect and maintain their autonomy. The diversity of economic activities utilised as coping strategies by many in Bouton included rearing of small flocks of animals such as cows, goats, sheep and fowls; the cultivation of cabbage, corn, potatoes, peanuts, coconuts, dasheen, yams, bananas (on a small scale), peas, tamarind, mangoes, cashew nuts, guava, seawet (goose berries) and a host of other activities including fishing, construction work, coal making and security services as schools’ watchmen.



Above are photographs of some of the crops cultivated including bananas, cabbage, corn, potatoes, coconuts, dasheen and yams grown in Bouton (Fieldnotes, May 16, 2000).

These crops were cultivated within specific time periods (seasons) and the technology utilised is complex and understood much better by locals than outsiders like myself despite the relentless efforts of two residents to help me understand how factors such as the type of soil, amount of rainfall, setting of the moon, type and quality of plant/seed, preparation of soil processes and timing were all influential in determining the yield and success of their endeavours.

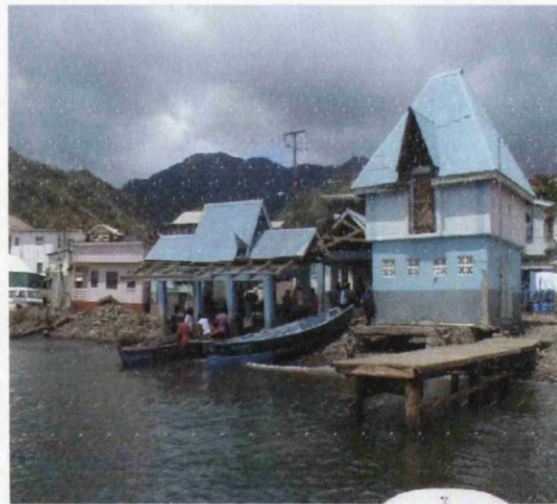
The fisher folk in Baron's Drive also detailed the coping strategies/ mechanisms adopted in their lives. Similarly, efforts to explain their fishing expeditions 'obtained by years of experience' evaded me. They outlined that they were being outmatched and outpaced by the foreign vessels in their fishing zone, which were bigger and could spend days without running out of supplies; such vessels also employed more advanced technology such as long line fishing; and above all were less susceptible to wave action and hazards because they had emergency equipment such as radios and flare guns.

The fishermen held that their profession was not always profitable since it was conditioned upon the catch, time of day when they returned, provision of market for their catch and the abundance of fish in the market. They outlined that sometimes they would return and there would be no storage facility left at the fish market, so traders could not purchase their fish. The fishermen held that they would have to go to the street corners and sell their catch sometimes for 'next to nothing'. They held that friends, neighbours, extended family members and relatives expected some favourable consideration and a much lower price.

Division of any money amassed, according to the fishermen, was only made after the cost of fuel was deducted and it was done along a dividends margin of (assuming three fishermen) one share each plus one for the boat, another for the engine and a third for the boat owner. They agreed that their profession was male-dominated but informed me that some of the boat owners were women. They outlined that fishing was a seasonal occupation since it was extremely dangerous to fish during the hurricane season. As a matter, they held that they had never seen waves on the sea like those that Hurricane

Lenny brought to their homes. The fishermen outlined that they sought alternative incomes by performing a multiplicity of tasks and trades. The Manager of the Fisheries Cooperative summed the fishing enterprise as follows:

“Fishing is a difficult profession with varied catching outcomes, uncertainties at sea, market and the unavailability of spare parts from dealers. Fishermen also engage in different trades such as farming, masonry, construction, industry etc. Seasonal fishing is undertaken because during the hurricane season (July – Oct) there are too many risks going deep-sea fishing. Attracting young persons is very difficult but a long line fishing project funded by the French Mission and Government of St. Lucia has attracted about 12 young fishermen. Fishing is a male/gender-biased occupation in St. Lucia” (Alexis, May 27, 2000).



Above are two images of some of the receptive, experienced and eloquent fishermen beneath the Fish Market at Baron's Drive battered by Hurricane Lenny. (Fieldnotes, May 1, 2000).

3.5.0 A Summary Analytic Conclusion to the More Contextual Studies

The findings of the research activities within the communities draw from a number of the analytical frameworks utilised to understand and explain the poverty phenomenon in Chapter 2, Section B. It must be reiterated that each locality has peculiar characteristics

and there are context specific issues for each in understanding, strengthening and utilising their livelihood assets and coping strategies to benefit the community as a whole. A desire below is not to confine the realities of the communities into any framework but rather to explore the issues and questions posed by the frameworks.

3.5.1 Bouton: A Social Exclusion Framework and Poverty

The specific issues from the community of Bouton tended towards a social exclusion conception of poverty. Bouton is a highly isolated community constrained by a number of essential deficiencies including electricity (which was only provided in February 2000); extremely deplorable roads with very limited access to public transportation; water and other essential services.

The community is experiencing a significant outflow of its youthful population with older persons and children predominantly remaining throughout the week. The youth who return on weekends ascribe the situation to a lack of employment opportunities, recreational and sporting facilities, community learning and information centre (to provide computer training, library facilities, home-work centre for students, skills training and adult education classes) and a sense of being isolated from Soufriere and Castries. In sum, the youth held that there was very little to do within the community, especially on evenings.

The community not only lacks the resources required for participation in customary activities but there is the drive by the Bouton Advisory Committee to exploit channels and access to resources, capital and services and to develop its capacity in areas of planning, project development and implementation; monitoring and evaluation; community mobilisation and advocacy on behalf of the community. Two meetings were convened with members of the Advisory Committee and other community members discussing and documenting approaches to these issues and effective strategies, which could be utilised in communicating with agencies.

The Committee has the support and engenders the participation of most residents. It may need to facilitate greater participation from its older population and devise a more integrative role for its students and for isolated residential units away from the community centre. A cautionary notice was served at the community meeting and it was well received by the Committee in that it should not automatically assume that its order of priorities is necessarily that of all members of the community. As a matter of fact, through casual discussions, individual visits and consultations with community residents, issues of access to credit were highlighted as a major priority, especially for farmers. Many expressed the desire for a community project aimed at pooling local resources; to encourage self-reliance and inter-dependence; and to act as a mechanism to save and lend.

One feature, which needs to be highlighted, is the significant level of female participation in the life of the community and attendance at meetings. The participation of women on the Advisory Committee, Cricket Team, Mothers and Fathers Group, Parents and Teachers Association is consistent and women have a reportedly higher level of attendance at meetings than the men.

Women's cricket in Bouton is a celebrated activity despite the fact that the playing ground/track is unbelievably narrow, with steep slopes all around. I shared the joke that it is very easy to score fours and sixes on the ground but the residents had the bigger and last laugh when 'Inspector' (a sharp, witty, receptive and hard working community activist) added, 'not with our female bowlers'. Four of the community's female cricketers are on the St. Lucia National Team (the reigning West Indian Champions for the last two years), two of which are also on the West Indies Female Cricket Team. Their bowling attack is fierce with wicket taking records at the West Indies Tournament held in St. Lucia in July 2000 while I was conducting fieldwork.

Women within the community engaged in the tasks of farming, the sale of cassava and farine making, and the production and vending of craft. Women shared the tasks with the men of weeding before planting, planting the crops, harvesting/cultivating the crops and

feeding the livestock as well as craft production. The men performed the tasks of preparing the farmland and the construction and mending of pens with little assistance from the women. But the women performed some exclusive tasks of marketing, vending or selling and feeding of some animals. This was not detailed nor pursued but I got the impression that women were responsible for the fowls and pigs within close proximity to the houses because the men were usually observed tending to the small flock of goats, sheep and few cows away from the house.

The provision of water was an issue close to the heart of the women since a deficiency implied going to Doctor King's Estate to wash and it meant a whole day's activity. The roads were of peculiar concern to them since they were most directly involved in marketing of the produce and shopping for the home.

The main form of land tenure was leasing from the Catholic Church and family lands. The residents held that the land belonged to them and both men and women had access to the land. It was reported that the Church only required that residents requested permission to build new homes and that they did not build imposing concrete structures since it had long term plans for the land. Residents were oblivious of such plans and seemed unconcerned since they affirmed that the land belonged to the community. This is a potential source of conflict and vulnerability since access to and ownership of land in Bouton remains insecure in the short and medium term.

The residents are fervent members of the Roman Catholic and Seventh Day Adventist Churches. It was held by one resident that 'you are either a Catholic or a Semdays in Bouton'. I found out though that there were alleged 'nowhereians'. Community meetings could not be held on Friday evenings or Saturdays, so it was usually held on Sunday afternoons immediately after the 2 p.m. Catholic Mass. The church/religion and school/education are the most central institutions within the life of the community.

A sore issue to the residents is the provision of essential services such as visits by doctors and community health aides. The residents noted that it had been eleven to twelve years

since their last community health aide migrated to the United States and none had visited them since. They stated that this had tremendous implications in caring for their older persons. The witty Inspector added, 'it is a good thing we are healthy, otherwise we would have all been dead by now'.

3.5.2 Palmiste: The Human Poverty Framework

The community of Palmiste displays some of the peculiar deficiencies identified within a human poverty approach. The community seem to lack the basic capability to sustain health and sanitation, literacy, consciousness and awareness raising, maximise the benefits of organisational mobilisation and support and obtain an adequate standard of living for the residents. There is a dynamic interplay of a number of factors including economic, social, cultural, political and coercive elements impacting on the lives of the poor. It is, therefore, only by addressing these multiplicity of factors that sustained poverty reduction could take place.

A number of the appalling human conditions have been outlined such as the health and sanitation issues of garbage disposal, the indiscriminate dumping of human excreta and urine in drains because of the absence of private and functional public facilities. Then there are the issues of inadequate housing contributing to overcrowding, unauthorised and dangerous extensions to homes and poor living conditions. Some residents outlined that this factor in particular contributed to a loss of privacy, encouraged child sexual abuse by the partners of single mothers and further contributed to the high rate of teenage pregnancy in the community.

Another factor, which the residents disclosed, that is linked to the conditions of housing and the cases of domestic abuse, is the high level of unemployment. They outlined that this condition creates much disturbances within households. Some were cautious in revealing that this has given rise to much drug abuse, peddling of drugs by young men within the community and prostitution among the young women.

The leaders were extremely concerned about such activities and went further to state that everyone in Soufriere knew even the police, but that nothing was being done about it. According to one, 'they are part of the problem also'. I did not pursue that issue, as I had been informed a few days earlier of a brutal beating of a young man by the Drugs Posse from Palmiste. The resident from the centre of town who informed me that he witnessed it right outside his house revealed that the Don (Drugs baron) lives in Palmiste and everyone knows.

Residents from Palmiste seize the opportunity to speak in a calculated manner. They move from their basic needs – that which is evident to social problems affecting the community including issues of unemployment. Before long, if the individual sustained their interest and seemed willing to listen, they begin with the issues of the political divisiveness and volatility of the community, the inequities of local social structures, systems and processes; and the need for attitudinal changes among residents especially the youth.

From the discussions, meetings and talking 'on the block' and within the community with residents and professional staff in Soufriere, I am convinced that the issues of human poverty overwhelmingly confront the community of Palmiste. The human poverty approach (considered in 2.2.2) employs its analysis from sources of well-being conceptions and examines the relationships and calculated exchanges of a variety of assets and capitals. It also seeks to address the capabilities of people to live long healthy lives with adequate living standards, knowledge, human rights, fundamental freedom and dignity.

3.5.3 Baron's Drive: Poverty and Vulnerability?

The community of Baron's Drive seemed even more peculiar than the two other communities because it does not only characterise a community deficient of the basic needs and capabilities but it seems so much more defenceless, insecure and highly exposed to risks, shocks and stress from environmental factors and its main source of

livelihood, the sea. The residents have been subjected to greater loss from Hurricane Lenny with many so far unable to recover from the disaster. This disaster has made so many people economically impoverished, socially dependent and psychologically harmed that it also reduced the ability of the others to cope with future needs and crises.

The seasonality, uncertainties and constraints of one of their main sources of livelihood (fishing) and exposure to such environmental factors without insurance coverage for either boats or fishermen constitute a great risk to the families and households within the community. The fishermen informed me of the dynamics underlying their occupation during one of our discussions beneath the fish market. I engaged them in discussion over an insight gained from the Social Assessment Study's Consultation by comparing their occupation to that of the farmers.

It was held that fishing was a lucrative occupation since fishermen sometimes earned more money in one week than a schoolteacher's salary in one month. Further, their lack of propensity to save was noted and compared to the farmers' tendency to make investment in homes, vehicles and savings. The idea that some fishermen may be earning more within one week than some of their educated friends certainly brought some enlightenment to their faces (broad smiles) but the comparison to farmers and the tendency on their part not to save, but rather to squander their returns at the rum shops did not impress a few. However, some did accept there were times when their financial imprudence and rum shop mentality worsened their life situation but they also outlined that there were more complex factors discussed earlier, which made their livelihoods unsustainable.

They outlined further that the Fisheries Cooperatives with its government subsidy/gas rebate was not profitable to them but only to the owners of the boats. Furthermore, neither their lives nor the vessels were insured because of the high risks involved in their occupation; and the separation of monies amassed did not benefit them greatly especially when they have to 'hassle' again to sell their catch after so much time spent on the sea.

They held that credit on food and non-food items only served as greater debt to them far less even thinking of building homes by mortgages.

The coping strategies adopted by the women are interesting as they seek financial security in a number of relationships including child maintenance from father; new relationships by co-habiting with partners; as well as help from family members, relatives and friends. The women are also engaged in a number of strategies to sustain their families including hotel jobs, vending (craft and food), limited ownership of fishing boats and miscellaneous odd jobs such as washing and cleaning. The level of unemployment among the women tends to be high with a great dependence on child support.

There was an added phenomena of 'group homes' in which young men, in particular but not exclusive to the group, with no family relation shared the rental expenditure with each other and cohabited in small rooms devoid of even basic facilities. These rooms were mainly seen as dorms since they did not spend much time in the room throughout the day.

3.5.4 Summary and Conclusion

An understanding of these context specific issues and characteristics of communities must be attained in an effort to effectively reduce their poverty and vulnerable conditions. They help us understand the realities of the communities from the perspectives of those who live the reality. The issues discussed in Section B are significant in themselves and the methods utilised also serve as invaluable tools of research to complement the studies previously undertaken. In addition, these research activities are important contributors to the formulation of policies and strategies for poverty reduction.

These more contextual research methods convey to policy makers that greater consideration should be given to the discursively generated priorities of the poor as well as the effect of the political, social, gender, seasonal, geographical and environmental factors on poor people's lives. They are vital sources of local insight and knowledge and

transmit key policy messages from the poor. The conceptual approaches and research methods utilised in Section B are valuable to obtaining a deeper understanding of the poverty dynamics, vulnerability context, coping mechanisms and strategies, local priority interventions, the complex social structures and relationships and the calculated exchange of different types of capital which impact on the lives of such communities. The Social Development Department, DFID (1998) outlined that insights from the poor obtained from such research tools indicated,

“Poor people have a deep and complex understanding of their situation... They are not seeking handouts but they look to governments to provide integrated solutions which will enable them to develop their human capacities, obtain the assets required to secure a livelihood, and take advantage of the opportunities offered by local, national and international markets” (DFID, 1998: i, ii).

The communities’ findings confirm that poverty is highly correlated to issues of vulnerability, social exclusion, powerlessness and insecurity. They translate the complex coping strategies adopted by men and women alike to sustain and secure their livelihoods. Shocks, trends, cycles, seasons, risks, structures, processes and innumerable environmental factors and influences constantly affect these livelihoods. As a result, such analyses should and must be integrated into policy, strategies and any action to reduce poverty. Let us examine now the policy goals and strategies and poverty reduction in St. Lucia.

CHAPTER FOUR



Policy Goals and Strategies for Poverty Reduction in Saint Lucia

Chapter Four

Policy Goals and Strategies for Poverty Reduction in St. Lucia

4.0 Introduction and Outline

In Chapter 3, we examined the context, methodologies and major findings of poverty studies in St. Lucia and compared and contrasted them with the perceptions of the poor attained through more contextualised and participatory research methods. The need for a more comprehensive conceptual framework in understanding the dynamics of poverty has been documented. The task, which must be accomplished now, is to provide a clear understanding and analysis of the content and processes of policies as well as the systems and other environmental factors, which influence and determine the poverty reduction outcomes in St. Lucia.

There are a number of mechanisms through which poverty reduction policies have been articulated. These include the Throne Speeches of the Head of State, the Governor General; Cabinet Conclusions; the Medium Term Economic Strategy Paper; and Acts of Parliament. This Chapter examines the policy goals and strategies formulated for poverty reduction in St. Lucia within two main Sections:

Section A examines the policy environment, content and processes utilising the Throne Speeches of the Governor General (The Head of State) on each Occasion of the Formal Opening of Sessions of the Parliament of St. Lucia. These provide the major policy goals and objectives of Government and lucidly demonstrate the inevitable link of these policies to the incumbent political administration. For this reason, two periods are distinguished during the 1990s as constituting two different political administrations: 1990 – 1996 and 1997 – present.

Section B attempts to examine and analyse the process, content, emerging national goals and strategies for poverty reduction in St. Lucia through a case study of the recent attempt of formulating a Directional Plan for the Eradication of Poverty.

A fundamental consideration of this Chapter is that the development agenda and poverty reduction are an integral part of a process through which policies and mechanisms are conceptualised within the context of the incumbent political administration, socio-economic and other environmental demands, pressures, supports and resources. The interplay of these variables was detailed in Chapter One, Section C.

Section A: Policy Environment, Process and Content

4.1.0 National Policy Goals and Strategies

Two distinctive periods can be identified during this decade reflecting significant policy shifts in St. Lucia. The first period, 1990 – 1996, features the Government of the United Workers Party in which poverty reduction and its eventual elimination was clearly identified, as a policy objective formulated from an essentially basic needs approach. The second period, 1997 – present, is characterised by the political administration of the St. Lucia Labour Party. Poverty reduction and its eradication is currently contextualised within a social development approach. Both periods, however, gain their impetus from the events of the international, regional and domestic environment, which vary over time but the content and processes of each period differ with emphases on alternative strategies.

4.1.1 Policy Goals and Strategies: 1990 – 96

The period commencing 1990 to May 1997 marks a significant decade of events for St. Lucia and other Small Island Developing States with sweeping changes in the international environment such as the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the age of glasnost and perestroika; events in Kuwait and Iraq leading to the Gulf War and its implications for prices; the end of Apartheid in South Africa; and the establishment of the European Union Single Market. The changing fortunes of the Banana Industry would also be evident by unfavourable international environment to preferential trading arrangements and relationships. These events would contribute to diminishing development assistance with the flow of resources to Eastern Europe and South Africa; the ascendancy of neo-liberalism as the paramount economic ideology; and expose the small, fragile and vulnerable economies of the small islands to international competition and emerging multinational corporations and trading blocs.

The Caribbean realities were characterised as great changes in tumultuous times with the persistent conflict in Haiti; the onslaught of political violence in Trinidad and Tobago (1991); and the non-maturation of relentless efforts for Caribbean integration. These disappointments would be manifested by the unsuccessful progress towards the establishment of Caricom's Common External Tariff, OECS Political Union and a Windward Islands' Political Union. The constant threat of natural disasters also featured prominently with the volcanic eruptions of Monsterrat, landslides and the fury of seasonal hurricanes and tropical storms.

The implications of these contributed to an emphasis on Caribbean democracy, political unity and the rule of law. Democratic principles of human rights, constitutional amendments, legislative reforms and good governance featured high as policy goals. In addition, the need for greater coordination of regional security system and rapid institutional response to threats towards democratic institutions were adopted as significant strategies. The need for a coordinated effort towards disaster mitigation was outlined and efforts were also made to pool the diplomatic resources of Caribbean banana producing governments in international negotiations.

The domestic environment was also dynamic with increasing tension in St. Lucia. The need for survival, especially with the looming uncertainties and challenging times for the Banana Industry, affected the small island considerably. National conflicts, strikes, and disruptions took a turn for the worse in 1995. These strikes and disturbances were propelled by the loss of profits and uncertainties in the Banana Industry as well as growing unpopularity of the policy outcomes of the political administration of the day to the above issues. The implications for the island was to concentrate its policy objectives in attaining a diversified economy in agriculture, commerce and tourism as well as social progress in education, health care for all and human resource development, with particular emphasis on domestic violence and child care and protection issues.

There were also efforts at legal, administrative, institutional and social reform to curb anti-social behaviour, indifference and deviance, since it was envisaged as a threat to

internal security. Additionally, appeals for national unity, peaceful negotiations and a determination to resolve difficulties, problems and the scourges of ignorance and poverty were proclaimed and outlined as products of underdevelopment. One appeal outlined, "We live in times of great challenges and these challenges can best be met by a people united to one purpose and one goal - that of national development" (1995: 6).

The policy goals for the period under consideration can be summarised by the objectives outlined within the Throne Speech on the occasion of the Opening of the First Session of the Sixth Parliament of Saint Lucia and are as follows:

- The promotion of economic growth and social development, particularly in those areas, which will reduce unemployment;
- The promotion of policies aimed at, the reduction and eventual elimination of poverty in our society;
- The promotion of social justice within our entire society;
- The mobilising of the energies and the ingenuity of our youth; and
- The full utilisation of the talents of our women (1992:3).

The fundamental policy goals for the period 1990-97 included an emphases on accessible health care for all St. Lucians; a highly efficient, motivated and well trained public service; development of the educational infrastructure and reducing illiteracy; and new instruments for sustaining and advancing social progress and cohesiveness; governance and citizenry; constitutional amendments and legislative reforms; environmental conservation and integrity; and economic development of citizenry.

The processes of consultation, negotiation and dialogue were outlined as vital to the attainment of these policy goals and objectives for socio-economic development and

constitutional reform. In this regard, the Government engaged in the process of establishing the National Social and Economic Council and the National Economic Development Commission as well as the quest to broaden its diplomatic relations and development assistance programme. The National Social and Economic Council was conceptualised as a social partner organisation comprising of government agencies, non-government and community based organisations and the private sector to dialogue on issues of socio-economic development.

The National Economic Development Commission was conceived as a mechanism and process for consultation on wages, prices, productivity, social conditions of work and economic activity in general. The participation of civil society and social partners in both processes of consultation was perceived as a significant component of good governance and the search for national consensus on issues of national and economic development.

The broadening of diplomatic relations and the emphasis on widening and deepening the cooperation of the OECS towards political unification of the islands was outlined as necessary "to amplify the small voice of St. Lucia and to scale and capture the commanding heights of the economy" (Throne Speech 1995: 3). These efforts were not fully realised amid successful attempts within the international community at pooling relatively large Single Markets; the formation of trading blocs; and the prominence of multinational corporations.

The underlying principles of the policy goals and strategies for the period 1990-97 stem from an incremental/institutional model of social welfare in which the state gradually expanded existing social services. The goal towards the reduction and eventual elimination of poverty was addressed by increased social spending in education, health and physical infrastructural projects such as water development, drains, footpaths and roads. These strategies were increasingly complemented by the work of social philanthropy organisations and the social work tradition in an effort to tackle the manifested social problems. These orientations have been detailed in Models of Social Welfare in Social Development (2.1.4).

The conceptions and analysis of poverty during this period were clearly drawn from the physiological deprivation model (reference 3.3). The policy goals and strategies were fundamentally biased towards the provision of basic needs without addressing the full gamut of human needs or genuinely tackling inequity. As outlined in 2.1.7, they were incapable of creating an environment in which choices, opportunities, access and certain fundamental human rights to live tolerable lives could be attained. Integrated strategies for poverty reduction, access to productive resources, effective social protection programmes, and participatory and people-centred development were significantly inadequate. These issues will be addressed further in 5.1.0.

4.1.2 Policy Goals and Strategies: 1997 – Present

The period 1997 ushered significant changes in government marked by an overwhelming majority (16-1) given to the Government of the St. Lucia Labour Party after approximately 30 years of the United Workers Party Government. This acclamation would find expression in the Throne Speech of the First Session of the Seventh Parliament of St. Lucia as,

“ On May 23rd 1997 an unprecedented wind of change swept St. Lucia creating political history as the people voted decisively for a new government representing a new vision for the new millennium. This overwhelming verdict represented an affirmation of a more inclusive, more people-centred and more technocratically competent governance” (1997: 1).

But there was also the appeal towards renewed nationhood and to emphasize unity and the necessities that bind the small island. This appeal was again made at the formal opening of the fourth session as the need to put progress above partisanship and to “look beyond the things that divide us to the necessities that unite us; to look beyond differences that separate us to the ties that unite us” (2000:3).

The complexities, uncertainties and dynamism of the international, regional and domestic environment remained largely unchanged but had become increasingly sophisticated and central to policy formulation with dramatic changes in the alignment of power and the irreversible emergence of a global economy. Moreover, the volatility of the World economy; the emergence of seamless global markets; and the impact of information technology posed a severe crisis for the Banana Industry (an economic lifeline for thousands of small farmers and labourers). Furthermore these challenged the small island to re-engineer and take advantage of the unparalleled opportunity of science and technology to militate against the risk of becoming structurally irrelevant. The relative disadvantages of the small island discussed in 1.2 became increasingly apparent as a result of the accelerated rate and effects of globalisation (2.1.6).

But human organisations, institutions and unequal relations did not exclusively engineer the testing times and variables within the policy environment. Global weather patterns and natural disasters would also considerably affect the policy environmental variables, policy outputs, outcomes and resource allocation. This was outlined in the Throne Speech 2000 as,

“Natural disasters in St. Lucia ... have tested our fortitude as a nation. The earth movements in Bogius and Black Mallet/Maynard Hill, the rain and water damage of Storm Lennie and the Independence rains tested the individual resolve of the people affected, tested the compassion of My Government and brought to stark relief our vulnerability as a small island state. My government had to find in excess of EC\$11.287 million to cater for relief and rehabilitation in the face of the human suffering and infrastructural damage” (2000:2).

The onset of the new Millennium and preparation for the 21st Anniversary of Nationhood marking a new age of national maturity would also influence the policy goals of Government. These provided greater emphasis on the culture and identity of St. Lucia within a global village and economy. A National Cultural Policy; a National Institute of Culture; the celebration of National Heroes Day and Emancipation Day as well as a

broader system of national awards were the resultant policy strategies to commemorate the 21st Anniversary of Nationhood. This emphasis provided the opportunity for instituting processes of matching diplomatic conduct to the vital trade interests of the independent nation state.

A distinguishing feature of this period was the clarity of relationships exposed between government's policy and the political manifesto of the ruling party. The Throne Speech of the First Session of the Seventh Parliament of St. Lucia outlined,

“The policies that my Government will follow are clearly spelt out in the manifesto that was put forward for the consideration of the electorate and whose process of formulation involved broad consultation with significant social partners, individuals and experts in various fields. The document, which constitutes a contract of faith with the people of St. Lucia will form the basis for the fundamental policies that my Government will embark on” (1997: 3).

In this respect, four strategic policy priorities were outlined for the period including:

1. **Good Governance and Constitutional Reform** engaging civic, community and professional organisations in partnership for public policy formulation and to promote transparency and accountability in government via public information services and dialogue. A regulatory and facilitatory mechanism of Government was also captioned as a policy strategy to empower citizens to exercise democratic rights and responsibilities and to uproot institutional and personal practices of corruption within State Agencies.
2. **Intensification of Social Development** with the erection of pillars of social development in comprehensive approaches to people centred development in education, human resource development, human services, health, labour relations, more compassionate social mentalities and a distinct Caribbean civilisation and culture.

Poverty reduction was elucidated as the need for social re-alignment and re-adjustment through access to credit, land, affordable housing and other social investment programmes of the Poverty Reduction Fund; the James Belgrave Micro Enterprise Development Limited; the Low Income Housing Project; and the Programme for the Rationalisation of Unplanned Development. It was outlined that a collective, significant and concerted attack on poverty causes from many angles was indispensable “to build a secure future and safe society of opportunity for all” (1999: 23).

3. *A More Diversified Economy* with expanded scope for local participation and clear parameters for international investment. The economic policy objectives were outlined within the periods essentially as stimulating and re-orienting the economy towards sustained growth and strengthening, modernising and repositioning the economy.

Within this framework, the strengthening of regulatory apparatus, elimination of unnecessary bureaucracy, greater responsiveness and a stronger facilitation capacity for investment, institutional efficiency and effectiveness would be highly featured. This would also lead to increasing investment in tourism, international financial services and trade and industry as well as the privatisation of the St. Lucia Banana Growers Association (SLBGA), the National Commercial Bank (NCB) and the Water and Sewerage Association (WASA).

4. *Public Sector Reform and Modernisation* to give effect to a modern, productive and committed public sector with a strong management base while dispensing the bottlenecks along with its complicated and inflexible procedures and codes.

These broad based policy goals and strategies initiated a massive legislative agenda in the quest to combine the issues of good governance and facilitating openness, public consultation, debate and the exercise of citizens’ rights and responsibilities with greater

accountability of government. It has also led to policy strategies of strengthening the mechanisms and institutions for enforcement and maintenance of law and order.

In addition to consultation, dialogue and the partnership of civic, community and professional organisations for public policy formulation, the advent of Government's Programme Planning and Budgeting System and the Medium Term Economic Strategy Paper are being consciously utilised as policy instruments for the articulation of the medium and longer-term goals.

The Medium Term Economic Strategy Paper (MTESP) is the policy instrument utilised by government to outline the medium-term strategies for facilitating economic diversification. The poverty reduction policy goals of the MTESP 1998 – 2000 were developed within the context of Government's dissatisfaction with the deeply entrenched inequalities of its Public Sector Investment Programme in that the poorest 20% of the population received only 4.4% of per capita public spending while the richest 20% received 53.6%. A long-term vision was advanced to, "significantly reduce poverty and its attendant human and social suffering and loss of economic potential" (1998:65).

To this end, the major policy strategies included the stabilisation of the economy and restoration of growth in output and employment; the development of a detailed Poverty Reduction Plan and establishment of the Poverty Reduction Fund; the construction of Human Resource Development Centres in deprived communities; Social assistance programmes such as free school meals and textbooks; improvement of environmental conditions in poor and depressed communities; access to low income housing, land employment opportunities and low interest credit or capital for economic self sufficiency.

The poverty reduction policy goals of the Government of St. Lucia espoused within the Draft MTESP 2001 – 2003 can be summed as to evaluate, consolidate and recover. Three policy objectives have been outlined for this period and they include:

- I. To assess the impact of past and current initiatives on poverty reduction in St. Lucia;
- II. To consolidate the operation and implementation of initiatives such as the BNTP, PRF, BELFund, Human Resource Development Centres and the National Skills Development Centre; and
- III. To address the specific concerns of farmers and their households as a vulnerable group via the European Union Social Recovery Programme

The main thrust of the Programme Planning and Budgeting System is to plan future priorities and to monitor and assess the impact of past priority decisions. The approach emphasizes the articulation of clear objectives, key priorities, responsibilities and performance indications within agencies' programmes. Reporting is an indispensable requirement in this approach and plenary sessions are convened during which public agencies report on progress made and recommend solutions to problems.

The policy goals of this period, 1997 to present, confirm the reality that though a significant welfarist and critical physiological conception of poverty persist, the strategies have evolved beyond this framework to incorporate the social deprivation conception of poverty. The goals and strategies for this period tend to vary along the continuum of State oriented and Empowerment approaches of social development outlined in 2.1.5. The poverty reduction policies and strategies are still heavily management oriented and maintain a shaky dependence on the State. However, there are progressive strides towards a more power-based framework with efforts to effect greater confidence, strengthen social capital and create opportunities and access to resources for poor communities. These strategies are detailed in 5.2 and Appendix 4.

Ezra Jn. Baptiste (1999) Deputy Director, Development Cooperation and Programme Planning, noted that although these approaches represent an improvement and significant

departure from past processes, there exist seven constraints and shortcomings to these goals and their processes. They include:

- 1) There is no well-defined and explicit Medium Term National Development Plan/Strategy. The Medium term Economic Strategy Paper, though elaborate in economic policy and strategy, was held to be deficient in demographic and poverty reduction targeting;
- 2) There is no framework of development indicators to guide the planning process in setting targets;
- 3) Some sectoral planning initiatives seem to be reactive rather than proactive driven by the availability of grant resources and their conditionalities;
- 4) The limited outlook of the annual planning of sector agencies;
- 5) A lack of skills and expertise at the agency level in the preparation of sectoral plans contributing to insularity, myopic visions and deficient methodologies;
- 6) Lack of collaboration between sector agencies resulting in duplication of efforts, wastage of resources and poor targeting; and
- 7) A lack of popular participation in certain critical sector in which consultation is restricted to a few stakeholders and the majority of beneficiaries are marginalized.

These observations reinforce assessments made of the programmes, projects and institutional mechanisms for poverty reduction. The criticisms are significant to the attempts of reducing poverty in St. Lucia because they reveal that despite changes in policy goals, objectives, strategies and mechanisms there remain grave disparities in the planning and effective implementation (including targeting, monitoring and evaluation) of programmes, projects and intervention strategies for poverty reduction. We will now

examine and analyse one case study of integrated participatory planning for poverty reduction in the next Section.

Section B: Development Planning and Poverty Reduction - A Case Study

4.2.0 A Directional Plan for the Eradication of Poverty

In Section A, we examined the broad policy goals and strategies adopted by the Government of St. Lucia related to poverty reduction programming. We documented the varying conceptions, analyses and policies of the two periods. Section B explores a case study of the focal coordinating agency for development planning in St. Lucia as well as the Ministry charged with the responsibility of monitoring the institutional mechanisms for poverty reduction, which will be examined in Chapter five.

During the period of my research, March – June 2000, The Ministry of Development, Planning, Housing and the Environment launched three programmes aimed at reducing poverty including a Directional Plan for the Eradication of Poverty; A Programme for the Rationalisation of Unplanned Development (PROUD); and A Low Income-Housing Programme. These are designed to deal with the issues of integrated and coordinated approach to poverty reduction; squatter settlements and the provision of affordable housing for low income earners.

Recognising the importance of a holistic/integrated approach to combating the persistent problem of poverty in St. Lucia, the Ministry of Development, Planning, Housing and the Environment has taken the initiative to engage stakeholder organisations in consultation to develop a directional plan for the eradication of poverty. The First National Consultation was held on March 29, 2000 with fifty-one (51) registered participants from more than thirty (30) agencies including the public and private sectors, NGOs, CBOs and a number of associations. The efforts engendered to date will be considered under the components of the process and structure and content of the consultation.

4.2.1 The Process and Structure

Some significant features in the development of the Directional Plan of Action for the Eradication of Poverty, to the participants and organisers, are the extent and degree of participation, consultation, national commitment and ownership engendered through the process. Although the consultation draws from and adopts the format developed at the Caribbean Ministerial Meeting on Poverty Eradication held in Trinidad and Tobago (1996), it seeks to engage all stakeholder organisations in meaningful consultation on the poverty issues. This process sought to elevate the importance of the mediating variables and organisational networks in the political system as essential stakeholders in the policy process. It captures the significant intermediate organ of Jenkins Amended System Model discussed in 2.4.2 (ii).

The activities culminating to this first consultation was the circulation of the relevant components of 1996 matrix³ to respective agencies in an effort to formulate a draft discussion document. Preliminary structuring of the workshop proved difficult, since participants questioned the relevance of the matrix and began the poverty debate over conceptions of poverty. It was argued that participants needed to decide on the conception of poverty, which would be utilised within the context of the consultation. However, consensus over this idea was not realised. Participants therefore forfeited the opportunity to formulate a conceptual framework for developing the Plan of Action and also agreed to utilise the matrix provided.

³ The matrix circulated included the following thematic areas: Enhanced Social Protection and Reduced Vulnerability; Productive Employment and Sustainable livelihoods; Education; Population and Development; Environmental Realities; Housing, Settlement and Infrastructure; Management/Financial Resources for Social Development Programmes; Violence, Drugs and Crime; Integrated Social and Economic Strategies; Institutional Mechanisms; and Measurement and Monitoring Instruments and Mechanism. It also sought an understanding of the current situation, constraints and opportunities; the desired goals/targets; recommended strategies/actions; the timeframe for implementation; and the agency/institutions at the national, regional and international scene which should/could assume responsibility for implementation.

4.2.2 Content of the Draft Directional Plan

An overview of the content of the Draft Plan can be examined under three main issues, viz., the Situational Analysis, and Emerging National Vision or Overall Goals and the Poverty Eradication Strategies.

The situational analysis embodied the issues and the constraints/opportunities apparent to the participants within the current situation and is denoted as the basis for action within the plan. The document is characterised by a multiplicity of issues, which display that the current situation as being problematic marred by financial, human, institutional, legislative and spatial constraints. Deficiencies in education, employment, housing, social and recreational facilities, water, solid and liquid waste management, emergency management systems and response, primary and preventative health care systems, opportunities, access, resources, and monitoring and evaluation of projects aimed at poverty reduction were also documented.

The matrix is plagued with the social ills of a high rate of illiteracy, high levels of unemployment, inequalities in the educational system, disintegration of family values and personal identities, cultural and religious inertia towards contraceptive technology, abandonment, neglect and marginalisation of older persons, disabled persons, and persons with HIV and AIDS, youth unemployment, prostitution, unwanted pregnancies, overcrowding and the creation of squatter settlements. In addition to these, there are the identified problems of media insensitivity, an inadequacy of and lack of coordination among institutional structures for social development and poverty eradication, as well as an absence of conceptual frameworks for social development and poverty eradication. The limited role of the private sector was also documented within the current situation.

The situational analysis has been overwhelmingly developed by the participants from a condition of deficiencies, problems, and absences or from a condition of ill being rather than down from an affirmative situation of opportunities, advantages and well being. They seek to base the current situation on the deprivation of basic needs required to meet

biological or physiological requirements as well as the broader conceptions of social, economic, cultural, religious and psychological ill being. There is negligence, however, among professionals and practitioners to avoid the political and spiritual dimensions, the former is conspicuously absent in the text. The whole gamut of issues encompasses elements of the physiological and social deprivation models as it seeks to integrate its approach to poverty eradication.

The emerging national vision and overall goals are guided towards the development of a coordinated approach for the eradication of poverty comprising of a number of components including the full integration of the private and informal sectors, civil society organisations, social development issues and agencies in national planning. The equitable distribution of income and wealth; the eradication of unemployment and illiteracy; the regularisation of unplanned settlements; the provision of affordable housing, social and recreational facilities and basic needs for all persons and access to resources, information and services which would improve the quality of lives of individuals and communities such as contraceptive technology, care for vulnerable groups, health systems and environmental concerns were also integrated into the national vision. Specific emphases were made to women and gender equity, children in difficult circumstances, persons with disabilities, older persons, and persons infected by the AIDS/HIV syndrome.

The emerging national vision and overall goals seem to be drawn from the critical standpoint of the need to place increasing emphasis on social equity and social development issues. While there are references to the creation of employment opportunities, equitable distribution of income/wealth, the framework for integrating the thesis of strengthening, modernising and repositioning of the economy is not given sufficient consideration. Whereas in the past St. Lucia's development planning had been seriously flawed by the preoccupation with economic growth and development to the detriment of the other sectors, it is imperative now that in any integrated approach to development and poverty reduction, adequate attention is given to the elements of economic growth and transformation.

A valid analytical framework, which would provide greater depth from which these issues derive, would be to examine the complex social structures and relationships as well as the interplay of economic, social, cultural, political, coercive and environmental capital of the poor. Employing such a framework would build the premise to examine opportunities, advantages, the capital, coping strategies, the transforming structures and processes as well as the vulnerability context within which the livelihoods of the poor can be enhanced. These analytical frameworks were detailed in 2.3. These approaches would detract from the approach of starting from the conditions of ill being that has led to handouts and top-down systems, which have furthered the impoverishment of the poor.

The poverty eradication strategies outlined encompass a wide scope of recommended actions, including comprehensive social sector policy with emphases on consultation, research, advocacy and gender equity; mass employment and skills training programmes; greater emphasis on the education and health systems and/or sectors for the provision of basic needs of sanitation and environmental health, literacy, water quality and solid and liquid waste disposal facilities and surveillance systems; the empowerment of communities to be custodians of their resources; provision of adequate housing and land rationalisation schemes; safety nets for vulnerable groups; and the development of partnership among social partners.

Great emphasis is being placed on the development of institutional mechanisms capacity to target the poor, implement projects and programmes efficiently; and to utilise management information and monitoring and evaluation systems effectively. There are also the expressed issues of the important role of information, awareness and sensitisation programmes to eradicate ignorance and poverty.

The poverty strategies/activities, which form the recommended actions for the eradication of poverty, embraces the need to continue and increase the provision of welfare activities and basic needs to the poor as well as creating a framework of opportunities, security and empowerment. There still remains much scope for the elaboration and operationalisation of the latter framework. The pervading feature of the recommended actions seem to be

the institutionalisation of services, processes and programmes aimed at eradicating poverty drawn from the Social Administration tradition (2.4.1).

There is also advocacy for partnership among social partners including government, private sector, civil society and the informal sector but not much emphasis is placed on assessing their relevance and the effectiveness of their programmes in meeting the needs of the poor. Neither is there any qualitative shift within the recommended actions to ensure that such agencies are pro-poor. There is need to place greater emphasis on empowering poor persons themselves rather than the greater emphasis on agencies. Whereas the latter is important, there are some reservations expressed earlier of their ability to effectively target the poor and the nature and effectiveness of their programmes have not yet even been assessed (an exercise which will be undertaken in Chapter Six).

The Ministry of Development, Planning, Housing and the Environment is continuing its efforts to sustain ongoing consultations with stakeholder organisations to develop a Poverty Reduction Plan. According to the Deputy Director, Development Cooperation and Programme Planning, the consultation was critical for providing an overview of the broad-based issues, constraints and opportunities but there seemed to be difficulties in the formulation of strategies (what to do).

Jn. Baptiste noted, however, that any meaningful strategy must address the varying levels of individual, household, community, national and the global realities with an appreciation of the dynamics operating at each level. In addition, he stated that the strategy must also be informed by the predecessor activities or attempts at tackling the problem. It was outlined that the next national consultation would address the impact of interventions and the history of programmes, since one of the key deficiencies resided in the absence of formal evaluations (quantitative and qualitative).

A critical assessment of the process and content of the Directional plan would reveal that it is constrained by a number of essential elements, including an absence or lack of

political commitment and will; an overall policy and conceptual framework for poverty reduction; and invaluable financial, technical and administrative resources.

One of the highlights of the consultation process engaged in the formulation of the Directional Plan for the Eradication of Poverty was the absence of policy formulators and the leadership provided by higher-level managers and technical staff from Government Agencies, and Private Sector. Ownership, commitment and advocacy are necessary elements from the political directorate and the higher-level bureaucrats for the development of such a plan. A number of persons interviewed individually and within groups identified the consultation as highly academic lacking any political will and commitment and administrative support. It was outlined that in the absence of such support systems, the plan is reduced to research and a reference document.

One interviewee, (Dr. Barbara Boland, June 15, 2000) referred to this phenomenon, as a political inertia or an absence of leadership will. The individual held that in most cases a lack of political commitment, not financial resources, is the real obstacle to poverty eradication. She identified that although the government of St. Lucia had clearly articulated its mandate for poverty reduction, there was inertia to follow-up resulting in an absence of internal ownership of poverty reduction projects and programmes.

Dr. Boland (2000) held that the activities were largely donor driven and recommended that reforming the planning ministry by strengthening its capacity for coordination of social programmes could contribute to achieving political sensitisation and ultimate commitment. A more thorough discussion of the role of the political system has been undertaken in Appendix 5. From a broader perspective, however, the policy advisor noted that there was no central coordination; no direct or recognised links to social planning; and programmes were not being directly integrated by an over-arching social development framework or guided by a social policy.

Dr. Boland emphasised that central coordination was needed to regain focus and articulate the issues central to poverty eradication, continuous monitoring and internal

consistency of strategies and programmes. She held that the fundamental issue in poverty eradication programmes is that of ownership (Whose?). Dr. Boland (2000) reiterated the absolute necessity to integrate poverty eradication into an overall development strategy or comprehensive framework, the significance of central coordination to strengthen implementation, focus, sequencing of programmes (relation and timing) as well as for control and understanding of the types and categories of programmes implemented.

The latter factor is compounded by the fact that directional planning for poverty reduction is not undertaken within any comprehensive planning and development framework. Despite the fact that the Ministry of Planning is pioneering the Integrated Development Planning Approach, it is at its formative stage and such efforts are by far isolated within the Environment Department. This factor has been clearly identified by the above policy advisor. We can therefore identify that a number of issues including an absence of a comprehensive policy framework, inadequate collaboration and networking; scant development planning and incorporation of a system of social indicators; and such political inertia to follow up as additional challenges to sustained poverty reduction in St. Lucia.

The institutional responsibility for different poverty related activities and programmes lie outside the portfolio of the Ministry of Planning. Hence, policy development, use of human resources, decision-making and implementation have been scattered and characterised by a diffused and isolated approach. The result is that the implementation of poverty programmes had not contributed much to achievement of overall targets and objectives of the national statements. Consequently, this situation had not contributed to an integrated approach for poverty reduction or a common platform for policy development and coordination.

Interviewees have outlined that poverty eradication programmes were being implemented on a piecemeal basis, by different and unconnected ministries and agencies, without any compass or map. A closer and more critical examination reveals that there is also an

absence of a critical mass of human, financial and administrative resources allocated for the overall coordination and monitoring of poverty reduction.

In addition, the findings of the research tend to suggest that the social sector ministries who implement a large part of the programmes had been out of the mainstream of policy on these issues and as a result their approach is conceptually one of basic needs and oftentimes with a strong welfare strategy. There is, however, a movement towards the social deprivation model with increasing emphasis on human poverty as examined in 3.3 and 4.1.2.

The research findings further reveal that a lot of activities are ongoing among government, NGO and regional donors but one of the main problems was the fragmentation of efforts aimed at addressing poverty as well as inadequate networking and coordination. In the absence of such a coordinating platform, projects and programmes were being implemented in an ad hoc fashion, isolated from the main central planning and policy institutions. This complexity is made even more complicated by the absence of a system of indicators to target the poor and monitor the impact of the social programmes and projects implemented.

In another paper, Brief notes on the St. Lucian experience in Social Planning, Ezra Jn. Baptiste (1999) provided a summary of 11 shortcomings in the present institutional framework for social planning, which inevitably challenge and retard poverty reduction programmes and projects in St. Lucia. They are as follow:

- 1) Lack of an overall co-ordinating mechanism to plan poverty reduction initiatives;
- 2) Absence of an explicit population policy;
- 3) Lack of a planning model to guide the integration of population issues in the planning process;
- 4) Excessive overlap in responsibilities and actions among different agencies, which are striving to achieve the same goal;

- 5) Constraints in making programmes more relevant and effective including inadequate, or non-existent information systems for data gathering and processing;
- 6) Absence of institutional mechanism to co-ordinate and integrate social policy, planning and services, where they do exist, are very weak;
- 7) Duplication of activities and aims;
- 8) Insufficient popular participation;
- 9) Weak policy guidelines for stakeholders;
- 10) Inadequate institutional capacity;
- 11) Lack of decentralisation at government levels;

Although this paper perpetuates the conception of ill being, it is therefore expedient that any comprehensive, integrated and sustained approach to poverty reduction take into account these challenges, constraints and inadequacies of policy, resources, central coordination, institutional capacity, networking, information systems, good governance and popular participation.

Conclusion

The examination, analysis and assessment of Poverty Reduction policy goals and strategies in St. Lucia have also revealed that one of the most significant limitations is an absence of a comprehensive framework within which poverty reduction research, programmes, projects and institutional mechanisms are formulated, implemented and/or coordinated. The approach is largely sectoral, scattered and lack any meaningful collaboration and effective coordination, despite recent attempts to develop a Directional Plan for the Eradication of Poverty.

The major deficiencies and challenges identified within this Chapter seem to reside within the overall framework for poverty reduction from conceptualisation, analyses, diagnoses/strategies, implementation and the relevant issues outlined within the assessment including governance, human resources capacity, ownership, networking and

coordination. A more critical reflection of these factors will be undertaken in the 7.2.1. However, we will explore next the institutional mechanisms established for poverty reduction in St. Lucia.

CHAPTER FIVE



Institutional Mechanisms for Poverty Reduction in Saint Lucia

Chapter Five

Institutional Mechanisms for Poverty Reduction in St. Lucia

5.0 Introduction and Outline

In the previous Chapter, we explored the policy goals and strategies formulated by the Government of St. Lucia during this decade. One of the main strategies adopted for the reduction of poverty is the establishment of social funds for the provision of basic needs, credit and social investment programmes. This Chapter seeks to examine and critically assess these institutional mechanisms under two main Sections: Social Welfare and the Provision of Basic Needs and Social Development and Poverty Reduction. This approach is adopted to clearly represent the fundamental elements underlying the poverty conceptions, analyses and strategies of development planning and policies in St. Lucia.

Section A examines, analyses and evaluates the establishment of the Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF) as one of St. Lucia's poverty reduction strategies under the thematic area of Social Welfare and the Provision of Basic Needs.

Section B provides an overview and critical evaluation of the Poverty Reduction Fund (PRF) and James Belgrave Micro Enterprise Development Limited (**BELFund**) under the thematic area of Social Development and Poverty Reduction. It is identified that this assessment is constrained for **BELFund** and to some extent the Poverty Reduction Fund since they are still at their formative/conceptualisation stages. Nevertheless, this assessment is undertaken, not as an end in itself, but to provide critical reflections for sustained and co-ordinated poverty reduction activities in St. Lucia.

This Chapter is not intended to depict a linear progression or distinctive shifts in the conceptions, analyses and strategies adopted since the elements of the first model remained and it was the foundation upon which the second framework has been initiated. It should also be outlined clearly that each Section builds on previous discussions in

Chapter Two, Section D: Institutional Mechanisms for Poverty Reduction (2.5). This Chapter also utilises the contents of the semi-structured interviews facilitated during the period March to June 2000 (Appendix 6).

Section A: Social Welfare and the Provision of Basic Needs

5.1.0 Elements of the Physiological Deprivation Approach

The overriding feature of this thematic area is the centrality and dominance of economics as development and ‘the diversification of the economic base of the economy through restoration, strengthening and improvement of supporting infrastructure’ (St. Lucia Community Development Sector Strategy, 1996: 1). Accordingly, remedial measures were undertaken in responding to the needs of families and social groups and supporting or substituting for the break down of support systems. Primary assistance was given to those with problems: personal/family; groups; community/basic needs.

This situation was captured succinctly in a confidential Memorandum to the Cabinet of Ministers entitled, ‘Integrated Planning for Sustainable Development’ dated September 14, 1998. The memorandum outlined,

“For many years, development planning in St. Lucia has focussed on economic planning with economic growth used as the measure for development. The evidence is that whereas the island has achieved economic growth, an unacceptable proportion of the population still live below the poverty line with limited access to social goods and services.” (1998: 2).

The framework for development was heavily influenced by the underlying principles of the policy goals and strategies for the period 1990-97 discussed in 4.1.1. Prior to this period, however, social policy aligned to this social welfarist approach was closely linked with the minimalist role of the State in the allocation of scarce resources, since it was widely conceived that growth in the economy would result in an improved standard of living for the mass of the population. The social work, community development and philanthropy traditions heavily influenced this orientation and have been examined in 2.4.1.

This Incremental/Institutional Model of Social Welfare in St. Lucia contributed to the development of 'Personal Social Services' which include crisis intervention, provision of social therapy, investigation of cases of child care, custody, maintenance and abuse, foster care, the investigation and provision of general social welfare, monthly financial assistance to indigent and poor persons, provision of coffins for the destitute, repatriation of destitute foreigners, assistance to fire victims, books and uniforms to the children of poor households and a diverse range of other assistance programmes.

Institutional social services such as Senior Citizens Homes, Ex – Servicemen's Leagues, Upon Garden Girls Centre, St. Lucia Red Cross, Persons with Disabilities and Children's Homes would also be established as a vital sector in the provision of remedial services for individuals and families affected by numerous diswelfares.

Poverty was seen as a persistent social problem and the State sought to provide social welfare provisions for its indigent and poor citizens. Therefore, in an effort to reduce poverty, a former Minister of Government (Charlie, June 2, 2000) outlined that strategies were envisioned within a framework of:

- The provision of economic stability and viability by investing and developing economic sustenance in agriculture, tourism and industry;
- The development of a sound educational system with the provision of primary, secondary and tertiary institutions of learning; and
- The attainment of health for all St. Lucians with the focus on strengthening institutional services and the primary health care. Health Services were made available within a three-mile radius. There had been the immunization and bilharzia success stories and the provision of clean potable water to remote communities.

It was within this framework that the Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF) was established to augment the provision of electricity, water, drainage, footpaths and other efforts aimed at addressing community facilities such as a multi purpose sports complex and community centres. For further discussion on the policy framework, refer to 4.1.1.

5.1.1 The Basic Needs Trust Fund

The Basic Needs Trust Fund was established in 1979 under a Tri-partite grant funding agreement among the Caribbean States, Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The purpose of the Basic Needs Trust Fund, according to its former project manager, (Archer, May 24, 2000) was to intensify ongoing national infrastructural development with particular emphasis on providing basic needs in areas such as education, health, water supply, roads, drainage and child care. It was intended that target communities would become more equipped to meet increasing demands for the provision of such services. According to Archer, the goal has been 'to expand and conserve, using labour intensive methodologies, the stock of social and economic infrastructure essential for growth, and the provision of basic services and employment' (May 24, 2000).

The period 1979 – 1993 apparently featured no fundamental alterations to the programme of the Fund as it continued to support and enhance educational and health facilities, footpaths, drains and walkways, the construction and renovation public facilities, and the provision of water supplies to poor communities. Archer (May 24, 2000) outlined that during this period, an officer within the Ministry of Planning managed the Fund. Grant Agreements were not negotiated by the Governments of the Region but handed down to them by CDB. All major decisions were made at the CDB head office in Barbados. For example, the procurement of contractors and consultancy services was undertaken in Barbados with carbon copies sent to the Project Manager. It was held that the role given to the latter was to submit advertisement in the Newspaper and appraise CDB of work in progress.

As of January 1994, there was an institutional reform within the Caribbean Development Bank and the Programme was reassigned under the newly formed 'Poverty Reduction and Environmental Unit', integrating the Fund within the broader framework of poverty reduction. This was not the only change, as the United States Agency for International Development would withdraw its finances from the programme. This was to lead to some fundamental shifts in funding and subsequently in the operations of the Fund. However, the difference between the two programmes (BNTF 2 AND 3) was mainly in the financing agreement.

Whereas in BNTF 2, CDB provided 100% grant funding with the assistance of USAID, under BNTF 3 funding would be 60% grant funded and 40% financed by the Government of St. Lucia. Although both programmes were designed to provide basic needs to deprived communities through labour intensive projects, it was outlined that BNTF 3 was also conceptualised to ignite the development of small contractors and businesses.

It was during the tenure of BNTF 3 that the Caribbean Development Bank commissioned the Poverty Assessment Report (1995) reviewed in 3.1.1. In our discussion earlier, we noted that the findings of the report indicated deficiencies in social infrastructure and inadequate provision and access to public services as major constraints on the lives of the poor in St. Lucia. The Report (1995) recommended improvements in social infrastructure, education and training, health services, employment and job creation, social welfare for vulnerable groups, and the strengthening of fragile organisations.

The fourth programme of the Fund (BNTF 4, 1997) would result in a change of philosophy and the Agreement was negotiated with Caribbean Development Bank. This negotiation was premised on the condition that the Governments invested 40% of the total funds. Three interviewees (Archer, Kenny and Barbs) agreed that BNTF 4 differed from the previous three programmes implemented by the CDB, USAID and the Government of St. Lucia (GOSL) in the following areas: its financing agreement; the latitude of autonomy given in the formation of a Steering Committee; the increased

capacity of the Project Management Unit to include a Community Worker and an Administrative Assistant in addition to the Project Manager.

Barbs (April 3, 2000) outlined that the emphasis of the fourth programme was the provision of community-based projects by generating short-term employment. The strategy employed to accomplish such a goal was the use of sub-contracts to meet essential infrastructural projects and to generate an adequate basis for employment opportunities. A former Chairperson of BNTF, (Kenny, May 11, 2000) provided further insight into the extent and degree of changes effected with the fourth programme. Kenny noted that the structure and processes of BNTF during BNTF 3 and 4 differed fundamentally. According to him, three individuals at the national level developed the project menu for BNTF 3, viz. the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Planning; the Prime Minister; and the Project Coordinator, Ministry of Planning.

These projects were conceptualised under the guidelines and conditionalities stipulated by the Caribbean Development Bank. Archer and Kenny revealed that there was overwhelming political influence and donor domination under this programme with limited scope for flexibility, innovation, stakeholders' participation and community involvement. The interviewee also noted that the projects were significantly biased towards physical infrastructure.

According to Barbs (April 3, 2000), the formulation of BNTF 4 would herald four distinct features of a Steering Committee, the recruitment of a Community Worker, Cost-sharing between CDB and the GOSL and the participation of communities. The Steering Committee was made up of stakeholder representatives from the Ministries of Community Development, Health, Communications and Works and Planning; the National Women's Association, National Youth Council, the Chamber of Commerce and the Project Manager. The Chamber of Commerce was supposed to perform a critical role since it was designed that the programme would be gradually integrated within the role of the Private Sector.

The role of the Steering Committee was to oversee the overall management and coordination of the project, including the procurement of services (contractors) and the approval of projects of less than US\$ 20,000, although a letter of no objection had to be gained from CDB. This Committee was accountable to the Ministry of Planning and was also assigned the responsibility of employing the Community Worker. Archer (May 29, 2000) disclosed later that the Community Worker was assigned the responsibilities of targeting the communities, identifying and prioritising their needs and also formulating project proposals to the Project steering Committee for approval.

The Staffing of BNTF was therefore limited to the Project Manager, Secretary and the Community Worker. The latter was envisaged as a critical link in the new and improved BNTF 4 programme. BNTF 4 was designed to initiate ideas and proposals as well as facilitate implementation and sustainability by the communities. Barbs explained that the idea was to provide basic social and physical infrastructure, skills training and development; generate labour intensive projects; accountability and transparency in the governance of the project through stakeholders involvement and a critical element of participation and ownership of the projects by the communities.

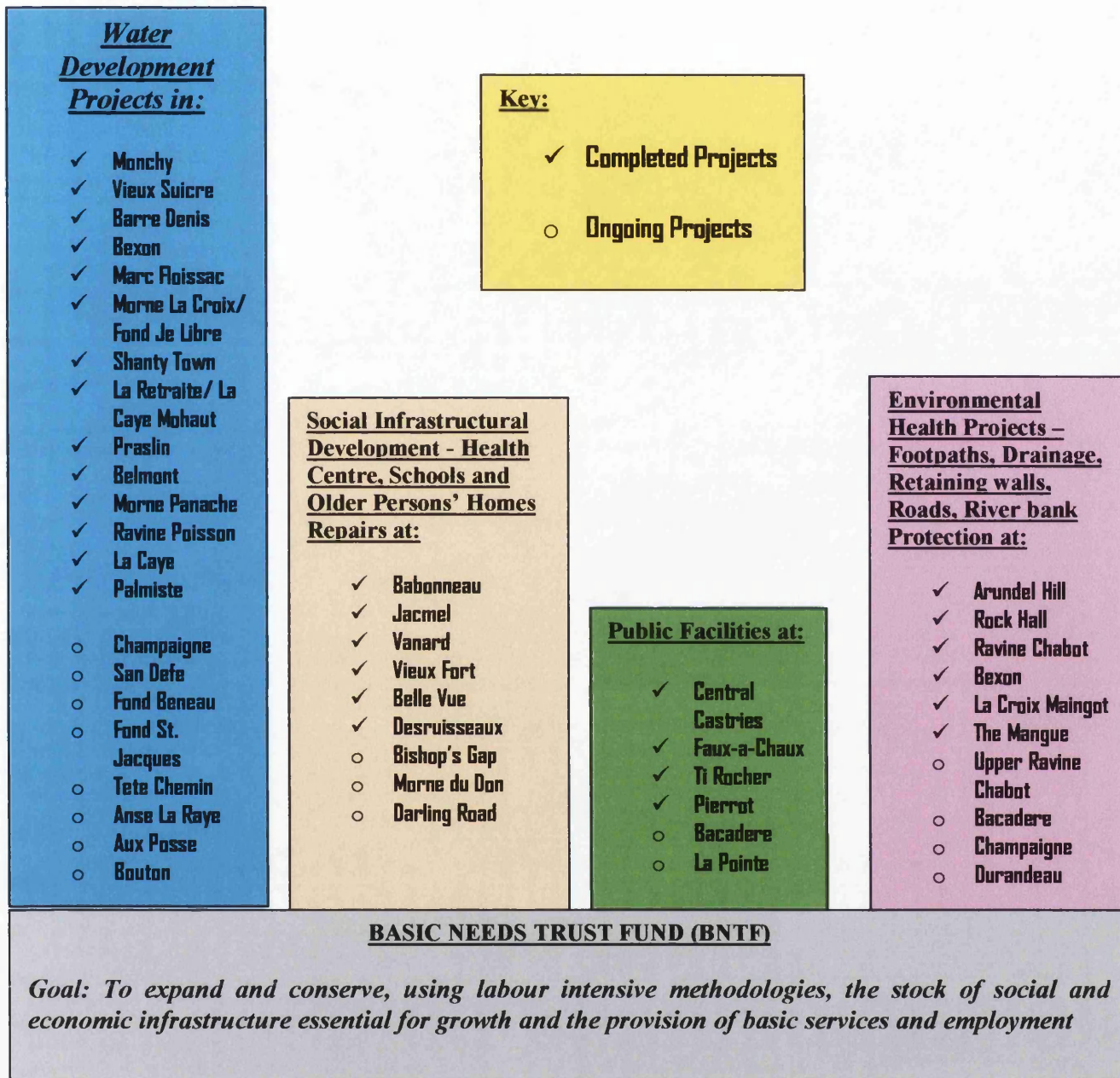
Two notable elements identified by Archer and Kenny which highlighted the active political interference in the project was (1) the constant breach of protocol whereby the Project Manager had direct access to the Prime Minister in making decisions superseding the role of the Project Steering Committee (PSC); and (2) the PSC was directed to appoint the Community Worker by the Prime Minister without due regard to process. The latter decision was imposed upon the PSC and initiated conflict with the former political directorate.

The financing agreement under BNTF 4 required that the Government of St. Lucia invest 40% of total funds for the programme. The funds invested by the Governments were primarily contributions towards salaries (administration) with little or no actual investments in project financing. This may have contributed to the continued dominant

role of the CDB in granting final approval on all matters, including the seemingly fixed, inflexible formats and stereotyped projects such as footpaths, drains and retaining walls.

Archer outlined that BNTF 4 was also designed to build and strengthen the capacity of communities not merely by providing basic physical and social infrastructure but through a process of skills transfer, development and the generation of employment opportunities. It was also conceptualised that via voluntarism and ownership of projects, sustainability and maintenance of the infrastructure provided to the community would be realised. However, having examined the proposed projects and programmes, the operations and extent of projects may have changed but the nature of the projects remained the same.

During the course of the fieldwork, we were able to examine the nature of sub-projects completed and ongoing. This activity provides some insights into the Fund. First, projects were significantly biased towards implementing physical infrastructural works such as water projects, footpaths, drains, walkways, retaining walls and public facilities as opposed to the provision of essential social services. Even when social facilities and services were targeted, it was for repairs to or provision of physical infrastructure or water storage facilities. It can be observed, however that the projects had a wide geographic spread. Diagram 1 below provides an overview of the nature and geographic distribution of the BNTF projects.

Diagram 1: Nature and geographical distribution of Projects

Source: Fieldnotes, May 15, 2000

5.1.2 Constraints and Challenges affecting BNTF

As indicated within our previous discussions on BNTF, the scope of the fourth programme would fundamentally change its goals to include skills transfer and development; accountability and transparency in the governance of the project through a Steering Committee, stakeholders involvement and a critical element of building and

strengthening the capacities of the communities via their participation, ownership and maintenance of the projects. Three interviewees (Archer, May 24 & 29, 2000; Kenny, May 11, 2000; Freddy, June 16, 2000) assessed a number of limitations and challenges of the Fund and concluded that they served to retard its effectiveness. These included:

1. Inadequate Staff for Project Coordination

There was a limited capacity for targeting communities worthy of assistance and for monitoring and evaluating projects. Communities needing assistance were excluded because of an absence of organisations or existing committees, which would facilitate ease of coordination. Consequently, the selection criterion tended to bias communities, which were capable of coordinating projects and programmes swiftly and with few anticipated difficulties because of the existence of some form of community organisation.

In addition, the project suffered considerably from an absence of leadership in the office of the Project Manager after the request by Government to merge the CDB funded BNTF with its World Bank funded Poverty Reduction Fund. An unfavourable response from CDB led to the reassignment and dual role of the BNTF Project Manager as Executive Director of PRF. This situation persisted for approximately 15 months and when a project manager of BNTF was eventually employed, about six months later, the manager passed away. The Chairman of the Steering Committee has been temporarily assigned the responsibility of Project Manager prior to my departure from St. Lucia at the end of June 2000. This rapid turnover of leadership and loss of institutional knowledge is rife especially since project records, reports, information and other documentation are not effectively or systematically managed by the Fund.

2. The Nature of the Community Work

The community work undertaken emphasized tangible/visible outputs. There was a lack of community leadership, mobilisation and awareness generated from the process. Skills

transfer and development as well as the participation of community groups was minimal. The emphasis of the project was too much oriented towards quick results without the latent step of confidence winning and community mobilisation. Projects seem to have been imposed on communities without facilitating the necessary process of building and strengthening the capacity of the community. Moreover, the strong political divide within peculiar communities also affected the nature of the community work.

Communities also lacked the capacity to articulate their ideas when project proposals were submitted and this contributed to high rates of proposals and projects being rejected by the Steering Committee and CDB.

3. The Role of the Project Steering Committee

The PSC lacked the authority and an adequate framework to effectively perform its mandate. There was the sense that its members, especially representatives from Non – Governmental Organisations and Private Sector lacked the required commitment to the Fund as was depicted in their attendance at meetings. A quorum for the meetings was always dependant on the attendance of the Government’s representatives. This was a significant drawback for the sustainability of the Fund, since it was designed that the Private Sector would assume responsibility for the financing of Basic Needs to the communities when funding dried up with CDB.

4. The Role of the Caribbean Development Bank

It was argued that CDB exercised exceptional authority over the coordination and management of the Fund. Its role as the verifier of all things placed the Fund into a mould, which robbed it of innovation emphasising an old system of stereotyped projects and fixed, unchangeable formats. It was also outlined that socio- cultural variables were not factored into the projects handed-down by the Caribbean Development Bank.

5. The Active Political Interference in the Project

The issue of political interference has been detailed in the Section B, The Political System and Representation for the Poor, therefore much more detail is not warranted on this issue. There were always elements of pressures from requests or demands imposed upon the Fund by the political administration. In fact, it was alleged that the peculiarities of the projects implemented under BNTF programmes 1-3, were determined at the National level by the Prime Minister in the absence of a Steering Committee. However, two identifiable components of this situation were the failure to follow due process influenced by political directives on the approval and implementation of projects; and the hiring of a community worker with an individual imposed on the Fund.

5.1.3 Conclusion

The Basic Needs Trust Fund has performed a significant role over the past 21 years in developing essential social and physical infrastructure and generating income for a large population of unskilled and semi-skilled labourers. However, the BNTF is at risk of being marginalized by the more recent and fashionable mechanism of the Poverty Reduction Fund. A holistic plan is needed to clearly demarcate and coordinate the activities of the BNTF and PRF. Presently, their roles appear a lot similar to many interviewees and survey respondents and it was contested that PRF programmes depict the continuation of the skewed approach of BNTF.

Kenny outlined that within a network of meaningful collaboration, BNTF should be allowed to continue with its emphasis on the provision of basic social and physical infrastructure with the transfer of skills and generation of employment opportunities. He is convinced that the role of BNTF is still significant to many poor communities. Freddy (June 16, 2000), on the other hand, argued that the Poverty Reduction Fund should emphasise the 'software development' of training, building capacity of communities and organisations, not merely the replication of the work undertaken by BNTF. There are evidently significant roles for both mechanisms and this provides us with the opportunity

to examine the Poverty Reduction Fund in 5.2.1. The roles performed by each of the mechanisms should not be examined solely by the nature of the projects, programmes and activities undertaken but by their conceptions, analyses and diagnoses of poverty. The context, which influenced the establishment of the mechanisms; methodologies employed and processes facilitated by the agencies are also significant elements for consideration.

Section B: Social Development and Poverty Reduction

5.2.0 Elements of the Social Deprivation Approach

The theme of Social Development emerged from compelling evidence for 'failed development' resulting from its heavy reliance on market forces for the allocation of resources. "Such a strategy is predicated on the belief that only a sound economic base will sustain the level of social sector development that is itself essential to the total development of the country" (Social Development in St. Lucia, 1995: 4).

This may have been largely determined by the World Summit for Social Development (1995) discussed in 2.1.3. The watchwords of social sustainability and people centred development promulgated a new social development agenda without abandoning economic development. This theme gained added momentum from the World Summit for Social Development with its core principles of enhancement of social integration, the reduction and eradication of poverty, and the expansion of the productive sectors.

Phil (June 29, 2000) confirmed the linkage between international contexts on priority issues at the national level. He outlined,

"All development issues including youth, women/gender, environmental, and the conceptions and strategies for poverty reduction in the post independence era of St. Lucia had been propelled by donor/funding agencies. These issues have largely been exogenous and poverty reduction was only the current development slogan" (Semi Structured Interview 29/06/00).

The results of this emphasis gave prominence to Sector Plans and Strategies in St. Lucia and a number of social issues gained greater currency among policy formulators such as the population and planned parenthood, gender, the rights, survival and development of children, care for older persons and equity of and access to opportunities for vulnerable and polarised socio-economic groups such as persons with disabilities. Other issues

included social problems such as domestic violence, child abuse, teenage pregnancy and incest under the broad heading of the 'disintegration of the family unit'.

The National Economic and Social Consultative Council (NESCC, 1995: 5, 6) posited that there was a marked imbalance between economic growth and social development in St. Lucia; economic growth was not synonymous with overall development; traditional models of development, which had little consideration for "people centeredness", must be challenged and characterised as obsolete. The deterioration and underdevelopment of social conditions could in turn constrain economic growth, and there were ethical and philosophical reasons for focussing on the social development dimension of national development.

Consequently, by the mid 1990s social development was advanced as an integral component and an interdependent factor in the process of national development.

The most significant issue to become a central component in the Social development agenda, however, was the reduction and eradication of poverty. An understanding of the nature and severity of poverty on the island was initially constrained by an absence of relevant research. The NESCC outlined that, 'the greatest obstacle to addressing the root causes of poverty has been the paucity of relevant data' (1995: 13).

Despite the continued absence of the relevant data (The Poverty Assessment Report had not yet been published), the NESCC would dance to the tune of the international community and donor agencies by raising the issue of poverty reduction as a favoured priority for the Nation. This was done despite the fact that the most recent study (1992) commissioned by United Nations Economic Council for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN ECLAC) indicated a pattern of declining levels of poverty over the period 1980 to 1991, suggesting a more equitable level of income distribution in St. Lucia during the 1980s.

Recommendations by the NESCC for a 'systematic attempt to reduce and ultimately eradicate poverty in St. Lucia' (1995: 14) included:

- Provision of and access to basic social services and infrastructure;
- Introduction of targeted interventions;
- Focus on the specific dimensions of rural and urban poverty;
- Access to productive opportunities and resources;
- Impact of distribution policy or the redistributive component of poverty; and
- Monitoring and assessing the efficacy of poverty reduction or eradication strategies and programmes.

The NESCC justified its position by outlining, “It is widely recognised that the changing global economic environment has had some negative impacts on the national economy which will be manifested disproportionately in the incomes and living standards of various groups in the population” (1995:14). It was these broad thematic issues that coupled with the Poverty Assessment Report (1995) would lead to the initiation of BNTF 4 discussed in 5.1.1 and the establishment of the Poverty Reduction Fund in 1998. This became part of the policy of the resuscitated St. Lucia Labour Party Government which came to power in 1997 after a historic landslide election victory (16–1) after almost thirty (30) years in power by the United Workers Party Government.

5.2.1 Understanding the Poverty Reduction Fund: Its Nature and Objectives

The Poverty Reduction Fund was conceptualised as a medium term, demand-driven socio-economic project, which aims to provide support and assistance to low-income communities. As such, this mechanism was designed to foster collaborative relationships among institutions and agencies and to facilitate community participation and ownership of the projects and programmes implemented.

The Poverty Reduction Fund Act No. 7 of March 1998 served to establish the Fund as an autonomous institution,

“To provide assistance to alleviate socio-economic problems; to establish a mechanism for delivering basic services and infrastructure to the poor and needy; to finance small-scale projects in selected areas to improve living conditions; to promote community participation in development projects; and to provide for related matters” (1998: 45).

An Incremental Welfarist approach evidently co-exists with the investment and development components of social funds in St. Lucia as well as the other countries such as Yemen and Bolivia. It must be outlined, as discussed by Carvalho (1994) in 2.5.1 that the Poverty Reduction Fund serves to enhance the poverty orientation of central and local institutions for sustained development and poverty reduction.

5.2.2 The Policy Mechanism and Management of PRF

The policy organ of the Fund is a Board of Directors comprising ten (10) representatives from the Public and Private Sectors, Credit Unions, Women's groups, National Youth Council and the Executive Director (in an ex-officio capacity, without the right to vote). The Board of Directors is currently accountable to the Minister of Planning and Section 9 (2) of the Act makes it clear that “the Minister may give general policy directives to the Board concerning poverty reduction measures and the Board shall give effect to such directives” (1998: 49).

Section 6 (3) specifies that the Board shall have the power to approve procedures and criteria for project and programme; the policies regarding the management of projects, programmes and activities; the tendering, procurement and disbursement procedures; the budget and the financial regulations; and the rules prescribing the procedures of the meetings and business of the Fund. It stipulates that, “In selecting projects and programmes for approval the Board shall be guided by the principle of equitable geographical distribution, as far as it is possible” (1998: 48).

A significant position of authority, however, seems to be assigned to the position of the Executive Director. The Act is littered all over with roles, responsibilities, tasks and significant power packs assigned to the post.

Box 8. Power Packs of the Executive Director

"The seal of the Fund shall be authenticated by the signatures of the Chairman or the Executive Director and one other Director authorised by the Board of Directors to act for that purpose, and the seal thus authenticated shall be judicially and officially noticed." Section 4 (2).

"All documents made by the Fund, other than those required by law to be made under seal, shall be signified under the hand of the Chairman and the Executive Director or by a Director and the Executive Director" Section 4(3).

"The Executive Director shall, subject to the general policy decisions of the Board, be responsible for the management of the Fund including the organisation of staff in accordance with the general terms and conditions of service established by the Board. The Executive Director shall have authority –

- a) to sign jointly with another Director, reports, balance sheets and other financial statements;
- b) to delegate his powers provided for in paragraph (a) of this subsection with the consent of the Board to another senior officer of the Fund" Section 8 (1) and (2).

"A quorum for the meeting of the Board shall be five Directors, one of whom shall be the Executive Director" Section 11 (3).

"The Board may from time to time, in respect of any particular matter or case of matters, and in writing, delegate to the Executive Director or any other Director, any of its functions under this Act except this power of delegation and the following functions:

- a) approving annual budgets or programme of activities
 - b) making regulations;
 - c) carrying out activities, which require expenditures not provided for in the budget"
- Section 13 (1).

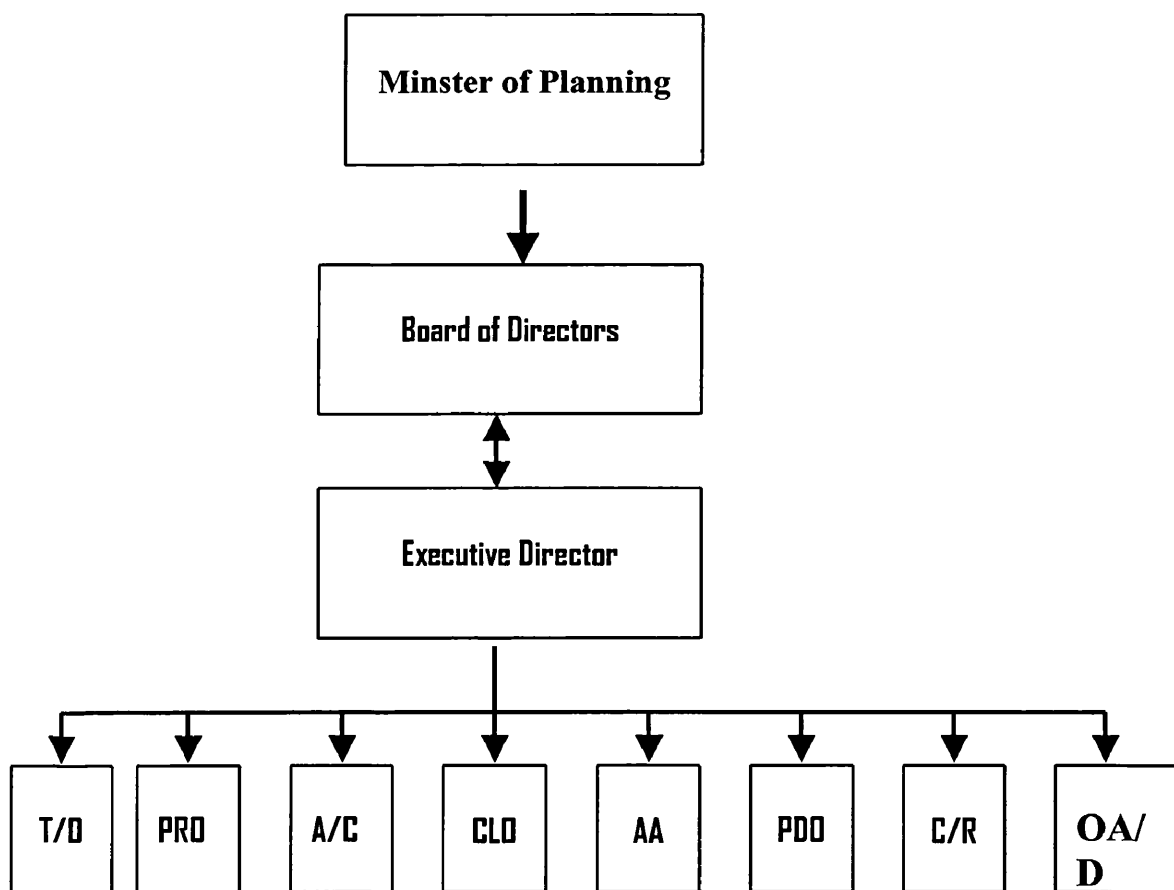
"The Executive Director shall keep accounts and other records in relation to the business of the Fund and shall prepare annual statement of accounts in a form satisfactory to the Minister, being a form which shall conform to the best commercial and accounting standards" Section 20 (1).

Source: Poverty Reduction Fund Act No. 7 of 1998

The Board was also assigned the responsibility to appoint and employ officers, employees and agents as it considered necessary for the proper performance of the Fund's mandate. This resulted in the appointment of a technical officer (T/O), Public

Relations Officer (PRO), Accountant (A/C), Community Liaison Officer (CLO), Administrative Assistant (AA), Project Design Officer (PDO), Clerk/Receptionist (C/R) and an Office Assistant/Driver (OA/D). There was no explicit chain of command other than that everyone was accountable to the Executive Director. Moreover, the technical skills and professional staff necessary for participatory poverty assessment, analyses and to provide specialist knowledge in the implementation and focus of the Fund are conspicuously absent.

Diagram 1: The Organisational Structure of the Poverty Reduction Fund



Source: Developed from Interview with Barbs, March 27, 2000

Glassner et al (1994) emphasized that the composition and role of the Board of Directors as well as the recruitment of staff were two of the most significant factors in the design of social funds. In 5.2.6, we will examine the significance of the leadership, policy and structure of the Fund to its initial operations and programmes.

5.2.3 Funding for PRF

The Government of Saint Lucia sought the support and assistance of the World Bank and following an initial exploratory mission, the Bank expressed its willingness to provide finance to assist in the design, establishment, testing and operation of the Fund. The Project Agreement dated July 22, 1999 stipulated that in the Development Credit Agreement between St. Lucia and the Association, the Association agreed to make available an amount equivalent to one million, two hundred thousand Special Drawing Rights (SDR1, 200,000) and by the Loan Agreement to make available an amount equal to one million, five hundred thousand Dollars (1,500,000).

A Subsidiary Agreement was made on July 21, 1999 between the Government of St. Lucia and the Poverty Reduction Fund reinforcing the terms and conditions inherent in the Project Agreement and stipulating “the terms and conditions applicable to the execution of the project as well as the rights and obligations of the Government and the Fund with regard to such agreement” (1999:2).

We will recall that Kalabaro (1999) noted that social funds also perform the role of quasi or semi-financial intermediaries and they often mobilise funds from both donors and government budgets (2.5.1). Well, additional finance for the Fund was also successfully generated from the EU Stabex allocation to the tune of approximately \$3 million Euros over three financial years (1999 – 2002). From this amount, a total of \$278,000 of the Stabex Funding would be allocated to the newly established James Belgrave Micro-Enterprise Fund (**BELFund**) during the financial year commencing April 1999. The latter amount would be matched by local revenue of approximately \$222, 000 drawn from Government’s commitment towards that **BELFund**. Therefore a total of approximately \$2, 220, 000 would be allocated within the Government of St. Lucia’s Budgetary Planning and Programme towards the execution of pilot and actual sub-projects planned by the Poverty Reduction Fund for the financial year 1999-2000.

5.2.4 Operational Stages of PRF

A Report (August 1998) of the Poverty Reduction Fund Workshop held on July 27, 1998 outlined that the World Bank loan would be prepared under the Bank's "Learning and Innovation Loan" (LIL) modality. This framework for the development of the Poverty Reduction Fund was outlined in the Project Implementation Plan (PIP, September, 1998) as consisting of four main components:

1. Operational Design of the Fund
2. Financing of Pilot Sub – Projects
3. Institutional Support for the Fund's Establishment and Operations
4. Financing of a full programme of community projects throughout the country upon incorporation of the lessons learnt during the pilot period.

The first stage, Operational Design of the Fund, has been initiated and has two main purposes. They are to provide hands-on technical support to the Technical Team appointed by the Government and to provide quality assurance review and evaluation process. In an effort to accomplish these objectives a number of analyses has been proposed including the logical framework, investment needs, social, institutional, technical and legal issues analyses as well as the design of a monitoring and evaluation system.

The second stage, Financing of pilot sub-projects, is designed to increase human and social capital in the areas of social and economic infrastructure, social services and organisational strengthening. The pilot projects have been categorised generally into two main components: Physical and Non-Physical Projects. *Physical Infrastructural projects* such as land rationalisation, pilot sewer systems projects, non-profit community based pre-school establishments, provision of water, health and education services would be given greater priority. There is an emphasis on skills training transfer of technology and the personal development of youth within the society.

Non – Physical projects would incorporate public education and sensitisation projects among Central and Local Government agencies, NGOs, CBOs and Special Interest groups. A short-term work experience and training programme targeting the unemployed; and collaboration with **BELFund** in the provision of financial and technical assistance to facilitate micro enterprise development among the poor would also be undertaken. An emphasis was made on the institutionalisation of monitoring and reporting measures and mechanisms prior to and during the pilot phase.

The Project Implementation Plan stated categorically that, “The first group of pilot projects will be implemented utilising the Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF) modality as it relates to the project menu, eligibility criteria and operational procedures” (1998:13). This is important because of the upsurge of poverty issues in the Press and subsequent Audit of the Operation of the Fund in November 1999.

The third stage of institutional support, it was outlined “would be determined largely by the outcomes of the design phase but would include technical assistance and training for not only the Fund but also key implementing/participatory agencies, departments and organisations at the national and local level in the sub project development and management” (1998: 14).

The fourth and final stage in which financing of full scale community projects will be undertaken will commence after substantial refinements have been made to the operational procedures and mechanisms and a thorough review of the previous three stages. An interesting clause, however was that this stage “would be subject to Bank satisfaction with and approval for the recommendations emanating from the review process” (1998:15). It was estimated that the design stage would utilise 3% of the funds over a six months period. The pilot stage would consume 22% of funds over a nine-month period whereas the implementation phase would employ the remaining 75% of the funds spanning over a two-year period.

Archer (May 29, 2000) sought to distinguish the work and operation of the Poverty Reduction Fund from that of the Basic Needs Trust Fund in light of the perception that the two were essentially the same. These differences outlined by Archer included:

1. The Poverty Reduction Fund offers greater autonomy and authority to its Board of Directors to formulate policies, manage and administer the implementation of projects and programmes.
2. There is a greater scale of support services inherent within the roles and responsibilities assigned to a broad-based crew of technical staff members at the Poverty Reduction Fund.
3. In the case of PRF, there is a greater emphasis and commitment to maintenance and sustainability of projects and the participation among the agencies and the community residents.

As a result of the above factors, Archer (May 29, 2000) was convinced that the PRF would attain an improvement in the level of social capacity and responsiveness to projects and programmes.

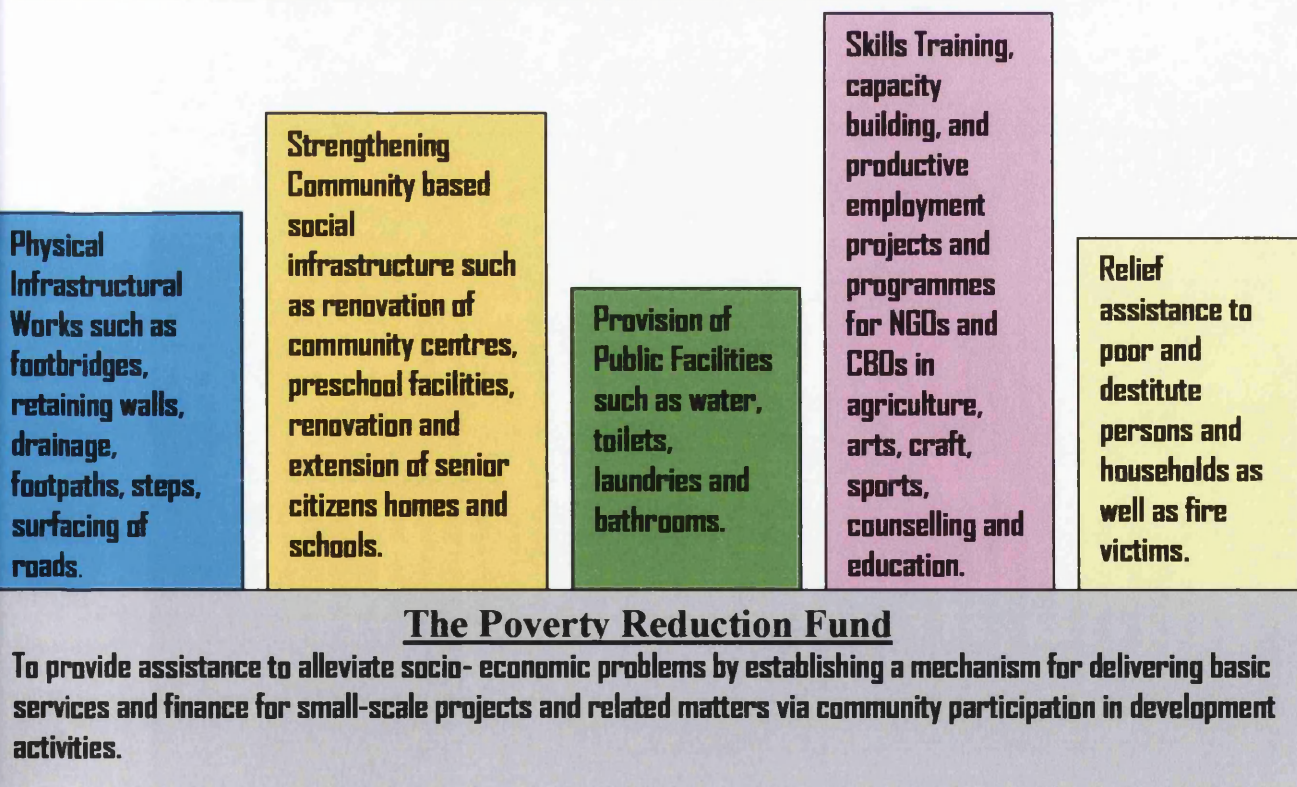
5.2.5 The Projects and Programmes of PRF

An examination of the projects and programmes completed and proposed for the Poverty Reduction Fund over its short time-span reveal that a wider variety of programmes and projects are implemented. These programmes and projects although they generate tremendous community participation and may result in the building of community capacity and the strengthening of civil society, they still reflect a considerable Welfarist tradition. The greater percentage of the funding is utilised also in the construction and renovation of physical infrastructural projects such as footpaths, bridges, retaining walls, drains and the like. There are a number of social projects but these evidently receive less priority than the former. The attempt is nevertheless made to integrate community

organisations in the identification and implementation of these projects and programmes. The nature of projects and programmes undertaken and considered by PRF is displayed in Diagram 2.

The projects and programmes are also implemented over broad geographical regions in keeping with the objectives of the Act for equitable geographical distribution. The administrative regions demarcated by government were all represented but the number of projects received from Region 8 (Castries) seems to be overwhelming. Given that this region is the most densely populated, NGOs are predominantly located (as well as the Fund) within this region and it is easier to gain access to the Fund from this locality, are all factors, which are advantageous to this community.

Diagram 2: Programmes and Projects of the Poverty Reduction Fund



5.2.6 Constraints and Limitations of PRF

After just two years of legislation of the Poverty Reduction Fund Act, the PRF has been subjected to widespread scrutiny by the media, political observers and the inquiring minds of the general public even to the extent that the Prime Minister sanctioned an audit of the Fund's operation. The audit team focussed on five issues, which were considered most significant, namely, compliance with mandate and authority; verification of assets; policies and procedures for the procurement of goods and services; verification of expenditure; and the James Belgrave Enterprise Fund. The main findings of the Audit Report (2000) were that:

1. The Board of Directors of the PRF have not functioned as the policy making organ of the PRF as required by Section 9(1) of the PRF Act;
2. There are no policies and procedures in place at the PRF for the procurement of goods and services;
3. There were no policies/procedures under which **BELFund** should operate.

This report provides us with the context to assess the Poverty Reduction Fund identifying three vital components of time sequencing and programmes; financing; and policy and administrative capacity.

Despite the need to chart its framework of operations and the necessary institutional collaborative process, the Government of St Lucia's desire to accelerate the implementation of projects aimed at reducing poverty allocated one million dollars from the Budgetary Support funds granted by the European Union to the Poverty Reduction Fund for immediate implementation of projects. Archer held that the Government's bureaucratic system operated slowly and there was the need to utilise a framework, which would readily address the needs of the communities.

Archer (May 29, 2000) outlined that the political pressure to implement projects and the culture of the Public Service, which he described as 'spinning top in mud', were both essential prerequisites for the decision to implement projects funded by European Development Fund. He explained that it was for this reason that the Social Investment Fund was established outside the heavy political and bureaucratic network of Government - to facilitate the speedy implementation of projects and programmes.

The PRF was therefore seen as the appropriate framework despite its inaugural or design stage and its procedures were largely inherited from the BNTF system of operation. In effect, the PRF seem not only to duplicate the BNTF administrative system and procedures, in the absence of its own but served also to implement similar infrastructure projects with the inclusion of other projects to develop capacity among NGOs and CBOs. This gave the perception that there was limited innovation and difference in the work of the Poverty Reduction Fund from the Basic Needs Trust Fund.

One factor that was improved substantially, however, was the level of community participation and ownership that the Fund was able to enlist. The focus of the Poverty Reduction Fund was reducing poverty through community participation. In an effort to heighten community awareness and sensitisation, the Fund sought to overcome the apathy inherent within communities with the innovation of the 'Incitation Method'. Archer noted that the communities were oriented towards the position that they must see before they act, therefore weekend projects were conceptualised in which the Fund would provide equipment and meals/refreshments while the residents implemented the project and provided publicity for the Fund. A post mortem was subsequently undertaken while the community engaged in the identification of its needs.

One assumption and disadvantage of a demand-driven Fund in this situation is that the poor has the capacity and capability to articulate its needs and problems through project or proposal writing. Kenny (May 11, 2000), a former Chairperson of the Basic Needs Trust Fund, identified this as an assumption, which proved detrimental to the provision of

basic needs to poor communities. He outlined that communities that were able to submit the better proposal and articulate their needs clearer received funding whereas projects were rejected on the basis that they were not developed properly. What was interesting, to Kenny, was that it was evident to those considering the projects that the communities which received the funds were not necessarily the most deserving. The issue of effectively targeting the poor must to be addressed adequately by the Poverty Reduction Fund.

An objection to the loan funding arrangement obtained from the World Bank was made so strongly that it would not be prudent to discount the issue. In an exclusive interview with the Leader of the Opposition, and former Prime Minister of St. Lucia, Dr. Vaughn Lewis outlined that social development and economic betterment was a function of economic growth. He stated that to achieve these, the government must invest heavily in potential growth activities. Dr. Lewis explained that experience had shown, however, economic growth co-existed with inequity and it was the role of government to engender the redistribution of public wealth.

Nonetheless, Dr. Lewis is convinced that in the climate of economic austerity, government should utilise its own savings or non-reimbursable (grant) funding to undertake social projects. He held that government's decision to borrow money from the World Bank for the Poverty Reduction Fund was only another example of financial imprudence. He highlighted that the Opposition had no difficulty with the intention to seek to alleviate poverty in the society since, after all, it was his party's government who commissioned the Poverty Assessment Study in 1995 and outlined a comprehensive policy and programme of education, health, rural development, increasing women's productive activities, youth skills training and development, employment and the provision of social safety nets in order to reduce poverty.

Dr. Lewis stated that the Government must be careful not to follow the World Bank blindly and in desperation, even though there is need for their assistance. He revealed that his government proposed utilising funds from the STABEX grant allocation (non – repayable) from the European Union that was, and still is available. In this way, there

would be no increased burden on the taxpayers to service yet another loan, in circumstances in which the purpose for which the loan was used did not contribute to long - term productivity.

The former Minister of Finance and Economist outlined that the principle the Prime Minister and his Government do not seem willing to understand and implement was a simple one: only borrow commercial or loan funds for projects which will contribute – in the long or short term – to national productivity. Conversely, utilise and/or seek grant funding for other types of activities or pay for them from local revenue or savings. He emphasised that the operations, management and funding of the Poverty Reduction Fund was only one of the instances, which revealed that St. Lucia was experiencing a Crisis of Credibility in the words of our Government and a Crisis of Confidence in the policies and actions of our Government.

This objection of the former Prime Minister and Minister of Finance represents the philosophical underpinnings of the policies and strategies for the period 1990-1997 reviewed in 4.1.2. In an environment of limited grant funding and local revenue for social investment programmes as well as the moral suasion to reduce poverty among 25.1% of the St. Lucian population, it is difficult to justify an objection to the loan funding arrangement. Moreover, it is unfortunate that the linkage between poverty reduction and national productivity could not be made by the interviewee. Freddy (June 16, 2000) confirmed, “There could not be a reliance on taxation/local revenue or grant funding to resolve issues of poverty and the island operated from a system of disadvantage in that financial, technical and natural resources were limited” (Semi-Structured Interview, 16/06/00).

Taking into consideration the stage of development of the Fund, it would be seemingly unfair to critically assess its operation. It was clear, however, from the conclusion of the Audit report that, “generally the present situation at the PRF, where there are no policies and procedures in place to assist the entity in the performance of its operations, is due to the fact that the Board has not been performing its functions as the policy making organ

of the PRF as required by the Act” (1999:3). The ineffective role of the Board of Directors, generally, and its Chairperson and Executive Director, specifically, was held as the major cause of the administrative irregularities of the Fund. An attempt to obtain an interview with the former Chairman of the Board was denied but he did explain his situation in the Mirror Newspaper.

In Vol. 6, No. 33 dated Friday, April 21, 2000 of the St. Lucia Mirror, the former Chairman of the PRF, absorbed the accusations for alleged mismanagement, abusive behaviour among the PRF staff and financial impropriety of the Funds when he noted,

“I personally take the blame. As Chairman, I was too soft. I had an attitude that didn’t go down well with the other Board members. They supported me, except that they thought I should have taken stronger action. And I should have... The Executive Director was not accustomed to taking orders from people...but there were certainly times when it was very difficult to do certain things and there were times when I had put my foot down to get things done” (Vol. 6, No. 33, 2000:1).

A member of the Board of Directors (Barbs, April 3, 2000) confirmed that there was the perception among the Directors themselves that the Chairman was not resolute and decisive especially towards the Executive Director. Barbs (April 3, 2000) contended that the conflict had its origination in the appointment of the Executive Director before the Board of Directors, although the Poverty Reduction Fund Act gives the Board the power to hire and fire. The Executive Director was well established and functioning when the Board was appointed. In fact, the Executive Director provided some form of orientation and update to the Board and sometimes felt that the Board was interfering in the management and implementation of his projects.

At the Consultation of the Final Draft of the Social Assessment Study (April 20, 2000), the Executive Director, PRF, outlined that his proactive role had been conceived many times as “moving too fast or even out of step” but it was in the interest of the Fund that projects and programmes were implemented were expedited without undue bureaucracy.

A former Minister of Government (Charlie, June 2, 2000) was convinced that the mismanagement and malpractice of the Fund could be attributed to a number of factors including:

- Total ignorance and lack of vigilance of board members in policy and administration reflecting an inherent weakness of understanding of roles on the part of persons offering themselves for services in the Public Service. The Board of Directors did not understand its role in providing guidelines, formulating policy and procedures for the operation of the Fund;
- The abusive role lashed out by technocrats in the face of a permissive and an ignorant board; and
- An underlying factor of political interference with the Executive Director being cosy with the Prime Minister providing opportunities for manipulation and political pressure.

Charlie (June 2, 2000) asserted that the processes, procedures and operations of the Funds (BNTF and BELFund included) must seek to eliminate the party politics in which Ministers and District Representatives are actively engaged. He outlined that there is the need to promote a community spirit and to equip and foster the participation of the civil societies into the activities of the Poverty Reduction Fund.

The absence of an operations manual, explicit chain of command, clear procedures and institutionalised systems of accountability may have exacerbated the constraints experienced. These limitations and constraints affected detrimentally the potential advantages of the Poverty Reduction Fund discussed in 2.5.2. They served to curtail the institutional flexibility, effective targeting of the poor and questioned the autonomy and transparency of the Fund.

The 'poverty rumble' in St. Lucia throughout the period also posed additional challenges for the conduct of my research work; the implications of which have been identified in

Chapter One and may have contributed to the limited rapport and information attained at **BELFund**.

5.3.0 James Belgrave Micro Enterprise Development Limited (BELFund)

As part of an effort to initiate and sustain a process of social re-alignment and re-adjustment through a series of measures, the Government of St. Lucia instituted **BELFund**. The policy objective was to create economic opportunities for persons in depressed areas or the so-called ghetto communities in an effort to reduce poverty. It was outlined that this initiative together with the many other measures adopted would

“Collectively constitute a significant and concerted attack on poverty from many angles – from alleviation to eradication – and will provide new material meaning for thousands of St. Lucian families shackled by social deprivation. Only by a resolute assault on the causes of poverty can we expect to build a secure future and a safe society of opportunity for all” (Throne Speech, March 1999).

The following objectives of **BELFund** were outlined in the Prime Minister’s Budget Speech 1999 – 2000. They are to:

- Support initiatives, which will engender greater community togetherness and civic responsibility and promote participation in community development;
- Facilitate initiatives, which will allow for the advancement of academic and technical skills and employability of persons;
- Encourage small-scale infrastructural projects, which will provide social relief and improve the living conditions of residents;
- Support initiatives that will create opportunities for sustainable employment and viable commercial activity.

The overall goal of the James Belgrave Micro Enterprise Development Fund Limited was stated within the First Interim Report on the Organisation and Management of the Fund as “the empowerment of the poor, the unemployed, the micro entrepreneur and other underprivileged persons” (2000: I). Emanating from such a mandate the mission of **BELFund** was formulated as to, “Create the conditions for the empowerment of the poor through fostering sustainable micro enterprise training, technical assistance and other support services” (2000: ii). It is intended that **BELFund** will foster self-employment and job creation through the promotion and development of commercial and productive activities among low-income social and economic groups and the informal sector in St. Lucia.

5.3.1 The Management, Structure and Financing of BELFund

In an effort to formulate the design, operations and management of BELFund, an interviewee, Thomas (May 22, 2000), acknowledged that a World Bank researcher undertook an assessment of Micro – finance sector in St. Lucia in March 1999 entitled, ‘Revolving Fund for a Micro –finance Institution’. Thomas (May 22, 2000) outlined that the findings of the Assessment revealed that micro-finance institutions in St. Lucia do not follow sound financial practices regarding micro-finance and require collateral that the majority of micro-entrepreneurs and farmers cannot satisfy.

Furthermore, the First Interim Report (2000) on the Organisation and Management of BELFund outlined that the Assessment of March 1999 found that the poorest of the poor were not beneficiaries of micro credit. It was found that interventions or projects aimed at assisting micro-entrepreneurs to increase the profitability of their enterprises tended to be piecemeal, disjointed and limited in scope.

The Assessment recommended an integrated approach to improve the profitability of the micro-sector and if projects and investments that were proposed and/or ongoing were coordinated to provide an integrated set of interventions, impact would be greater. According to the Interim Report an analysis of various options including the creation of a

new institution for lending to the poor was undertaken and concluded, “a new institution could select the best expertise in the region to launch a program designed to follow the best practices to reach the poor. A new institution would not have to overcome the bad habits of some of the existing institutions but could start afresh” (2000: 16).

Thomas (May 22, 2000) held that the **BELFund**, had an inbuilt capacity to undertake awareness promotions including audio – visuals, media broadcastings and community meetings. He outlined that the organisation comprised of a full - fledged structure including a Board of Directors as the policy - making authority; General Manager; Internal Auditor, Administrative Officer, Credit/Loan Officer, Business Support Officer, Project Development Officer, Management Information System Officer and Accounting Officer.

Another interviewee (Phil, June 29, 2000) disclosed that funding for the organisation was obtained from the European Union (\$278,000) and local revenue (222,000) and emphasised that it was a revolving Fund requiring low interest rates from its clients. The Fund would allegedly operate on the premise that technical advice and consultancy would be added to the loans offered to the poor. The credit would be advanced without need for physical collateral, using instead the concept of “character collateral” by requiring of the applicant three sound referees who will underwrite the loan risk.

The fund is intended to be largely demand-driven with special emphasis on the most vulnerable and deprived in the community, including women, youth, unemployed persons, small food-crop farmers, fisher folk, social organisations, community groups, disabled persons and market vendors. Despite the fact that the original design of BELFund was to rescue some of the young people from Wilton’s Yard, Marchand, Shanty Town and the Mangue from crime and direct them to self-sustaining economic activity, an interviewee held that **BELFund** would assume a national focus, which was inclusive of all poor communities.

There is very little about BELFund that can be assessed especially since the institution recently opened its door for business about two weeks before my departure from fieldwork in June 2000. The opportunity to interview its Manager and one of its three-member Board of Directors revealed some concerns of transparency and accountability to the public; an estranged relationship and lack of meaningful collaboration with the other poverty reduction mechanisms and civil society organisations; and the pervading conviction among many that micro-credit is a panacea for the empowerment of the poor, the unemployed, the micro entrepreneur and other underprivileged persons.

The drama, which was being unveiled within the nation's print and electronic media over the Poverty Reduction Fund seem to have had the effect upon the management of **BELFund** to disassociate itself from the administrative and policy mechanism of PRF with whom there was a vital collaborative relationship being developed. The visible effect of the 'poverty rumble' was the operation of **BELFund** in the courtroom principle of 'in camera'. Documentation was held to be confidential and unavailable and very little was disclosed about the operations of the Fund that was not labelled as being "confidential".

The perception obtained from the interviews seems to relate a case that, though conceptualised to offset the deficiency of existing credit institutions and poverty reduction mechanisms, **BELFund** has not taken the advantage to develop meaningful collaborative relationships. The organisation tends to perceive its role as unique, detached from the roles performed by the other institutions. However, it would not be fair to assign such criticism solely to **BELFund** since many infant organisations endeavouring to develop a clear identity and gain credibility from their financial supporters and the general public.

5.4 Conclusion

We have engaged in an overview of the mechanisms established for poverty reduction during which a number of constraints, challenges and opportunities were identified.

These included issues of the nature and distribution of the programme; administrative and institutional capacity for delivery of the designed projects; the role of the Donor agencies and political interference in determining the nature and distribution of projects; policy and financing issues; the levels of collaboration, transparency and accountability built into the mechanisms; as well as limitations in effectively targeting the poor and indigent persons and communities. There is yet another issue which is pertinent to all of the mechanisms and was outlined by a number of interviewees. This is the constraint and need for central coordination.

Freddy (June 16, 2000) noted that there were a multiplicity of mechanisms such as the Poverty Reduction Fund, Basic Needs Trust Fund and James Belgrave Micro Enterprise Fund, which he had no objections towards since in his estimation there was nothing wrong with the schemes. He held that BNTF and PRF were only concerned with physical work and the creation of short - term employment opportunities whereas **BELFund** was more concerned with access to credit. Freddy remained convinced that there was no distinction currently between BNTF and PRF.

Addressing this issue, three policy advisors (Barbs, Phil and Freddy) ascertained that there were a number of scattered programmes and mechanisms established for poverty reduction, and outlined that it was the role for the Ministry of Development, Planning, Housing and the Environment and even more specifically the Development Cooperation and Programme Planning Section to perform the meaningful roles of coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the mechanisms. Phil (June 29, 2000) noted that by its representatives on the agencies' Boards of Directors and Steering Committee as well as the Ministry's monitoring role of their projects, this should be a critical factor in integrating the approaches to poverty reduction.

In addition, they agreed that it was imperative that all three institutions gained a clearer understanding of each other's roles and that there should be strategic collaborations aimed at sharing institutional knowledge and experiences. Barbs (April 3, 2000) observed that there had been some prior areas of collaboration and complementarities including

referrals but these should be further strengthened and consolidated into more meaningful working relationships. This was thought necessary to avoid duplication of their programmes and waste of resources.

Freddy (June 16, 2000) noted that there was also the need for a smooth evolution from the Basic Needs Trust Fund to the Poverty Reduction Fund but a hasty decision propelled by funding considerations from the Caribbean Development Bank and the World Bank militated against this meaningful transition. He identified varying levels of accountability, intervention strategies and donor conditionalities as making the mechanisms distinctive although he conceived both BNTF and PRF as social funds while Belfund provided credit for productive activities.

Although the former Prime Minister was more concerned about the politics of poverty reduction, which he held was dynamic, he identified an inherent problem within the machinery of government and in particular with its supervision of statutory institutions. Drawing reference from the widespread poverty rumbles associated with the PRF, Dr. Lewis (June 22, 2000) outlined that it was the role of the Ministry of Planning to supervise such institutions and the latter were accountable to the Minister. However, these institutions were left virtually all alone and the oversight of the Permanent Secretary diminished to reviewing annual reports and audits. Therefore these institutions took advantage of all the autonomy surrendered by Government.

These considerations of the institutional mechanisms for poverty reduction have provided additional scope for three critical reflections. The first is the need for the agencies to delineate clearer conceptual frameworks for their poverty related policies and programmes. Despite the thematic areas denoted in this Chapter for the discussion of the work of the agencies, in practice the conceptions, strategies and programmes of the mechanisms not entirely distinct. There seems to be a bias towards an infrastructure based model of poverty reduction. It is my conviction that the Poverty Reduction Fund, in particular, needs to focus more on innovation, learning and creative inroads to participatory planning and poverty assessment. It's conception analyses and strategies for

poverty reduction should be drawn predominantly from the Social Deprivation Model emphasizing human and participatory approaches to poverty reduction.

Second, it is necessary to gain the maximum potential advantages of the social funds, therefore building accessible, transparent and accountable mechanisms with well-represented Boards and competent Staff is important. Finally, the need for inter-agency collaboration and networking cannot be over-emphasised. The mechanisms should seek to foster greater and more meaningful working relationships in addition to fostering the participation among stakeholder organisations and beneficiaries in their poverty reduction programmes.

The next Chapter is an effort to explore the nature of selected civil society organisations and the roles, which they perform in poverty reduction.

CHAPTER SIX



Poverty Reduction and Civil Society Organisations in Saint Lucia

Chapter Six

Poverty Reduction and Civil Society Organisations in St. Lucia

6.0 Introduction and Outline

In Chapter Five, we examined the institutional mechanisms established by the Government of St. Lucia to reduce poverty. The Poverty Reduction Fund, in particular, emphasizes the importance of poverty reduction through community participation and employs Non-Government and Community-Based Organisations (NGOs and CBOs respectively) in fulfilling its mandate. This Chapter demonstrates that the nature and extent of civil society organisations' participation in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation is critical to any integrated policy, strategy and programming for poverty reduction.

The five Sections of Chapter six are an attempt to illustrate that any meaningful effort aimed at fostering a coordinated approach for poverty reduction must seek a comprehensive understanding of the Civil Society Organisations' nature, operations, resources, target populations, strengths, limitations, networking, and current and proposed roles in poverty reduction. The Sections seek to convey a greater understanding of and a more meaningful approach towards NGOs and CBOs in the overall scope of poverty reduction in St. Lucia.

Section A examines the nature of civil society organisations generally and the profiles of the NGOs and CBOs surveyed including their nature, mission statements, goals, strategies, age of the organisations and main spheres of activities.

Section B considers the registration and affiliation of the selected organisations; and their membership characteristics with respect to the composition, members' attendance at meetings; and their participation in projects and programmes. It also examines the leadership and management functions of non-governmental and community based

organisations including leadership roles and the management of the organisations and resources.

Section C provides details of NGOs and CBOs participation in poverty reduction projects and programmes including the nature of their poverty reduction activities; target populations; and the degree and level(s) of their participation in government, PRF, BNTF, UNDP, UNICEF and UNIFEM-assisted programmes. Six levels of participation are examined: Meetings/Workshops, Planning, Implementation, Policy Formulation, Monitoring and Evaluation. The potential and limitations of NGOs and CBOs in poverty reduction are also outlined.

Section D provides an overview of proposed poverty reduction activities of the civil society organisations within the next five years and the nature of assistance needed. The section then explores a meaningful role for the organisations given the current situational analysis and immediate plans.

This exploration of civil society organisations in St. Lucia is based on a survey of twelve (12) NGOs and thirty-two (32) CBOs in St. Lucia conducted during the author's fieldwork period, March 9 to June 30, 2000. For a discussion of the methodological issues, refer to the Reflexive Consideration of the Methodology and Fieldwork Activities in **1.8**.

Section A: Organisational Profiles

6.1.0 Understanding the Nature of Civil Society Organisations

The term ‘Civil Society Organisations⁴’ is utilised to include private charities, community based and non-government organisations, associations, committees, clubs and volunteers. The LSE Magazine, Vol. 12, Number 1, Summer 2000 provides a useful working definition of civil society as

“The set of institutions, organisations and behaviours situated between the state, the business world and the family. This world include voluntary and non-profit organisations of many different kinds, philanthropic institutions, social and political movements, forms of social participation and engagement, the public sphere, and the values and cultural patterns associated with them” (2000: 17).

These organisations have contributed significantly to their communities by performing a number of roles including the delivery of services, advocacy, creating access or channels to resources, capacity building, credit and savings cooperatives, mutuals and self help bodies. Their main strengths, according to Deakin (1998) include innovation, flexibility, lack of bureaucracy as well as peculiar specialist skills and experience, which are utilised at the community level.

Civil society organisations have developed from the perspectives of social philanthropy and social work approaches, discussed in 2.1.4 that seek to tackle social problems by providing care for vulnerable groups and social therapy to persons in difficult circumstances.

⁴ There is little agreement on the precise meaning of Civil society but the diversity of the forms of organisations usually fall outside of government and include those who are not primarily motivated by profits. These also include trade unions, consumer groups, academic and research institutions or tribal and ethnic groups. However, this thesis examines non governmental and community based organisations in St. Lucia.

Smitu Kothari (1996) provides an overview of the awakening of civil society in the Third World by outlining their growing social and political thrust. Kothari (1996) examined the increasing efforts of these organisations to ‘underscore the endemic problems in the dominant economic and political processes’ (1996:1). The writer outlined that the multiplicity of activities among these organisations are:

“Indicative not just of the potential of civil society coming into its own but more importantly ... the limits of representative democracy, the adverse implications of the current pattern of development and, on the responsibility of citizens in contemporary society – lessons that are fundamental to the building of democratic polity and humane society” (1995:3).

6.1.1 The Nature of Civil Society Organisations in St. Lucia – “The ⁵Coud Mein Culture”

Tracing the history and overview of community-based organisations in St. Lucia, Steve Gray and Didicus Jules (1996) outlined that,

“Community based organisations have always played a prominent role in the social history of St. Lucia. The earliest CBOs emerged in the post-emancipation period with the former slaves creating institutions of their own to pool their limited resources and to provide some form of collective economic and social security.” (1996:7)

NGOs were formed during the period before independence as social philanthropy organisations aimed at promoting the well being of vulnerable individuals and groups as well as relieving the ‘diswelfares’ of communities imposed by their socio-economic conditions. These organisations were formed in an effort to respond to the needs of families and social groups and to substitute for the breakdown of community support systems such as the ‘coud mien’. Primary assistance was given to those with problems: personal, family, groups and community basic needs.

⁵ The Coud Mein culture is a community support system in which persons would usually pool their labour to assist in the construction or repair of community facilities or private homes.

The author's survey features organisations with as much as 100 years of experience among the NGOs as well as relative infants with less than two years experience. Proportionately, NGOs had much more experience and longevity than CBOs and none of the former surveyed had less than two years experience.

On the other hand, although some CBOs had more than twenty-one years experience, these received government subsidies and were involved in sports and cultural activities. Most were community based Credit Unions, Fishermen's Cooperatives and a few Sports and Cultural Clubs⁶. One interviewee (Devopla) illustrated his views on the early formation and continuity of the CBOs as a feature of the Community Development efforts within St. Lucia.

Devopla (June 23, 2000) traced an evolutionary progression among community development organisations on the island from the 1970s to 2000. He outlined *four distinct periods and modes through which this evolution was staged:*

1970s – Remedial: a reactive mode in which response to needs and problems prevailed among government agencies, voluntary organisations and local charities;

1980s – Preventative: efforts aimed at decentralisation and deconcentration of Central Government to local Councils and the advancement of Mothers' and Fathers' Movement.

1990s – Developmental: the establishment of development committees within communities to plan, identify and take action on the developmental challenges facing them. The 1990s were particularly important as a 'developmental period' for the nation. Significant efforts were undertaken by the Ministry of Community Development to promote the establishment of Development Committees. There was also a resurgence of

⁶ These organisations espoused and believed in values that privileged their poor and disadvantaged members and clients but not at the cost of their own survival.

Mothers and Fathers' Groups within communities after the decentralisation process failed to effect the necessary changes during the 1980s.

2000 – Social Transformation: to affect greater local autonomy and collaboration as well as administrative and institutional reform. This is built on the premise that all areas of social policy are about the mobilisation of people. It meant more than just the use of unpaid labour to include programme attainment by people themselves and control over the conditions in which they live.

The evolution of community development organisations identified by Devopla (June 23, 2000) reflects to some extent the underlying strategies of the four generations of Development-Oriented NGOs (Relief and Welfare, Community Development, Sustainable Systems Development and People's Movement). These conceptions provide us with a fruitful framework to understand the organisational profiles of civil society organisations in St. Lucia. However, they are also indispensable to our analysis of their poverty reduction activities and interventions.

Gray and Jules (1996) also identified qualitative shifts in the evolution of CBOs in St. Lucia from local cooperatives to a greater dependence on external funding; from loose associative structures to more bureaucratised ones resembling statal structures; from community self-reliance to community development; and from CBOs to NGOs, providing greater scope for improving the quality of lives for their members and communities. The authors, nevertheless, identified that these shifts left largely unchanged some essential characteristics of the CBOs including:

- A specific geographical focus usually to a specific community or location;
- Local management and control (relative autonomy); and
- A programming emphasis on local (and immediate) needs (1996:7).

There have been some efforts to address the processes, mechanisms and institutions through which the poor can gain access to services, opportunities and satisfy their needs.

The watchwords and 'slang' of many politicians and professional within the society are participation, transparency, accountability, equity, the rule of law and efficiency in the use of resources. There is also greater recognition of the role of civil society organisations in the conception of 'good governance' as ⁷"facilitating political and social interaction by mobilising groups for participation in economic, social and political activities".

We shall now examine the findings and implications for poverty reduction from the author's survey of NGOs and CBOs in St. Lucia.

6.1.2 Profiles of the Organisations Surveyed

The ideals and roles packaged in the issue of 'good governance' in St. Lucia are important and integral to any sustained effort to reduce poverty. However, they are based on an insufficient understanding of the nature, capacity, level of collaboration/networking of these organisations or even an understanding of the roles, which they perform in poverty reduction on the island.

In the author's 2000 fieldwork activities, a total of forty-four (44) organisations were surveyed and these ranged from Development Committees and Projects; Professional Associations and Co-operatives; Sports and/or Cultural Clubs and Councils; Youth, Children, Mothers, Fathers and Women's Organisations; Credit Unions; Residents' Associations; Religious Organisations; and other Associations established to serve specific needs such as persons with disabilities, individuals in difficult circumstances and small businesses.

These civil society organisations surveyed were from all eight administrative regions in St. Lucia. It should be noted that whereas CBOs are located in every administrative region in St. Lucia, NGOs are nested in Castries, the capital and 'nerve centre' of the

⁷ Cletus Springer, consultant to the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), addressing the participants of the Multi-Partite Development Conference, St. Lucia Consultation (1999)

island, although they do serve several communities on the island. A full listing of the organisation within the administrative regions can be found in **Appendix 5**.

The uneven representation within and among the regions is related to a number of factors including: the ‘nesting’ of NGOs in Castries; the limitations (despite advantages to the study) of the snow-ball method of sampling; the constraints of time and resources and failed attempts to convene interviews with representatives of other regional organisations. The latter, however, is not a significant limitation since the groups tend to be similar in nature, goals and strategies employed. Their acquired experiences, constraints and membership tend to differ nonetheless.

The period of formal constitution for the organisations had two distinct peaks, viz. the periods before 1979 and 1994 – 1998. **Table 1 and Diagram 1, Appendix 6** show that NGO and CBO formation differed in the two peak periods. The period before 1979 (the island’s year of independence) was the most significant for the NGOs and 1994-1998 for CBOs surveyed. Both periods were marked by significant development challenges and social ‘diswelfares’ in St. Lucia.

6.1.3 Unveiling the Goals of Civil Society Organisations

The goals of the organisations are varied and represent their peculiar interests and target population. The goals of the NGOs and CBOs are summarised in **Tables 2 and 3, Appendix 6** respectively. It should be observed that many of these NGOs goals target *specific interests groups, professions and issues*.

In contrast to NGOs, the goals of CBOs are overwhelmingly focused upon *distinct localities* within which they function (*communities*). These organisations act as conduits or channels, providing access to resources and services for the development of their communities or regions. There are instances where the interests of their membership are highlighted exclusively but it spills over to a more direct linkage with the rest of the community. There is greater diversity of desired outcomes among CBOs This diversity

will be explored in 6.1.5 but let us first consider the strategies employed by the organisations.

6.1.4 “Spreading Themselves Thinly”

The strategies employed by the organisations are wide ranging, providing coverage for a multiplicity of basic needs, the development of human capabilities and capital, and the empowerment of membership and communities by providing skills training, opportunities, access and a voice for their expressed needs, issues and interests. These strategies are detailed in **Table 3, Appendix 6.**

An examination of the strategies adopted by NGOs and CBOs reveals great similarities, including the provision of financial and technical assistance (credit, self help projects advocacy, training and crisis intervention); representation and participation in workshops, meetings and consultations; formation of sub-committees; facilitation of educational, outreach programmes and community work among sick and older persons; interface with government agencies; and youth empowerment programmes.

The differences of strategies employed by NGOs and CBOs include the scale of the intervention and the processes and extent of participation undertaken. It is evident that the strategies adopted by the NGOs are much more extensive (requiring greater resources), institutionalised with greater bureaucracy and focus on the role of the professionals in providing services and assistance to their groups and communities.

On the other hand, strategies employed by CBOs are more contextualised; provide specific benefit to their members; seek cooperative ventures among residents and the pooling of community resources; and require less capital investment for the projects and programmes. As a general rule, CBOs and NGOs surveyed undertook some similar strategies but they varied in accordance to the involvement of beneficiaries and the levels of operation (community/nation).

6.1.5 Multi-dimensional Spheres of Activities

The findings on main sphere of activities of these organisations as in **Table 4, Appendix 6** reveal the strategies employed by the organisations according to their emphases on particular activities. One of the differences in the focus of the activities resides in the emphases placed by community-based organisations on sports, cultural and social activities for its members. **Diagrams 3 and 4 in Appendix 6** display the main sphere of activities among the organisations.

The CBOs seem to encourage and undertake a greater diversity of activities for residents within their communities perhaps to cater for the diverse needs of their population structure and composition whereas NGOs tend to focus a greater share of their activities on developmental, educational and humanitarian roles for specific vulnerable groups, professions and issues. This may prove significant especially when we examine later the conceptions of poverty, analyses and reduction strategies employed by the organisations.

In summary, Section A revealed key differences between NGOs and CBOs, in terms of their history, profiles, geographical focus and levels of operation and programming. The goals, strategies and spheres of activities among civil society organisations are intricately related to an anti-poverty mode of development. Although many (especially CBOs) emphasised the importance of providing remedial services (relief and welfare assistance), they are poised towards the remedial (community self-help) and preventative orientation.

The birth of new organisations identified during the 1990s did not give rise to a distinct mode of operation. Development Committees and Mothers and Fathers' Groups continued, for the greater part of their strategies and spheres of activities, to operate in a remedial mode. However, it is interesting to observe that their vision is increasingly toward a developmental mode to improve the standard of living for their target populations and the physical and social infrastructure of communities.

Section B: Linkages, Bonds and Bridges of Civil Society Organisations

6.2.0 Registration and Affiliation: “Linkages to Resources”

The membership characteristics and affiliations of organisations are critical to the realisation of civil society organisations’ goals, strategies and the fulfilment of their spheres of activities. The survey sought to understand not just membership at the local community or national level but transcended to the Caribbean region and international community. It also explored attendance and participation of members disaggregated by sex. These provided invaluable insights for the analyses to be undertaken in the Section D.

The registration (established by legal proceeding) and affiliation (developed through more informal ties) of the surveyed organisations showed a moderate number of official linkages developed by the organisations. The highest number of affiliates was to government agencies, particularly the Ministries of Community Development and Youth and Sports.

The survey findings revealed greater frequency to all forms of linkages at the national level including legal, governmental and national associations than those affiliations at the regional and international levels. **Table 5, Appendix 6** shows the registration and affiliation of the organisations with various agencies.

It is interesting that when one examines the proportionate shares of NGOs’ affiliation, the findings reveal an almost equal distribution among government, legal, regional and international associations. Affiliation to national associations is lower and this may be attributed to the fact that there is no ‘umbrella organisation’ for NGOs in St. Lucia and whereas they participate in many activities, they safeguard their autonomy.

The proportionate shares of CBOs affiliation reflect an overwhelming government registration and limited regional and international linkages. In a number of cases, the registrations and affiliations among CBOs are with their 'parent agencies' and sponsors.

Three communities including Anse La Raye, Canaries and Bouton made these affiliations abundantly clear. These communities foster meaningful linkages between the United Kingdom immigrants and the local community. This form of affiliation highlights the role of remittances and other forms of assistance (ambulance, wheel-chairs, books, computers etc. donated to these communities) in CBOs poverty reduction activities.

6.2.1 Membership Characteristics: "Bonds of Mutual Support"

The membership characteristics of the organisations were diverse among the groups. The very concept of 'membership' does not represent a specific entity of persons for all the groups. Some organisations valued and articulated that those to whom they provided services were members. Others stipulated that membership was reserved to share holders and the Board of Directors. One thing was clear, however, and it was that most if not all the organisations had not given considerable attention to membership characteristics such as age, sex, and employment status. Much of the information was not available or was merely a 'guesstimate' by the person contacted.

6.2.2 Size of Membership

The findings of the survey show that total membership of most organisations clustered in the 25-49 and above 175 classes. The membership of most organisations was either small or very large in numbers. Proportionately, the membership of CBOs were smaller than that of NGOs and this may be attributed to the levels at which these kinds of organisations operate (community and national levels respectively). **Diagram 9** suggests that the membership of 50% of NGOs was above 175 members. The other 50% resided within the class intervals of under 25 and 75-99 members.

The membership pyramid for CBOs, **Diagram 10**, is more consistent with the realities at the community level. For a few, membership is automatic while for most, it depended on the interests and willingness of residents. Where the membership of some CBOs tended to be relatively small in comparison with the population of the communities, many interviewees explained this as the 'fatigue of social organisations'.

The latter factor put simply is that persons are tired of meetings and talk with little action to improving their well-being. This factor was revealed by many persons within the communities studied and was expressed most succinctly by Phil (June 29, 2000) who disclosed that, in his opinion St. Lucian society was experiencing 'the fatigue and dearth of social organisations'. According to Phil, CBOs were becoming increasingly difficult to mobilise; their structures were fragile and their capacity diminished. However, a number of CBOs had been formed during the last two years and many recorded moderate membership records. This leads us to explore the composition of the organisations' membership.

6.2.3 Membership Composition

For many of the organisations, female membership was definitely greater and many recorded very low male membership. The gender component of membership is even more telling when one considers that among the 44 organisations only one was exclusively a women's organisation. The low female membership in two organisations (fishing cooperatives) can be attributed to the gender biased profession in which men were the fisher folk and two women reportedly owned boats (discussed in 3.4.6).

The **age profiles** varied among the organisations, as some were youth organisations while others were devoid of young persons. It must be noted that whereas youth organisations are exclusive groups, the other organisations undertake membership drives to integrate their young persons but to date have been highly unsuccessful. As a result the organisations either remain highly youthful or adult dominated reflecting the need to bridge the 'generation gap'.

The **employment status** of members of the organisations also varied significantly. Although in a number of organisations, a majority of their members were employed and working full-time, in others there were considerably higher numbers who reported 40-80% unemployment. However, full-time employment dominated membership employment status.

Generally, NGOs reported very low rates (0-25%) of male participation, over 35 years memberships and part-time employment. Conversely, female, less than 35 years membership and full-time employment were very high (76-100%). The findings for the CBOs are somewhat different to that of the NGOs. Male membership is greater within CBOs but there is still an element of higher female membership. Among the CBOs, it is the under 35 years composition, which is very low with higher unemployment but higher full time employment among those working.

6.2.4 Membership Acceptance Processes

Having considered the characteristics of membership, it is interesting to note the differences in the processes engaged in acceptance of new members. Most NGOs require that those desirous of becoming members of their organisation should complete membership forms with stipulated criterion and such persons would need the consensus of its membership at their general meetings. On the other hand, the major requirements of CBOs are not the completed application form but an acceptance in the form of a vote by members and/or an executive decision. The findings suggest that there is certainly less formality and bureaucracy in the acceptance process of CBOs.

6.2.5 Attendance at Meetings and Participation in Projects and Programmes

“There is alot of talk and no action! What we need is less talk and more work!”
(Goldie, May 16, 2000).

The attendance of members at the organisations meetings seems to be fluctuating between the 51 – 100% mark. The findings reveal that more women attended meetings and they are predominantly consistent at the meetings of civil society organisations. **Table 7, Appendix 6** captures the higher and more consistent attendance of the female membership of the organisations.

Diagram 13, Appendix 6 illustrates the regularity with which meetings had to be postponed because of poor attendance of members. Only two of the twelve NGOs surveyed acknowledged such occurrence whereas 21 of the 32 CBOs disclosed that they did in fact postpone meetings due to attendance problems. Though the regularity of such occurrence was evaluated as being seldom, the fact that more than half of CBOs surveyed postponed meetings because of poor attendance remains significant.

The participation of the total membership of the organisations in their projects and programmes can be characterised as being consistent with approximately 78% of all the organisations recording a highly consistent involvement in the activities. It is important to note that women also participated more consistently than men. **In Table 10, Appendix 6** the patterns of membership participation are outlined.

6.2.6 Leadership Forms

The dominant form of leadership among the civil society surveyed is the democratically elected executive. Among the 44 organisations surveyed, 36 (82%) elected executive members to serve in leadership capacities within their organisations. The other eight organisations had appointed committees and voluntary core of members. The pattern was similar for NGOs and CBOs and is displayed in **Diagrams 14 and 15, Appendix 6**.

6.2.7 Stores of Resources: “Bridges to Service”

Ownership of buildings and offices for meetings and to coordinate programmes such as seminars and workshops was limited to very few civil society organisations. Only half of the NGOs, despite the number of years since being established, owned buildings and even then age was not the determining variable for ownership of buildings. NGOs rented, owned and had access to public and/or private offices, while CBOs predominantly had access to the community centre. Only three among the 32 CBOs owned (2) and rented (1) offices and that was for the conduct of businesses.

The situation among the organisations with employment of staff and volunteers to perform managerial, executive, technical and administrative functions among the organisations was less than encouraging to them. The NGOs had an advantage of being able to employ staff, whereas the CBOs depended on the voluntary services of their elected executive members to perform such tasks.

Both employment of staff and the voluntary system were greater among NGOs. Staff members were employed in 84% of NGOs and the voluntary system was prevalent among 50% of the NGOs surveyed. Seventy-eight percent of all CBOs surveyed did not have any staff employed neither were there any volunteers performing the functions of their organisations, other than the core of executive members. These issues of resources were held to be a major weakness to many CBOs (6.4.8).

6.2.8 Sourcing Funds: “Things really hard!”

The findings ascertained that the main form of funding for the civil society collectively is fundraising. This was true of two-thirds of CBOs (66%), but half of NGOs' main form of funding was grants and/or subventions. On the other hand, the main forms of funding for CBOs were fundraising and membership contributions. The sources of financial support for NGOs and CBOs are detailed in **Diagrams 16 and 17, Appendix 6**. One important

observation is that the main sources of funding for CBOs would be their membership compared to NGOs, which was government.

Section B revealed that Civil Society Organisations pursue linkages, bonding relationships and bridges that will assist them in the fulfilment of their goals, strategies and spheres of activities. There are significant variations among organisations with respect to the nature of linkages which they foster and bonding relationships also differ along the characteristics of age, sex and employment status of membership.

The analysis shows that the roles performed by women within the organisations are highly valued and significant to community management and poverty reduction efforts. On the other hand, fragmentation of efforts exists at the community level along the variable of age. There is continuous conflict between Youth organisations and Mothers and Fathers Groups with respect to the bridges to services (community resources such as community centres and fundraising activities). It is necessary to synchronise these efforts for greater community development and social transformation.

Section C: Civil Society Organisations and Poverty Reduction

6.4.0 Participation in Poverty Reduction Activities

“All of a sudden poverty reduction came around, money is available, everyone is setting up new organisations and instruments. Poverty reduction suddenly became a major goal for everyone” (White, June 9, 2000).

Poverty Reduction is a major activity which most organisations indicated forms part of their programmes. A total of 37 (84%) of the organisations surveyed affirmed that they were involved in poverty reduction activities. All (12) of the NGOs and 25 CBOs surveyed said that poverty reduction was one of their main programmes of activities. Many organisations indicated that their major areas of involvement were project implementation, advocacy and humanitarian services or welfare assistance to the poor.

6.4.2 The Nature of Poverty Reduction Programmes

The areas of involvement of the organisations, which participated in poverty reduction activities were predominantly identified as those that provided high visibility, immediate and tangible assistance in the form of infrastructural projects such as roads, drains, footpaths, construction and repairs to poor and/or older persons' houses; scholarships to students from disadvantaged homes, assistance to schools within poor communities and donation of food baskets to poor families or homes for vulnerable persons.

Diagrams 21 and 22, Appendix 6 examine more closely the involvement of NGOs and CBOs (respectively) in poverty reduction activities. The NGO community has a more diversified sphere of involvement in poverty reduction in St. Lucia. CBOs are increasingly utilised as channels and agents in the implementation of projects performing secondary roles of welfare assistance.

NGOs have a greater policy influence than CBOs. Eight of the twelve NGOs surveyed recorded their influence in the formulation of policies, in contrast to 3 of the 34 CBOs. The survey analysis suggests that the level and extent of participation of the organisations in poverty reduction activities are determined by a number of variables including age since established (experience), location (visibility), management (effectiveness of representation) rather than registration with government since there exists a greater dimension of registration with government among the CBOs than among NGOs.

These may be extended further to the fact that because of their level of management, institutional capacity and their centrality to the 'nerve centre' or administrative operations of the island, these are ideal features to gain some advantage to influence policies. Furthermore, NGOs have greater longevity and institutional experience than CBOs. The former also have paid employees with more time, greater capacity and are located closer to government agencies than CBOs' volunteers.

An example of one such NGO is the Planned Parenthood Association, which provides a wide range of specialist services in sexual reproductive health. The Association employs the services of eight (8) full-time professionals and 61 trained volunteers. Its participation in poverty reduction activities included the designing of national policies, advocacy, welfare assistance and project and programme planning with Government and the United Nations Agencies.

6.4.3 Civil Society Target Population: "The Buffet-Style"

An examination of the targeting practises of the organisations suggests that this may be one of the significant weaknesses of their efforts at reducing poverty. The population that the civil society organisations target is diverse and for some organisations, it would seem that anyone and everyone is being targeted. The organisations targeted 1 to 12 groups of persons.

On average, NGOs targeted 4-5 groups. The target receiving greater priority were those outlined previously although these organisations gave greater consideration to urban residents than rural communities. Again, geographical location may determine this bias. Communities are also given preference over individual needs and women receive a substantive advantage over the group, 'men at risk'. The target groups for CBOs are overwhelmingly communities, youth and children. Rural residents, women and households also receive considerable attention. Again, even when men are categorised as being 'at risk' very little consideration is being given to this target group.

The picture that develops from the survey findings is that civil society organisations target diverse groups as being vulnerable and poor. The greater share of their resources generated are utilised to improve the quality of life of youth, children, women, and rural communities. It is particularly interesting to note here that the most recent Final Draft of the Social Assessment Study (2000), discussed in 3.2.3 outlined that the worst kind of poverty was prevalent among urban residents, who are not consistently targeted by the organisations.

6.4.4 Self Evaluated Poverty Reduction Programmes

Most of the organisations are convinced that they have been 'successful' in their poverty reduction programmes. A total of 36 of the 37 organisations believed that they had a great impact in improving the lives of poor communities, households and vulnerable groups. More NGOs were inclined to rate their achievements as being 'very successful' whereas more CBOs rated their contributions as being 'fair', identifying the need to do much more. **Diagram 25, Appendix 6** views the organisations assessment as detailed above.

6.4.1 'Non-Participation' in Poverty Reduction – “We Don't Do That!”

“We only soothe poverty stress but do not reduce poverty. Persons participate in our activities to reduce frustration and only to pass the time or gain some leisure” (Lasser, President of Youth and Sports Council, June 12, 2000).

There were seven (7) of the 32 community based organisations (22%) which indicated that they did not perceive their organisations as involved in poverty reduction activities. It is important to understand that such perception seem to be an evaluation of their performance from an income/consumption conception of poverty (as we discussed in 2.2.1) and their relative ineffectiveness in improving the living conditions of individuals.

The Women's League, which participated in the survey exercise, employed strategies such as feeding programmes, self-help projects (footpaths, drains and scholarships), educational programmes and other recreational and cultural activities. However, Lina (June 26, 2000) was convinced that the Women's League was not involved in poverty reduction activities. Lina highlighted that the League would need to change the mode of activities and operation to address the dire needs of the community (skills training, housing and a human resource development centre).

A closer examination of some 'non-participation' in **Diagram 20, Appendix 6** confirmed this assessment and helped elucidate this proposition. The findings suggest that the major factors influencing organisations' evaluation of their participation in poverty reduction activities are their conceptions of poverty, membership participation, organisations' resources, environmental constraints and their perception of the effectiveness of their programmes within their communities.

6.4.5 Opportunities for Collaboration

An exploration of civil society organisations' participation in the programmes of other agencies revealed that not only do most civil society organisations initiate activities to reduce poverty but they are also active participants in implementing the programmes of other agencies. These agencies include the Poverty Reduction Fund, Basic Needs Trust

Fund, Government of St. Lucia and the United Nations Agencies. **Diagrams 26 and 27** in **Appendix 6** outline the proportionate and actual representation (respectively) of civil society's participation in the agencies' poverty reduction programmes.

Diagrams 26 and 27 show a significantly higher level of participation among the civil society organisations and national agencies compared to the United Nations Agencies. This analysis should not be taken to any greater depth, since it does not consider the sources of funding and external influence within the poverty programmes of BNTF, PRF and Government of St. Lucia. One deduction can be made, however, and it is that local ownership of poverty reduction programmes generates greater levels of participation than others. This brings to the fore an important issue of ownership of the poverty reduction activities, since public and private sector personnel interviewed identified this issue as being significant to the sustained efforts of reducing poverty in St. Lucia.

6.4.6 All Promise but Few Deliver

The participation of civil society in the poverty reduction programmes of other agencies can be examined via their contribution to planning, policy, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and their attendance at meetings, seminars and workshops. Some highly consistent elements in civil society's participation, which is worthy of recognition include:

- The activities that civil society organisation were least involved in included the critical elements of policy designing, monitoring and evaluation.
- The extent of participation is consistently high for UNICEF, GOSL and PRF but low for UNIFEM, BNTF and UNDP.
- Attendance at meetings, workshops and seminars is the most popular form of participation for civil society organisations.

The survey found that CBOs and NGOs are most likely to be invited to consultations but are unlikely to have any significant influence on the agencies' policies for poverty reduction. In other words, they are usually invited to plan and implement projects and programmes for which critical policy decisions with their embedded ideological principles and targets had already been established. This provides very few options in determining the nature of interventions and desired goals, because conceptions of poverty emanating from policy directives would necessarily influence analyses and strategies.

Although policy design may be the weakest dimension of their participation, the elements of monitoring and evaluation of programmes were noted by most professionals interviewed as a severe deficiency in the operations and programmes of all the sectors. The survey findings show that relatively few organisations participated in monitoring and evaluation of the poverty reduction programmes of the agencies. Barbs (April 3, 2000) outlined that the tendency was to allow the external agencies to contract consultants at the end of the programming and financial periods to evaluate impacts of the programme. He stated that monitoring was sometimes substituted for the occasional visits of Regional Representatives and Officials of the external agencies.

The participation of NGOs reveals the underlying pattern for the civil society. They were invited to many more meetings, implemented prescribed programmes and their participation was limited in monitoring and evaluation. There is very little difference with the CBO community. Given their limited association with the regional and international community, few participated in the programmes of these agencies. It would seem that these organisations were merely utilised as vehicles in the delivery of services and assistance to their communities.

A vital component of civil society organisations' attendance and participation at meeting is not only a process of creating awareness of agencies' programmes and of poverty issues but involves building the capacity of these organisations and their members to plan and implement programmes. In this manner, training of personnel to serve at the

community level may have been realised as a result of their participation at meetings, workshops and seminars.

It should be noted here that many leaders were suspicious of the consultations and claims of participation and argued that such meetings, workshops and seminars were conducted to appease policy formulators and donor agencies that the processes, through which resources were allocated and expended, were participatory. One of the NGO leaders expressed this succinctly,

“Ministries and Agencies invite us to consultations but their minds are already made up. The participation is merely to satisfy donors that the consultative process was undertaken. The issues and comments raised are not taken seriously. The documents are already prepared. Inputs from NGOs should be gained from the inception phase through to the end” (Sherry, Children’s Organisation, June 9, 2000).

Although the participation of civil society in the poverty reduction programmes of the agencies portrays a significant trend, there are also substantial differences in the extent of involvement among the agencies. **Table 11, Appendix 6** affirms the diminishing order of participation in the programmes of UNICEF, GOSL, PRF, UNDP, BNTF, and UNIFEM.

The findings show that the participation of civil society organisations in poverty reduction activities were highly correlated to the national and international agencies emphases, and their target groups (women, children, youth, older persons and rural residents). The analysis suggests that the roles initiated by the organisations themselves are also significant in determining and realising the specific needs and interests of persons with disabilities, women, youth and rural households. It also signifies that the contributions of civil society organisations are extremely important to these vulnerable groups as they seek to reduce poverty in St. Lucia.

The National Council for Disabled Persons, one of the NGOs surveyed, has been advocating relentlessly over the past twenty years for the betterment of persons with disabilities within the nation. The Association has employed varying strategies to secure equity of access and the right to educational and employment opportunities for its members. The Executive Director of the Association recorded the participation of the members in the meetings, planning, and policy design of PRF, BNTP, UNDP, UNICEF and the Government but held that enough was not done to assist persons with disabilities.

These considerations prompt us to move to the evaluation of collaboration among national organisations and agencies.

6.4.7 Evaluation of Collaboration among Agencies

“All the organisations are working at the same goal but they are working individually clouding the issues ... There is need for unity among the agencies working in St. Lucia” (Pela, June 26, 2000).

The effectiveness of collaboration was cited by many interviewees as significant to any sustained efforts to reduce poverty in St. Lucia. Civil society organisations were engaged in a process aimed at evaluating the relative success or absence of a working relationship with other agencies.

The findings of such an evaluation showed that civil society organisations valued most of all their working relationships with the poor and among organisations similar to themselves (CBOs and NGOs). **Table 12 and Diagram 30 in Appendix 6** present these features. The peculiar feature is that proportionately more NGOs recorded poor and non-existent working relationships with central government than the CBO community. The agency, whose working relationship was judged by most of the organisations as being relatively poor and non-existent, was local government. These collaborative efforts must be further strengthened if an integrated approach to poverty reduction will be sustained and its impact maximised.

6.4.8 A Convergence of Potential and Challenges

Civil Society organisations have been credited with a central and advantageous position in the provision of services to local communities (Deakin 1998 and Kothari 1996). These organisations assessed their greatest strengths as their resourcefulness to the communities and target population that they serve in their efforts to reduce poverty. They concur that their skills, services, centrality, accessibility, ability to mobilise the community, training and development of human capital by their organisations towards the communities and target groups are all areas which their resourcefulness is manifested. **Table 15, Appendix 6** provides an outline of the identified strengths of these organisations.

The evidence revealed that many of the CBOs recognised the commitment of a core of their membership as one of the strengths of their organisations. In addition, a strong sense of community was recorded as major advantages to CBOs as residents entrusted and demonstrated confidence in leaders of CBOs to mobilise, plan and manage scarce community resources (as in Bouton, 3.5.1). There was also a sense among some of these organisations that the types and nature of programmes (variety and people-centred) that they implemented contributed greatly to their success and effectiveness.

Many of the NGOs, on the other hand celebrated the nature and types of programmes along with their longevity and experience as contributing to the strongholds of NGOs in their efforts to reduce poverty on the island.

Civil Society organisations were not only empowered by their resourcefulness and commitment to community, but they are also constrained by their own limitations. The most poignant challenges outlined by most organisations were the absence or inadequacy of resources (financial, technical, managerial and infrastructural). This finds expression later in their assessment of assistance needed for future activities. **Table 16, Appendix 6** details the weaknesses of civil society organisations.

A significant number of NGOs identified the need for greater collaboration to improve efficiency and effectiveness and to avoid duplication, conflict and waste of resources. A few identified problems of leadership, management, membership and implementation of programmes as some of their challenges. One survey respondent stated candidly one of the main constraints to sustained poverty reduction in St. Lucia,

“There is a big turf war going on. Everyone is safeguarding his/her territory with no collaboration. Everyone recognises the need for collaboration but no one wants to give up anything” (White, June 9, 2000).

Among the CBOs, apart from the issues of scarce resources, the poor and irregular attendance of their members, a burnt-out core of volunteers and leaders are all significant issues grouped under membership weaknesses of these organisations.

Though there may seem to be some contradiction, in that, on the one hand, CBOs identify membership commitment and a sense of community as a fundamental strength of their organisations, poor and irregular attendance at meetings and an overloaded core of volunteers are also identified as weaknesses. The issues become clearer when we reflect on the issues raised earlier of attendance at meetings and participation in projects and programmes. The organisations outlined candidly that attendance at meetings was relatively poor with occasional postponements but membership participation in projects and programmes was overwhelmingly consistent.

In addition, meaningful participation became an issue and was identified as an area of weakness. The issues raised were that of depth of participation, the political divisiveness and polarisation of communities and community groups. It was highlighted that residents would only participate if and when they would receive direct benefits from the programmes.

In 6.4.5, many NGOs identified the lack of influence and involvement in the designing of policies as the least developed component of their participation in poverty reduction

activities. However, only one NGO identified this as one of their limitations. This may not have been envisaged as a weakness of their organisations but rather as a deficiency within the processes initiated by the other agencies. Other important issues were also highlighted as weaknesses including access to agencies and resources, legal representation for the poor, community-based research and training.

The challenges experienced by civil society organisations were further magnified when these organisations responded to the issue of assistance that they would require for poverty reduction. This will be examined in **6.5.2, Institutional Strengthening for Poverty Reduction.**

Section D: Vehicles for Community Development and Social Transformation

6.5.0 Back to the Future

The diverse nature of poverty reduction activities which civil society organisations outlined that they would be undertaking within the next five years, serve to confirm the finding of the more contextual research activities undertaken in Baron's Drive, Bouton and Palmiste. It is conclusive that these civil society organisations conceptualise poverty as multi-dimensional and that they believe that any fragmented and isolated approach that does not address the human, physical, financial, natural and social capital of the communities is likely to achieve little.

6.5.1 Poverty Reduction Priorities

Civil society organisations placed great emphasis on the following poverty reduction activities:

- Educational and skills training programmes including scholarships, technical vocational training, computer technology and an apprenticeship system. These would specifically target parents, caregivers, communities, adolescents, youth and children.
- Improvement of Social Infrastructure and Support Services such as day care centres, homes for abused children, older persons, housing, ramps, handrails and pathways for persons with disabilities, counselling and crisis interventions, feeding programmes, legal aid and medical clinic, home visitation programmes, thrift shops, resource libraries, community based support groups and youth development programmes.
- Public Awareness and advocacy on poverty issues and influencing policy processes and content.

- Employment and income generating activities for self-sufficiency in youth including entrepreneurial schemes, micro industries and food processing programmes.
- Institutional Capacity Building and the development of a coordinated approach among agencies for reducing poverty.

One NGO, the National Youth Council (NYC) exemplifies one significant attempt to address poverty reduction in St. Lucia. In collaboration with the Poverty Reduction Fund, NYC held a National Search Conference on Poverty (December 1999) in which the issues of unemployment; barriers to credit, technical support and infrastructural development; consumption and value patterns; psychological problems were all critically examined and solutions to these constraints were recommended.

The Council's President (Cenac, June 8, 2000) outlined that their interests over the next five years are in youth entrepreneurial programmes, skills training and employment generation activities; and the provision of support programmes for its underprivileged members. Cenac noted that a key aspect of poverty reduction, for the NYC, was ongoing research and monitoring and evaluation of programmes, projects and mechanisms for poverty reduction.

The proposed activities for the community-based organisations are similar but they place additional emphasis on the following:

- Physical Infrastructural projects including roads, toilets, showers, laundries, bus shelters, bridges, water, electricity, telecommunications services and fishermen's docking stations.
- Security of livelihoods programmes such as micro projects funds for farmers, fisher folk and small businesses as well as the death benefits fund.

- Strengthening of community institutions and the improvement of collaborative relationships among the community organisations.
- The promotion of sporting excellence, musical, arts and craft appreciation and community self help projects to beautify the community and enhance aesthetic capabilities among community residents.

All of these activities were outlined as being inherent within their organisations' five-year plan for reducing poverty.

The Cecilian Rays of Anse-La-Raye can be utilised to illustrate the nature of interventions outlined by CBOs. The group emphasis is to enable members to participate in activities, which would develop their total being. It focuses on folk music culture and the performing arts. Their poverty reduction activities outlined for the next five years included musical production of St. Lucian and Caribbean folk music; the establishment of an arts' education centre and programme for community members; the provision of scholarships and musical instruments for young musicians and the generation of employment opportunities through performances in the tourism sector.

6.5.2 Institutional Strengthening for Poverty Reduction

The organisations were subsequently requested to outline the kind of assistance they would require in pursuing these activities, given five options: financial, technical, administrative, organisational strengthening and others. **Table 17, Appendix 6** provides an outline of the assistance identified by civil society to pursue their poverty reduction activities within the next five years. It must be outlined that this multiple response question is perhaps the question, which received the highest response rate other than the closed ended questions.

Among the 44 organisations, 86% indicated that they needed finance, 84% outlined their need for technical assistance, 88% indicated that their organisations needed strengthening, 68% outlined that they needed administrative support and 27% stated that they needed some other forms of assistance. Other forms of assistance included monitoring and evaluation systems; community support and participation; facilities, equipment and training; increased agencies collaboration; advisory services; and government recognition.

The potentially good news for the poor is that none of the organisations indicates that it had plans to discontinue its participation in poverty reduction activities. Rather than any of the organisations indicating its plans to discontinue its participation in poverty reduction, all but one community based organisation, indicated their intention to meaningfully participate in reducing poverty in the community.

6.6 Conclusion: “The Creation of an Enabling Environment”

The survey findings reveal that civil society organisations are performing significant roles in reducing poverty in St. Lucia. These roles include responding to needs, problems and distresses of the poor (relief and welfare) as well as mobilising, planning and implementing projects and programmes at the community and national levels (community and nation building). It would also be observed that their capacity to sustain such meaningful roles is detrimentally affected by financial, human and institutional constraints.

Despite these constraints and the evidence advanced for the fatigue of social organisations, NGOs and CBOs have formulated their plans to be vehicles for community development and social transformation. CBOs continue to conceptualise their roles in the provision of relief and welfare; creating access to resources, opportunities and choices to their communities; and implementing physical and social infrastructural projects. In addition, they purposefully seek to facilitate the holistic development of their communities and members and to strengthen the capacity of their organisations to effectively serve the needs and interests of the poor.

NGOs have served the roles of educators and catalysts in their efforts to reduce poverty in St. Lucia. They are actively involved in the planning, implementation and discussion of policies despite their recorded limited influence in policy formulation. NGOs' proposed roles embody the components of advocacy, skills training, employment generation, empowerment of the poor and building the institutional capacity of other civil society organisations for poverty reduction.

The prospective roles require that emphasis be placed on the organisational strengthening and capacity building of CBOs and NGOs. This would foster greater community ownership of development processes and the sustainability of projects. Moreover, an approach, which seeks to coordinate the development plans, processes and programmes for poverty reduction among these organisations and agencies must be formulated. Chapter Seven proposes some of these essential components for an integrated and coordinated approach for poverty reduction.

CHAPTER SEVEN



Critical Reflections on Poverty Reduction in Saint Lucia

Chapter Seven

Some Critical Reflections on Poverty Reduction in St. Lucia

7.0 Introduction and Outline

This thesis has explored the significant challenges experienced by St. Lucia, a Small Island Developing State, in its efforts to reduce poverty. Throughout the text, we examined the conceptions, analyses, policies, strategies, institutional frameworks, the roles of civil society organisations and their implications for poverty reduction in St. Lucia. This chapter concludes our exploration by providing a critical overview of poverty reduction in St. Lucia utilising the underlying assumptions of the study. It also tries to offer some direction on the way forward to sustained poverty reduction.

The three central tenets of this Chapter are (1) poverty is complex and multidimensional in its nature, therefore, prudence must be exercised to triangulate research activities which will inform our conceptions, analyses, policies and strategies; (2) poverty reduction activities must capture the diverse challenges, constraints and opportunities operating within the dynamic national, regional and international environments and (3) an integrated and coordinated approach is essential for sustained poverty reduction. The following Sections relate these concluding reflections.

Section A provides an overview of the context for understanding development planning and policy for poverty reduction in St. Lucia, outlining the need for socially responsive macroeconomic policy and an understanding of the institutional web of relationships that exclude the poor.

Section B summarises the constraints, challenges and opportunities for sustained poverty reduction in St. Lucia outlined within the preliminary discussions and analyses. These critical issues are identified in an effort to create the context for possible recommendations.

Section C proposes some essential elements of an integrated and coordinated framework for sustained poverty reduction in St. Lucia. This framework outlines the need for a dynamic and multi-dimensional model of poverty including conception, analyses and diagnoses. It also underscores the importance of the livelihoods and coping strategies of the poor.

Broad based participation of the poor themselves in participatory research, policy, planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and maintenance is emphasized as being essential. Addition, key elements of the framework are meaningful partnerships, networking and fruitful collaboration with civil society organisations, the private sector, social funds and among government agencies implementing poverty reduction activities in St. Lucia.

Section A: Understanding Development Planning and Policy for Poverty

Reduction in St. Lucia

7.1.1 “Houses made of Coconut Palms⁸”

An overview of the evolution of poverty perspectives, methodologies, conceptions, strategies, policies and interventions in St. Lucia reveals similar changes to those in the poverty issues and debates within the international community. This similarity is fundamentally influenced by a small, open economy heavily dependent on foreign trade; the pattern of development planning pursued; and the conditionalities of agencies providing loans, grants and counsel. The agencies include the Bretton Woods Institutions, United Nations, European Union, United States Agency for International Development, Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and other Regional institutions.

The above factors and agencies are poignant in shaping and determining the features of the development policies and processes; the pursuit of economic growth; poverty conceptions, strategies, interventions; and the resources allocated towards poverty reduction.

The local reality is that over an extended period in St. Lucia, development was coterminous with economic growth. The architects and auditors of development forecasted and formulated policies and plans for the island's progress utilising frameworks that categorically fostered growth in the economy. The belief was that the productive sectors (although mainly monocrop) were pre-eminent and ultimately such growth, as measured by the GDP per capita and other conventional economic indicators (Balance of Payment, Prices, Direct Foreign Investments, Employment, etc.), would 'trickle down' and result in improved standards of living for all. These assumptions were

⁸ The memories of my childhood serves as a reminder that while some children settled for card box houses, a group of us were more sophisticated. We surveyed our immediate environment for fallen coconut branches or even cut off palms from existing trees. We constructed houses of coconut palms, weaving the branches into creative designs. These houses seemed so strong, green, and luxurious. However when the sun, wind, rain and other external factors and agents acted against the houses, the whole thing falls down suddenly.

translated into policies and strategies and such interventions were largely to the detriment of the social, cultural and environmental development of the island (Confidential Memorandum to Cabinet, September 14, 1998).

When this assumption lost its credibility, it was generally held that the development of the State could be attained through 'discretionary national economic management' with some attention to human resource development and the provision of services such as education, health, sanitation and community development and empowerment. The conceptions of social funds also emerged as a strategy to reduce poverty in St. Lucia. In addition, the principles of good governance with its emphasis on accountability, transparency and participation have also received currency among policy formulators and development agencies as necessary to development and poverty reduction.

The roles of organisations and agencies such as the Pan American Health Organisation (PAHO), United Nations Agencies, international and regional financial institutions (World Bank and CDB) and other multi-lateral agreements (European Union and USAID) acted to catalyse investment in the areas of health, rural development, education, mortality, child survival and development, good governance and poverty reduction.

7.1.2 Poverty Realities: 'Living from Hand to Mouth'

One of the significant factors always identified as critical to effective poverty reduction was the performance of the economy. Whereas this condition remains true, all things being held constant, it is not sufficient. The economists, social sector staff and politicians interviewed agreed that despite significant growth of the St. Lucian economy over the past decade, there were important imbalances in the distribution of income and wealth, creating a condition of poverty. Nevertheless, they differed on their causes.

The assortment of factors outlined which perpetuated poverty included the propensity to save; lack of opportunities or skills; by products of a capitalist economic system; the nature of the St. Lucian economy (small and open to international competition with an

excess or unlimited supply of labour); susceptibility and volatility of the market system to natural disasters; the loss of quota subsidies and preferential treatment in the banana industry; and an 'overlapping generation model' in which wealth is skewed towards persons whose families passed it on to them in the form of inheritance.

However, there still remains one qualitative difference in the deliberations of the professionals within the social sectors as opposed to those within the field of economics and politics and that is the weight or preoccupation given to economic growth by the latter in their conception of poverty, analyses and intervention strategies.

The major emphasis of most economists still seems to revolve around the consumption/income and basic needs approach with a minimalist role of government (proponents of trade liberalisation and privatisation of markets). At least two economists maintained that the heavy investment in the social sectors (including poverty reduction) of present policies epitomised a mismanagement of the economy. Such investments, it was argued, should be channelled to the 'productive sectors' (tourism, manufacturing, small businesses and agriculture).

On the other hand, the Social Sector Staff interviewed were convinced that poverty was more complex but the primary cause was the inequity of the economic system and low priority given to social planning and development (in the past). This Social Sector Staff highlighted the need to examine the socio-cultural variables and institutional web of relationships, which create and maintain intergenerational poverty and limited the opportunities for social mobility among the poor.

Given the characteristic features of the small island developing state, the dynamics of poverty and the substantially weak institutions of social welfare and development, a dependence on local revenue savings and diminishing grant funding cannot sustainably reduce the significant poverty proportions in St. Lucia. It is imperative that substantive investments, and a coordinated approach be employed to reduce poverty.

The distinctions among economists, social sector professionals and politicians can be addressed within a coordinated and integrated development planning framework, which fosters sound macroeconomic management contributing to higher rates of saving and efficient investment in both physical and human capital. This element forms part of a new paradigm of “socially responsive macro-economics” outlined by Michel Camdessus at the Inter-American Development Bank on March 26, 2000.

This paradigm is significant because of its focus on economic growth that is people-centred, sustainable and promotes protection for the environment and respect for national cultural values. The new paradigm is grounded in fundamental human values and emphasises that democracy must not only be representative but participatory. This democracy engenders the participation, commitment and ongoing dialogue with civil society. Good governance, anti-corruption efforts, transparency, openness and accountability in economic management are all highlighted as basic requirements of a system, which continuously pursues greater equity and poverty reduction.

Furthermore, it transcends domestic or national realities to provide an international dimension of social responsiveness. It advocates for common action within the international community to transform the opportunities of globalisation into an effective instrument for development. Moreover, it calls for the humanization and security of the international monetary and financial system and the fulfilment of financial and technical assistance and commitments to advance human development and reduce poverty.

This framework highlights the need to examine the poverty issues within their global, regional and local context. It recognises that the issues of ownership, political inertia and constraints on financial, human, natural, and physical capital were influential to poverty assessments and its reduction. Other elements of this paradigm are discussed in more detail in Section C. However, a broad overview of the constraints, challenges and opportunities for poverty reduction in St. Lucia will be undertaken first in Section B.

Section B: A Critical Overview of Poverty Reduction in St. Lucia

7.2.1 'Extracting the Bitter Herbs'

Through the triangulation of the diverse research activities undertaken in St. Lucia (March to June 2000), a number of focal issues emerged from the research process and these will be discussed in this critical overview of poverty reduction activities in St. Lucia. These focal issues highlight constraints, challenges and opportunities to sustained poverty reduction, which are not merely deficiencies in the resource bases of the activities.

First, there were identifiable deficiencies in the framework or model for poverty reduction. Agencies' conceptions, analyses and diagnoses of poverty as well as the processes initiated for poverty reduction by the agencies were dubious and lacked any distinctive framework. In this way, agencies such as the Poverty Reduction Fund and the Basic Needs Trust Fund were envisaged as performing similar roles. The only apparent difference was the sources of donor funding.

There appeared to have been a consistent lack of knowledge, consensus and clarity among technocrats, practitioners, and agencies on desired conceptions, analyses and strategies to be employed for poverty reduction. This was made abundantly clear during the National Consultation on the Directional Plan for the Eradication of Poverty (4.2.0). It was outlined that research activities and agencies purported to study and reduce poverty in St. Lucia but did not clearly outline 'what poverty'. As a result, research findings tended to vary somewhat significantly in their identification of the poor and in the recommended interventions. This lack of clarity inherent within the models of poverty consequently led to ill-informed policies, strategies, and targeting mechanisms of those persons who are in need of assistance within the society.

Second, the dissatisfaction of civil society organisations surveyed with the management, accountability, transparency and effectiveness of the mechanisms established for poverty

reduction was evident. Furthermore, challenges to claims of participation and good governance in poverty reduction were held as being rather 'cosmetic', lacking depth and meaning. Interviewees and survey respondents emphasised the need for greater participation, collaboration and networking in poverty reduction activities. Even the specific roles of government agencies and the Social Funds involved in poverty reduction were unknown to community based and non-government organisations and poor communities.

The reality is this: government and its institutions cannot reduce poverty on a sustainable level on their own. Meaningful partnerships, networking and collaboration with poor communities and civil society organisations are absolutely essential. Such agencies must be accountable to the public providing more efficient and transparent management and operational procedures.

These issues provide the opportunity for sensitisation programmes, consultation and decision making with the poor. An emphasis on community based awareness programmes and mobilisation strategies would fulfil significant gaps. Government technocrats should not act alone formulating poverty reduction strategies 'in the belly of the whale'.

This also provides the opportunity to redress the zero-sum conceptions of the relationships between government and civil society and between centralised and decentralised government. The hard and fast distinctions made between the state, market and civil society, although they may be analytically helpful, may well serve to maintain a great divide inhibiting meaningful efforts for sustained poverty reduction policy, planning and implementation. The roles of government agencies, the private sector and civil society in poverty reduction are essential elements to an enabling environment for good governance.

Third, social funds are celebrated in Latin America and elsewhere for their efficiency, institutional flexibility, social participation, partnership in development, effectively

targeting the poor and sustainable strategies. However, the horrid reality in St. Lucia may be that their initiation may have served the interests of the donor agencies rather than the establishment of clear institutional and conceptual frameworks for effecting qualitative changes in the lives of the poor. Sufficient efforts are not being undertaken to integrate, coordinate and clearly delineate the roles and operations of the social funds with other stakeholder agencies and organisations. This would serve to maximise their potential advantages, since it was constantly heralded that agencies and organisations engaged in a range of activities characterised by duplication, waste of scarce resources and minimal results.

These issues were intricately linked with the theme of political and socio-cultural inertia, strategic timidity and financial imprudence in times of economic austerity. Current efforts at poverty reduction were too technocratic, lacking a strong political will and an adequate policy framework to move the process beyond rhetoric. Conversely, political involvement was unduly concentrated in the implementation of projects and programmes rather than the development of the policy framework.

Fourth, a poorly developed and weakened central government coordinating machinery exacerbated the deficiencies in the institutional mechanisms for poverty reduction. This may have contributed to interviewees and survey respondents claims that poverty reduction mechanisms and programmes are donor driven, externally propelled agendas and lack national ownership and impetus. Notwithstanding this, there were many instances when territorial defence or “turfism” plagued the institutional management among agencies.

There exists the need to overcome these perceived political, socio-psychological and institutionalised inertia within the small island. These perceptions constrain the effective implementation of poverty reduction activities and may even serve to undermine the efforts of the agencies to collaborate, network and coordinate their activities with poor communities, civil society organisations and the private sector.

Fifth, the lack of a critical mass of skills to move the process towards sustained poverty reduction is another significant impediments to St. Lucia's efforts. A continuous outflow of human resources from St. Lucia and the region (emigration); an inadequate pool of technical, managerial and research expertise in the areas; and the increasing promotion of the technical staff to perform administrative roles significantly hindered progress in implementation of projects and programmes.

Additionally, the failure of administrators, managers and professional staff to follow due process was a considerable deficiency within the system despite the fact that the framework was conceptually faulty. A number of significant limitations and challenges identified among State agencies included:

- ❑ Apathy, demoralisation, mediocrity and malaise;
- ❑ Lack of ingenuity, proactivity and capacity to perform;
- ❑ Dearth of strategic ways of thinking and of conceptualising plans, programmes, projects and policies;
- ❑ Ill-advised policies and practices over the years contributing to a bitter harvest.

Sixth, an absence of social indicators and targeting programmes coupled with poorly developed monitoring and evaluation systems has contributed to ad hoc identification of the poor as well as the further fragmentation of programmes from their stated goals and objectives. Inadequate databases and information resources were additional deficiencies inherent to the above activities related to poverty reduction.

There is evidently a need for the systematic collection, analysis and dissemination of social indicators required for informed decision-making and monitoring of poverty reduction projects and programmes. In addition, this is necessary to strengthen the

capacities of agencies for the development, implementation and coordination of such activities with national development plans and policies.

Among all of these constraints and challenges, fruitful opportunities for sustained poverty reduction can be identified. These include the need for community-based advocacy and research; systems to effectively target the poor; local and national ownership and implementation; monitoring and evaluation systems; capacity building and mobilisation programmes; networking and collaboration; broad based consultations and participation of the poor in policy processes, planning and implementation stages; and creating an enabling environment for civil society organisations and the private sector. These are useful variables for consideration within the policy and planning framework for poverty reduction explored within 7.3.

Section C: Towards a Policy and Planning Framework for Poverty

Reduction

7.3 The Integrated and Coordinated Approach for Poverty Reduction

The constraints, challenges and opportunities that persist over the issues of poverty and its reduction can be addressed within a holistic framework for poverty reduction. In this final section, we present and discuss an analytical framework that responds to this challenge, the Integrated and Coordinated Approach to Poverty Reduction (ICAPR).

There are a number of fundamental elements that make up this framework:

- A conception of poverty that is dynamic, multi-dimensional and captures an appreciation for the vital poverty approaches of income/consumption, basic needs, human poverty, social exclusion and participation. It therefore becomes expedient that more and less contextual research methods are undertaken to provide measurable/observable characteristics as well as the understanding/interpretation of the poor;
- Analyses of poverty that embody, not only the deprivation of basic physical needs and the consumption of goods and services, but also sources of well being. These should include livelihoods and coping strategies and the socio-cultural, political, economic and spiritual elements influencing the lives of the poor. These should also relate such elements to web of institutions, laws and relationships operating at the domestic and international levels
- Strategies at the domestic level that make human development and poverty reduction the centrepiece of economic policy by providing adequate social protection and social investment programmes, opportunities and access to the poor;

- Making the economic, social and political institutions (including institutional performance, laws, regulations, standards and codes that support the functioning of markets) pro-poor. Transparency, accountability and good governance must be established as essential building blocks of such institutions;

- Well-targeted, cost-effective and sustainable social fund programming must be ensured with great institutional flexibility but transparent and accountable procedures. These funds should also have the capacity to engender partnerships in development and mobilise poor communities to participate, claim ownership and sustain community based projects and programmes.

On the basis of the paradigm for a “socially responsive macro-economics”, the critical overview of poverty reduction, and the above considerations, the case for an Integrated and Coordinated Approach for the Poverty Reduction (ICAPR) is overwhelming. Such an approach offers the possibility of giving greater equity of consideration to the spatial, environmental, social, cultural, economic and political dimensions of development planning and policy for poverty reduction. In addition, it seeks to integrate economic development with social equity, good governance and environmental sustainability through meaningful inter-agency and inter-sectoral collaboration and coordination.

Moreover, the approach advocated requires that policy formulators, planners and administrators have a duty to include poverty reduction among the core objectives of their policies, plans, programmes, projects, operations and services and that no one is exempted from making the fundamental changes required for sustained poverty reduction. The proposed ICAPR Framework is represented in diagrams 26 and 27.

Diagram 26: Understanding the ICAPR Framework**Traditional Approach**

- Emphasis on economic planning and growth
- Weak frameworks of conceptions and analyses
- Limited Scope of Policies and Strategies
- Scattered Programmes and Mechanisms
- Hand-out, top-down interventions
- *Limited inter-agency and inter-sectoral coordination and networking*

Modus Operandi: Isolated, Scattered and Vertical Programmes with ambivalent conceptions, analyses and a limited range of strategies.

Integrated and Coordinated Approach to Poverty Reduction (ICAPR)

- A Process and an Approach
- Holistic Development Planning and Policy for Poverty Reduction
- Multi-dimensional conceptions and analyses
- Formulation of National Policies and Strategies
- Integration of economic development, social equity, good governance, and environmental sustainability
- Pro-Poor Institutions and Participatory Processes

Diagram 26 highlights the critical changes that must be effected in development planning and policy for poverty reduction. The transition is towards a more inclusive, comprehensive and synchronized process than what was practised in the traditional formula.

Diagram 27: The Essential Components of the ICAPR

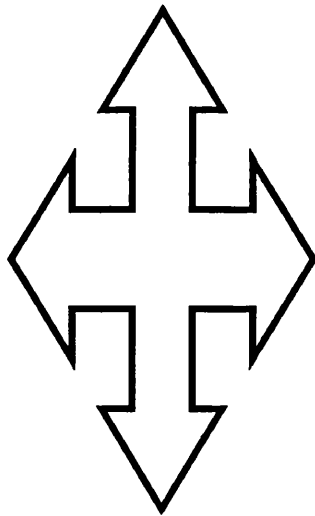
ICAPR must focus on the relationships among the following variables:

- Dynamic national, regional and global environments
- Economic growth and sound management of the economy
- Multi-dimensional conceptions and analyses of poverty
- Policies and strategies that include social protection and investments beneficial to the poor
- Sustained Poverty Reduction
- Stakeholder participation and issues of good governance

Modus Operandi: Comprehensive, Integrative, Collaborative, Inter-agency, multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary

Objectives of ICAPR

- Maximise efficiency and efficiency in utilisation and management of resources;
- Reduce/eliminate waste of resources, duplication;
- Efficient utilisation of human technical capacities;
- Articulate long term strategic goals and plans for poverty reduction;
- Formulate pro-poor policies; Identify strategies to translate proposed policies to tangible outputs; and
- Meaningful Participation of the Poor.



Institutional Framework for ICAPR should include the:

- Political Directorate/Policy Formulators;
- Policy Support and advisory Committee;
- ICAPR Coordinating Unit;
- Implementing ministries, social investment funds, civil society organisations and the Private Sector;
- International and Regional Agencies and Institutions; and
- Representation from Poor Communities/Beneficiaries

Elements of ICAPR

- Inter-sectoral linkages;
- Transparent and Accountable institutional frameworks and Mechanisms;
- Participatory Assessments, Planning and Implementation;
- Sound Databases, Indicators and Monitoring and Evaluation Systems;
- Long term strategic goals and plans
- Comprehensive analyses of current situation, issues, constraints, strategies and policies.

Diagram 27 provides an overview of the essential components of the ICAPR relating the overall goals and objectives to relationships of key institutions, agencies and communities as well as important elements of the approach. This process is undertaken to effect a more multifaceted, broad based and coordinated approach for poverty reduction.

7.3.1 Conclusion

There has emerged a greater consciousness in St. Lucia that development and poverty are multi-dimensional and that an equally multi-dimensional strategic approach should be fostered to effectively address the issues. However, approaches to poverty reduction in St. Lucia remain predominantly strewn and ungainly.

These initial thoughts on an Integrated and Coordinated Approach to Poverty Reduction have been stimulated by the global challenges of globalisation, liberalisation and integration of the international system on the small island developing state of St. Lucia. It is fuelled at the domestic level by the poverty ratios; a plethora of scattered poverty reduction strategies with no map or compass; the expressed need to strengthen the economy; and to mobilise and empower the communities and society. Moreover, the effects of such global challenges, Caribbean realities and domestic imperatives on the social, cultural and environmental fabric of St. Lucia warrant that a synchronized and comprehensive approach be initiated for poverty reduction.

This approach seeks to ensure inter and intra-generational equity by addressing the sustained reduction of poverty in a coordinated and holistic framework. It emphasizes the participation and ownership by the poor themselves and partnership with government, the private sector, civil society and international organisations. It requires clarity of conceptions, analyses and strategies among agencies, mechanisms and organisations in an effort to facilitate meaningful networking and to adequately address needs and empower the poor.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

METHODOLOGICAL TOOLKIT FOR RESEARCH MPhil ON POVERTY REDUCTION IN SAINT LUCIA, ANTHONY GEORGE, UNIVERSITY OF WALES SWANSEA, SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES, SA2 8PP, UK.

This methodological toolkit provides an overview of the methods which will be utilised to examine the poverty definitions, measurements and strategies; policy processes, systems and content; institutional frameworks, capacity and networking in Saint Lucia. It is also an attempt to outline the relationship between the conceptual models and methods as well as the usefulness of combining or “nesting” research methods to gain greater depth, richness and validity of findings and analyses. The purpose of the toolkit is to generate discussion and gain critical feedback on the models and research methodology utilised in this study reinforcing the participatory and empowerment ideals espoused by the researcher.

The use of the selected methods is premised on a reformulated broader theoretical framework of “*dialectical synthesis*” advocated by Johnson et al (1990). In their book, The Structure of Social Theory, the authors argue that despite the variety of competing theoretical prepositions, each endeavoring to represent itself as the sole, valid approach to an understanding of the social world, *a dialectical synthesis attempts to provide a systematic means of recognizing the interconnecting paths which structure this thicket of controversy: a basis for conceptualizing the structure of unity which underlies the diversity and fragmentation.* They reinstate that *all social theory seeks to elucidate two poignant questions: What is the nature of social reality and how best can we obtain knowledge of it?*

Johnson et al (1990) argue that the investigation of social relations logically entails such theorizing whether the investigator recognizes it or not. The writers argue that *past and present controversies are best understood in terms of a dialogue between “strategies” of theorizing.* Two basic assumptions, which have been grafted from this epistemological orientation, are:

1. *The alternative realities that each of the models or competing schools of theory and methods identify have equal status; and*
2. *None of the alternative elements identified by the models should be reduced to any other.*

It must always be remembered that research methodologies are inextricably linked with one’s theoretical orientation. Social research clings to theoretical underpinnings, methods of investigation, fieldwork, analysis and assessment of findings in an effort to explain or develop a law or understanding of human behaviour or social interaction. Issues of theory and methods are therefore inescapably and indispensably intertwined to the research enterprise.

The conceptual frameworks advanced in the poverty debate, which has flourished over the past decade, capture the significance of the issues of theory and methodologies by the disputes evoked over definitions and measurements; analyses and interpretations; and policies and planning. Certainly if all the theories and corresponding methodologies inherent in the models used to study poverty would identify the same persons as being poor, one gets the general impression that the whole poverty debate would not be all that “emotive, rhetorically powerful and ideologically useful” (Bevan 1997).

Soniya Carvalho (1994) illustrates this multi-dimensional nature of poverty and the link between theory and method in her response to the question of ‘Who are the poor?’ Carvalho notes that the answer depends on how we define poverty, i.e., in terms of which indicator(s) of well-being (income, consumption, real unskilled wages, or social indicators) employed and the corresponding methodology to the conceptual framework utilised. The reality is that people differ in the understanding of poverty, its causes and measurements/indicators. In addition, one’s conception of poverty or theoretical perspective and methodology espoused are integrally linked and provides useful insights into the measurements, indicators, causes, analysis, policy statements, plans and reduction strategies.

This “connectedness” of theory and method is systematically and graphically deduced from the work of Paul Shaffer (1998). In his review of the poverty reduction strategies of the United Nations Development Programme, the consultant clearly elucidates the conceptions of poverty/deprivation inherent in two models, *the physiological deprivation model* and *the social deprivation model*. The methodological preference of each model is evident in the indicators and proxies of poverty and deprivation used by the approaches.

Shaffer cogently summarized the focus of *the physiological deprivation model* as being “*the non-fulfillment of basic material or biological needs, including inadequate nutrition, health, education, shelter, etc.*” (1998: 3). According to him, the physiological deprivation model is prominent in two different approaches to poverty in the developing world: the *income/consumption approach*, which underlies the money metric utility and the specification of the poverty line and some versions of the *basic human needs approach*.

Poverty is represented within the physiological deprivation model by indicators and/or proxies such as total household income/consumption; income/consumption per capita; income/consumption per adult equivalent; food share in consumption; weight for age (underweight); weight for height (wasting); body mass index; incidence of illness; literacy rates; years of schooling; education level; access to safe drinking water; access to sanitation; person per room; floor area per person and other related indicators and proxies.

Paul Shaffer proceeded to outline the diversity and richness, which *the social deprivation model* affords by identifying that “*it uses a wider conception of deprivation, which may include vulnerability, lack of autonomy, powerlessness, lack of self-respect/dignity etc.*” (1998: 3). Shaffer states that the social deprivation model challenges the physiological deprivation model on two different levels: it rejects the representation of relevant aspects of well-being in terms of equivalent

income/consumption or of goods/services or achievements that fulfill basic needs; and it rejects the specifications of an adequate level in terms of basic physiological deprivation in the two approaches.

Shaffer identifies three formulations within this model, which he notes are particularly relevant to the developing world. These are the **human poverty**, the **social exclusion**, and **participatory approaches**. Poverty is represented within the social deprivation model by such indicators as longevity (mortality), knowledge (literacy rate), standard of living (access to health and water as well as malnutrition), social integration, participation, marital instability, precariousness, vulnerability, voicelessness, capability, risk management and powerlessness. Diagrams 1 and 2 provide a snapshot of the models of poverty/deprivation along with their indicators and proxies.

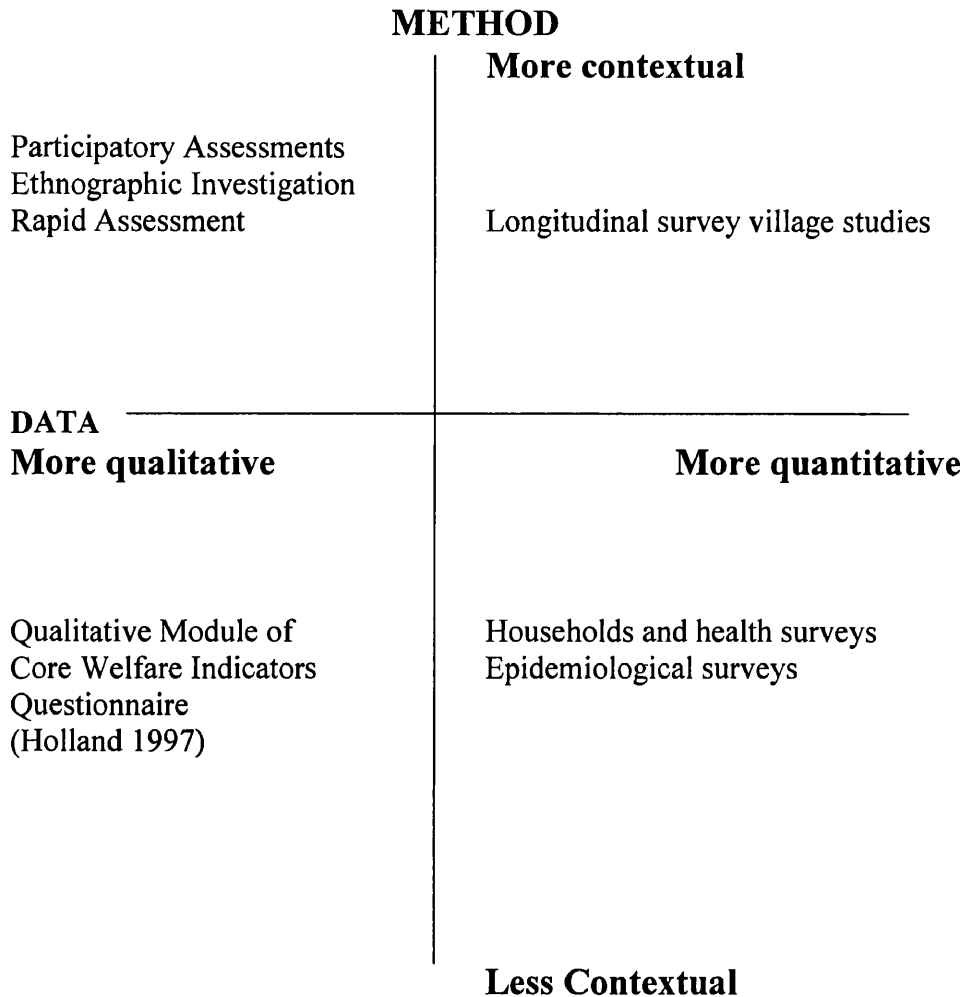
Although Shaffer emphasizes the fragmentation and specialization inherent within and between the models and their approaches, I am convinced that neither can provide us with any comprehensive understanding of the nature, severity, and dynamics of poverty. Both models, and even their distinctive approaches, as single-stranded approaches, are limited in their conceptualization of poverty measurements, diagnostics, methodologies, strategies and policy recommendations. It is therefore necessary to adopt the integrative approach highlighted as a “dialectical synthesis” so that we may capture the multi-dimensionality of poverty.

Drawing from this conception of poverty/deprivation and the work of David Booth et al (1998), a poignant relationship can be established between the theories and methods adopted within this study. In their work, Participation and Combined methods in African Poverty Assessment: Renewing the Agenda, Booth et al (1998) argue that,

“The literature often labels both the methods employed and the type of data collected as “quantitative” or “qualitative”, which creates a problem with regard to analyzing what the comparative advantages of different methods and data types are in understanding poverty and vulnerability. We therefore distinguish methods of data collection according to their degree of contextuality: those data collection methods are labeled contextual which attempt to understand poverty dimensions within the social, cultural, economic and political environment of a locality...If the idea of “context” is employed in this way to distinguish different methodologies, the terms “qualitative” and “quantitative” can be used in a more consistent and literal fashion to refer to the degree of quantifiability of the recorded data” (1998: 52).

They then propose a framework in which methods and data types are examined as a continua, “where a certain type of investigation uses more or less contextual methods and produces more or less qualitative data” (1998: 52). This can be graphically represented as:

Data Collection Step: The Method/Data Framework



Source: Participation and Combine methods in African Poverty Assessment: Renewing the Agenda, Booth et al (1998: 53)

Less Contextual methodologies (e.g. surveys and secondary data sets) will provide us with the following indicators:

- **Income/consumption measures:** total household income/consumption, income/consumption per capita, food share in consumption.
- **The poverty line:** a predetermined consumption standard below which a person is deemed poor (Carvalho, 1994). This poverty line can be drawn to measure **absolute poverty** (based on an estimate of the cost of a bundle of goods that satisfies basic consumption needs) or **relative poverty** (which sets the poverty line at a certain percentage of mean national consumption);
- **The headcount index:** the number of people divided by total population size (measures the proportion of population below the poverty line);

- **The poverty gap index:** based on the distance of the poor below the poverty line (does not capture the severity of poverty);
- **The squared poverty gap index** (captures the severity of poverty giving greater weight to those further below the poverty line);
- **Welfare indices** (such as the human development Index, human poverty index)

More contextual methodologies (e.g. participatory local appraisal, semi-structured interviews and focus groups) will provide us with indices, which are locally specific and participatory, more dynamic or explanation oriented and would usefully complement the non-contextual methods.

These indices would include:

- ❖ Gender roles and traditional beliefs as explanations of vulnerability of specific groups;
- ❖ The role of trust, corruption and conflict as determinants of poverty;
- ❖ The role of households and community networks - social capital;
- ❖ Traditional health beliefs, metaphysical importance of land and earth and dietary beliefs; and
- ❖ The role of civil organisations and political representation for the poor.

The authors are convinced nevertheless that, *“certain information necessary to understand poverty manifestations and poverty dynamics can be obtained through contextual methods of data collection only. In these instances, strict statistical representativeness has to give way to indicative conclusion, internal validation and replicability of results”* (1998: 54).

An analysis of the work of Paul Shaffer (1998) and David Booth et al (1998) illuminates the link between method and theory which can be summed by examining the use of indicators in the conceptions of poverty and deprivation and the method and data continua depicted in the participatory and combined methods framework. These reveal that the physiological deprivation model may be naturally inclined to utilize less contextual methods and more quantitative data whereas the social deprivation model would be cultured towards more contextual methods and more qualitative data.

The Nature of the Study and the Scope of Methods

Implicit to the research design is the desire to refrain from attaching static label or categorizations to such a dynamic phenomenon such as poverty. Nevertheless, for discursive purposes, the nature of the research can be deduced as being *exploratory*. *Four dimensions, which will be explored are the:*

- 1) processes by which poverty is measured, perceived and interpreted;
- 2) intervention strategies, institutional frameworks, capacity and networking; and
- 3) appropriateness of insights obtained in contextual and non-contextual research methods; qualitative and quantitative data; and the conceptual models of poverty and deprivation
- 4) the feasibility of undertaking a more careful national study incorporating participatory combined methods in poverty assessment.

These dimensions are explored in an effort to show their relevance to policy formulation and planning for poverty reduction in St. Lucia.

The following methods/tools, which will be utilised during the research exercise, can be short-listed as:

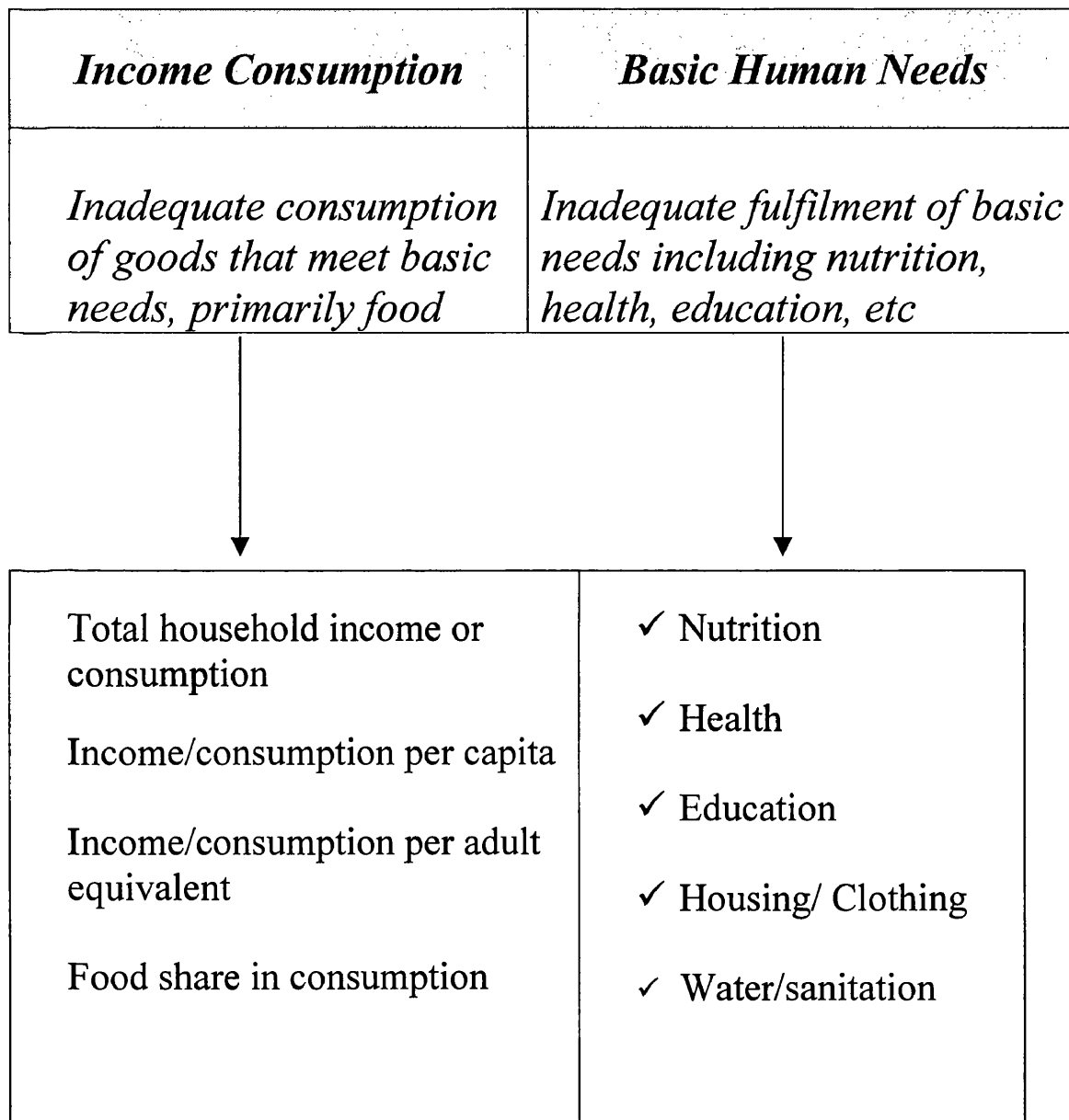
1. Secondary analysis of household and community surveys and census data, reports, project documents and other official documentation;
2. A survey of non governmental and community based organisations on poverty reduction in Saint Lucia;
3. Semi-structured interviews with policy formulator, legislators, leaders and managers of key stakeholders' organisations;
4. Focus group interviews among NGOs and CBOs leaders to triangulate findings of survey;
5. Participatory local appraisals or participatory learning and action (PLA) research will be conducted also within the selected communities.

These tools will not be utilised as single-stranded methods, rather a great effort will be made to integrate the methods through a process of triangulation. For example, a series of pre-tests to the survey will be initiated with the civil societies (NGOs and CBOs) through group discussion and an attempt will be made to verify the findings through focus group discussions. In addition, secondary information needing greater clarity and analysis will be pursued during the semi-structured interviews. This research exercise does not seek to duplicate studies already undertaken or in progress. Thus, where secondary data/information is available, such will be utilised assessing its value and limitations.

In addition, priority of status or prominence is not given to any of the methods adopted. Rather, the effort is to demonstrate the usefulness of each method and the degree to which they can commensurate for the weaknesses of the other in providing greater explanatory power and a broader framework for analysis. To sum, the methods are utilized in a purposefully integrative process of triangulation. Issues of resources, time constraints and appropriateness of methods to the institutions and communities studied will be considered by the researcher.

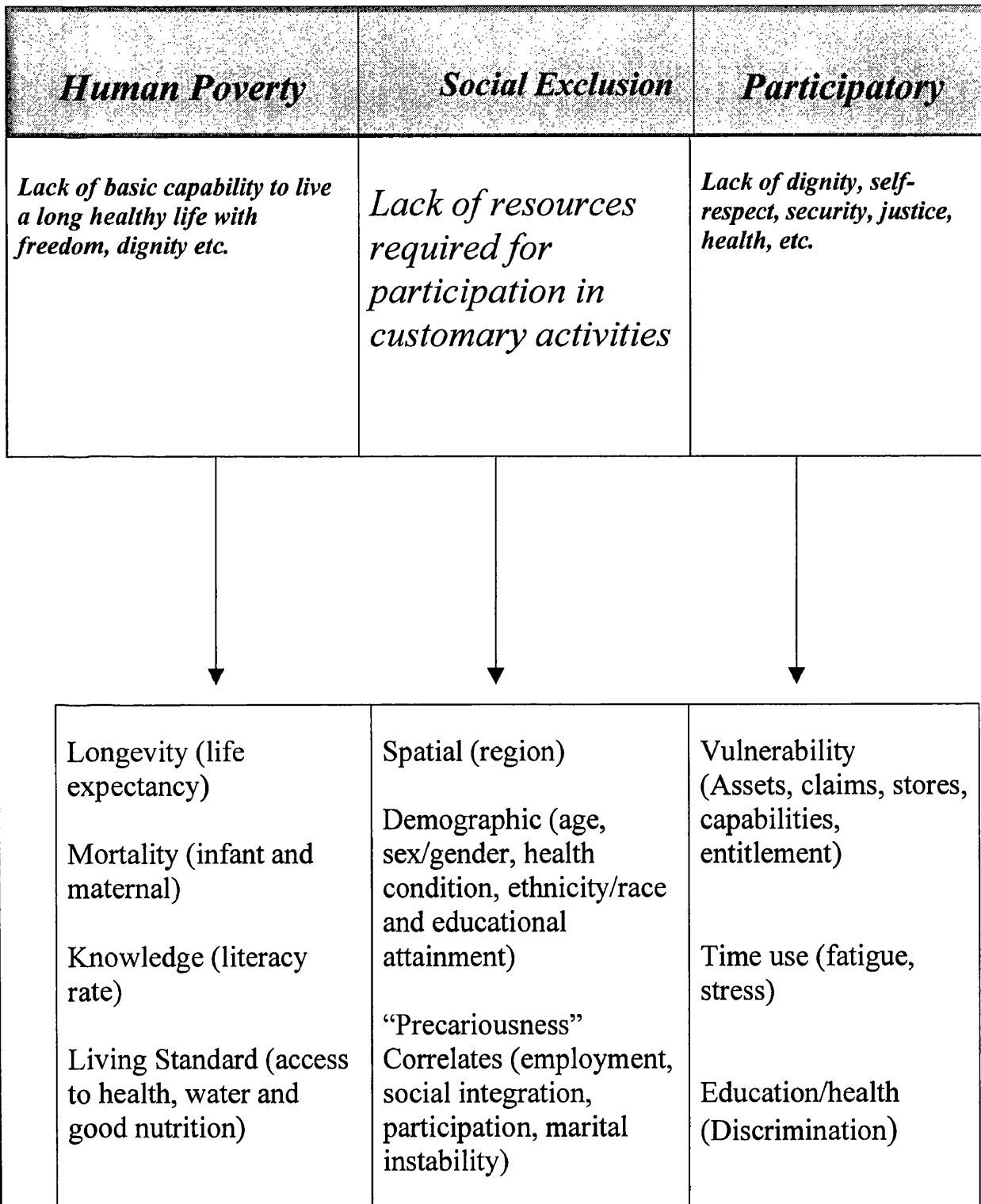
Diagram 1. CONCEPTIONS OF POVERTY

PHYSIOLOGICAL DEPRIVATION MODEL



Source: Poverty Reduction Strategies, A Review
United Nations, New York (1998: 10)

Diagram 2. SOCIAL DEPRIVATION MODEL



Source: Poverty Reduction Strategies, A Review
United Nations (1998:10)

INSTRUMENT I

SURVEY OF NON GOVERNMENTAL AND COMMUNITY BASED ORGANISATIONS ON POVERTY REDUCTION IN SAINT LUCIA

PURPOSE

The objectives of this survey are to outline the nature and extent of poverty reduction activities undertaken among NGOs and CBOs and to assess the degree and level of participation of these organisations in planning, policy formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Government of Saint Lucia's poverty reduction programmes and projects.

HYPOTHESES

1. NGOs and CBOs participation in the planning and implementation of poverty reduction programmes, projects and/or services designed by the Government of St. Lucia has a causal/direct relationship to the profile, leadership and management of these NGOs and CBOs.
2. The constraints, limitations and challenges affecting the participation of NGOs and CBOs at all the levels of Government's poverty reduction has an associational/indirect relationship to the membership characteristics, leadership and management of the NGOs and CBOs.
3. The participation of NGOs and CBOs at all levels in the Government of Saint Lucia's poverty reduction projects and programmes are more likely to contribute to the development of the necessary institutional capacity and networking for sustainable poverty reduction.

DIMENSIONS

The scope of the survey can be outlined as:

- a. Profile of NGOs and CBOs
- b. Membership Characteristics of the Organisations
- c. Leadership and Management
- d. Details of participation in poverty reduction projects and programmes
- e. Strengths, Competence, Constraints, Limitations and Challenges to participation
- f. Participation: degree and level(s)
- g. Assessment of Government's poverty reduction policy formulation process, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation

INDICATORS

The operational measurements for the dimensions of the survey are as follows:

Profile of NGOs and CBOs

- Name of organisation
- Age since registration and/or establishment
- Mission statement /Goal
- Strategies
- Main sphere of activities

Membership Characteristics of the Organisations

- Size of membership
- Type of membership: formal or informal
- Age proportions of the membership
- Employment Status of members
- Ranking of members attendance at meetings and participation in projects and programmes

Leadership and Management

- Leadership offices, selection process and period of tenure
- Type of facility for planning, meetings among membership, management of the organisation
- Number and position persons employed with the organisation
- Sources of Funding
- Proportionate ranking of sources of funding

Details of participation in poverty reduction projects and programmes

- Number of project(s) and/or programme(s) planned and implemented by your organisation
- Type of project(s) and/or programme(s) planned and implement
- Target Population: numbers, age cohort(s), sex, geographic area(s) and means of targeting

Participation: degree and level(s)

- Participation in government-assisted programmes, projects and agencies: etc. PRF, BNTF, UNDP, UNICEF, UNIFEM
- Level(s) of participation: Planning, Implementation, Policy Formulation, Monitoring, Evaluating

Strengths, Competence, Constraints, limitations and challenges to participation

- Ranking or degree of success
- Area(s) of strength identified
- Area(s) which need strengthening
- Area(s), which should be discontinued

Ranked assessment of Government's poverty reduction policy formulation process and content, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation**QUESTIONS AND SCALES*****Section 1: Organisational Profile***

1. What is the name of your organisation? -----

2. In what year was your organisation formed? -----

3. Please outline the major goals of your organisation

i. -----

ii. -----

iii. -----

Some organisations have a mission statement to their goals. Does your organisation have such a statement? Yes [] No []

4. Have your organisation developed any way(s) or plan to accomplish its goals?

Yes [] Go to 4 (a)

No [] Go to 4 (b)

4 (a) If yes, what are the strategies employed by your organisation to accomplish its goals?

4 (b) If no, what are the reasons for not developing strategies to accomplish your organisation's goals?

5. How would you describe the main of activity of your organisation?

Please tick all appropriate responses

- a. Educational
- b. Developmental
- c. Social Club
- d. Sports
- e. Cultural
- f. Religious
- g. Humanitarian

h. Other (please specify) -----

6. Is your organisation registered with the Department of Civil Registry?

Yes No

If yes, in what year was your organisation registered? -----

7. Is your organisation registered with any of the following:

Please tick all appropriate responses

- a. Government Ministry
- b. National Association
- c. Regional Association
- d. International Organisation

e. Other (please specify) -----

If yes, please specify which agency and/or Ministry and the year of registration

a) -----

b) -----

- c) -----
- d) -----
- e) -----

8. What is the total number of members within your organisation?

9. Is there a stipulated membership acceptance process for individuals who wish to join your organisation? Yes [] No []

10. If yes, which of the following highlight(s) this process:

- a. Completed application forms []
- b. Recognition of such individual(s) at group meetings []
- c. Acceptance of such individuals by the membership []
- d. Executive decision on acceptance of such individuals []
- e. Others (please specify) -----

11. How many (if known) of your members are:

- i. Male [] Female []
- ii. Over 35 years [] Under 35 years []
- iii. Unemployed [] Working []
- iv. Working Part-time [] Working Full-time []

12. How would you describe your members' attendance when a meeting is open to all? Please tick the appropriate responses below.

AI. MEMBERS ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS –

All attend	Some attend	A few attend	Very few attend
[]	[]	[]	[]

AII. MALE ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

All attend	Some attend	A few attend	Very few attend
[]	[]	[]	[]

AIII. FEMALE ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

All attend [] Some attend [] A few attend [] Very few attend []

AIV. Have you ever had to postpone a meeting(s) because of very few members in attendance? Yes [] No []

If yes, how often does this occur?

Most of the time [] Sometimes [] Seldom []

How would you describe members' participation in the organisation's projects and programmes?

BI. MEMBERS PARTICIPATION IN PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES

Highly Consistent [] Consistent [] Inconsistent [] Highly Inconsistent []

BII. MALE PARTICIPATION IN PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES

Highly Consistent [] Consistent [] Inconsistent [] Highly Inconsistent []

BIII. FEMALE PARTICIPATION IN PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES

Highly Consistent [] Consistent [] Inconsistent [] Highly Inconsistent []

13. Which one of the following best describes the leadership and management function of your organisation? *Please tick appropriate response.*

- i. An elected executive body []
- ii. An appointed committee []
- iii. A voluntary core of members []
- iv. Members volunteer to perform tasks as needs arise []
- v. Other (please specify) -----

14. What type of facility is mainly used for your organisation's meetings and coordination of its projects and programmes? Please tick one response only.

- i. Rented office []
- ii. Community centre and/or town hall []
- iii. Owned building []
- iv. Access to private/public offices []
- v. Other (please specify) -----

15. Does your organisation have any person(s) employed to perform administrative, managerial/executive or technical functions?

Yes [] **Go to Question 16** No [] **Go to Question 17**

16. If yes, how many staff members perform the following functions:

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| i. <u>Administrative:</u> | Full-time ----- | Part-time ----- |
| ii. <u>Managerial/executive:</u> | Full-time ----- | Part-time ----- |
| iii. <u>Technical:</u> | Full-time ----- | Part-time ----- |
| iv. <u>Voluntary services:</u> | Full-time ----- | Part-time ----- |

17. What is/are your organisation's main source of funding? Please tick one response only.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| i. Fund-raising | [] |
| ii. Membership dues and/or donations | [] |
| iii. Loan(s) | [] |
| iv. Grants/subventions | [] |
| v. Others (please specify) ----- | |
-

18. Does your organisation receive financial assistance from the following agencies? Please tick all appropriate responses.

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| i. Local Community | [] |
| ii. Government | [] |
| iii. Private Sector | [] |
| iv. National Organisations | [] |
| v. Regional Organisations | [] |

vi. International Organisations/ Donor Agencies

19. Please indicate your organisations sources of revenue in order of priority from 1 (greatest amounts received) to 7 (least amounts received), only where appropriate:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| I. Membership total contributions | <input type="checkbox"/> | V. Local Community | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| II. Government | <input type="checkbox"/> | VI. Private Sector | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| III. National Organisations | <input type="checkbox"/> | VII. Regional Organisations | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| IV. International Organisations | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

20. Is your organisation involved in poverty reduction activities in St. Lucia?
 Yes **Go to Question 21** No **Go to Question 24**

21. **If yes**, which of the following best describe(s) your organisation's sphere of involvement:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| i. Public awareness, sensitisation and advocacy on the situation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ii. Conducting social research and other forms of investigation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| iii. Project and/or programme planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| iv. Influencing and/or designing national policies for poverty reduction | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| v. Providing welfare assistance for poor and indigent persons, households and/or communities | <input type="checkbox"/> |

22. In providing the above service(s), which of the following do you target?

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| I. Youth | <input type="checkbox"/> | VII. Women | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| II. Households | <input type="checkbox"/> | VIII. Children | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| III. Rural residents | <input type="checkbox"/> | IX. Men at risk | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| IV. Urban residents | <input type="checkbox"/> | X. Persons with disabilities | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| V. Nationals/citizens | <input type="checkbox"/> | XI. Foreigners | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| VI. Individuals | <input type="checkbox"/> | XII. Community level | <input type="checkbox"/> |

23. Please indicate in order of priority, on which of the following your organisation uses its resources from 1 (most resources used) to 12 (least resources used), where appropriate.

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| I. Youth | <input type="checkbox"/> | VII. Women | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| II. Households | <input type="checkbox"/> | VIII. Children | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| III. Rural residents | <input type="checkbox"/> | IX. Men at risk | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| IV. Urban residents | <input type="checkbox"/> | X. Persons with disabilities | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| V. Nationals/citizens | <input type="checkbox"/> | XI. Foreigners | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| VI. Individuals | <input type="checkbox"/> | XII. Communities | <input type="checkbox"/> |

24. Does your organisation participate in any of the following government coordinated or assisted poverty reduction programmes or activities?

Please tick all appropriate responses.

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Poverty Reduction Fund (PRF) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| United Nations Women Fund (UNIFEM) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Ministerial Portfolio Poverty Reduction Activities (GOSL) | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If your organisation does not participate in any of the above, GO to Question 33

25. What is your organisation's level of involvement in the above activities?
Please tick where appropriate.

Programme	Attend Meetings Workshops Seminars	Planning	Implement Projects Programme	Policy Design	Monitoring	Evaluation
PRF						
BNTF						

27. Overall, how successful has your organisation been in the poverty reduction activities?

Very successful [] Successful [] Fair [] Unsuccessful [] Outright failure []

28. What are the main strengths of your organisation (if any) in participating in poverty reduction activities in St. Lucia?

- 1. -----
- 2. -----
- 3. -----

29. What are the main weaknesses of your organisation (if any) in participating in poverty reduction activities in St. Lucia?

- 1. -----
- 2. -----
- 3. -----

30. Does your organisation plan to discontinue its participation in any of the poverty reduction activities? Yes [] No []

If yes, please specify which programme and the level participation to be discontinued:

31. What is/are the reason(s) for discontinuing your participation?

- Inadequate funding []
- Lack of technical support []
- Lack of membership support for the activities []
- Ineffective coordination among stakeholders []
- Inefficient management and administrative structures []

Other(s) (please specify) -----

32. How would you characterise the level of collaboration/working relationship with the follow agencies or organisations involved in poverty reduction in St. Lucia?

I. Central Government

Excellent	Fair	Poor	Non-existent
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

II. Local Government

Excellent	Fair	Poor	Non-existent
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

III. Other Community Based Organisations

Excellent	Fair	Poor	Non-existent
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

IV. Other Non Government Organisations

Excellent	Fair	Poor	Non-existent
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

V. The Poor and Indigent

Excellent	Fair	Poor	Non-existent
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

33. Thinking about the immediate future, what aspects of poverty reduction is your organisation interested in pursuing within the next five years?

1. -----
2. -----
3. -----
4. -----

34. What kind of assistance will your organisation need in pursuing these poverty reduction activities? Please tick appropriate responses.

Financial Technical Administrative

Organisational strengthening Other(s) -----

INSTRUMENT II

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS' SCHEDULE

The purposes of the semi-structured interviews are to:

- I. Outline the poverty definitions, measurements and strategies adopted by major agencies undertaking poverty reduction activities;
- II. Discuss the concepts, issues and perceptions of poverty definitions, measurements and strategies of other key organisations and agencies in St. Lucia;
- III. Describe and evaluate the policy process, content and system utilised in the formulation of poverty reduction in St. Lucia;
- IV. Examine and assess the institutional frameworks, capacity and networking of agencies involved in implement poverty reduction activities in St. Lucia.

DIMENSIONS AND PROPOSED SCHEDULE

I. POVERTY DEFINITIONS, MEASUREMENTS AND STRATEGIES

- ❖ Identifying the poor and poverty
- ❖ Explaining poverty
- ❖ Methodologies for poverty measurements

II. POVERTY CONCEPTS, ISSUES AND PERCEPTIONS

- Poverty reduction, alleviation and eradication: Do these objectives/goals differ?
- People's ability to earn or consume (income/consumption measurements of poverty) and other concepts of vulnerability, well-being and sustainable livelihoods
- Effectiveness and strengths of poverty reduction strategies
- Limitations and/or constraints experienced

III. POLICY PROCESS, CONTENT AND SYSTEM

- ❑ Context and philosophy for the formulation of poverty reduction policy
- ❑ Policy Process: legislative mechanisms, participation
- ❑ Policy content and options: Welfare, Investment Fund, Credit Enterprises/ Micro Financing
- ❑ Policy outcome: desired target and means of achieving these outcomes
- ❑ Institutions/Structures, Management, Accountability, Transparency and Incentives
- ❑ Poverty reduction policy, sectoral linkages and the role of the private sector

IV. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS, CAPACITY AND NETWORKING

- Nature of agency/institution and work undertaken
- Staffing of the agency
- Philosophy/goals, objectives, strategies, and target group(s)
- *Volume and nature of programmes and projects*
- Management, Accountability and Transparency
- Source(s) of funding and conditionality (if any)
- Evaluation of agency's effectiveness: strengths and limitations
- Networks of civic engagements
- Scaling up/out /mergers

TARGET GROUP

Semi-Structured interviews will be pursued with policy formulators and legislators and leaders of key stakeholders' organisations such as the Board of Directors, Poverty Reduction Fund (PRF); Executive Director, Manager, PRF; Basic Needs Trust Fund; National Women's Association; National Youth Council; Saint Lucia Save the Children Fund; National Councils of and for Older Persons; Regional/Community Development Foundations; and Presidents of Regional Associations of Mothers' and Fathers' Groups (especially within communities identified as being 'deprived').

The semi-structured interviews will be initiated through non-probability sampling utilising the means of official correspondence and telephone conversations as well as informal visits. Purposive and snowball sampling designs will be the primary means adopted but other non-probability designs may be utilised.

INSTRUMENT III

FOCUS GROUPS AS QUALITATIVE RESEARCH (This instrument will be utilised as an optional tool considering the constraints of time and resources).

The purposes of the focus group discussions are to:

- 1) **Discuss the perceptions and meanings of poverty, its measurements and causes**
- 2) **Outline the coping mechanisms and strategies adopted by the poor**
- 3) **Examine the poverty reduction activities undertaken in the related communities**
- 4) **Identify the policy issues and intervention strategies considered as priority to the poor**

Focus group interviews will also be conducted among NGOs and CBOs leaders to triangulate findings of survey;

DIMENSIONS AND PROPOSED SCHEDULES

- I. Poverty perceptions, meanings, measurements and causes
- II. Coping strategies and outcomes
- III. Community, household and individually based interventions
- IV. Prioritised policy issues and intervention strategies

TARGET GROUPS

The group interviews will be conducted at the regional offices or community centres of the respective communities. Gatekeepers from the Ministries of Community Development, Health and Education (Community Development Officers, Family Case and Welfare Officers, Community Health Nurses and Youth and Sports Officers); the Community Relations officers of the PRF AND BNTF; and the National Youth Council as well as its Students' Brunch will be sought to facilitate these interviews.

Focus group interviews will also be conducted to capture the voices of the poor themselves to give credence to the fact that their reality counts.

The character of the groups selected will reflect those identified as being poor and indigent within the studies undertaken in St. Lucia, for example, unemployed youth, farmers, women, children and older persons. An attempt will also be made to conduct such interviews among students within these communities.

INSTRUMENT IV

PARTICIPATORY LOCAL APPRAISAL (PLA)

The purposes of the Participatory Local Appraisals are to:

1. Facilitate an interactive process in which residents engage in dialogue about the nature, dimensions, and causes of poverty, wealth and well being as perceived and/or conceptualised by themselves;
2. Identify the individuals, organisations and institutions important in and to the communities and their relationships;
3. Discuss poverty reduction activities undertaken within the communities in an effort to enable residents to express and analyse the realities of their lives and conditions and to plan for themselves what actions to take and to monitor and evaluate the results

Approach and Behaviour

The approach, which will be adopted, is to enable residents to share, enhance and analyse their knowledge of life and conditions within their own households and communities, to plan and to act. The act of eliciting and extracting information from the respondent and the expert development professional behaviour of turning up, dispensing wise words and advise to residents and the communities is necessarily reversed. Instead, the researcher is present to facilitate the process of learning, sharing, empowering and ownership of outcomes with, from and by the residents, communities, their organisations and institutions.

This approach is conceived both as a process and a product. As a process, residents become analysts of their own realities and of plans, strategies and policies to improve those realities. As a product, it provides added value for improved research output because of the comparative advantage of the research methodology, which allows for exploratory and explanatory depth of analysis.

Proposed Methods and Tools

In an effort to facilitate the process of learning, sharing, empowering and ownership, the following methods are proposed:

- i. *Transect walks and participatory mapping and modelling* - walking with key informants and residents through the communities or an areas, observing, asking, listening, discussing, identifying different conditions of deprivation and/or of wealth and well being and mapping and diagramming the zones.
- ii. *Well-being and wealth grouping and ranking* – identifying groups or ranking of households according to well-being or wealth, including those considered poorest or worse off. This will lead to the identification of key indicators of well-being.
- iii. *Institutional or Venn Diagramming* – identifying individuals, organisations and institutions important in and for a community and their relationships. This will reveal the norms of reciprocity or networks of civic engagement and lead to an analysis of linking and bridging social capital, renowned as ‘the asset of the poor’.
- iv. *Group discussions and brainstorming* – differentiated especially by gender, age, social group, wealth/poverty, employment status and occupation in an attempt to identify issues, preferences and intervention strategies.
- v. *Community meetings* – presentation and analysis of maps, models, diagrams and findings and the community members collectively check, correct and discuss.

TARGET GROUPS

The primary target group for the participatory local appraisal are the residents of the communities themselves. The research method will seek to adequately represent the diversity of groups present within the communities along lines of gender, age, social group and wealth and well-being differentials with an emphasis on the ‘Voices of the Poor’.

Nevertheless, the researcher will also seek to facilitate the participation of other stakeholders such as the civil society, government officials, PRF, BNTF, Donor agencies, etc. working within the communities.

APPENDIX 2

Anthony George, Research Student, University of Wales, Swansea, c/o Development Cooperation and Programme Planning, Ministry of Planning and Environment P.O. Box [REDACTED] Waterfront, Castries, Telephone [REDACTED], Facsimile:

Email: [REDACTED]

April 25, 2000

First Report of Ongoing Fieldwork Activities conducted in St. Lucia - Anthony George

Greetings from the warm and beautiful shores of St. Lucia. I do trust that you are experiencing good health and that you are not at all disappointed over the absence of correspondence from me during the first six weeks of fieldwork. I have experienced mixed fortunes over the past weeks including a stint of illness. Nevertheless, I would like to believe that the worse is over and that the groundwork having being laid will support the progress of my work.

1. Critical Issues outlined by Agencies

During the initial period, I engaged in the dissemination of information and discussion over the research proposal and methodological toolkit. The major concern expressed was that it would be difficult to undertake the extent of research proposed within three months. The recommendation made was that I should critically examine and contribute to the Social Assessment Study currently undertaken by the Poverty Reduction Fund; the stakeholders consultations convened by the Ministry of Development, Planning, Housing and the Environment in an effort to develop a directional plan of action for the eradication of poverty; the Social Recovery Programme coordinated by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries; and other related secondary sources of information. It was strongly advocated that I should use the Poverty Assessment Report of 1994 as my point of departure thus covering a period of six years. The suggestion is that I should evaluate and utilise these secondary sources of information and where applicable conduct further research.

This advice is consistent with the original design and endeavour to refrain from duplicating any research activity, which has already been undertaken. Nevertheless, my concern rests over the extent to which primary data from the interviews and focus group discussions would be made available for further analysis should there exist information gaps.

Another inquiry focussed on the validity and reliability of the epistemological underpinnings of the participatory methods and depth of consultation proposed identifying that this would result in a 'lack of intellectual richness'. This argument

stems from the epistemology of those who espouse that the social world can only be understood from the application of scientific enquiry (the adoption of natural science methods of observation, explanation and comparison by the academic and not by those being studied). It was contested that persons would be subjective and the research would not be valid nor reliable since such individuals are not capable of understanding, explaining, interpreting, or proposing meaningful programmes or projects, which would improve the quality of their lives.

The Ministry of Community Development has countered this argument by documenting that the participatory methodology recognises that people are not just to be studied but they have values. The Ministry argued that to participate is to empower, i.e., increasing capacity of those being studied not as subjects but as active participants in the whole project. It was communicated that via such participatory process, the objectives of the research will not be accomplished at the expense of others. It was envisaged that the participatory research method would result in people becoming better; it does not tantalise or raise hope without the wherewithal to stand on their own.

The discussions identified these propositions as paradigms utilised to understand and explain human behaviour. One of the premises of the research enterprise is to explore the use of these methods in development planning and policy for poverty reduction.

There were issues raised that the nature of the study was not clear, i.e., whether the study is descriptive or evaluative and merely intends to examine a series of poverty intervention strategies. It was noted that if the study is not simply a review of poverty definitions, measurements and reduction strategies, then its scope needed to be further defined explicitly rather than implicitly. Nevertheless, during further discussions, it was acknowledged that the entire research proposal was not examined and that upon a more thorough review, these issues were resolved.

I highlighted that implicit to the research design is the desire to refrain from attaching static label or categorizations to such a dynamic phenomenon such as poverty. Nevertheless, for discursive purposes, the nature of the research can be deduced as being exploratory. Four dimensions, which will be explored are the:

- 1) processes by which poverty is measured, perceived and interpreted;
- 2) intervention strategies, institutional frameworks, capacity and networking; and
- 3) appropriateness of insights obtained in contextual and non-contextual research methods; qualitative and quantitative data; and the conceptual models of poverty and deprivation
- 4) feasibility of undertaking a more careful national study incorporating participatory combined methods in poverty assessment.

I emphasized that these dimensions are explored in an effort to show their relevance to policy formulation and planning for poverty reduction in St. Lucia. Despite all attempts to clarify the issue of the study's emphasis, more comments keep flowing in

that the research objective must be clearly stated and that which is outlined is quite a bit to accomplish. The agencies seem to desire that I focus on one issue rather than all the issues outlined above. Issues of expected outcomes (reference our discussions at the review of the research proposal) and the timeframe/period over which the study will extend must also be addressed. To sum, Ezra Jn. Baptiste, Deputy Director of Development Cooperation and Programme Planning, states in his thorough review and critique of the research proposal and methodological toolkit:

“It is very essential that you look at macro economic variables in understanding poverty. For example, issues of economic management need to be examined – taxation, subsidies, fiscal measures etc. At the micro level, the economic behaviour of consumers is also critical. You do not have to go in-depth, but an incorporation of the micro-macro economic environmental and sociological factors present a good mix and greater foundation for analysis of the poverty situation and reasons why certain mechanisms have failed or succeeded...I think that the paper needs to focus a little more on what it sets out to achieve. For example, are you looking at the institutional mechanisms as the main focus of the study? Indeed other things need to be determined like definitions, etc. but emphasis should be clearly articulated.”

2. Gaining Informed Consent

The Ministries of Government along with the Poverty Reduction Fund have embraced the research process identifying the issues research as being timely and posed to contribute significantly to development planning and policy for poverty reduction in St. Lucia. Most persons, including myself, were surprised at the sudden death of the Project Manager of the Basic Needs Trust Fund and the resignation of the Community Worker prior to the manager’s death. This project has experienced such turnover of staff recently. The Chairman of the Steering Committee, Clive Hippolyte, has been appointed as project manager and efforts will be made to gain informed consent for the research exercise.

The Ministry of Planning has provided invaluable assistance with the provision of a working desk, computing services and access to information. The Community Development Department has furnished significant feedback on the proposal and has indicated that the Director, Community Services has been requested to facilitate the exercise. The Ministry of Education has gone to the extent of writing the other Social Sector Ministries requesting their support for and facilitation of the research exercise. The Ministry of Health has communicated that every assistance will be given in enabling the process of research. The Staff of the Poverty Reduction has been overwhelmingly cooperative providing information and opportunities for interviews and discussions on programs, projects, policies and procedures. Many leaders of community based organisations and local government authorities have responded favourably to the objectives and methods of the research exercise.

3. Participation in the National Consultation on Poverty Reduction

The Ministry of Planning convened the first consultation on March 29, 2000. I was allowed to participate fully and to assist in the co-ordination of the day’s activities. The consultation adopted the format developed at the Caribbean Ministerial Meeting on Poverty Eradication held on October 28 to November 1, 1996 in Trinidad and

Tobago. The meeting identified the key issues, which must be addressed for effective poverty eradication, as enhanced social protection and reduced vulnerability; productive employment and sustainable livelihoods; education; population and development; environmental realities; housing, settlement and infrastructure; management/financial resources for social development programmes; violence, drugs and crime; integrated social and economic strategies; institutional mechanisms; and measurement and monitoring instruments and mechanism for effective poverty eradication.

In accordance with this matrix, the meeting sought to identify the issues inherent within these thematic areas; the current situation, constraints and opportunities; the desired goals/targets; recommended strategies/actions; the timeframe for implementation; and the agency/institutions at the national, regional and international scene which would assume responsibility for implementation. The Ministry also gave me the opportunity to briefly discuss the research proposal to the fifty-one registered participants from more than thirty agencies (there were many more persons in attendance than those registered). Ongoing consultations with stakeholder organisations are being undertaken by the Ministry of Development, Planning, Housing and the Environment to develop a Poverty Reduction Plan.

4. The Poverty Reduction Fund and the Social Assessment Study

The Poverty Reduction Fund has been conceptualised as a medium term socio-economic project, which aims to provide support and assistance to low-income communities. As such, this intervention mechanism is designed to foster collaborative relationships among institutions and agencies and to facilitate community participation and ownership of the projects and programmes implemented. An initial attempt to merge the Poverty Reduction Fund (PRF) with the Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF) was declined by the Caribbean Development Bank, which provided a substantial amount of the BNTF funds. Despite the need to chart its framework of operations and the necessary institutional collaborative process, the Government of St Lucia's desire to accelerate the implementation of projects aimed at reducing poverty allocated one million dollars from the Budgetary Support funds granted by the European Union to the PRF. It was held that the Government's bureaucratic system operated slowly and there was the need to utilise a framework, which would readily address the demands/needs of the communities. The PRF was therefore seen as the appropriate framework despite its inaugural /design stage and its procedures were largely inherited from the BNTF system of operation. In effect, the PRF seem not only to duplicate the BNTF administrative system and procedures but served also to implement similar infrastructure projects with limited innovation and difference.

There have been significant developments at the PRF with the sanctioning of an audit report by the Prime Minister, Dr. Kenny D. Anthony. The audit team focussed on five issues, which were considered most significant, viz., compliance with mandate and authority; verification of assets; policies and procedures for the procurement of goods and services; verification of expenditure; and the James Belgrave Enterprise Fund. The main findings of the report were that:

1. The Board of Directors of the PRF have not functioned as the policy making organ of the PRF as required by Section 9(1) of the PRF Act;

2. Not all assets purchased by the PRF were available at the entity during the physical count by the auditors. However, they were subsequently made available;
3. There are no policies and procedures in place at the PRF for the procurement of goods and services;
4. There were discrepancies over the lack of controls in place for the use of telephones; expenses borne by PRF for the BNTF; accountability over the quantity of fuel purchased; fixed mileage allowance paid to an officer; stipends paid to board members even when no meetings are held; staff loan and advances issued without the approval of the Board; overpayment of salary to staff; and
5. There were no policies/procedures under which the JBEF should operate.

The report concluded, "generally the present situation at the PRF, where there are no policies and procedures in place to assist the entity in the performance of its operations, is due to the fact that the Board has not been performing its functions as the policy making organ of the PRF as required by the Act" (1999:3). Dr. Anthony subsequently requested that the members of his self-appointed Board of Directors to submit letters of resignation with the executive director having been forced to proceed on leave prior to the dissolution of the board. All of these developments seem to have been inspired by the findings of the audit report. However, the justification is offered that these actions are taken in the light of the reshuffling of the Cabinet of Ministers and the appointment of a new Minister of Planning. The former Chairman of the Board of Directors has affirmed the above explanation of the Prime Minister by stating that the dissolution of the Board was 'a prudent thing to do because there is a new Minister handling the portfolio'. It must be outlined that this precedence has been set in other sectors and agencies of government. Nevertheless, the public did not generally accept this explanation.

The management and operational deficiencies of the PRF is evidently no secret to the public since there has been much speculation and allegations made of the mismanagement of funds and conflict between the Executive Director and the Board of Directors. In addition, there was the perception among the Directors themselves that the Chairman was not resolute and decisive especially towards the Executive Director. In Vol. 6, No. 33 dated Friday, April 21, 2000 of the St. Lucia Mirror, the former Chairman of the PRF, Elijah Greenidge, absorbed the accusations when he noted, 'I personally take the blame. As Chairman, I was too soft. I had an attitude that didn't go down well with the other Board members. They supported me, except that they thought I should have taken stronger action. And I should have'. According to Greenidge, the Executive Director 'was not accustomed to taking orders from people...but there were certainly times when it was very difficult to do certain things and there were times when I had put my foot down to get things done'.

It is contended that this conflict has its origination in the appointment of the executive Director before the appointment of the Board of Directors, although the Poverty Reduction Fund Act gives the Board the power to hire and fire. The Executive Director, Curtis Greer, came from his previous post as Project Manager, BNTF where it is alleged that he had developed a style of flying solo with an aggressive personality and resistance to teamwork and collective decision-making. The Executive Director was well established and functioning when the Board was appointed. In fact, he

provided some form of orientation and update to the Board and sometimes felt that the Board was interfering in the management and implementation of his projects. The Executive Director outlined that his proactive actions has been conceived as “moving too fast or even out of step”.

The Board, on the other hand, held that the Executive Director skilfully circumvented its decisions, procedures and wishes. Then, there were brewing tension and correspondence documenting ‘attempts to undermine and cause division within the working environment via management by intimidation at the highest level’. Allegations of persistent managerial abuses and harassment of staff as well as the mismanagement of approved project funds were made over the print and electronic media. This reportedly developed by the dissatisfaction of staff members with the management ethics and personality of the Executive Director. The absence of an Operations Manual, explicit chain of command, clear procedures and systems of accountability may have exacerbated these difficulties.

I am currently reviewing an internal copy of the audit report since it has not yet been made public information. This reluctance has only added more fuel to the allegations made. The Political Leader of the Opposition United Workers Party, Dr. Vaughn Lewis, in his address to the nation on April 13, 2000, argued that there existed ‘a crisis of confidence and credibility’ and it was not enough that the Prime Minister should silently request the resignation of the Board of Directors. Dr. Lewis called for greater accountability and transparency demanding that the performance audit report be made public and a financial audit of the fund be undertaken immediately. He chastised the Government for contracting a World Bank loan for poverty reduction activities and argued that, ‘we must be careful not to follow the World Bank blindly’. He highlighted that although St. Lucia is small, it is a sovereign nation. Further decisions on the issues raised will be outlined in the next update.

Having contracted a Learning and Innovation Loan (LIL) from the World Bank, the fund has initiated its Design Stage by commissioning a Social Assessment Study. It should be outlined clearly that a Pilot Project Implementation Stage would follow this Design Stage even before it would fund community projects with the World Bank loan funding. The Social Assessment Study is designed to conduct a comprehensive study of poor and vulnerable communities in St. Lucia. Its purpose, according to the Draft Final Report of April 2000, ‘is to evaluate their resources and needs and elicit their views on their problems and the most effective methods for a targeting strategy, the operation and maintenance of completed sub-projects as well as the monitoring and evaluation of these subprojects’.

A stakeholders’ workshop was attended on Thursday, April 20, 2000 where the main results were presented and working groups among stakeholders were formed to fill possible information gaps in the Study. One thought, which consumed me during the stakeholders’ consultation, is that “process” seems to be disliked by many persons for different reasons. To some, it is a justification for dismal performance indicators while to others; it is a painstaking experience requiring resilience and hard work. This was conceived because of the manner in which processes are not documented and participants in the stakeholders’ workshop seem to be content with identifying problems and recommending solutions. The workshop sought to deviate from this two-stage approach and the difficulties experienced by participants in documenting

processes in the plenary sessions were only too evident. This workshop was meaningful and the study should prove invaluable to my research endeavour. A series of two additional consultancies will be commissioned aimed at developing an Operational Manual and appropriate Monitoring and Evaluation Systems.

5. Community Profiles and the More Contextualized Methods

Three communities within the Soufriere region have been selected to conduct the more contextual research activities. They are the communities of Bouton, Baron's Drive and Palmiste. The communities were selected because of a number of factors. First, the Poverty Assessment Report of 1994 identified these communities among the most indigent communities in St. Lucia. Second, they were among the communities selected by both UNICEF and UNDP for areas to implement projects and programmes to reduce and/or eradicate poverty. Research was conducted in 1998 and 1999 resulting in the publication of baseline data for the communities. During the period in which these research activities were finalised, they were part of my responsibilities as the officer co-ordinating the Government of St. Lucia's Programme of Co-operation with UNICEF and UNDP. Having considered the availability of baseline data and some degree of familiarity with two of the communities, a preliminary discussion of my decision to conduct research in the communities was disturbed by the news of the ravages of Hurricane Lenny in November 1999 to the coastal community of Baron's Drive.

The damages inflicted by Hurricane Lenny were great to the already impoverished community. To date, persons who did not have alternative family accommodation are still residing at the Soufriere Primary School, which was designated as a shelter since November. School has been disrupted for the past school term (more than fifteen weeks). The desire to expedite the relocation of persons affected by the storm at this delayed stage lead the Ministry of Planning to undertake a general survey to assess the extent of the damage and a housing survey to determine the housing needs, preferences and capacity of affected residents to pay for their housing needs. I was invited participate in a meeting held in Soufriere on March 24, 2000 which discussed the multiplicity of issues and proposed interventions. My assistance was sought to conduct the housing survey among the thirty-three affected households. This has been accomplished and was indispensable as an entry point into one community and among the Professional Staff and leaders of Community Based Organisations and Agencies within the Soufriere region.

6. Meeting with Leaders of Stakeholder Organisations in Soufriere

A meeting was convened among the leaders of organisations and agencies functioning within the communities selected on Tuesday, April 4, 2000. Despite the fact that fifteen leaders were invited representing ten organisations, six persons representing five organisations were in attendance. It was discussed that representatives may have been informed too late; community based meetings could be more effective with groups and organisations; and that the benefits as well as the result of participation should be clearly outlined. Letters of invitation were delivered at least ten days in advance to representatives who worked in the town. An officer offered to distribute those outstanding to leaders who worked and lived elsewhere. To my dismay, I discovered that some of the letters were not delivered while working at a desk in the

Soufriere Regional Office. I have subsequently resorted to my original plan of distributing all my letters to the workplaces and homes of leaders, near or far.

The approach taken is to honour the contributions made by existing community organisations and groupings and to underscore their importance within the communities. Community leaders expressed apathy over the number of research exercises already undertaken and the frequency with which they have facilitated researchers, international and local agencies and government personnel by providing access to their communities to no avail. The leader of one community expressed his reluctance to take anyone to his people after so much effort in the recently concluded Social Assessment Study. They expressed that the reports of the studies are not even made available to them or the community library. I emphasized the importance and benefits of their participation in this research exercise as not merely extractive but that it initiates the process of developing a plan of action for poverty reduction within their communities. Funds are available from UNICEF and UNDP for the implementation of such a plan but the necessary institutional networking and processes for implementation must be developed and documented to facilitate the release of such funds.

7. Meeting with the Public Sector Staff in Soufriere

Another meeting was held among the professional staff of the region on Thursday, April 13, 2000. Nine professional staff members representing eight departments of government services attended the meeting. A number of issues were discussed which necessitates further discussions (individual interviews as well as group discussions). Among the issues raised was the perception that there is a unique psychology prevalent in Soufriere, which seems to be detrimental to integrated development planning in the region. It was also outlined that the policy formulators and programme planners who recommended initiatives from Castries do not appreciate the peculiar reality of the communities in Soufriere. It was generally held that policy formulators have preconceived ideas and a menu of projects and programmes which did not depict local realities neither is there any community participation and integration in the decision making process. They also acknowledged that collaborative relationships among institutions, groups and agencies whether they are governmental or community based organisations were conspicuously absent. These factors, according to persons in attendance, accounted for a lack of sustainability in the projects and programmes; and planning is conceived as being short term.

The meeting examined some specific issues identified within the research proposal and held that the term, 'poverty' must be clearly defined to examine tangible and intangible aspects as well as its relative and absolute nature. It was held that the 'mindset and levels of actualisation' of poor persons differ and that there are aspects of poverty which are not understood, conceptualised and even perceived by the poor. The latter was used as a justification for adopting an autocratic role in program planning and the delivery of services. Furthermore, the importance of legislating policies for social development was outlined. Population policies to regulate the number of children within households were identified as an example since poor and large households correlated.

These issues require further research and to facilitate this process a matrix utilised by the Ministry of Development, Planning, Housing and the Environment was distributed among the staff present. The matrix seeks to develop a directional plan of action for poverty eradication in Soufriere and the professional staff present consented to identify the issues and identify the basis for action and recommended action. It was agreed that the exercise would be completed and submitted by Friday, April 28, 2000. Letters highlighting the issues discussed and recommendations made have been circulated to all contact persons identified involved in the research process. When these worksheets are forwarded, a master sheet will be prepared and circulated to all professional staff prior to the second meeting.

Rationale for Approach Undertaken for the Community Research Process

The community leaders and professional staff were informed that this research exercise seeks to explore the use of research methods for an integrated development plan for the eradication of poverty in three communities (Baron's Drive, Palmiste and Bouton), These communities were identified as being poor by the Poverty Assessment Report, 1994. The study also utilises research undertaken by UNICEF and UNDP in 1998/99 and other agencies working within the region via a consultative process to formulate a plan for poverty reduction in the communities mentioned above. They were informed that this was their opportunity to examine these reports and contribute significantly in the development of holistic strategies, programs, projects and a coordinated approach for improving the quality of life for all in Soufriere.

In addition, it was justified that participatory methodology (a more contextualised method) was paramount to the research process since none of the research methods employed previously did not afford residents the opportunity and status of analysing their own realities and to develop plans, strategies and policies to improve those realities. Information regarding the purposes, approach and behaviour, methods and tools and the target groups was disseminated and discussed with both groups of persons. It was highlighted to the leaders and professional staff that at the end of this research process, their organisations would not have only contributed to the development of an integrated and coordinated approach for poverty reduction but would understand the institutional processes, structures and networking; the conditions and issues of deprivation as well as intervention strategies, programs and projects most applicable to their communities. It was made abundantly clear that this can be done only through their collective participation, commitment and ownership of the process and outcome of these exercises.

This research process deliberately avoids merely eliciting and extracting information/data from residents. It seeks to empower individuals and groups through the participatory process. Many of the reports for studies undertaken, have not been discussed with nor made available to the community leaders or professional staff. The intended projects and programmes, which were to be developed from these studies, have not been even initiated although funds are available for the development of a plan for at least two of the communities studied. Residents, community leaders and professional staff lack the institutional networking necessary to commence this process or for any sustained poverty reduction activities. The performance of their roles is often undertaken in an uncoordinated and reactive manner. The challenge has been to get these key representatives to begin to think of an integrated, coordinated

and sustainable approach to reducing and/or eradicating poverty. This involves an attempt to utilise research findings, the sharing of their professional and organisational experiences within the communities and knowledge of each other's roles, capacity and competence.

Constraints, Challenges and Decisions

There are a few, yet significant constraints and challenges, which are currently experienced. These include the conduct of the survey of the civil societies; the financing of consultations and workshops among the leaders of community groups and professional staff within the Soufriere region and the perception that time constraints may detrimentally affect the conduct of the research exercise.

The constraint with the survey of civil society organisations is that there is no record of such organisations, which would make probability sampling credible or valid. My thoughts are that if this cannot be resolved by April 28, 2000, then I will resort to a purposive sampling method of selecting the organisations. The strategy that may be utilised is to list the organisations identified as working among the poor by the various reports and pursue the survey with these organisations.

Second, the cost of travelling and spending evenings in Soufriere on a regular basis is very expensive and acts as a constraint to the research process and the constant follow up needed to gain the participation and commitment of community leaders and the professional staff. Return transportation to the town of Soufriere cost \$14 and since it is the "tourism capital of St. Lucia", the cheapest room with basic amenities is \$65 per night. In addition, there are proposed consultations and workshops, which require much more resources. The latter may be reduced to half-day meetings and efforts will be made to gain some method of cost sharing with participating agencies. Travelling to the communities will be limited to one day weekly and spending the evening in Soufriere will be undertaken only if absolutely necessary.

Finally, the reality of running out of time is beginning to sink in! This is documented not a panic attack but to identify that the research enterprise is certainly influenced by the time constraints of the researcher. As the research process continues, efforts are undertaken to view the big picture and it is this endeavour, which jerks the perception of time constraints. I will persevere in the conduct of these research exercises and to facilitate the processes of participation.

Hard at Work!
Anthony.

APPENDIX 3

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July 12, 2000

Second Report of Fieldwork Activities conducted in St. Lucia – Anthony George

Greetings beneath the unpredictable weather and splendid shores of Swansea. I arrived here on the evening of July 3, 2000 and had the pleasure of residing with the family of Steve and Sarah Jones including Clem and Hope for three evenings before moving back to Beck Hall. They are my adopted family from the Pantygwydr Baptist Church and the time spent with them relieved me of the trauma in transition from a home to an empty room. Moreover, the first week was plagued with feelings of being unwell characterised by a couple of dizzy spells, an eye infection, fatigue from the fieldwork, and the trauma of a vehicular incident on the way to the airport. Yes, I have been through all of these including a doctor's visit and recommendation to rest with some prescriptive medicine. I am thankful to God Almighty for his mercies, protection and all of these experiences because it reminds me of the frailty of life and the essence of living. Now that all has settled, I think that it is prudent to report on the development of the research activities since the last report dated April 25, 2000.

Meeting of Core Group

As a climax to the broad based consultation undertaken on the research proposal and methodological toolkit, a meeting was held on May 3, 2000 in an effort to gain collective feedback on the research methodology/instruments circulated previously and to review the issues emanating from the varied interactions with agencies and at the consultations. It was anticipated that the results of the meeting would help to prioritise the issues and assist in streamlining the methodology to handle the scope and depth of the research. Seven representatives from six public and private sector agencies were present at the meeting. Having outlined the objectives of the meeting, representatives began a thorough investigation and debate on extracting the elements of process/methods from the issues emanating from the research activities. They agreed that it was important to disaggregate issues of methodology and processes engaged in the research activities as distinct from the findings and assessments made thus far. In light of this observation, one representative held that the report presented prior to the meeting needed amendment.

Subsequent to this voluminous debate, representatives agreed that it was important to carve out specific objectives and provide greater focus for the research activities given the short period of time for research activities left. They made it abundantly clear that the proposal was over – ambitious and needed to focus a little more on what it sets out to achieve. They held that each of the three dimensions of the research proposals was a thesis or a major exercise in itself and that the Herculean task of converging all of these dimensions was suicidal. The representatives also outlined that the major contribution, which the thesis could make was in the component of exploring intervention strategies, institutional frameworks, capacity and networking. They held that there were numerous interventions undertaken which resembled scattered programmes with everyone doing a little in their own world. It was emphasised that a greater/clearer understanding of the institutional mechanisms, civil society organisations and government interventions would contribute tremendously to the development of the Directional Plan for the Eradication of Poverty. Representatives were invited to make suggestions or brief comments of their perceptions on the research's point of departure or focus. Suggestions submitted subsequent to the meeting included:

- Adequacy of studies conducted for National Poverty Reduction Policy and Plan
- The role of institutions and/or national level implementation plans
- The weaknesses of Institutional frameworks for poverty reduction in St. Lucia
- An assessment of the institutional frameworks, capacity and networking: Basic Needs, Social Fund, Micro Financing and Welfare institutions
- Community based/ National measures of Poverty
- Gender Equity and Poverty reduction: Institutional mechanisms for gender equity

A few issues of methodology were raised and could be captured from these comments from Ezra Jn. Baptiste dated May 1, 2000, “ The concept of participation vis-à-vis the concept of consultation needs to be articulated. One gets the feeling that participation as apposed to consultation in the research is overemphasised. Undoubtedly, either process is an integral part of each other. However, in the context of the research process, consultation emerges as the Venn diagram and not as the subset of the participatory approach”.

Conducting Semi – Structured Interviews

A total of twenty-one (21) semi-structured interviews were conducted among employees of the Public Service, mechanism/agencies established for poverty reduction and two representatives from the Opposition, the United Workers Party. The reception and trust exhibited by these individuals was overwhelming despite the period of time it took before some could keep an appointment. Nonetheless, the reasons were always excusable in every case including illness, attending to work and domestic emergencies, out of state on urgent state business, and even the untimely

death of the Project Manager, Basic Needs Trust Fund (my sincere condolences to his family). These interviews were conducted to explore the policy process and content, the institutional frameworks, capacity and networking as well as the issues of poverty and politics. The latter emerged as a focal/central issue in the process of research activities.

An attempt was made to transcribe the content of the interviews and forward them to the interviewees for their further comments and possible editing. Most persons who responded either ensured that issues which they may have forgotten were added or the adjectives utilised to recreate the mood or tone of the interview was softened. For example, 'he argued' was changed to 'he stated' or 'he disclosed' was reduced to 'he outlined'. The general reaction among the persons interviewed after reading the text was that they did not realise that so much was disclosed during the interviews and sought reassurance that the interview transcripts would remain confidential and anonymous. This revealed the depth of trust and rapport, which was realised during the interviews. One officer noted to me in an impromptu meeting at the Bank, 'Boy, you could put me in a lot of trouble with this manuscript' referring to the transcribed interview. Two specific persons raised issues of understanding from the transcript in which they felt that a component of our discussions were not adequately represented. It would be injudicious not to outline that responses have not yet been acquired from some interviewees as well as a few transcripts were not edited due to time constraints.

Some of the central themes, which emerged from the interviews and need further development, were:

- ❑ The management, accountability, transparency and effectiveness of mechanisms established for poverty reduction
- ❑ Politics and Poverty: The role of the politician in poverty reduction
- ❑ The role of government agencies, the private sector and civil society organisations in poverty reduction
- ❑ The nature and extent of collaboration and networking undertaken and desired for effective poverty reduction
- ❑ Overcoming political and cultural/socio-psychological inertia
- ❑ The need for central coordination amid scattered poverty programs with no map or compass
- ❑ Heavy dependence and an over-reliance of the civil society towards government
- ❑ Donor driven poverty reduction mechanisms and programs
- ❑ Lack of a critical mass of skills to move process towards poverty reduction
- ❑ Politics of management/administration characterised by territorial defence, turfism and clogmatism

More Contextualised Research Methods

Three transect walks were undertaken with differing levels of organisation and participation in the communities of Bouton, Palmiste and Baron's Drive. One general community meeting was held in Bouton whereas 'talking on the blocks' were the most meaningful forum for discussions in the communities of Palmiste and Baron's Drive. In addition, meetings were held among the professional staff in the Soufriere region that served these communities. Reports of these meetings and one transect walk (Bouton) have been prepared.

The success of the research activities within the communities was mixed from the onset. It was definite that one of the communities' Leader (Palmiste) was not prepared and stated explicitly from the first meeting that he would not introduce or take any more researchers to his community since too many agencies conducted research within the community and nothing had taken place. He informed that poverty reduction just finished conducting research among the residents and I should require of them the results/findings. I understood from him that this position was taken particularly because Poverty Reduction Fund had promised EC\$250,000 for work within community since October 1999 but they had not received that money. A few inquiries at the Fund provided sufficient information for dissemination and gained some credit towards my research activities.

Persistence in letter writing and delivery to their homes informing the leaders of the communities of the ongoing activities of fieldwork also paid dividends. Making available copies of the previous studies conducted within their communities such as the UNICEF and UNDP Baseline surveys may have furthered my interest in 'a repertoire of gimmicks' to gain entry and informed consent into the community of Palmiste. It was not until the last week of fieldwork that great enthusiasm and openness to discuss issues in – depth was realised in Palmiste and it was no coincidence that the finance from the Poverty Reduction Fund was available and work within the community had finally began. I was welcomed with smiles of contentment on the faces of the two leaders (President and Vice President) with the Vice remarking, "now we can really talk of poverty reduction" and so we did.

The other communities were not as difficult as Palmiste since Bouton was awakened by the massive electrification project of the community. They leaders had persisted until this was finally accomplished and now utilised this project to act as a catalyst for the further development of their community. The Committee have gained the confidence of their members and meetings are well attended though a lot more participation was desired to determine community priorities. Baron's Drive, although much more difficult in its reception than Bouton was aided by the preliminary research work undertaken to assist the Ministry of Planning in developing a Relocation Plan for residents. Hurricane Lenny ravaged the shoreline community affecting approximately 100 households rendering substantial damage to about 43 homes. The fishermen beneath their battered fish market were also always inclined and available during the mid morning to discuss issues affecting their community and lives.

Some of the issues emanating from these Contextualised research activities were:

- The perception that there was a unique psychology prevalent in Soufriere, which was detrimental to integrated development planning in the region. The participants outlined that this psychology seemed to be the birthright of persons within the region. It was argued that this attribute was rooted in the historical, cultural and political constitution of the region.
- The reactions of this unique psychology to implementation or delivery of programs and services within the communities ranged from open hostility and instant rejection to the receipt of negative feedback.
- Persons residing in Soufriere desired things that were visible, of tangible benefits, immediate, and the creation of channels and access to resources. ***The three communities studied articulated needs, which were basic such as water, housing, basic infrastructure (including drainage, toilets/public facilities, footpaths, retaining walls), employment, skills training and development.***
- There was a great disparity in the degree and extent of networking facilitated among agencies within the region. The level of networking tended to be predominantly engaged with the Public Sector Departments and established agencies with very limited collaboration with Community Based Agencies. The nature of their networks resembled that of an interface for the resolution of problems. There was an absence of collaboration in the planning and implementation of programmes and projects even though viable linkages may be profitable and necessary for the effective and sustainable completion of these activities.

A number of recommendations to reduce poverty were made by the public service staff in Soufriere and these included:

- a) *The need for meaningful Political Decisions aimed at Poverty Reduction*
- b) *Reorienting the beliefs system among the poor*
- c) *Reinforcing Family Agendas*
- d) *Strengthening the use of Indigenous Resources and Technology*
- e) *Improving Sanitary Conditions and Practices*
- f) *Legislate and Enforce Population Controls*
- g) *Reducing Unemployment*
- h) *The Elimination of Illiteracy*
- i) *Improving the lot of rural farmers*
- j) *Divestment of the Tourist Industry in Soufriere to facilitate Local Participation*

Survey of Civil Society Organisations

Forty-four (44) survey instruments were administered among twelve (12) Non Government organisations and thirty-two (32) Community based organisations throughout the island. The organisations included:

Non – Government Organisations

- 1) National Council for the Disabled
- 2) National Association for Early Childhood Educators
- 3) St. Lucia Mission of Seventh Day Adventist
- 4) St. Lucia Media Workers Association
- 5) St. Lucia Crisis Centre
- 6) National Research and Development Foundation
- 7) St. Lucia National Youth Council
- 8) Centre for Adolescent Rehabilitation and Education
- 9) St. Lucia Planned Parenthood Association
- 10) The Salvation Army
- 11) St. Lucia Association of Social Workers
- 12) St. Lucia Save the Children Fund

Community Based Organisations

1. Laborie Development Planning Committee
2. Laborie Club 60
3. Laborie Cooperative Credit union Limited
4. Micoud Youth and Sports Council
5. Micoud Mothers' and Fathers' Group
6. Baron's Drive Youth Organisation, Soufriere
7. Palmiste Tenants Association, Soufriere
8. Bouton Advisory Committee, Soufriere
9. Soufriere Mothers' and Fathers' Group
10. Soufriere Regional Development Foundation
11. Soufriere Fishermen's Cooperative
12. Choiseul Cooperative Credit Union
13. Choiseul Fishermen's Cooperative
14. Canaries Improvement Committee
15. Canaries Youth and Sports Council
16. Anse la Raye Youth and Sports Council
17. Foundations Sports and Cultural Club, Anse la Raye
18. Cecilian Rays, Anse la Raye
19. Anse la Raye/UK Committee
20. Anse la Raye Club 60
21. Bexon Development Committee
22. Cul-De-Sac Development Committee
23. Cul-De-Sac United Mothers' and Fathers' Group
24. Mabouya Valley Development Project
25. Marchand Women's League
26. Marchand Improvement Committee
27. Riviere Mittant Development Committee

28. Corinth Residents' Association
29. Forestierre Development Committee
30. Babonneau Mothers' and Fathers' Central Committee
31. Grow Well, Gros – Islet
32. Rotaract Club of Gros – Islet

Among these organisations included development committees, credit institutions, youth and sports' groups, social clubs, cultural and religious institutions, women's groups, children's organisations, older persons and persons with disability groupings as well as professionals' associations. Tremendous challenges and difficulties were experienced in securing appointments with other groups such as women's organisations, the Rastafarian association, the Folk Research Centre and the St. Lucia National Trust. Two other major communities were not represented within the communities researched (Vieux Fort and Dennery) due to time constraints. Yet the nature of organisations within these communities were similar to those represented and also performed similar functions/roles, according to the community development staff.

Non-probability sampling techniques were utilised to select organisations for the study and included snowballing and purposive selection. Such an approach was justified since there was no complete listing of civil society organisations on the island. The lists available were incomplete, outdated and in some cases not relevant to the study conducted. Attempts were made to capture organisations identified within the comprehensive social assessment commissioned by the PRF, which were involved in poverty reduction in St. Lucia. In other cases, the Ministry of Community Development and Local Government was instrumental in providing a list of CBOs in each region (although some of the CBOs were inactive or had been dormant for years) and personal contact were made with these leaders. In addition, a colleague provided a comprehensive listing of organisations (101 pages) compiled by NRDF. Even this proved incomplete and somewhat outdated.

The survey instrument was twelve pages long comprising seven sections which included the organisational profile, membership characteristics, leadership and management, participation in poverty reduction activities, strengths, limitations and challenges in participation, assessment of other agencies poverty reduction activities, and future poverty reduction activities and needs including an optional comments and conclusions column. The results of this survey are not prepared, however, the optional comments and conclusions column was immersed with diverse views on poverty reduction and the operations of agencies and civil society organisations, which could not be ignored. Some of the central ideas and views that were consistent included:

- ❖ All the organisations are working at the same goal but they are working individually clouding the issues. We all seem to be doing the same thing and are targeting the same people. There is need for unity among NGOs within St. Lucia. We have been trying to organise an umbrella body for NGOs but every one has reasons for this not to take place. The time for this idea has not yet come. Every one recognises the need for collaboration but no one wants to give up anything.

- ❖ The main strategy for poverty reduction is education, youth empowerment and the development of the mindset with an emphasis on education (at least secondary education) and not changing the circumstances in which people live. A key aspect of poverty reduction is ongoing research and monitoring and evaluation. Basic needs must be met and may include recreational facilities. To educate persons in an effort to come out of poverty rather than helping them in their poverty should be the aim of poverty reduction. The first step is developing self-awareness, self-esteem and the development of the personality. Then skills training and job internship programmes. Giving handouts and money will keep them in poverty.
- ❖ The concept of poverty reduction is still a strange term in the ears of the public. They do not readily understand the concept and operations of the term and institutions established/utilised. The role of citizens and the benefits, which can be attained from such institutions, are unclear. More public education, awareness and sensitisation on the issues and agencies must be undertaken.
- ❖ There is a big turf war going on. All of a sudden poverty reduction came around, money is available, everyone is setting up new organisations and instruments. Money is being spent in administration. The same mistakes are being made over again with no body learning, costing the country money. Every one is safeguarding their territory with no collaboration. There are significant duplication and a lack of a coordinated approach
- ❖ A strong collaboration between PRF and NGOs is necessary. The emphasis should not only be governmental. Agencies such as this one can have greater effect because of the lack of bureaucracy. We work on the needs and satisfying the gap. Government is concerned with winning votes in addressing issues of particular groups. Government cannot do it all and must allow NGOs with the latitude to perform such valuable functions. Cost effective mechanisms and shared technical staff will be the desired results of greater networking.
- ❖ We seem to be in little worlds by ourselves but to come together to understand the nature of the organisations and problems, this does not happen. It is only when they are stuck/trapped that they remember that there are such groups that can be of some help. We need to strengthen the agencies working relationships and collaboration.
- ❖ There is no clear leadership and procedures at the PRF, it creates the problem of considerable delays and frustration. A number of trips are made and one has to be at them all the time to get things done. It takes too long to implement projects. No response is obtained from communication sent to them and when they are ready, we are expected to make ourselves available at once. We need to put more money where our mouths are. A lot of rhetoric and meetings but on the ground, nothing is happening.

- ❖ There is a problem of information dissemination. Little is known of the PRF in the community. Information, support and funding are limited. Community level strategies must be developed to inform individuals of the role of agencies in poverty. Putting up posters and calling meetings are not always effective. Informal dialogues may be more effective. Familiarity with the various agencies and individuals involved in poverty reduction on the island is necessary.
- ❖ We only soothe poverty stress but do not reduce poverty. Persons participate in our activities to reduce frustration and only to pass the time and gain some leisure time. Changing the mindset of persons is critical to poverty reduction. Younger persons seem to have given up.
- ❖ Leadership and organisational strengthening, community mobilisation and directional plan for the community as a whole must be developed. Insularity and selfishness prevail among agencies within the community. Community participation and fund raising are very difficult activities now. As groups developed over time, competition for scarce resources increased while group sought to maintain their identities and claim credit for the programmes and projects. Members of the executive were expected to do all the work. Members of the community are unwilling to help themselves or each other.
- ❖ Persons within the community, all that they need, they look to government, for all they need. Road repairs, busted pipe, every little thing, government must do it for them!! There must be less reliance on government among organisations and individuals.

Administering these surveys all over the island was a deeply enriching and rewarding academic and professional activity to me. It proved to be difficult and challenging at times due to the mere physical fatigue of travelling through the island utilising the public transportation system and the accumulated weariness of fieldwork. I left home sometimes very early in the morning and returned late at night to my young wife and two year old son waiting in anticipation and sometimes disbelief in my tardiness to return home.

During some periods, I thought that the survey took so much longer and posed to be much more difficult to complete especially when persons relished the opportunity to converse on every question asked. Imagine going through a twelve page document with over fifty questions and yet there were persons who desired to discuss so much more than required. The amazing element was that all except two organisations opted not to make comments and conclusions (Bouton and Baron's Drive) because of the extensive period of time we spent working together. There were instances that I sought to indicate to individuals that an opportunity would be provided for comments and conclusions towards the end and they took the liberty to indicate that I should make notes of certain issues lest they forget at the end.

I could not believe that research was so time consuming, challenging and expensive. Sometimes my monthly resources would be depleted by the commencement of the fourth week and family, friends and colleagues would chip in upon request to provide

transportation, finance, photocopying services and the use of their computers. I learnt the concept of Murphy's Law (a copy of which was handed to me by the leader of a CBO) by the perils which I experienced during fieldwork, "nothing is as easy as it looks; everything takes longer than you expect and if anything can go wrong – it will At the Worst Possible Moment! This was also my experience in acquiring a portable computer for a considerable sum of ££££s.

The Proposed Structure and Reformulated Direction of the Thesis

Subsequent to the research activities and overview of the issues deemed significant to poverty reduction in St. Lucia, the preliminary structure and direction of the thesis has been revised to reflect:

The Introduction will outline the economic, social, environmental and demographic context of the study, as well as its rationale, objectives and assumptions. It will also incorporate a reflexive discussion of the methodology utilised and the issues of fieldwork including the biography of the researcher, the reasons for choosing this topic for research, and the ethics and politics of researching in a small island developing state of which the researcher is a national.

Chapter One will provide a literature review on the issues of poverty conceptions, reduction strategies and interventions, policy processes and content in development planning and the institutional mechanisms established for poverty reduction. An effort will be made to integrate the frameworks of major international agencies such as the World Bank, United Nations Agencies and the United Kingdom Department for International Development into the review.

Chapter Two will attempt to present an analysis of the welfare, basic needs, and the new social investment Funds within the context of St. Lucia's Development Planning and Policy aimed at poverty reduction. The global and international cooperation context within which these development planning and policy approaches are formulated will also be examined.

Chapter Three will seek to evaluate and critically assess the projects, policies, programmes and institutional mechanisms. These will include an assessment of the institutional mechanisms established (mechanisms, capacity and networking) and the project and programmes aimed at reducing poverty in Saint Lucia.

Chapter Four will examine the nature, capacity, level of collaboration and an assessment of the poverty reduction activities of the civil society organisations and the Private Sector. An attempt will be made to delineate a more integrative and meaningful role for the Sector in the overall scope of poverty reduction in St. Lucia.

The Conclusion will provide some critical reflections on poverty analyses, diagnoses, policy content and process and institutional frameworks. It will also highlight the need for central coordination for policy formulation and directional planning for the eradication of poverty in Saint Lucia.

Activities Timeframe

The timeframe within which to complete these assignments is even more dynamic and challenging during this write up and conclusion period. My assessment of the time zones and production output would be as follows:

- *July 15 – 24 Chapter Two*
- *July 25 – August 1 Chapter Three*
- *August 2 – 11 Chapter Four*
- *August 12 – 21 Chapter One*
- *August 22 – 31 Introduction and Conclusion*
- *September 1 – 15 Final Preparations*
- *September 15 onwards - Preparation for a presentation and defence of the thesis.*

Anthony George
Student Researcher

APPENDIX 4

Approaches to Understanding and Analysing Poverty

Table 1: The contrasting methodologies of Income/ Consumption and Participatory Approaches

Approaches

<u>Income / Consumption Approach</u>	<u>Participatory Approach</u>
<p>Methodology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Defined externally in a prior fashion by a third party as physical needs deprivation due to private consumption shortfalls; b) Well-being can be measured or proxied quantitatively by either income or consumption expenditure levels. Sources of data include standardised questionnaire techniques or household surveys; c) The consumer is assumed, in most instances to rationally allocate resources in such a way as to maximise basic needs fulfilment (consumer sovereignty and rationality); d) The underlying goal is to provide an accurate description of income / consumption poverty in terms of its measurable and observable characteristics. 	<p>Methodology</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Defined through an internal/external interactive process involving facilitator and participants; b) Measured both qualitatively and quantitatively from participatory poverty assessments and the sources of data depend on these interactive, interpretative and critical examinations; c) Evaluations of participants' preferences are made in dialogue between facilitator and participants (communicative rationality); d) The overriding goal is to achieve understanding of peoples' conception of well-being with a view to empower either during the exercise itself as a function of a self-reflective process or as a result from substantive conclusions.

Source: Developed from the work of Shaffer (1996)

Table two below relates the epistemological and ethical disagreements inherent in the two conceptions of deprivation.

Table 2: The contrasting epistemology and ethics of the income/consumption and participatory approaches

<u>Income / Consumption Approach</u>	<u>Participatory Approach</u>
<p>Epistemology</p> <p>I. Close affinities to the naturalist paradigm with its application of research methods adopted from the natural sciences to the social sciences;</p> <p>II. Seeks to accurately explain and describe social reality and strives for value neutrality by explanation and description not evaluation and prescription</p> <p>Ethics</p> <p>i. Based on characteristics of the naturalistic self as an empirical entity whose inner properties are amenable to discovery through scientific inquiry; and</p> <p>ii. Normatively desirable ends are determined a priori and consequently lie beyond the ambiguous realm of continual human interpretation.</p>	<p>Epistemology</p> <p>I. Important linkages with the critical hermeneutics camp with its interpretative understanding of human behaviour with a view to emancipate or empower;</p> <p>II. Understanding necessarily involves the evaluation of claims. It is inevitably evaluative and self consciously prescriptive;</p> <p><u>Ethics</u></p> <p>i. Justification of norms and commands require that intersubjective communication be carried out and that cannot occur in a strictly monological form; and</p> <p>ii. Normative claims to validity have cognitive meaning and can be treated as claims to truth.</p>

Source: Developed from the work of Shaffer (1996)

Table 3 below seeks to further the gulf between the approaches by elucidating that as a result of the methodological, epistemological and ethical dilemmas, it is imperative that proponents of the approaches will differ in their conceptions and sources of ill – being. These differences subsequently affect poverty analyses, policy and intervention strategies.

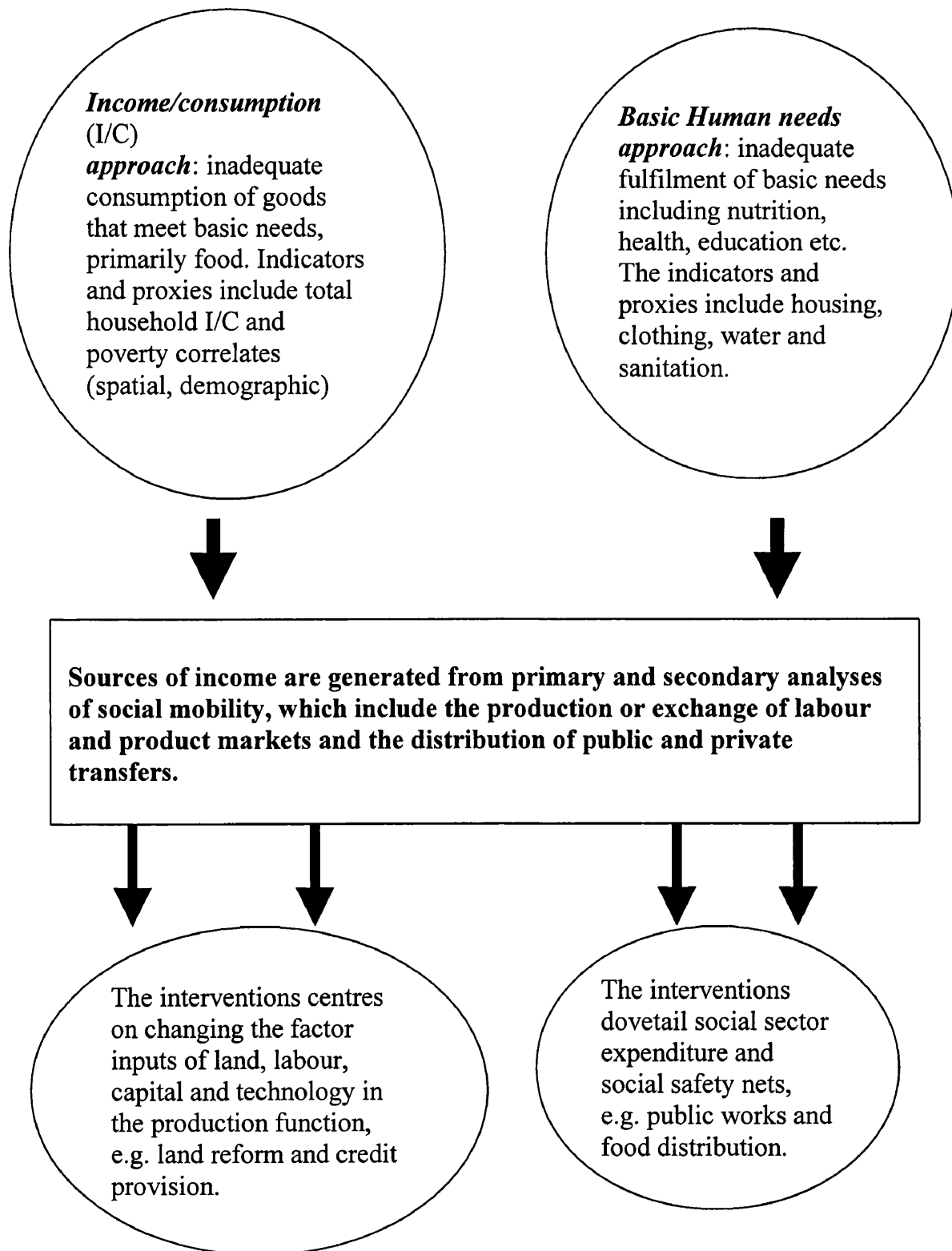
Table 3: The conception and sources of deprivation examined by the income/consumption and participatory approaches

<u>Income / Consumption Approach</u>	<u>Participatory Approach</u>
<p><u>Conception of Ill – being</u></p> <p>This is based on the deprivation of basic needs required to meet physiological requirements. The primacy of physical needs over other needs and/or desires underlies the deprivation of the poverty line.</p> <p><u>Sources of Ill – being</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Limited to inadequate private consumption of goods and services. Private consumption may include both non market and publicly supplied goods 	<p><u>Conception of Well - being</u></p> <p>A much broader conception of ill – being or deprivation is espoused including physical, social, economic, political, psychological and spiritual elements.</p> <p><u>Sources of Well – being</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ These extend beyond inadequate commodity consumption to include non – income sources of entitlement, social relations of production and exchange, security, autonomy, self-respect and dignity.

Source: Developed from the work of Shaffer (1996)

Diagram one attempts to show the transition in the income/consumption and basic needs conceptions of poverty from definition to intervention.

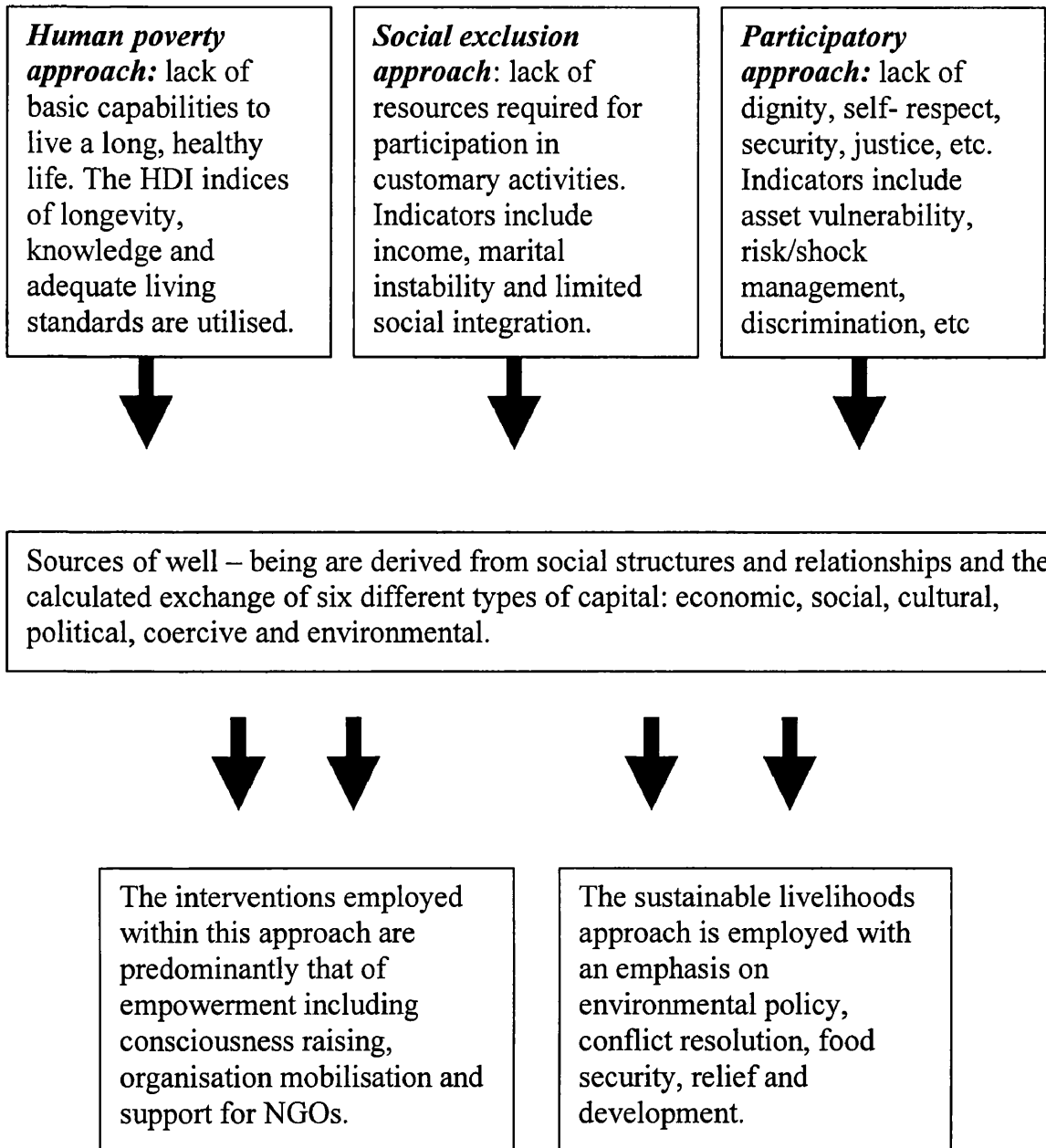
Diagram One: Physiological Deprivation Model



Source: developed from the work of Shaffer (1998)

Diagram two below attempts to broaden and diversify the base upon which the physiological model is established.

Diagram Two: Social Deprivation Model



Source: Developed from the work of Shaffer (1998)

APPENDIX 5:

Survey Diagrams and Tables

Table 1: Periods for the formation of Civil Society Organisations surveyed in 2000

Age of the Organisation (yrs)	NGOs	CBOs	Total
Before 1979	5	8	13
1979 - 1983	2	5	7
1984 - 1988	2	3	5
1989 - 1993	1	3	4
1994 - 1998	2	12	14
1999 - present	0	1	1
Total	12	32	44

Diagram 1: Comparative Age of the Organisations

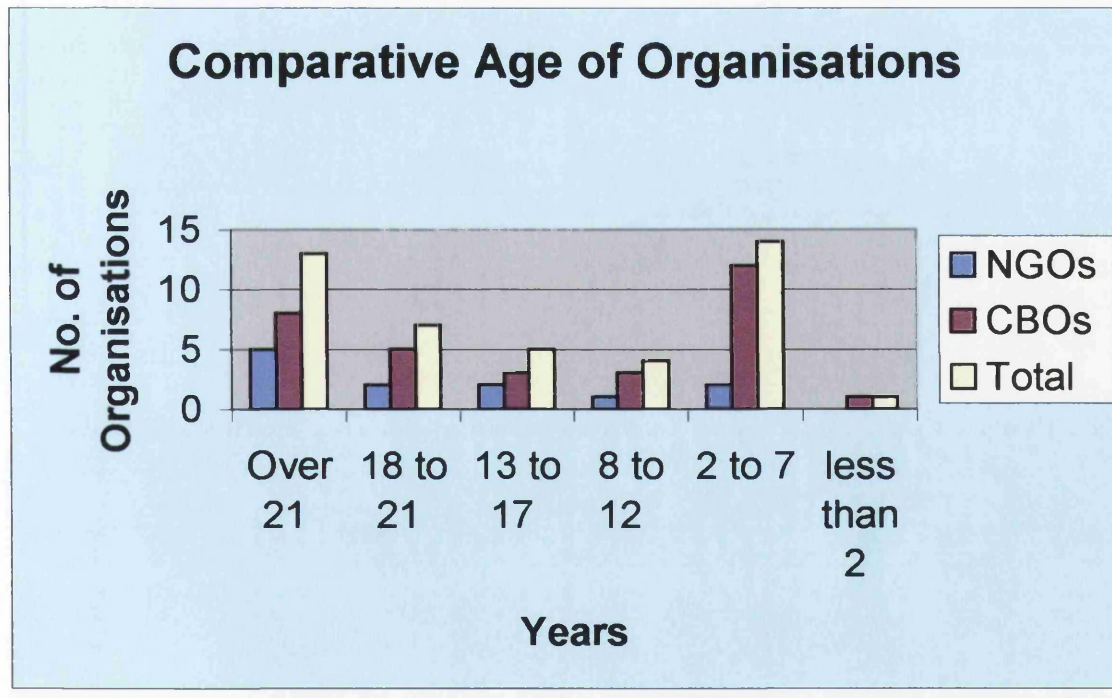


Table 2: Overall Summary of Goals for Non Government Organisations

- **Child Rights Promotion and advocacy, influencing national policies and utilising all human, financial and material resources in the care and protection of children**
- **To Preach the Word/Gospel baptising in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Evangelism) and the alleviation of Poverty**
- **To safeguard the individual's right to make free and informed choices in regard to sexual and reproductive health and advocacy for sound government policy to support this right;**
- **To serve as a mouthpiece for journalists, developing their abilities and performing an active role in the civic life of St. Lucia**
- **To seek the betterment of persons with disabilities within the nation**
- **To identify, promote and implement select development activities**
- **To facilitate youth empowerment, advocacy, leadership training and placing youth on the national agenda**
- **To promote issues of human rights and gender equality and provide assistance and readjustment for persons in times of crises**
- **To provide quality education and training for Early childhood educators**

Table 3: Overall Summary of Goals for Community based organisations

- **To formulate development plans for specific communities**
- **To provide assistance to persons over 60 years reducing their levels of stress and develop a sense of belonging and participation within the specific communities**
- **To provide financial assistance and promote thrift, savings and loans at low interest rates for productive activities to community residents**
- **To oversee, organise and encourage youth participation in community development and sports programmes in the specific communities**
- **To provide financial and emotional assistance and recreational activities to mothers and fathers, especially in times of needs**
- **To foster the development of children, youth and disadvantaged persons in areas of education, sports, music, culture and community services**
- **To improve the welfare, socio-economic status, infrastructure and level of organisation among/for persons living within the specified communities**
- **To act as a conduit to facilitate the development of the community**
- **To provide services to members such as fuel, line fishing inputs and gear, markets for their fish and fuel rebates**
- **To encourage members to participate in activities to develop their total beings**
- **To act as a link with international Associations for the overall development of residents within the community**

Table 3b Strategies of Civil Society Organisations

NGOs Strategies

The strategies employed by NGOs were employed island-wide. These included child rights campaigns; evangelistic crusades; and the establishment and management of schools including early learning centres and a School for persons with disabilities. Advocacy on issues of national importance and the publication and sale of literature; and training programmes for other professions and communities are also adopted by NGOs to fulfill their goals.

CBOs Strategies

The strategies of CBOs, on the other hand, were confined to specific localities (the community within which it functioned). These included the formulation of development and action plans; provision of death benefits, pensions and medical funds and secretarial services; distribution of duty and patronage refunds from government; and the promotion of sporting, cultural arts in song, drama, creativity and educational competitions among clubs and individuals within their communities.

Table 4: Main Sphere of Activities of Organisations surveyed in 2000

Main Sphere of Activities	NGOs	CBOs	Total
1) Educational	10	24	34
2) Developmental	10	29	39
3) Social Club	1	12	13
4) Sports	1	8	9
5) Cultural	1	13	14
6) Religious	2	6	8
7) Humanitarian	6	19	25
8) Other	1	0	1

Diagram 3: Main Sphere of Activities among NGOs

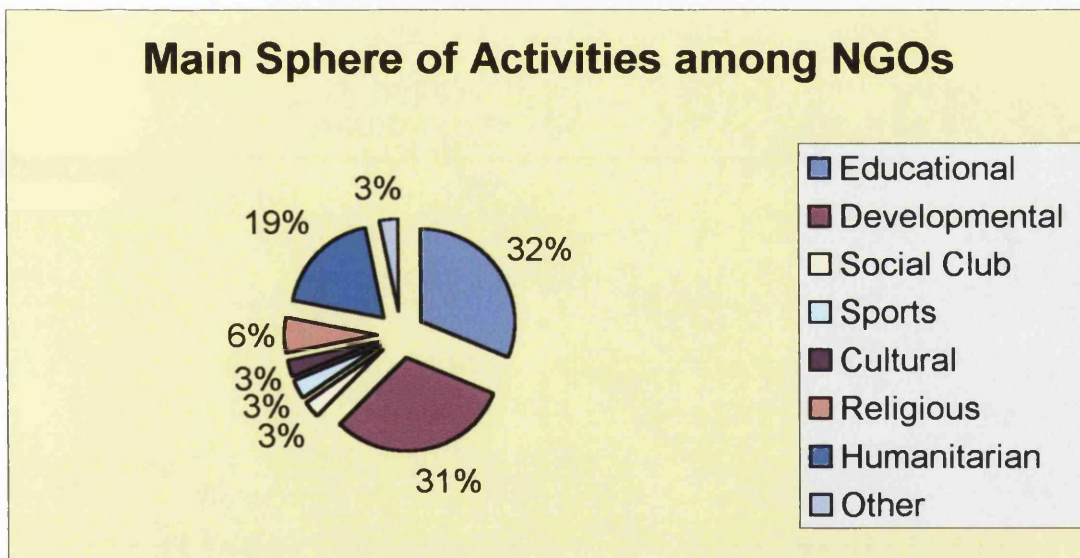


Diagram 4: Main Sphere of Activities among CBOs

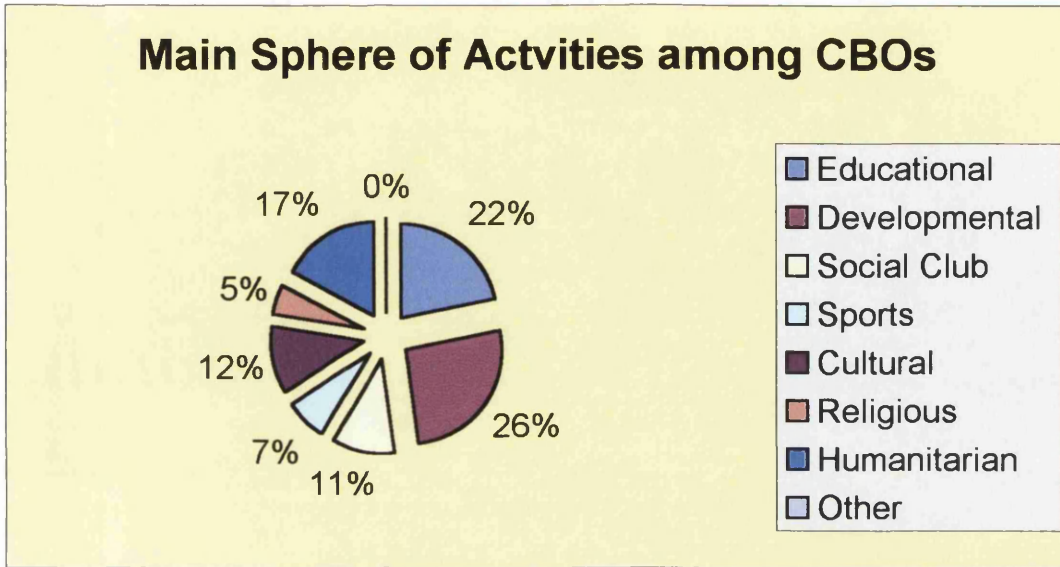


Diagram 5: Registration and Affiliation Chart of Organisations

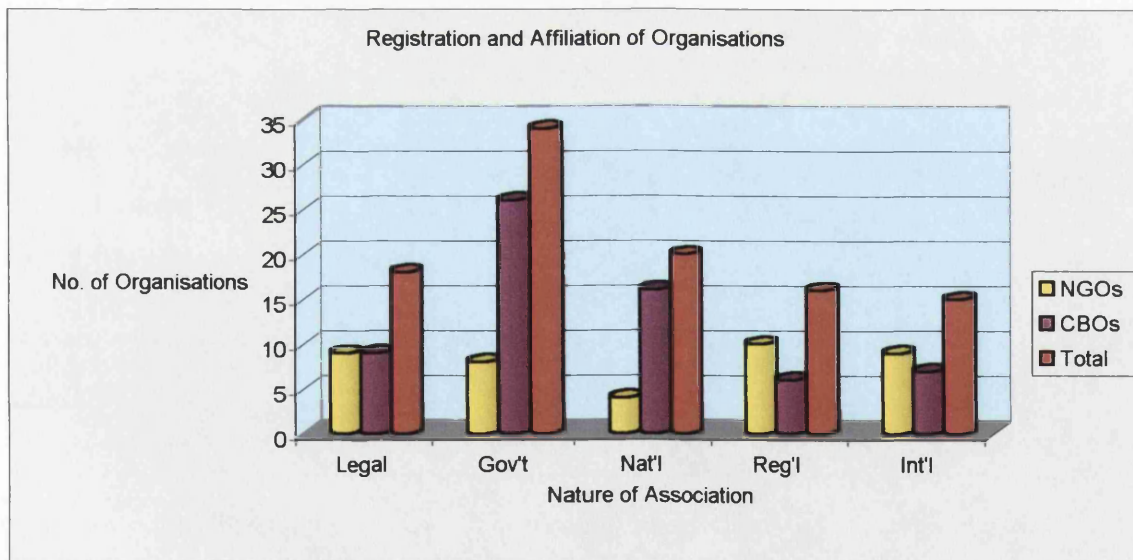


Table 5: Registration and Affiliation of Organisations

Registration and Affiliation	NGOs	CBOs	Total
1. Legal	9	9	18
2. Government	8	26	34
3. National	4	16	20
4. Regional	10	6	16
5. International	9	7	16
6. Total	40	64	104

Diagram 9: Membership pyramid of Non Government Organisations

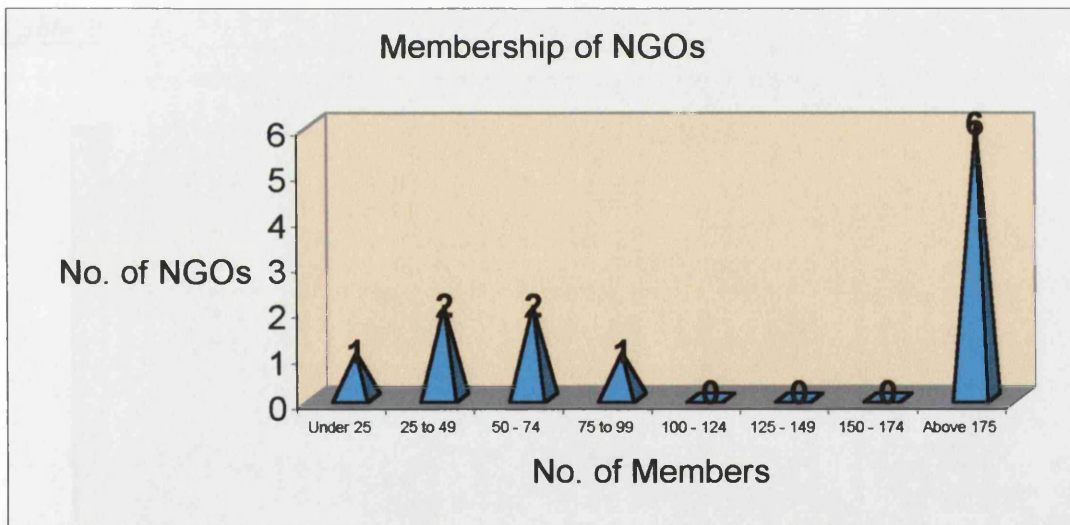


Diagram 10: Membership pyramid of Community Based Organisations

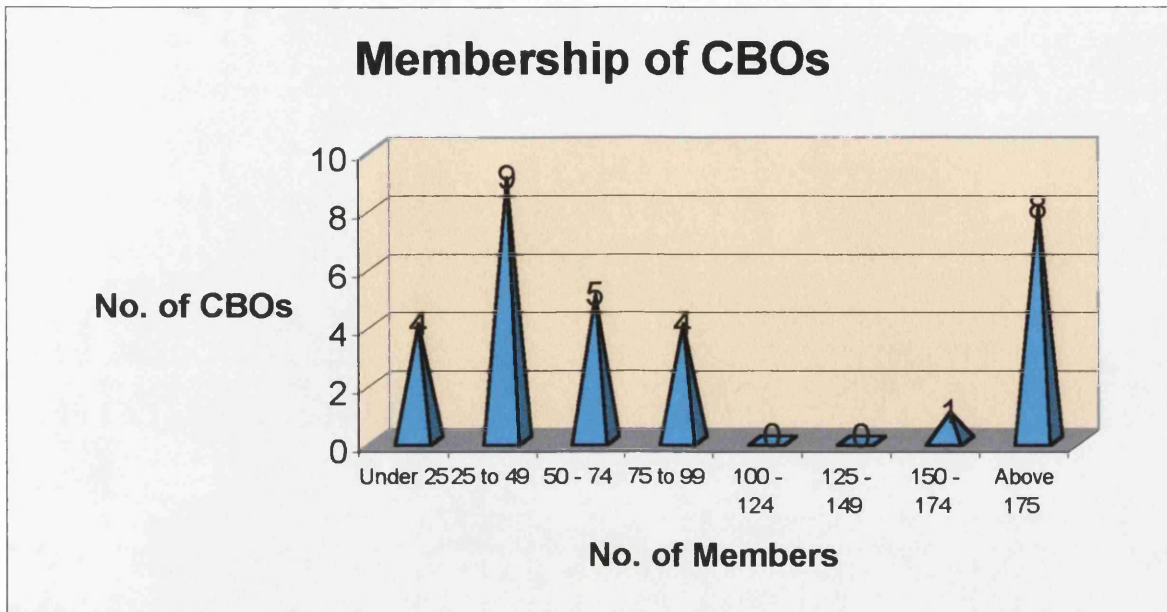
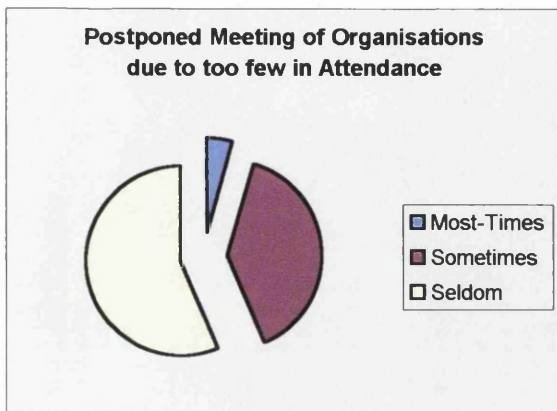


Table 9: Membership Attendance at Organisations' Meetings

Attendance at Meeting	All (76-100%)			Some (51-75%)			Few (26-50%)			Very Few (0-25%)		
	N	C	T	N	C	T	N	C	T	N	C	T
Nature of the Organisations	G	B	O	G	B	O	G	B	O	G	B	O
	O	O	T	O	O	T	O	O	T	O	O	T
			A			A			A			A
			L			L			L			L
Members	2	3	5	6	23	29	3	5	8	1	1	2
Males	2	6	8	5	14	19	2	7	9	3	4	7
Females	4	3	7	6	20	26	2	5	7	0	3	3

Diagram 13: Regularity of Meetings Postponed



Among the 44 organisations, more than half recorded that they had to postpone meetings because of their inability to attain a quorum. This situation, though, was held to occur only seldom but 9 of the 23 organisations noted that this occurred sometimes (more often than seldom).

Table 10: Participation of Members in Projects and Programmes

Participation in Projects and Programmes	Highly Consistent			Consistent			Inconsistent			Highly Inconsistent		
	N	C	T	N	C	T	N	C	T	N	C	T
Nature of the Organisations	G	B	O	G	B	O	G	B	O	G	B	O
	O	O	A	O	O	A	O	O	A	O	O	A
			L			L			L			L
Members	4	7	11	6	18	24	1	7	8	0	0	0
Males	3	5	8	6	18	24	2	7	9	0	0	0
Females	6	10	16	4	17	21	1	4	5	0	0	0

Diagram 14

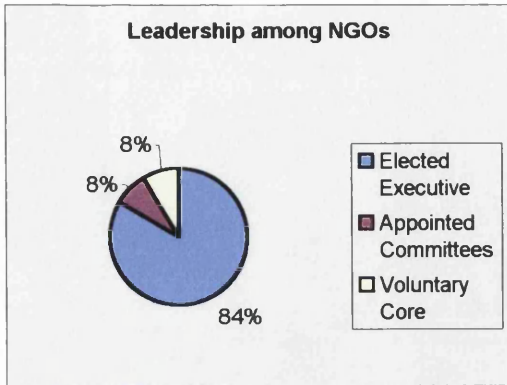


Diagram 15

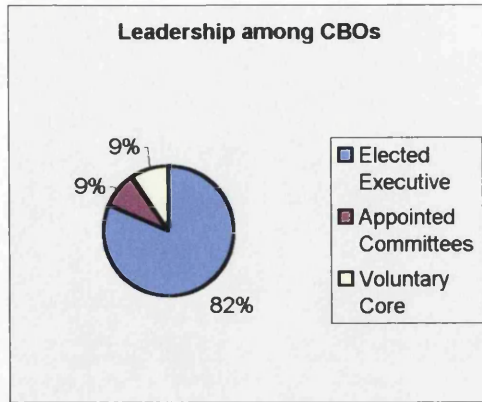


Diagram 16: Sources of Financial Assistance to NGOs

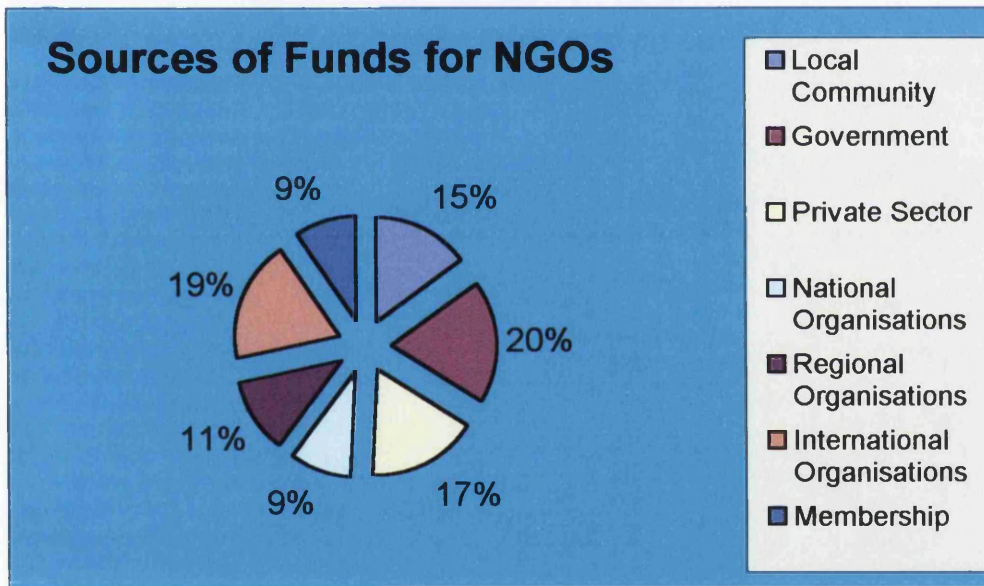


Diagram 17: Sources of Financial Assistance to CBOs

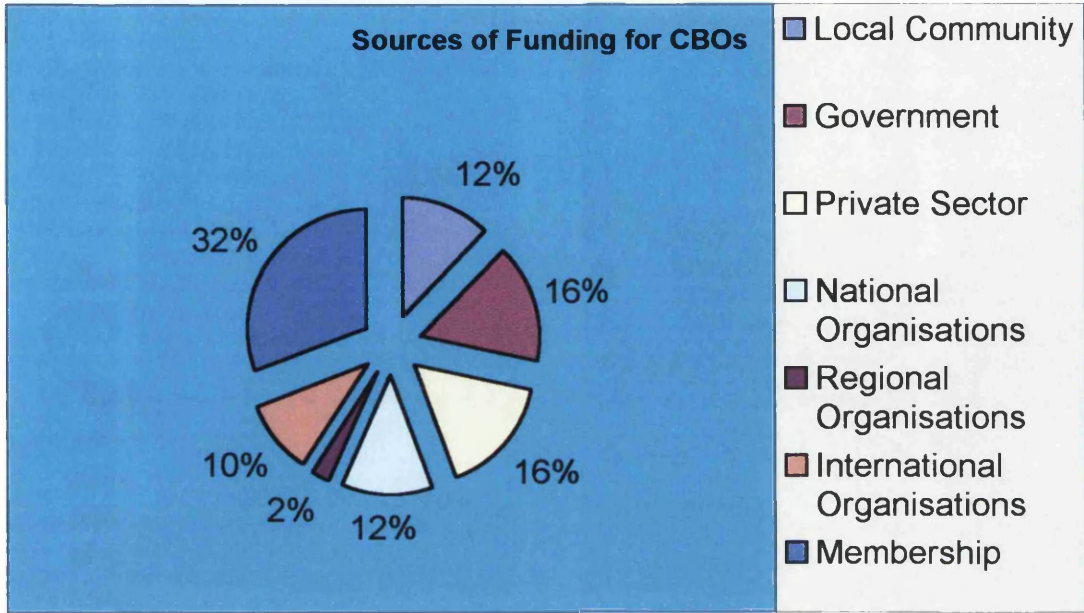


Diagram 20: Justifications for evaluations of 'non participation'

"We only soothe poverty stress but do not reduce poverty. Persons participate in our activities to reduce frustration and only to pass the time and gain some leisure time" (Lasser, President of Youth and Sports Council, June 12, 2000).

"The organisation does not reduce poverty among its members as yet. We do not work with the poor in the community for our members are poor and we are unable to help them. Others always promise but they don't deliver " (Corpay, President of Club 60, June 8, 2000).

"Despite our efforts to undertake feeding programmes and self-help projects, these are not sufficient to say that we are involved in poverty reduction activities in St. Lucia. We have proposed a headquarters now for 18 years but this has been postponed for a long time now. The District Representative meets us frequently and we indicate the conditions of poverty to him and he provides considerable help. However, there is a lot more which must be done such as the manner in which people are building" (Lina, President of Women's League, June 26, 2000).

"Corinth is a new housing development area comprising of young couples and single women who have built their homes. The majority of residents are working and cannot be conceived as being poor. The Association must seek to employ more self-help programmes and less reliance on government. Poverty is a relative term and members of the households can afford the basic needs. Income, household size, employment rates, and levels of skills training are all issues, which must be taken into consideration for poverty reduction". (Garcon, President of Tenants' Association, June 21, 2000)

Nature of Poverty Reduction Programmes undertaken by the Organisations

Diagram 21

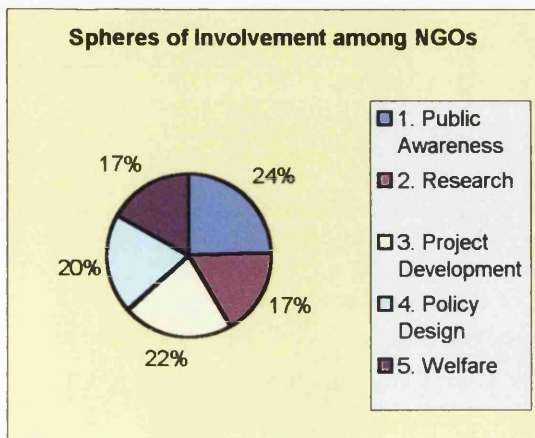


Diagram 22

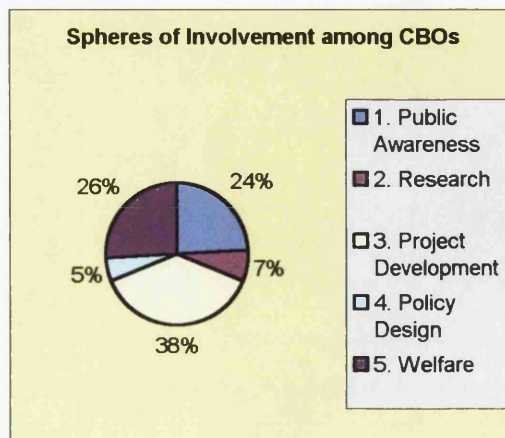
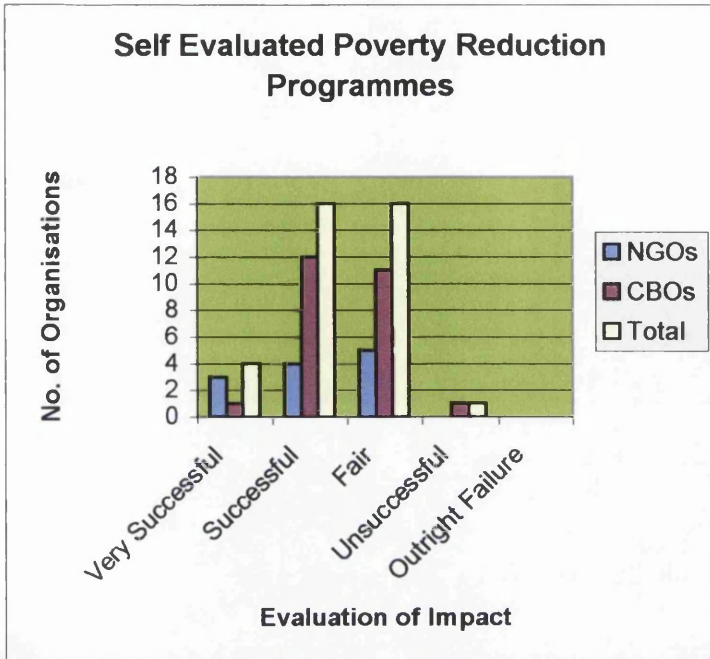


Diagram 25: Self Evaluated Poverty Reduction Programmes

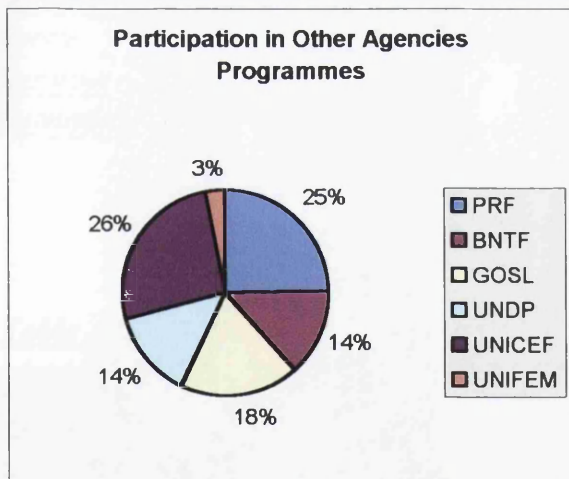


The self-evaluation by NGOs found that 42% evaluated the programmes as fair, 33% success and 25% as very successful.

CBO findings asserted 4% as unsuccessful, 44% fair 48% success and 4% very successful programmes.

The overall assessment of the organisations programmes relates 3% unsuccessful, 43% each for fair and successful, 11% very successful programme.

Diagram 26: Participation in other Agencies Programmes



A number of civil society organisations were actively involved in the programmes of the United Nations Children's Fund (17), the Poverty Reduction Fund (16) and Central Government's poverty reduction Programmes (12). A lower level of participation was recorded with the United Nations Development Programme (9), Basic Needs Trust Fund (9) and even less with the United Nations Women's Fund (2). The latter is significant even in the light that women were identified as a top priority target group.

Diagram 27: Participation in Agencies' Programmes

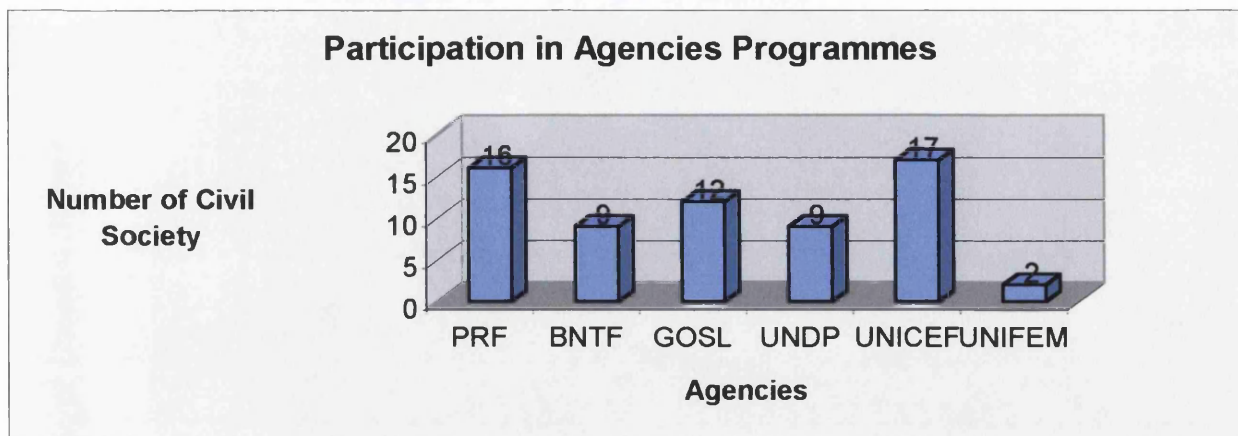


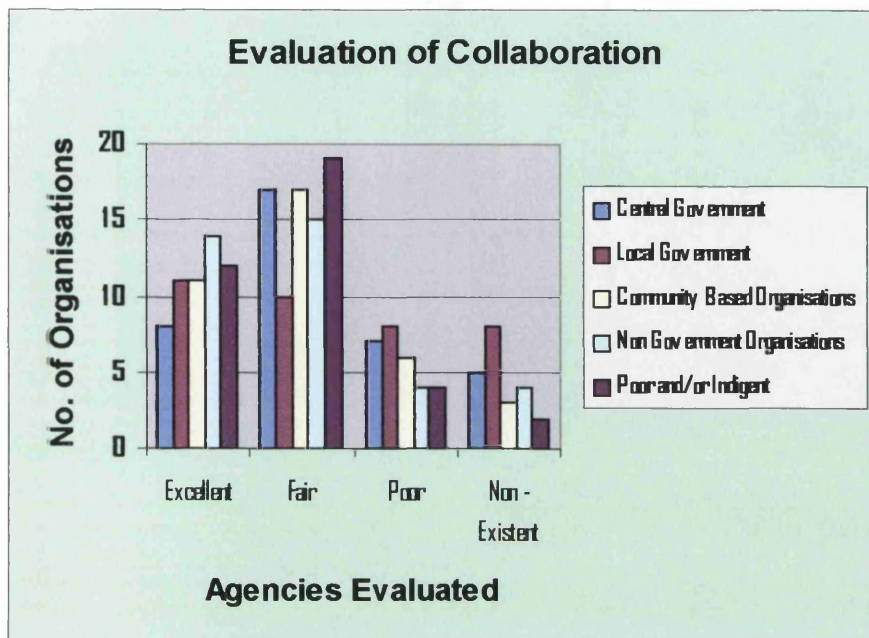
Table 11: Participation of Civil Society in Poverty Reduction Programmes

Participation in other Poverty Programs	PRF	BNTF	GOSL	UNDP	UNICEF	UNIFEM
Meetings, Workshops, Seminars	16	9	12	9	17	2
Planning	10	5	10	6	12	1
Implementation	6	4	8	2	10	2
Policy	3	1	8	0	5	0
Monitoring	5	1	5	1	7	1
Evaluation	4	1	6	1	7	1

Table 12: Evaluation of Collaboration among Agencies by NGOs and CBOs

Evaluation of Collaboration among Agencies	Excellent	Fair	Poor	Non - Existent
Central Government	8	17	7	5
Local Government	11	10	8	8
Community Based Organisations	11	17	6	3
Non Government Organisations	14	15	4	4
Poor and/or Indigent	12	19	4	2
Total	56	78	29	22

Diagram 30: Evaluation of Collaboration



The working relationship with the poor proved to be the most significant collaborative relationship for civil society. This finding has tremendous scope for the delivery of services, provision of assistance and the targeting of the poor.

On the other hand, local government was evaluated with poorer and more nonexistent working relationships than any other agency by civil society. This link should be strengthened since CBOs in particular operate within the same communities with local government.

Table 15: Strengths of Civil Society Organisations

Strengths of Civil Society Organisations	NGOs	CBOs	Total
Commitment to target population	7	3	10
Longevity and Experience	4	0	4
Donor Assistance	2	4	6
Types of Programmes and Services	5	7	12
Voluntary Staff	2	1	3
Lack of bureaucracy	1	1	2
Membership	1	19	20
Resourcefulness	9	15	24
Empowered by Divine Mission	2	0	2
Representation	0	4	4
Organisation and Planning with Communities	0	6	6
Greater Impact	0	2	2
Sense of Community	0	11	11

Table 16: Weaknesses of Civil Society

Weaknesses of Civil Society Organisations	NGOs	CBOs	Total
Policy Design	1	0	1
Resources	9	9	18
Purpose and Direction	1	1	2
Management and Leadership	2	5	7
Membership	2	10	12
Implementation	2	8	10
Collaboration of Agencies	4	1	5
Sustainability of Programmes	1	5	6
Situational Assessment	1	0	1
Legal Representation for the Poor	1	0	1
Meaningful Participation of Communities	0	10	10
Access to Agencies and Resources	0	1	1
Training	0	1	1
Public Awareness	0	2	2

Table 17: Assistance for Future Poverty Reduction Activities

Assistance for Future Activities	NGOs	CBOs	Total
Finance	11	27	38
Technical	11	26	37
Organisational Strengthening	11	28	39
Administrative Support	7	23	30
Others	4	8	12

Other forms of assistance include:

- Monitoring and Evaluation Systems
- Community Support and Participation
- Facilities, Equipment and Training
- Increased Agencies Collaboration
- Advisory Services
- Government Recognition

APPENDIX 6

An outline of the semi-structured interviews facilitated during the period March – June 2000

- 1) Donovan Williams, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Development, Planning, Housing and the Environment, April 3 and 17, 2000
- 2) Anthony Darius, Foreign Service Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, May 15 and 17, 2000
- 3) Dr. Barbara Boland, Social Advisor, Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Secretariat, June 15, 2000
- 4) Brain Louisy, Executive Director, St. Lucia Chamber of Commerce, June 5, 2000
- 5) Clement Edward, Officer in Charge, Human Services and Family Affairs, Ministry of Health, Human Services, Family Affairs and Gender Relations, May 31, 2000
- 6) Dr. Walter Francois, District Representative for Soufriere and Minister of Development, Planning, Housing and the Environment, May 8 and June 1, 2000
- 7) Ernest Hillaire, Permanent Secretary, Youth and Sports, Ministry of Education, Human Resource Development, Youth and Sports, June 29, 2000
- 8) Ezra Jn. Baptiste, Deputy Director, Development Cooperation and Programme Planning, Ministry of Development, Planning, Housing and the Environment, June 16, 2000
- 9) Guy Myers, Vice President, Caribbean Chamber of Commerce and President, St. Lucia Chamber of Commerce (1995 – 1998), June 6, 2000
- 10) Hamilton Stephen, Economist, Department of Development, Research and Policy, Ministry of Finance, May 26, 2000
- 11) Marcellus Joseph, General Manager, James Belgrave Micro Enterprise Development Limited, **BELFund**, May 19 and 22, 2000
- 12) Lucius Ellevic, Registrar of Cooperatives, Ministry of Community Development, Culture, Local Government, Cooperatives and Ecclesiastical Affairs, May 30, 2000

- 13) Stevenson King, General Secretary of the Opposition United Workers Party and Former Minister of Health, Community Development, Social Services, Youth and Sports (1987 – 1997), June 2, 2000
- 14) Dr. Vaughn Lewis, Former Prime Minister and Leader of the Opposition, United Workers Party, June 9 and 22, 2000
- 15) Vincent Peter, European Development Fund Program Manager, Ministry of Development and Planning, June 14, 2000
- 16) Embert St. Juste and Thomas Lucian, Economists, Debt Management Unit in the Ministry of Finance, June 8, 2000
- 17) Curtis Greer, former Project Manager, Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF) and the current Executive Director, Poverty Reduction Fund (PRF), May 24 and 29, 2000
- 18) Lucian Isidore, Acting Director, Community Services and Local Government – Member of the recently constituted Board of Directors, Poverty Reduction Fund, June 23, 2000
- 19) Michael Gittens, Economist, Ministry of Development, Planning, Housing and Environment and Chairman of BNTF Steering Committee (1997/98), May 11, 2000
- 20) Group Interview with members of St. Lucia Association of Social Workers and Staff of Social Services Agencies in St. Lucia, May 31, 2000
 - i. Antoinette Joseph, President, St. Lucia Association of Social Workers
 - ii. Karen Matthews, Family Caseworker, Human Services and Family Affairs
 - iii. Anthony Ferdinand, Chief Welfare Officer, Ministry of Health
 - iv. Jennifer Joseph, Social Worker, Golden Hope Hospital
 - v. Clementia Eugene, Intake Counselor, St. Lucia Family Court
 - vi. Donnaline Constantine, Counselor, Upton Gardens Girls' Centre
- 21) Group Interview with Public Sector Soufriere Regional Staff, April 13 and May 16, 2000
 - i. Raymond Joseph, Family Services Officer,
 - ii. Jacqueline Allain, Community Development Officer
 - iii. Claudius Prospere, Environmental Health Officer
 - iv. Methodius Claircin, Communications and Works Officer
 - v. Harold Andrew, Environmental Health Officer
 - vi. Methodius Faucher, Agricultural Extension Officer
 - vii. Simone Mondesir, Nutritionist, Ministry of Health