

**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION,
YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS**

STRATEGIC PLAN 2002 – 2012

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Education

- 0.1 Education should not only be seen as a refuge from ignorance, but also as a vast creative enterprise. It should therefore be organised for the enlargement of knowledge and also for the improvement and empowerment of human life. This country cannot and should not try to escape the impact of technology and change on the lives of its citizens. And the application of these technologies and the management of change extend to the world of the classroom.
- 0.2 A progressive approach to planning formal education for this century will require educators and other stakeholders to refocus on the dynamics of human behaviour for at the core of human instinct is a strong desire to succeed and become somebody. There is also a need for a kind of education that will enable our people to deal with “social distance” in everyday life; the social distance which may be measured by such variables as income, social mobility, race, education, occupational prestige, wealth and intelligence
- 0.3 As far as access to education is concerned, Barbados is a leader among Caribbean and other non-industrialised countries. Education up to and including tertiary education is free for all Barbadian nationals and it is compulsory by law between the ages of 5 to 16 years.

Indeed, Barbados boasts one of the few education systems in the world where education is free up to and including the tertiary level for all its nationals. However, we must never allow such accolades to narrow our visions.

- 0.4 It is safe to say that in the face of all the rapidly changing global and societal arrangements, our education system has remained virtually unchanged in its focus since the early post-independence days. Education reform or reform in education has played and continues to play a major role in shaping the post-independence landscape of this society.

Youth Sector

- 0.5 A progressive approach to planning formal youth development during the first decade of the new millennium requires an understanding of the pivotal role of this segment of society in shaping the future of the country. MESHanisms must be devised to let young people get greater control of their own lives, but at the same time with a heightened responsibility to make positive contribution to the overall advancement of the nation.
- 0.6 Mindful of the fact that Barbados is not immune from the global problems of unacceptable levels of environmental degradation, unemployment, increasing crime, substance abuse and social alienation, the Government of Barbados is determined that this group of human beings who have suffered most from societal upheavals should be given special attention.
- 0.7 Young men and women must be empowered to break the shackles of tradition with its inequalities, disadvantages and prejudices. Capacity building will focus on the age cohort of 15 – 34 years in keeping with the UNESCO definition of the youth spectrum. Prioritizing the allocation of resources to this sector should be seen as managing investment in the future.
- 0.8 The changing international, regional and national arrangements dictate that positive steps be taken to ensure the system delivers and is seen to deliver education and youth development initiatives that are relevant to the needs of the individual and the society and sees to the overall improvement of the quality of life in the country.

0.11 The major aspects of this document are summarised as follows:

- ***Review of the Sector***

A summation of the major highlights and achievements of the last decade

- ***Environmental Scan***

Which details the methodology employed to arrive at the strategies articulated herein.

- ***Strategic and Contextual Issues***

Looks at the major issues still confronting the education and youth development sectors; and

- ***Strategic Goals and Objectives***

A synthesis of the strategies to be adopted by the Ministry to achieve its strategic vision over the next decade.

0.12 This Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports represents another step by this Ministry towards the development of a blueprint by consensus which will chart its course through the first decade of the 21st century.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Mandate

1.1.1 The Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports (MES) is the Government agency responsible for the formulation of educational policies and for the administration and regulation of education and educational policies in the island of Barbados. The Ministry directly oversees the administration of approximately 55 000 students annually - 28 000 at the primary level 22 000 at the secondary level and 5 000 at tertiary level (excluding those enrolled at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill campus). Within the education system there are presently 82 Government public primary schools, 23 Government public secondary schools, 11 private secondary schools, 20 private primary schools, 2 tertiary-level institutions, 1 teachers' training institution and 1 central administrative agency. The Education Act CAP. 41 mandates compulsory education for children between the ages of 5 and 16 years.

Education

1.1.2 The education system in Barbados provides a wide and varied range of educational opportunities from the pre-primary to the university level. Public education is free at the point of delivery and compulsory for all children, thus providing for 100% participation at the primary and secondary levels. In addition, a number of programmes are provided to ensure active participation by all students. These programmes include the provision of school meals at the primary level; the provision of educational media resources to support both students and teachers; the provision of a subvention to the Transport Board to assist with the cost of student transport; and the provision of a wide range of awards, grants, exhibitions and scholarships at the tertiary level.

Under-pinning these support systems is the premise that every person has the right to educational opportunities to allow him/her to develop his/her abilities to the fullest and to contribute to the social and economic well-being of the country.

Youth Affairs

1.1.3 The Youth Affairs Division of the Ministry is the agency charged with the specific responsibility for the formulation, implementation and management of Government's policy on youth development. This unit operates through three main programming channels relating to specific elements of youth development namely, the Barbados Youth Service (BYS), the Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme (YES) and the Youth Development Programme (YDP). The Barbados Youth Service offers a one-year structured curriculum of personal and skills development for out-of-school young people; the Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme provides an integrated package of services and training modules to service the needs of young entrepreneurs; and the Youth Development Programme facilitates research and consultation within the general framework of the Government's policy and stimulates the development of young people and youth organisations through a range of direct interventions, referrals and initiatives, including facilitative training in non-traditional areas. These segments or sub-programmes are then coordinated and serviced by a central administrative agency.

1.1.4 At its inception in 1995 the Youth Affairs Division followed the Commonwealth definition of youth – persons aged 15 to 29 – as the main target group for its programming. However, given the experience developed that it is critically important to build trust in the development of young people and the fact that such trust needs to be developed as early as possible, the Division has developed a number of activities specifically targeting persons from age 8 and extending to age 34. This sector operates under the basic philosophical theme of “Building Tomorrow Today” – seeking to contribute to the future

development of Barbados through the realisation of potential of this generation of young people.

1.2 Purpose of the Strategic Plan for the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports

The overall purpose of the Strategic Plan of the Ministry is to provide a blueprint for educational, youth and cultural development, guiding its programme of activities for the next decade.

The main purpose of the Plan is to improve the quality and delivery of education, youth and cultural development activities in Barbados. In trying to develop and support such a blueprint, the Plan will review the current stage of these sectors in Barbados and examine the internal and external environment that will assist the Ministry to realise this vision. Cognisant that a collaborative approach by all sectors in the society is needed to achieve these goals, the Ministry will function as the hub to facilitate the activities needed to realise this vision.

Essentially the Plan will address the issues that are pertinent to Education, Youth Affairs and Sports and fit those policies and strategies into the wider national framework for human resource development and the development of the society as a whole. The Plan is designed to provide a framework for:

- ensuring that each child matters in the educational system and can develop to the maximum of his/her ability;
- consulting and articulating a shared vision towards national identity;
- reforming the curricula to provide the tools to meet the economic, social, cultural and technological demands of a Barbados participating in a global economy;

- utilising education, youth and cultural policy to engender respect for the rule of law and for the need to reinforce a disciplined, cohesive and inclusive society;
- the fostering of the holistic development of young people;
- Maintaining and strengthening the elements of our culture that define us as individuals and strengthens national identity;
- Effecting a cultural seed-change where necessary;
- The creation and coordination of a network of groups and agencies that are focused on the delivery of services and the support of young people;
- to promote the cultural disciplines and industries of Barbados locally, regionally and globally;
- closer private-public sector partnerships and alliances that will ensure and support greater stakeholder involvement in the education, youth and cultural development; and
- strengthening the managerial competence of the Ministry in order to fully implement the process.

The Ministry needs to articulate a strategy that transcends structural and functional boundaries. This strategy should be capable of implementation by all functions within the organisation, and be consistent and similar as much as possible.

1.3 Vision for the 21st Century

The national philosophy will be to use education as a tool for national development ensuring that society develops social, cultural, economic and political viability. Education will be promoted as a lifelong process and will seek to produce outcomes that are culturally-based, technologically-driven, diverse and dynamic. It will also seek to inculcate in citizens an understanding of, and appreciation for the rule of law. It is through education that individuals will be equipped with the tools necessary to build an all-embracing, cohesive society.

1.3.1 Within the Ministry, there is a unified managerial thrust whereby the three divisions of the Ministry (Education; Youth Affairs; and Sports) operate harmoniously and work collaboratively to meet their objectives. This integrated system will:

- ◆ Promote learning as a collaborative experience.
- ◆ Be responsive to, and influenced by, the needs of all beneficiaries.
- ◆ Recognise the existence of multiple intelligences and abilities, and ensure that these are addressed in the classroom.
- ◆ Accommodate and address the different learning styles of our students.
- ◆ Allows each student to develop at his/her own pace.
- ◆ Promote the creativity of students and the building of self-esteem and confidence.
- ◆ Reinforce the cultural and spiritual values and those behaviours necessary for a productive and wholesome life.
- ◆ Adopt a research-driven and consultative approach to the development of programmes.

1.3.2 The Ministry in conjunction with other governmental and non-governmental agencies will continue to offer a multi-sectoral approach to the delivery of social services to young people. The emphasis has been placed and will continue to be placed on the identification of the needs of young people and the addressing of these needs through relevant programmes. These needs will be determined by the extensive research programmes undertaken on a continuous basis.

1.4 Goals and Objectives

1.4.1 The mission of the Ministry is threefold:

- (a) To ensure equitable access to quality education for all our citizens so that their potential is fully realized;
- (b) To assist in the development of responsible citizens who are disciplined, industrious, creative and confident and who can function effectively in a modern society; and
- (c) To assist in the development of citizens who demonstrate positive, social behaviours.

The policies that follow will embrace higher levels of productivity, enhanced values and self-concepts.

Goals

1.4.2 The main goals of the Ministry are:

- 1) to provide a sound basic education at the pre-primary, primary and secondary levels to every citizen to equip them to recognise and realise their potential for development;
- 2) to provide a wide range of higher education and training opportunities to enable those best able to avail themselves of those facilities to develop the professional, technical and other skills they can use to further their careers and contribute to the development of the Barbadian economy and society;

- 3) to provide special educational facilities for the disadvantaged to enable them to lead full, active and interesting lives;
- 4) to devise an effective policy on cultural development to further the development of cultural disciplines and cultural industries and to assist in the creation of an institutional framework to manage the same; and
- 5) to formulate and implement an effective policy on youth development with the assistance of all stakeholders.

EDUCATION

1.4.3 The objectives of the Ministry of Education are:

- (1) to develop a workforce that is equipped to adapt to a rapidly-changing environment and that is readily re-trainable.;
- (2) to ensure equity in the delivery of education, taking the special needs of students into account;
- (3) to ensure quality education for all;
- (4) to help students to develop enquiring and creative minds;
- (5) to forge a sense of responsibility to self, family, community, country and region;
- (6) to empower teachers;
- (7) to foster a greater partnership between the school, the home and the community;
- (8) to strengthen the capacity of the Ministry to plan, manage and evaluate the education system more effectively; and
- (9) to make the Ministry more user-friendly and more responsive to the needs of its various publics.

Youth Affairs

1.4.4 The broad objectives of the youth programmes are:

- (a) to inform the development of policy through the process of research and consultation with youth;
- (b) to contribute to community building and networking through the facilitation of youth programming and structured supervised activities at the community level;
- (c) to facilitate access to opportunities and services from both governmental and non-governmental agencies for young people and youth organisations;
- (d) to promote growth and development of youth organisations;
- (e) to create and maintain a social and infra-structural environment appropriate to the delivery of training for young people;
- (f) to provide a comprehensive package of programmes and services to young entrepreneurs;
- (g) to contribute to the development of an entrepreneurial climate among young people towards personal and national development.

Youth Development Programme

1.4.5 The specific objectives of the Youth Development Programme are:

- (a) to conduct community-based training programmes in sports and cultural disciplines for young people;
- (b) to convene zonal and national consultation workshops with youth community groups in order to deepen the consultative process between the Division and young people and ensure efficiency in resource utilisation;
- (c) to act as a Secretariat for youth and community organisations;
- (d) to contribute to community building and networking through the facilitation of youth programming and activities at the community level;
- (e) to provide access to all government and non-governmental (NGO) services to facilitate opportunities at the individual level for the communities and young persons at risk.

Barbados Youth Service

1.4.6 The specific objectives of the Barbados Youth Service are:

- (a) to process trainees through the programming of the Barbados Youth Service involving personal development; disciplinary training; academic, technical and vocational skills development; and preparation for the labour market.

- (b) to facilitate the placement of graduating trainees into further training, higher education or employment;
- (c) to deliver walk-in counselling and referral services to young people;
- (d) to create and maintain a social and infra-structural environment which is appropriate to the delivery of the programming of the Barbados to process trainees through the programming of the Barbados Youth Service;
- (e) to foster patriotism and a sense of responsibility to self, family, community, country and region.

Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme

1.4.7 The specific objectives of the Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme are:

- (a) to provide a package of technical assistance, financial assistance, business counselling, training and a mentorship programme to young entrepreneurs; and
- (b) to contribute to the development of an entrepreneurial climate through school and community-based programming.

2. MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

2.1 REVIEW OF EDUCATION SECTOR 1990 - 1999

Over the past ten years developments in the education sector have been guided by initiatives outlined in the following documents:

- 1) National Development Plan 1993 – 2000/ Education Sectoral Plan 1993 – 2000,
- 2) White Paper on Education Reform (1995),
- 3) Education Sector Enhancement Programme (1997), and
- 4) The Master Plan for the Integration of Information Technology in the Barbadian School System (1997).

2.1.2 The National Development Plan 1993 - 2000

The National Development Plan 1993 – 2000 represented a deliberate departure from previous plans in that it placed emphasis on increasing the productivity of the Barbadian people. The Plan had as its motto “Prosperity through Increased Productivity” and sought to adopt a strategy that was more export-focussed and driven. With reference to the education sector, greater focus was placed on strengthening the linkages between education and the productive sectors.

2.1.3 The White Paper on Education Reform: Quality Education for All

The *White Paper on Education Reform* emerged from the need to adopt a coherent set of strategic measures to address the major issues in the education sector and to

prepare the nation's children and young people to lead more meaningful and self-fulfilling lives in their communities. It embodies the results of broad-based consultations with various stakeholders which began as early as 1993. Since February 1995, when the Minister held a technical retreat, followed by area meetings with principals and teachers, the process of consultation, review and sector analysis has intensified and accelerated.

The upshot of this process of review and in-depth discussions has been an agreed set of measures that has laid the foundation for the education reforms now taking place in the education system.

2.1.4 Education Sector Enhancement Programme document (1997)

The Education Sector Enhancement Programme (ESEP) outlines a comprehensive approach being undertaken by the Government of Barbados to address some of the deficiencies within our education system. This has resulted in a major initiative to retool the education system through the implementation of this Programme, also known as EduTech 2000.

ESEP will touch every facet and clear every conduit in the education system in an effort to effect the desired changes. It is not designed to be a fly-by-night remedy or stop-gap panacea, but a deliberate and sustained assault to effect a paradigm shift in the behaviours and attitudes of teachers and students. The Programme represents a culmination of reform initiatives emanating from the White Paper on Education (1995). The core objectives of this Programme are to:

- provide teacher training to enhance the pedagogical skills;
- integrate all available information and communications technologies within the school system;
- repair and upgrade the existing school plant;
- strengthen the capacity of the Ministry to effectively manage the

- education system; and
- achieve the desired balance between teacher-centered and child-centered approaches.

It is also expected that this Programme will result in the development of responsible citizens capable of contributing to the country's sustainable social, cultural and economic growth.

2.1.6 Master Plan for the Integration of Information Technology in the Barbadian School System” (1997)

This document outlines a multi-faceted approach to integration of information technology into the teacher-learning process. This approach will help to:

- i. improve administration and management of information in the schools and the Ministry;
- ii. improve the preparation and presentation of lessons;
- iii. enable students and teachers to access other sources of information;
- iv. enable students and teachers to analyse and manipulate information for the general good;
- v. develop technology literacy among teachers and students; and
- vi. increase student motivation to learn.

2.2 Review of Education Sector 1990 - 1999

During the period under review, the Ministry of Education assumed responsibility for Culture and Youth Affairs. This ministerial adjustment occurred in September 1994. In 1997, the Ministry moved to its new headquarters, The Elsie Payne Complex, on Constitution Road.

The Ministry of Education's primary objectives during this period were to:

- (i) ensure equity in the delivery of education and equality of opportunity in the access to education;
- (ii) prepare citizens for the responsibility of nation-building;
- (iii) revalue the role of education in the sphere of national development;
- (iv) provide expanded training and retraining opportunities to allow teachers to respond effectively to differentiated learning needs;
- (v) engender tolerance and respect for cultural and religious difference;
- (vi) foster greater partnership between the school and the home, and the community;
- (vii) engender creativity and innovation in problem solving;
- (viii) prepare citizens for meaningful living in an Information Age;
- (ix) create conditions for the export of educational services, and educational media resources, both regionally and extra-regionally; and
- (x) lay the groundwork for the integration of technology in education.

A review of this period reveals that the majority of the objectives articulated the afore-mentioned documents have been achieved. The sector has been able to rebound from the effects of negative economic growth and stabilization experienced during the years 1991 to 1993. Over the last seven years, the sector has made significant progress.

During this period, the sector was also able to benefit from financial and technical assistance provided by the Caribbean Development Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the European Union and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

2.2.1 Early Childhood Education (ECE)

The Ministry ensured that primary schools continued to admit 3 and 4 year olds, provided that the schools had the facilities and resources. ECE coverage reached approximately 70%. Erdiston Teachers' Training College offered a one-day release Teachers' Advanced Professional Certificate (TAPC). This provided the opportunity for trained teachers to receive specialised training in early childhood education. Evening courses were also offered to the general public.

Parent Volunteer Support Programme

Recognising the important role that parents can play in strengthening early childhood education, which is the foundation for early literacy and numeracy, the Ministry formed alliances with both the National Council for Parent-Teachers' Associations (NCPTA) and the Early Childhood Association (ECA). The purpose of these alliances was to identify parent volunteers who were willing to assist teachers in the nursery classrooms of primary schools. The Ministry has provided basic training and a stipend to these volunteers for their services. This programme has been in existence since 1996 and extends to 52 schools island-wide. A full-time Special Projects Officer was assigned overall co-ordinating responsibility for this programme.

2.2.2 Primary Education

Primary education is the foundation for lifelong learning and unless there is a commitment to improve the "quality" of the children leaving the primary level, the Ministry will always have to spend far more at the secondary level on remediation with a smaller chance of achieving effective results. The focus of the Ministry at the primary level has been to:

1. strengthen and complement the performance of pupils to ensure that they transfer to the next level with the requisite numeracy and literacy skills;

2. improve the physical conditions at the schools to provide comfortable and safe environments for teachers and pupils; and
3. rationalise the method of transfer from primary to secondary education.

A number of notable achievements were realised in the areas of:

- Diagnostic testing;
- Testing for Physical Impairments
- Barbados Secondary Schools' Entrance Examination
- Flexible Transfer
- Partial Zoning
- Conversational Spanish in Primary Schools

Diagnostic Testing

In an effort to (a) determine the strengths and weakness of pupils, (b) facilitate building on children's strengths and correcting their weaknesses through specialised programmes, and (c) direct teaching time where it is needed most, the Ministry introduced criterion-referenced testing in primary schools for pupils at the end of Infants B and Class 2.

In 1995, a temporary unit – the Diagnostic and Remedial Unit - was established to diagnose the deficiencies of pupils who scored less than 30% on both BSSEE papers. Diagnostic and remediation procedures were established to ensure that these pupils were referred to the social service agencies and relevant professionals for follow-up action when necessary.

Testing for Physical Impairments

Testing for sight, hearing and speech impairments of all children enrolled in primary schools began in June 1995. After testing, pupils with impairments are referred to the relevant professionals for follow-up action. By the end of 1999, 30 461 pupils had been assessed.

Barbados Secondary Schools' Entrance Examination

- In May 1996, the Ministry changed the structure of the Language Arts paper to include 30% free response comprehension. This comprised a new section – Section B. This change was effected to encourage children's use of Standard English and to assist them in developing competence and creativity in the use of the language.
- Given the concern that the method of comparison of the Mathematics and Language Arts scores BSSEE was not statistically correct, the Ministry reverted to the use of standardised scores in May 1996.
- In addition to those who marked at the secondary schools on the day of the examination, primary school teachers undertook the standardized marking of Section B of the Language Arts paper.

Flexible Transfer

Cognisant of the fact that each child develops at his or her own rate, the Ministry introduced a policy of flexible transfer of pupils from primary to secondary school. The Education Act was amended to reflect the same. This policy facilitates the writing of the Barbados Secondary Schools' Entrance Examination by pupils aged 9+ who are deemed to be ready, and it also allows for an additional year in primary schools for those pupils aged 11+ who have chosen not to write this examination. The Ministry has also introduced a Summer School programme for these pupils who deferred writing this examination. This summer school programme started in 1996.

Partial Zoning

Effective May 1996, the Ministry instituted a policy of partial zoning where all primary school pupils writing the BSSEE were allowed to select public secondary schools as follows: two open choices and seven other choices from within their zone. The island has been divided into three zones for this purpose - northern, central and southern. Each school must admit at least 30% from its zone. This change has also

been reflected in an amendment to the Education Act and is expected to result in the following:

- (i) a reduction in the level of travel undertaken by students;
- (ii) greater equity in the distribution of children across the school system than existed prior to 1996; and
- (iii) the facilitation of a closer relationship between children and their schools, and the neighbouring community.

Conversational Spanish in Primary Schools

This programme originated from Government's policy that primary school children should be exposed to a foreign language, namely Spanish. The major objective of the programme was to stimulate interest in learning Spanish at an early stage through an exposure to the culture of Latin America. The pilot programme began in September 1997 with twenty (20) schools. Native speakers of Spanish are recruited to deliver the programme, which targeted pupils aged five (5) to eleven (11) in selected schools. Three years into the project, there are thirty-six (36) schools that benefit from the programme and the number of facilitators currently involved in this programme stands at nine (9).

2.2.3 Special Education

Training for teachers in special education was intensified with a view to upgrading their skills to meet the demands of training this population of students. In addition, the Ministry continued to upgrade the four (4) special education annexes located at various primary schools on the island. The financial assistance to private special education institutions - The Challenor School and the Learning Centre - was significantly increased to meet their operating expenses. It should be noted that a

separate sum of money was provided by the Ministry to underwrite their accumulated deficits.

Significant improvement has also been made at the Centre for Pre-Vocational Training (now renamed The Anne Hill School) in terms of expansion and upgrading of the physical plant. A strengthening of the various vocational skills training programmes at the Centre also occurred.

2.2.4 Secondary Education

With the advent of the GOB/CDB Secondary Education Project, notable achievements were realised at the secondary level. Phase I of the construction and refurbishment of the St. Leonard's Boys' School commenced in 1996. In addition, construction of the St. Thomas Secondary School, subsequently renamed the Lester Vaughan Secondary School resumed in 1996, after having been commenced in May 1990, and suspended in 1993. This school was officially opened in 1997.

Children at Risk

The Ministry's commitment to the provision of quality education for those students who exhibit a wide range of social, emotional and behavioural problems was demonstrated with the opening of the Edna Nicholls Centre in April 1998. Children of school age who are expelled or suspended from secondary school are mandated to attend this institution. This programme offers both academic instruction and counselling services. Attendance at the Centre is supported by an amendment to the Education Act.

Phasing Out of Senior Schools

The phasing out senior schools and the senior department of composite schools continued. During the period, one senior and the senior departments of four composite schools were closed, leaving one senior school, St. Giles, and one composite school, St. Lawrence.

Establishment of a School offering an alternative secondary school curriculum

The Ministry established the Alma Parris School in 1995 to address the needs of students from the senior departments of the composite schools and senior schools which were closed. Other students demonstrating significant remedial needs were also admitted. This school focuses on life skills education and school-to-work experiences.

Barbados National Diploma of Secondary Education (BNDSE)

Aware that the present system of certification leaves a significant number of secondary school students without independent indicators of their achievement, the Ministry set up a committee to advise on the establishment of Barbados National Diploma of Secondary Education. During the period under review, the committee submitted its initial report to the Ministry.

Sixth Form Education

The Ministry re-established the committee for admission of students to sixth form schools and to the Barbados Community College in an effort to improve access to Advanced Level studies and to ensure that the principles of transparency and equity are maintained.

2.2.5 Student Services

The Ministry restructured its technical arm and established a Student Services Unit to address the social and psychological needs of the student population. In this Unit, provision was made for a Senior Education Officer and two additional posts of Education Officer (Psychological Services).

School Attendance

Closer monitoring of school attendance was achieved during the period. The mobilisation of School Attendance Officers reduced the incidence of loitering and truancy. This was achieved through closer liaison with schools, addressing morning

assembly and PTA meetings, and patrolling areas in the city where students loitered. The joint patrol operation between the Royal Barbados Police Force and School Attendance Officers contributed significantly to the continued success of the programme.

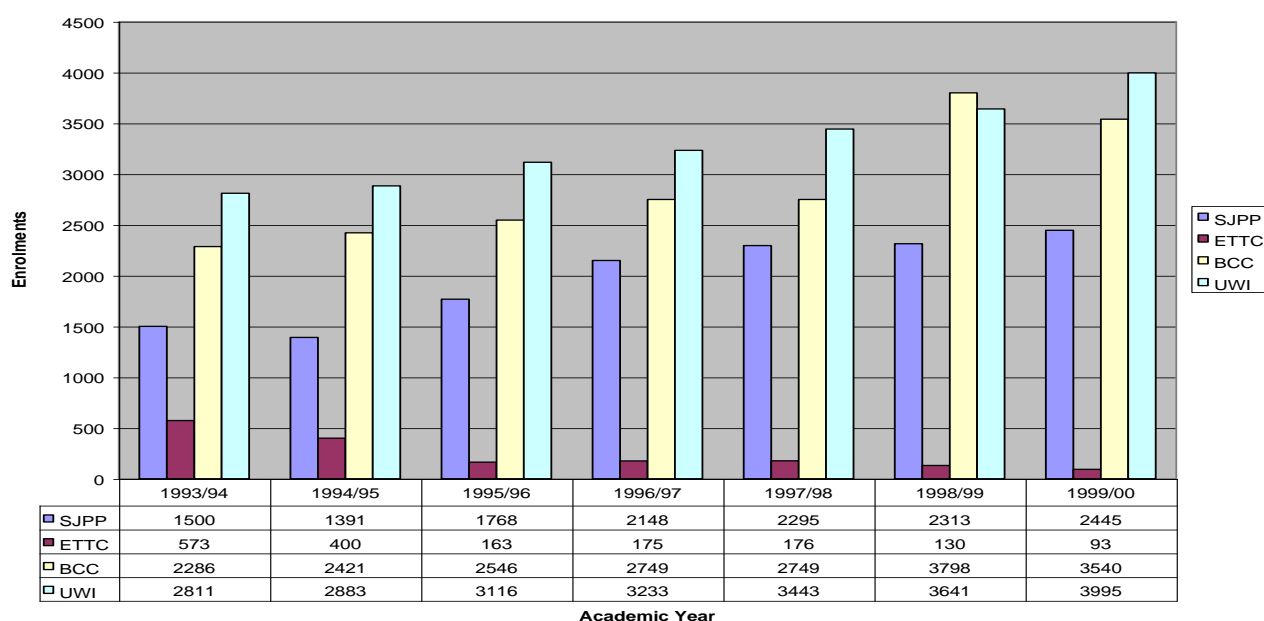
2.2.6 Tertiary Education

Access to tertiary education was significantly expanded during the period under review. A major achievement was the creation of the Framework for Articulation between University of the West Indies and Barbados Community College. This was settled in twelve areas.

Other notable achievements were:

- i. an increase in student enrolment across all tertiary institutions;
- ii. the systematic upgrading of plant and facilities at the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, with the most recent upgrade being to the Autotronics Lab in the Welding and Automotive Division;
- iii. the opening of the Barbados Community College's new hospitality institute and twenty-room hotel, The PomMarine, at Marine Gardens in 1997 with financial assistance being provided by GOB and the European Union (EU);
- iv. the resumption of the two-year in-service teacher training programme at Erdiston College in 1997;
- v. the relocation of the Diploma and Certificate in Education programmes from University of the West Indies to Erdiston Teachers' College;
- vi. the introduction of Technology Mastery training for teachers under the GOB/CDB Secondary Education project and continuing under the GOB/IDB/CDB Education Sector Enhancement Programme;
- vii. the convening of a high-level conference on financing university education in September 1995;

- viii. the commissioning and receipt of a Report on rationalising the delivery of tertiary education in Barbados;
- ix. the submission of the Final Report from the Committee to review the Financing University Education in Barbados in December 1995;
- x. the conceptualisation of a Centre for International Services at the UWI to facilitate the training and re-training for professionals in the Services sector in Barbados in recognition of the critical importance of this sector to the economy;
- xi. the conceptualisation and the establishment of the Education Evaluation Centre at the UWI to provide for independent measurement of the effectiveness of the policies being implemented by the Ministry of Education, especially in the Education Sector Enhancement Programme; and
- xii. the establishment of an Advisory Committee on Tertiary Education chaired by the Minister of Education.



Note that the enrolment figures for Erdiston Teachers College have shown a decline over the last two (2) as a result of the fact that the College is no longer enrolling full-time students but is now conducting island-wide training for teachers and other educational personnel under the Education Sector Enhancement Programme (ESEP).

2.2.7 Curriculum Development

During the decade of the 90s, attempts have been made to review and update certain aspects of the Curriculum, but it was not until 1996 that efforts aimed at overhauling the Curriculum were fully initiated. This was as a result of prevailing societal changes and the recognition that the current curriculum was no longer meeting the needs of the students or those of society. Curriculum Reform is, therefore, a major component of the Education Sector Enhancement Programme.

The National Curriculum Development Council was re-constituted, with specific sub-committees to advise on the updating, revision and evaluation of all levels of the schools' curriculum to ensure that they reflect the national developmental needs. In particular, the Council's primary focus was to:

- (1) give direction to its sub-committees with respect to the development of curricula for specific subject areas,
- (2) decide on the "core" and foundation subjects which every child will be expected to pursue during primary and lower secondary education, and
- (3) set attainment targets and learning outcomes for these core areas to be reached by at least 80% of all pupils.

2.2.8 Special Services

Audio Visual Aids Department

The major objectives of this Department during the period were similar to those of the wider Ministry. They included:

- working towards making schools more self-reliant in the production of learning resources;
- expanding the department's capacity to supply educational multimedia resources to schools;
- expanding its role as an educational multimedia resources centre, capable of giving advice and assistance on the use of educational technology; and
- preparing a proposal on the restructuring of the Department.

In an effort to achieve these objectives, the Department benefited from participating in the GOB/IBRD Human Resources Project and the IDB Primary Education Programme. The department was able to acquire new equipment, and its officers were able to participate in study tours and institutional strengthening activities.

In 1996, the Ministry also commissioned a study for the restructuring of the department. The aim of this study was to advise on the proposed re-organisation of AVA with a view to improving the delivery of services by this department.

2.2.9 Rationalisation of Primary School Plant

The process of rationalising and refurbishing the school plant continued with the building of 11 new schools under the GOB/IDB Primary Education Programme. These schools are:

1. Selah Primary	-	1990
2. St. Mary's Primary	-	1991
3. Mount Tabor Primary	-	1991
4. Bayley's Primary	-	1991
5. Gordon Greenidge Primary	-	1993
6. Hillaby/Turner's Hall Primary	-	1993
7. St. Stephen's Primary	-	1993
8. Hilda Skeene Primary	-	1995
9. Ignatius Byer Primary	-	1996
10. St. Christopher's Primary	-	1997
11. All Saint's Primary	-	1998

2.2.10 Legislation

Education Act

During the period under review, the amendments to the *Education Act Cap. 41* were as follows:

1995

- The definitions of *child*, *compulsory school age*, *primary pupil* and *secondary pupil* were changed
- A Section on "Zoning" was included immediately after Section 4 to make allowances for partial zoning.
- A section on the "*Entrance Examination and Compulsory School Age*" was included immediately after section 41 to make allowances for flexible transfer.

- An amendment of section 42 to include subparagraph (g) which states “*the child has successfully completed a period of study in secondary education to the satisfaction of the principal of the school.*”

1996

- The *power to search* amendment was included immediately after section 64.

2.3. ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

2.3.1 Introduction

The entire consultative process started in early 1997 and culminated in a major 3-day retreat in June 1998. Prior to this major 3-day consultative retreat which drew on the energies and participation of all the major stakeholders, a series of seminars, workshops and internal meetings were held in order to sensitise all the stakeholders as to the importance of a strategic plan document. From the outset of this exercise, the Ministry had established a Resource Team made up of key Ministry personnel. CARICAD and the Office of Public Sector Reform (OPSR) facilitated this team and the entire strategic planning process with technical assistance.

Based on the analysis and the conclusions synthesized from the 3-day consultation, recommendations were agreed on by consensus for the future direction and strategies for the Ministry of Education to pursue over the years from 2000 to 2010. The synthesis of these recommendations represents the framework for the actual Strategic Plan formulated.

2.3.2 Methodology

Another critical component of the SWOT exercise was the Environmental Scanning component which required a cross-section of the stakeholders to conduct the situational analysis and prepare and present relevant Discussion Papers for the SWOT Analysis workshop. From the papers presented by the various Environmental Scanning Teams, a SWOT analysis of the education system was conducted to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that should be prioritized for attention.

2.3.3 Summary of SWOT Analysis

2.3.3.1 Strengths

- Strong political will to put education at the center of national development.
- Large portion of National Budget spent on education.
- An average of 7% of GDP spent on education.
- Strong legislative and policy framework.
- A sustained policy framework.
- Highly trained personnel at all levels of educational administration.
- 85% of trained teachers at the primary and secondary level.
- Full and free access to primary and secondary schooling and training.
- 20% access to regional post-secondary and tertiary institutions.
- Strong organizational support.
- National entity managing our cultural development
- Strong ancillary services in the delivery of education (school meals, textbook loan scheme at secondary, subsidised school transport).
- Strong private sector involvement.
- National commitment and dedication to the importance of education.

2.3.3.2 Weaknesses

- Need for a shared vision among all levels of stakeholders.
- Deteriorating physical plant
- Low priority on public relations.
- Students' creativity suppressed in early childhood.
- Inability to use Standard English.
- Excessive reliance on rote learning as opposed to the fostering of critical thinking strategies.

- Lack of confidence manifested in a general fear of criticism and in making mistakes.
- Lack of adequate assessment procedures for students.
- Absence of a focus on bolstering national identity in our curriculum.
- An ineffective performance appraisal management system for teachers and administrators.
- Centralised decision-making processes.
- Ineffective financial management systems.
- Inability to apply supervisory management strategies.
- Over-centralisation in the appointment of personnel.
- Lack of accountability among personnel.
- Lack of Cultural integration with Education
- Research capacity and record management.

2.3.3.3 Opportunities

- Strong political will to develop universal access to early childhood education.
- Free education at the point of delivery at the primary, secondary and tertiary level.
- Increased prevalence of private-public sector partnerships.
- The shift to knowledge-based and service-oriented industries.
- The political will for increased opportunities at the level of post-secondary and tertiary institutions.
- Increased reliance on inter-departmental and inter-Ministerial collaboration.
- Increased usage for information and communications technology.
- Recognition by the international financial community to the critical role for funding education.
- Commitment to the alleviation of poverty.
- Freedom of movement of skilled personnel within CARICOM.
- Increased opportunities for extra-regional studies.

- Increased collaboration between the Spanish, English, French and Dutch Caribbean.
- Increased access to teacher training.

2.3.3.4 Threats

- Influence of illegal drug use and abuse.
- HIV/AIDS.
- Negative changes in cultural values and attitudes
- Pervasive negative media culture and the effects of that culture.
- Weakened role of the home and community in education and youth development
- Indiscipline and antisocial behaviour within society.
- Limited focus by society on morals and religion.
- Increasingly litigious society.
- Limited role of religious and moral education.

2.4 STRATEGIC AND CONTEXTUAL ISSUES

It is recognised that the Barbadian society has made great strides in terms of improving the quality and delivery of education. The issues of equity and access are almost non-existent, as there is compulsory and free education for all children between the ages of 5 to 16 years old. Barbados boasts one of the few education systems in the world where education is free up to and including the tertiary level for all of its nationals. Indeed, up until recently, the Barbadian education system was rated in some United Nations (UN) and other international social publications as one of the leading educational systems in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The fundamental issue in education to be addressed is essentially to bring along “*those that have been left behind*”. Not negating its past accomplishments, as a Ministry and by extension, a primary social reform organisation, MES has for a long time failed to address the plight of those made disadvantaged by the education system. This is evidenced in the fact that, as reported in *The White Paper on Education Reform (1995)*:

- 30% - 40% of those leaving the secondary system did not leave with adequate certification;
- at the primary level, at least 30% of those taking the Barbados Secondary Schools Entrance Examination (BSSEE) did not demonstrate the level of basic skills in literacy to successfully follow a secondary curriculum; and
- there is an absence of effective educational opportunities for those with special needs.

In May 1997, at a Special Meeting of the Standing Committee of Ministers responsible for Education (SCME) in the Caribbean, the point was made that human resource development strategy must ensure that education and training are not done in a MEShanistic manner, but that the strategies need to take account of:

1. the emerging profile of the workforce needed for Barbados to be competitive;
2. the re-organisation of the production processes within the economy; and
3. the development of abilities, attitudes, skills and technological knowledge necessary for jobs, entrepreneurial development and human well-being.

It has been argued by sociologists and welfare economists alike that the one common factor that defines the Caribbean is the realisation that its people are its one major resource. This factor puts Barbados in a unique position where the fuel needed for its economic development is readily available. If one takes into consideration the fact that the evolving global economy is presently being crafted and stoked by skill-intensive and knowledge-based industries and innovations, then the quality of any nation's human resource base becomes of critical importance.

2.4.1 Key Contextual (Sector) Issues

General

1. Ill-discipline in schools.
2. Malicious damage to school plant and facilities.
3. Drug use and abuse among students.
4. Physical and verbal abuse of children in the classroom and on the school premises.
5. Poor physical plant and facilities as a result of ineffective maintenance.

Early Childhood Education

6. Absence of effective strategies to build on the early development of a child .

Primary

7. Poor performance (underachievement) at the primary.
 - ◆ 30% of children scoring less than 30 in the BSSEE.
8. An effective system for the use of textbooks and workbooks at the primary level.

Secondary

9. Only 30%-40% of children leaving secondary school without adequate certification.
10. Super-annuation of children from secondary school.
11. Absence of a proper system of certification.

Post-secondary/Tertiary

12. Absence of a proper system of accreditation.
13. Need for a further increase in the transfer rate from secondary to post-secondary level.
14. Absence of proper quality assurance Mechanisms at the tertiary level.
15. Absence of a proper system of determining equivalencies.

Teacher

16. Lack of teacher involvement in PTAs.
17. Time lost on instructional tasks at school.
18. Teacher attendance and punctuality.
19. Recognition and rewards for the teaching profession.
20. Absence of an effective appraisal Mechanism for teachers.

Curriculum

21. Relevance of curriculum to the needs of the individual, society and the economy.
22. Effectiveness of assessment Mechanisms within the school curriculum.
23. Absence of importance attached to the social and emotional development of the child.
24. High incidence of automatic promotion.
25. Absence of a strong special needs programme.

26. Issue of the use of Standard English in the classroom.

27. Absence of a proper system of certification.

Institutional

28. Transportation of pupils.

29. Efficiency in the deployment of resources at all levels in education.

30. Effective communications within the system.

31. Effective supervision and accountability Mechanisms within the system.

32. Absence of an effective HRD programme.

Pastoral

33. Poor involvement in extra-curricular activities by students and teachers.

34. Lack of parental support and the incidence of child abuse.

2.4.2. Early Childhood Education

To date, there are approximately 5,346 children between the ages of 3 and 5 receiving early childhood education. With a school age population of approximately 7,855 of this age cohort, there is still another 31.90% children who need to benefit from the early childhood programme the majority of whom may be in private schools.

Continuing research has revealed the benefits of early childhood programmes as:

- (a) the early intellectual stimulation of children;
- (b) preparation for an easier introduction to primary education; and
- (c) the social interaction that occurs between children.

2.4.3 Primary Education

Primary education continues to be the bedrock of the education system in Barbados. To date, there is 100% access at this level, which caters to children aged, 4+ to 11+.

This commendable achievement affords every boy and girl the opportunity to pursue a programme of literacy and numeracy regardless of race, religion or social class. The curriculum - which embodies Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Religious and Moral Education, Family Life Education, Physical Education, Art and Craft and Computer Technology - has been structured to enhance the learning capacities of children of this age group, four plus to eleven plus.

Since the 1980s, one of the major concerns at the primary level has been the number of children who score under 30% in the Barbados Secondary Schools' Entrance Examination (BSSEE). The implication here is that children at this level have not been sufficiently mastering the literacy and numeracy skills which will allow them to maximise their learning opportunities at the secondary level. In light of this, there is a need to explore new initiatives and to continue and intensify existing programmes relating to the quality of basic education and to the diagnosis and remediation of weak students.

Table . Summary of Students Scoring Less than 30 in the BSSEE for the period 1990 - 2000

YEAR	SUBJECT					
	ENGLISH			MATHEMATICS		
	M	F	MF	M	F	MF
1990	669	336	1005	626	424	1050
1991	551	255	806	557	231	788
1992	412	187	599	441	298	739
1993	536	397	933	425	369	794
1994	659	309	968	556	276	832
1995	626	297	923	707	454	1161
1996	459	241	700	465	367	832
1997	628	372	1000	431	264	695
1998	488	376	864	474	255	729
1999	523	276	799	482	305	787
2000	647	276	923	771	477	1248

2.4.4 Secondary Education

There are sufficient places for pupils from primary schools within the public secondary school system. Other places are provided in private secondary institutions. In 1999/2000, there were approximately 20,435 students benefiting from a secondary education in the public secondary schools. The secondary education programme was established to ensure that all students acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes that will adequately prepare them for the world of work, thus allowing them to become productive citizens in society. While secondary education is available to all post-primary students, government's concern is the fact that a significant number of secondary students leave school without any form of proper certification.

In addition to the poor academic performance of some students at the secondary level, there exist the social problems manifested in the behaviour of a growing number of students. Of major concern is the realisation that the education thrust concentrated heavily on academic skills and little attention was paid to the development of social and emotional learning skills. These social and emotional learning skills should have been developed in a programme which could better students to face the challenges and issues confronting them.

A major observation during this period was the declining use of standard English demonstrated by students when communicating. It is clear that many students were unable to express themselves

The system at present lacks a proper process of articulation, certification and equivalency of qualifications. Provision should also be made for greater rationalisation of the facilities and programmes provided at secondary schools.

2.4.5 Tertiary Level

It is recognised that tertiary or post-secondary education will play an important role in the development of any country's human resources development. There is general

agreement that the basic infrastructure is already in place in the Barbados economy, however, there is a pressing need to facilitate the expansion of access at the tertiary level. The Ministry of Education has made a concerted effort to increase the numbers of students at all public post-secondary institutions through expansion of the curricula with relevant course and programme offerings.

2.4.6 Teaching Profession

The successful delivery of quality education in Barbados is dependent on a well-trained and qualified teaching staff. Fortunately, Barbados has enjoyed consistent success in this regard both at the primary and secondary level as a result of an extensive training and retraining regime. However, in spite of this training, the teacher of today must now be part of the revolution in education that embraces the constructivist philosophy of learning where both teachers and pupils become partners in the acquisition of skills and knowledge.

Today's teacher, therefore, needs to adopt new teaching methodologies to engage the attention of students. While it will be senseless to abandon past practices in total, the demand to adjust to pedagogical changes will be inevitable.

2.4.7 Co-education

During the period under review, the policy of co-education continued with a number of primary schools moving from single sex to co-educational and one secondary school becoming co-education after moving to its new facilities and location. To date, only St. Leonards' Boys' and Springer Memorial are single-sex secondary schools, which have been left as single-sex institutions to allow choice as well as further empirical studies to be executed.

There has been continuing controversy over the question of co-education in Barbadian schools despite the favourable response of two major studies on the

topic, namely, the studies entitled “Women in the Caribbean Project” and “Co-education in Secondary Schools in Barbados: The Perceptions of Heads, Teachers and Students”. Within the past ten years the question of the marginalisation of males has directed attention again to the alleged “disadvantage” of males in a co-education system. The apparent under achievement of male students has compounded the debate.

2.4.8 Support Services

Audio Visual Aids

The effective operation of this unit is limited by the lack of adequate physical and human resources. Specifically, the equipment at the Government Hill Studio is inadequate to function effectively, and the printing division does not have sufficient staff.

School Meals

The existing facilities were not designed to carry out their present function and as a result, it is impossible to obtain maximum efficiency in the delivery of service. Service in this area is also hampered by the obsolescence of much of the equipment, and by the lack of financial resources to replace or maintain the existing equipment.

Transportation of Pupils

The current system of Partial Zoning has alleviated some of the issues associated with the mass transportation of pupils. However, the fundamental problems associated with unpunctuality, loss of teaching time, tiredness, lack of concentration and absenteeism are still of major concern to the authorities.

2.4.9 Cost and Management Efficiencies in Education

The important issue to be addressed when discussing quality and efficiency in education is the relationship between expenditures and desired educational outcomes and to some extent, actual educational outcomes. In assessing efficiencies, the Ministry has been aware of strongly held societal expectations and the social welfare function that is deeply embedded in successive governments' philosophy in the delivery of education in Barbados. Cost efficiency is in effect, value for money and there is a clear trade-off of value in terms of quantity versus quality. Therefore, the Government of Barbados needs to begin to view the education sector as a productive sector since it is principally responsible for the development of the country's primary natural resource; its human resource.

2.5 CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS

The Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports has identified the following as the critical success factors on which a successful strategy will be implemented and measured:

- Political will.
- Motivational Leadership and Management
- Prompt and timely decision-making.
- Recognition of the time-bound nature of education strategy.
- Continuity of education policies in spite of change in personnel.
- Teacher empowerment.
- Stakeholder buy-in.
- Planned structured involvement of parents.
- The fostering of proper attitudes.
- Proper succession planning.
- Effective appraisal systems.
- Provision of adequate resources.
- Private-public sector partnerships
- Adequate physical environment.
- Strong HRD.
- Review and reform of rules.
- Proper and effective information and communication channels.
- Proper transportation system.
- Efficient service delivery
- Responsive Organisational Arrangements.

2.5.1 Political Will

Successive Governments of Barbados in the later half of the twentieth century, have always seen education as a priority and have continued to demonstrate the political will by providing the necessary funding. This funding has been both recurrent and capital expenditures. In addition, Government has implemented the concomitant policies and legislation to support its political will. This level of commitment has been critical and is still needed in the future.

2.5.2 Motivational Leadership and Management

The fostering of motivational leadership and management among the Ministry personnel, principals, Board chairmen, senior teachers and senior officers of the education system is imperative. During this time of dynamic change and educational reform, leaders and managers must effectively direct change and sustain the motivation of teachers, agency and Ministry staff to expeditiously implement policy changes, consistently deliver high standards of service and excellence to all stakeholders.

2.5.3 Prompt and Timely Decision-making

From time to time, other departments of government have to review and give comments on the policies of the Ministry of Education. These delays in response to the Ministry can result in the Ministry not being able to take advantage of opportunities. The end result can then be delays in the Ministry's ability to formulate and implement policy. The consequences of these delays range from the disappointment of teachers and parents to negative public opinion and disenchantment towards the Ministry. Prompt and timely decision-making would facilitate a more harmonious relationship between the Ministry and its key stakeholders.

2.5.4 Recognition of the Time-bound nature of Education Strategy

It is important to recognise that it takes about five (5) years for an education policy to show its benefits. In addition, all new policies are better implemented at the beginning of a school year. It is therefore critical that these times and dates are understood and recognised by the agencies and departments which support education. Failure to do so will result in delaying the implementation of programmes until after the commencement of the new school year. Further all stakeholders and the public must be sensitised to and appreciate that reform in education is a medium- to long-term process and that it is generally unrealistic to expect results before completion of the five-year cycle.

2.5.5 Continuity of Education Policies in spite of a Change in Personnel

One of the strengths of the Barbados education system has been the general continuity and consistency in policies over the years. Education has benefited from a number of policy initiatives in spite of changes in personnel within the Ministry and the school system, and across political administrations.

2.5.6 Teacher Empowerment

There is a need to ensure the effective recruitment, selection, on-going professional development (including values and attitude training, leadership and entrepreneurial skills development), and succession planning to maintain the high standards of professionalism required to accomplish the mission of a modern educational system. In addition, effective strategies must be put in place for the empowerment of teachers. These would include teacher evaluation, teacher training and rewards and recognition of excellence in the profession.

2.5.7 Stakeholder Buy-in

Almost every family in Barbados has someone who is in the education system or is affected by the system in one way or another. This creates a large body of

stakeholders. Success in education has also resulted from involvement by parents and other stakeholders in the schooling life of the child. It is therefore critical that stakeholders understand and appreciate the policies of the Ministry and take ownership of these policies so that they can perform their roles as supporters and motivators to the children and as partners in the education system.

2.5.8 Planned Structured Involvement of Parents

Parents represent a critical factor in the learning process of a child. Major research has shown that when parents are actively involved in the child's learning process, the child generally performs better. The planned activity of the Ministry will allow for parent participation at every level of development, from assessing entry level skills to commenting on the child's performance reports.

2.5.9 Fostering of Proper Attitudes

One of the major goals of education is to develop responsible and productive citizens. Equally important is that students be trained to develop a sense of self, family and community. They should be allowed and encouraged to develop the appropriate attitudes that are conducive to such development.

2.5.10 Proper Succession Planning

The recognition is that managers are not necessarily born and that the traditional system of promotion by seniority within the Civil Service may not be best suited in the circumstances to the needs of the education system. The drafting of an appropriate Succession Plan will allow the Ministry to establish clear and transparent guidelines that will govern the methods of selection and recruitment for leadership and management considerations. An important element of this Succession Plan will be the guidelines by which candidates are to be nurtured and fast-tracked to assume leadership in teaching and decision-making in administration within the system.

2.5.11 Effective Appraisal Systems

In order to advance, it is necessary to constantly evaluate the inputs in any system – the how, what and when – both the structures in place as well as the personnel who support these structures. It is important that at least two (2) systems of appraisal be developed as a matter of priority: one for the appraisal of teachers and one for the appraisal of the institutions involved in the delivery and administration of education. These systems are mainly for developmental purposes but the information realised can and should also be use for decision-making.

2.5.12 Provision of Adequate Resources

The Ministry of Education will need adequate financing in order to fulfil its goals. This financing can be obtained through improving the efficiency of the education system, encouraging public-private sector partnerships and continued allocation from the Consolidated Fund.

2.5.13 Private-Public Sector Partnerships

The complexity of the technological age and new global order demands a wider participation in education from all the stakeholders. The fostering of partnerships in education with the private sector and civil society is therefore critical, and provides a valuable pool of resources and specialised skills to be utilised for the benefit of both students and education professionals.

In addition to continuing the partnerships already operating the education sector, the Ministry of Education has committed itself to instituting a comprehensive partnership programme across the system. The establishment of this programme of partnerships in education should place the education system in a better position to respond quickly and appropriately to changes in the dynamic economic environment, as there will be better information on real world conditions and demands. In addition, the participation of the partners in education, especially those from civil society,

should allow the system to better meet the social and emotional needs of students in the system.

2.5.14 Adequate Physical Environment

There is a need to consistently provide the necessary resources to ensure on-going maintenance and protection of the physical assets of the Ministry of Education and its schools, centres and agencies island-wide; and the safety of employees and other users of these facilities. This is very important, given the increasing levels of vandalism in the society and given the high cost of capital investment and the critical reliance on such plant and equipment for the efficient and effective delivery of services to stakeholders.

2.5.15 Human Resource Development

The island's human resource development must be geared towards meeting the needs, both technologically and scientifically, of our major economic sector earners of foreign exchange – particularly, tourism, informatics and telecommunications and off-shore services. These skills, knowledge and attitudes must be fashioned towards optimizing the opportunities and innovations that will be needed to give our economy the edge in areas of international competitiveness. Effective human resources management must be developed and systems appropriately structured to ensure that the educational system has the requisite skills and capacity to meet the challenges which will arise from sustained and broad-based programmes.

The ability of Barbados to maintain, regulate and manage its economy, which places it first among developing countries - according to the United Nations Development Report, (1998) – is sufficient to alert the Government of Barbados of the need to constantly improve and develop the nation's human resource. The imminence of globalisation and a "global" market, and the movement towards a Caribbean Single Market and economy at the regional level are imperatives that force this economy to pay more than lip service to making sure that its people are equipped with the

requisite skills to function effectively and efficiently in an increasingly competitive labour market.

2.5.16 Review and reform of Rules

The dynamic nature of the environment in which the education system functions, requires that reviews are conducted on a regular basis to make the system more responsive to the current needs. A culture of independent and objective evaluation would allow the Ministry to review and adjust its policies when warranted.

2.5.17 Proper and Effective Information and Communication Channels

Technology training for users and technical staff to master any computerised systems installed by MES so as to fully utilise technology capabilities to enhance learning and creativity, improve efficiency, reduce costs of operations and to increase productivity. In particular, teachers must become highly computer literate in order to guide students as computerised learning environments and cyber-technology become the norm in school, at home and in the wider society.

2.5.18 Efficient Service Delivery

The effective determination and efficient delivery of the services identified by government, social services partners, the private sector and the young people themselves is critical to the maintenance of trust which is so important in serving the needs of young people. The general cynicism regarding government and the natural reluctance of young people to approach social service agencies requires that both the atmosphere and the Mechanisms of service delivery maintain and build their trust.

2.6 KEY DIRECTIONAL STATEMENTS

Developments in the educational sector continue to be guided by initiatives outlined in the following documents:

- 1) National Development Plan 1993 – 2000/ Education Sectoral Plan 1993 – 2000
- 2) White Paper on Education Reform (1995)
- 3) Education Sector Enhancement Programme (1997)
- 4) Master Plan for the Integration of Information Technology in the Barbadian School System (1997)
- 5) Education for All (2000)
- 6) Caribbean Plan of Action 2000-2015 (2000)

2.6.4 Curriculum 2000: Rationale and Guidelines for Curriculum Reform (2000)

This document sets out the philosophy underlying the curriculum reform initiative and addresses the following issues:

- The need for curriculum reform;
- How children learn;
- What we expect children to learn;
- General competencies for students at the primary and secondary schools

- Proposed structure of the curriculum at the primary and secondary schools; and
- Mode of assessment.

2.6.3 Caribbean Plan of Action 2000-2015 (2000)

The Caribbean Plan of Action 2000-2015 (2000) is a regional initiative aimed at addressing two main problems:

1. Reducing the incidence of children not attaining educational levels that are considered minimal in many developing countries; and
2. Ensuring that those who make it through the entire education system emerge prepared for the world of work.

This Plan represents the culmination of a regional consultative effort that began at the CARICOM Heads of Government meeting in July 1997 in Montego Bay, Jamaica. This consultative process culminated in the *Meeting of the Caribbean Ministers and Stakeholders in Preparation for the Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Meeting*, 9-12 February 2000.

The Plan of Action 2000-2015 aims to place education at the center of regional development and to develop the ideal Caribbean citizen who can be conversant with the demands of the twenty-first century.

2.7 STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The strategy of the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports is to provide a framework within which the organisation will plan and execute its policies, initiatives, programmes and activities during the years 2000 to 2010.

2.7.2 Strategic Goals

The following strategic goals have been identified to guide the activities of the Ministry over the next ten (10) years to achieve the mission and realise the vision.

- I. to develop citizens who are readily retrainable at each stage of their development.
- II. to realise improvements in the national educational standards.
- III. to instill in citizens the discipline of regarding education as a lifelong process.
- IV. to develop a culture of industry and entrepreneurship among citizens.

2.7.3 Strategic Objectives

- Increase in the number of students who are educationally well rounded, confident, mannerly, respectful of authority and the rule of law.
- Reduction in acts of lawlessness and vandalism.
- Increased participation and achievement of excellence in sports and cultural activities.
- Reduction in drug usage among the school population.
- Increase in the number of students pursuing healthy lifestyles.
- Widespread use of Standard English by teachers as well as students.

Pre-primary and Primary

- Universal access to early childhood education (ECE).
- Increase in the number of students scoring above 30 in the Barbados Secondary Schools Entrance Examination (BSSEE).
- Increase in the number of students speaking a foreign language.

Secondary

- Increase in the number of students leaving school with proper certification.
- Increase in the number of students specialising in Science and Technology.

Tertiary

- Increase in the number of students attending post-secondary and tertiary institutions.
- Promotion of freedom of movement of skilled personnel.

Professional Development

- Increase in the productivity and effectiveness of teachers.

Institutional

- Increased accountability of institutions, departments and individuals.
- Greater efficiency in the use of financial and human resources within the schools and the Ministry.
- Establishment of independent Mechanisms of evaluation.

Civic (Pastoral)

- Increased parental and community participation in the education of children.

2.8 STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

8.1 Primary Education

In the plan period the Ministry is committed to: -

- ◆ continuing & broadening Criterion-Reference testing at the primary level
- ◆ Continuing testing for and remediation of, physical impairment – sight, learning and speech impairments in children aged 5 and 7.
- ◆ The testing of children for emotional problems
- ◆ Assessing the effectiveness of the newly instituted initiatives -Flexible Transfer, Partial Zoning, Amalgamation.
- ◆ Introduction of a Before- and After-School Care programme.

8.1.1 Criterion Reference Tests

As a means of ensuring that pupils reap optimum benefit from their primary programme, the Ministry has introduced a number of innovations in the area of testing and measurement. These have included the Criterion-Referenced Tests (CRT) which are administered at the end of Infants B and Class 2. These tests, which began in 1996, provide teachers with profiles of student skills, information on their strengths and weaknesses, which allow them to target the student's deficiencies and work on an individual basis with the student. It also allows parents an opportunity to be cognisant of the strengths and weaknesses of their children, and therefore, become an integral part of the teaching-learning process.

8.1.2 Continuous Assessment

Continuous Assessment will be another means used to assess pupil performance at the primary level and along with the BSSEE will be used in transferring students from primary to secondary school. At present the “one shot” BSSEE is the only means of assessment used for transfer. Continuous assessment would involve all subjects of the curriculum from Class 1 and would account for 40% of the marks towards the transfer examination. The process should begin in the Class 1 in September 2001 and become fully operational in the primary system by the year 2004.

The Ministry of Education proposes to introduce Continuous Assessment across all learning areas from Class 1 to Class 4. This Continuous Assessment will account for 40% of the marks towards the BSSEE transfer examination, which will account for 60%. This process will begin in Class 1 from September 2001. The majority in the primary system will have this new assessment procedure by the year 2004/5, but it can be earlier if there are any students who sit the examination under Section 41(A) of the Education (Amendment) Act, 1995-23.

In addition to the above-mentioned assessments, which demonstrate what students know and do not know, children will continue to be physically examined for sight, hearing and speech defects. These physical examinations will either eliminate these areas as the source of problems, or pinpoint where a physical problem exists so that it may be addressed.

8.1.3 Special Needs Education

Special Needs education (SNE) is recognised as an integral part of the education system of Barbados. Government’s policy is that all children have an equal right to receive education, which is appropriate to their individual, development needs. It is envisaged that with the assistance of personnel from the Ministry of Health and

supporting agencies, the Ministry of Education will be in a better position to offer these children an education commensurate with their needs and abilities.

The Ministry is committed to the following strategies as they relate to SNE in the 2002 - 2012 plan period:

- ◆ Teacher training and upgrading
- ◆ A systematic referral process
- ◆ Recruitment and deployment of Learning needs co-ordinators
- ◆ Support services
- ◆ Incorporating Erdiston Annex into the new Carrington's/Erdiston Primary school
 - provisions for Autistic Children
- ◆ Additional placement facilities in the north of the island
- ◆ The provision of equipment
- ◆ A dedicated transportation service for special needs children attending State-sponsored Special Needs institutions.
- ◆ The provision of bursaries (for under 11)

8.1.4 Early Childhood Education

The Ministry of Education is committed to the following steps in order to address the need for universal coverage in early childhood education: -

- ◆ Ensuring that schools continue to admit three and four year olds provided they have facilities and resources and have a volunteer teacher aide programme in place.
- ◆ The continued expansion of the Parent Volunteer Support Programme to cover all public primary schools.
- ◆ The continued training for teachers of young children (3-8) at Erdiston Teachers' College.

- ◆ The provision of assistance in terms of monitoring their programmes, for the private institutions offering Early Childhood Education Programmes.
- ◆ Ensuring that more materials are available to these programmes to ensure more effective teaching;

8.1.5 Conversational Spanish in Primary Schools

It is anticipated that early in the plan period, all primary school will have a Spanish Awareness Programme on their curriculum. To maximise the interactions in the classroom between pupil and facilitator, there will have to be the provision of teacher training support, which, it is envisaged, the Barbados Language Centre will facilitate. The expected outcome of exposing all of our children to a foreign language from such an early age is in anticipation of improving and exploring bilateral trading and economic arrangements with its immediate Spanish-speaking neighbours.

2.8.2 Secondary Education

The Ministry of Education has committed itself to the following strategies in the plan period: -

- ◆ The early introduction of a National Certificate of Secondary Education (NCSE).
- ◆ Introduction of the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination
- ◆ The employment of additional Psychologists and social workers in the Student Services section of the Ministry.
- ◆ The encouragement of management of secondary schools to be more innovative and to develop in their schools an area of excellence.
- ◆ The implementation of a Pilot Project to rationalize the technical and vocational resources at the secondary schools.
- ◆ The introduction of a flexible 6-year academic programme.
- ◆ Provision at secondary for non-academic areas (e.g., sports and arts).

- ◆ Rationalisation of the student rolls at all secondary schools so that they do not exceed 1000 students. The exception to this policy will be the two single-sex schools.

8.2.1 Barbados National Certificate of Secondary Education (NCSE).

A new national curriculum will be introduced into secondary schools in September 2001. It will be divided into six levels with Levels V and VI preparing students for CXC general proficiency. Initial placement in either Level I or II will be made in consultation with the Principals making allowance for consultation with parents where there is a difficulty.

- Level I will be specifically designed to bridge the transition from primary to secondary school and will serve to consolidate the foundation of primary school education.
- Level II will be the entry point for those pupils who have demonstrated competency in the primary school programme.
- Level III constitutes an extension of the Level II and is the end of the junior stage of secondary school.
- Level IV will provide opportunities to continue the foundation studies and will allow for limited specialization with the choice of electives.
- Level V will allow the student to sit the exit competency tests in the other two (2) core areas – Language Arts and Mathematics, along with the two (2) electives.
- Level VI is the final stage of the secondary school programme. Only students taking CXC General Proficiency Examination and equivalent examinations will enter Level VI.

All schools will be required to maintain records of students' performance and progress to allow fair and accurate decisions to be made regarding their movement across levels. Decisions on students' progression through the school will be made in the best interests of the students by their school principals and teachers in conjunction with the students' parents/guardians. Automatic promotions will no

longer occur. There will be provision for students who underachieve to repeat the level. No student will spend less than 4 years or more than 8 years in a secondary school. The implementation of the Education Sector Enhancement Programme in our school system has signalled changes in what we teach students and how we teach them in the classroom. Hence, assessment of students' performance must also undergo change to maintain the paradigm shift.

Secondary school students who, because of physical, social, or cognitive reasons, have not been able to complete the requirements for the award of the BNDSE, will be given a Certificate of Completion with profiles of the skills and competencies reached in the various disciplines at the last completed level. The school, in conjunction with the Ministry of Education, will issue the Certificate. This Certificate will permit them to return via the Continuing Education Programme to attain their BNDSE qualification.

A working committee will be established to design a National Summer School programme to help those secondary school students who have not satisfactorily completed their studies.

8.2.2 Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination

A major strategy in the area of secondary education is the implementation of the Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE) to replace the current Cambridge G.C.E. Advanced Level examinations. CAPE was born out of the same set of diagnoses and initiatives that gave birth to the push towards a regional accreditation system. It responds to the mandate set by CARICOM Heads of Government at their July 1996 meeting in Montego Bay, Jamaica, by providing flexibility and the opportunity to increase access to education at the post- Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) level.

The primary objective of CAPE is *“to provide a coherent and transparent certification, recognised regionally and internationally and which establishes equivalencies across*

upper secondary and lower tertiary education in the Caribbean with the view to clarifying routes to educational advancement; and promoting better articulation between educational pathways¹.”

8.2.3 Centres/Areas of Excellence

Reconciling equal access to secondary education cannot be achieved without recognition of the need for a diversity of educational ‘supply’. MES is cognisant of the fact that ensuring equal access does not mean that all students should follow the same educational ‘diet’. In addition to offering the basic subjects, each secondary school will be encouraged to identify and develop an area of excellence with which it can be identified. Areas/centres of excellence will characterise individual schools and help them to create their own unique identity and image within the community and society. The Ministry is committed to implementing this programme in every school at the secondary level.

MES is committed to supporting the efforts of these schools through effective communications to parents and the community so that they can make informed decisions on the choice of schools. A major activity is the proposed establishment of an Academy of Excellence in Sports and Arts (AESA). The broad aim of this Academy is to harness and hone demonstrative talent from an early age. The Academy will admit students around the 14 – 15 age range, and hold them for approximately four years. There will be an academic programme which will allow the students to take their external examinations, but there will also be major emphasis on the teaching of discipline, life skills and critical thinking, as well as a heavy concentration in either a sporting or artistic discipline.

Upon graduation, students will be able to access further studies and/or training, or they will be able to pursue a career in some aspects of the discipline followed. The disciplines contemplated include cricket, athletics, music and drama. Eventually, it is hoped that the Academy may be open to talented students across the region. In

¹ *Caribbean Advanced Proficiency Examination (CAPE)*, Caribbean Examinations Council Headquarters, March 1999

every sphere of educational development, there must be areas of excellence to harness the skills of students. The Academy represents the first such facility in a phased implementation of this initiative.

8.2.4 Re-Deployment of Specialist Teachers

Specialist teachers are those teachers who teach only one or two specific subjects as distinct from their generalist counterparts who teach a wide variety of subject areas as part of their timetables. It is anticipated that these specialist teachers will be assigned to more than one school as a means towards a more effective utilisation of their instructional time since in the past some of these persons did not have a full timetable. Instead of being a "jack-of-all-trades", this policy is aimed at encouraging teachers to become "masters of one".

The main thrust of this initiative is to group schools – either by zones or by subject area specialty - so that specialist teachers' resources can be shared among these schools and more optimally utilised. With the implementation of this initiative, the number of graduate teachers will be deployed more efficiently and this will translate in savings in Other Personal Emoluments (OPE). Full implementation of this programme is expected to be achieved using a phased approach.

2.8.3 Tertiary Education

One successful aspect of the system thus far has been the result of programmes being pursued by our tertiary institutions – the Barbados Community College, the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, Erdiston College and the University of the West Indies. While these institutions have been performing well individually, the time has come to enhance their effectiveness by a strategy of greater articulation, accreditation and certification among them with a view to optimizing our resources at this level. Quoting from the White Paper on Education Reform: - “Opportunities for progression from one institution to another are limited due to the absence of any

clear linkage or equivalency between the programmes of various institutions". The Ministry of Education has already initiated action on some of the above issues and is about to implement the following strategies: -

- (1) Invest larger sums of money in learning technologies and other related equipment to meet the training needs of business, industry and software development.
- (2) Provide for articulation of programmes and courses, both horizontally and vertically, to allow for student mobility at all ages and stages, providing for career paths in each occupational sector.
- (3) Ensuring increase access to higher education to all its citizens
- (4) Facilitating the provision of on-going adult and continuing education programmes.
- (5) The establishment of a Barbados National Accreditation Agency.
- (6) The establishment of a University College of Barbados.
- (7) The expansion of Associate Degree programmes at the Barbados Community College.
- (8) The expansion of courses at the S.J.P.P, both in terms of the number of courses on offer and student enrolment per course.

8.3.1 Establishment of a University College of Barbados

The establishment of a University College would allow the Ministry to confront some of the major issues affecting the delivery of quality tertiary education.

First, there is a need to facilitate the expansion of access to tertiary level education. While the island's tertiary level transition rate rank among the highest in the region, it is still inadequate in terms of the island's human resource development plans which seek to develop a highly skilled workforce for the further development of a knowledge-based economy.

Second, there is a pressing need for greater collaboration and coordination between and among tertiary institutions with a view to optimizing the use of scarce resources (capital, financial management and technical).

Third, matters pertaining to articulation, accreditation and certification continue to be issues at the tertiary level. Opportunities for progression from one institution to another are limited due to the absence of clear linkages or equivalencies between the programmes of the various institutions.

Fourth, financing tertiary education is another matter of concern. The competition between education and the other social sectors for Government financial support places an additional burden on the allocation process for available funds. Given the size of the Government's annual allocation to tertiary education, particularly university education, and the comparatively small number of persons who are eligible to matriculate into universities, it is clear that education at this level is costly.

Rationalisation of Tertiary Education

In an effort to rationalise the administration of the tertiary institutions, MES commissioned a study to investigate the feasibility of merging the administrative arms of the three tertiary institutions (BCC, SJPP and Erdiston College) as a measure to improve both cost and management efficiencies. Out of this study, which was undertaken by the Barbados Institute of Management and Productivity (BIMAP), has evolved a proposal for the establishment of a University College of Barbados.

Preliminary calculations using a Education Cost and Finance Model designed by an IDB-sponsored consultant, Dr. Mun Tsang, would suggest that a merger of this sort will realise saving in the vicinity of approximately BDS\$2 million annually. While MES is aware of the potential for displacement (human and capital) such a merger might realise, it is also cognisant of the potential qualitative gains to be made.

The BIMAP proposal was examined and further commented on by a three-man team which included experts in the field of tertiary level education.

A further step in the development and conceptualisation of the UCB was taken when ORACO was engaged by BCC to look at the physical expansion of BCC. The study was broadened to include SJPP and ETTC. A master plan for the physical/infrastructural development of the three institutions based on a detailed revision of programmes within the framework of the UCB has been prepared. Consequently there has been the establishment of an Advisory Committee, under the Co-Chairmanship of the Deputy General Secretary of the Barbados Workers Union, Mr Robert Morris and Mr. Joseph Goddard, to plan the implementation of the UCB.

Greater Articulation between Tertiary Institutions

There is a pressing need for greater collaboration and co-ordination among tertiary institutions with the view of optimising the use of scarce resources. With either under-utilisation or over-utilisation of resource capacity, the particular institution involved will be operating at a disadvantage. The view of the Ministry is that opportunities for progression from one institution to another should be expanded and facilitated by way of clear linkages and equivalencies between the programmes of the various institutions.

8.3.2 Establishment of a Barbados National Accreditation Agency

There presently exist a number of factors at the national and regional levels that dictate the need for a nationally constituted organisation to handle the issues of accreditation, equivalency and articulation. These factors are:

- (a) The existence of an increasing number of post-secondary/tertiary institutions.
- (b) The lack of a comprehensive accreditation system for post-

secondary/tertiary institutions and the absence of the institutional capacity within the Ministry of Education to implement such a system.

- (c) Inefficiency in the current Ministry system of determining equivalencies, due to the lack of adequate resources to deal with the volume and nature of the work.
- (d) The agreement by CARICOM governments on the freedom of movement for certain nationals in relation to employment in the region.

The present system of accreditation and equivalency by the Ministry can be very time consuming at times. It is recognised that an organisation needs to be set up on a full-time basis to provide information in a timely manner, as well as to monitor the quality of instruction and provide accreditation and equivalency for courses offered.

National accreditation and articulation is now a regional programme adopted by CARICOM which is being addressed through its Directorate of Human and Social Development. The thrust of the regional programme for the 2000/01 biennial will be:

- ◆ Quality assurance, relevance and financing at tertiary institutions.
The Directorate will continue work towards the strengthening of national accreditation systems and towards achieving a consensus on a strategy for the implementation and financing of the regional accreditation Mechanism.
- ◆ Establishing standards in the school system.
There is a thrust towards creating and maintaining linkages between Primary Level Standards, Early Childhood Education and Lower Secondary.
- ◆ Free movement of skills and persons and the implementation of Protocol II.
The aim is to continue work with professional associations towards common registration arrangements and establish a consensus on a

common CARICOM Passport.

◆ Public sector reform

The emphasis is towards the infusion of gender equality concerns.

The principal functions of this organisation will be:-

1. Accreditation/ Quality Assurance

Development of philosophy, procedures, etc. for the establishment and operation of institutions and approval of programmes.

2. Equivalency

Evaluating local, regional and international qualifications and determining their status, level and equivalency.

3. Articulation

Providing a framework for institutions, and facilitating agreements through its accreditation and equivalency systems.

4. Quality Enhancement

Disseminating information on best practices locally, regionally and internationally and promotion of professional development within institutions.

In the past, assessing the qualifications of persons applying for work was a time consuming and costly exercise, carried out in an ad hoc, unstructured way. It is recognised that an organisation of this kind will delivery the type and level of quality articulation and accreditation that is required.

8.3.3 Financial Assistance to Barbadian Students in Cuba

From 1995 the Government of Cuba has been offering scholarships to Barbadians through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 1999, these scholarships were offered

through the Clement Payne Movement in collaboration with the Government Party of Cuba. With the increasing demand for these scholarships, the Government of Barbados will provide financial help to Barbadians studying in Cuba during the first year. This will widen the scope for Barbadian students to access tertiary level education.

2.8.4 Adult and Continuing Education

Government remains committed to the provision of a comprehensive adult and continuing education programme for those persons who were unable to benefit from formal education. The changing requirements of the labour market and the concomitant need for the population to be readily re-trainable at any stage make it essential for citizens to recognise and accept learning as a continuous, lifelong process.

A flexible programme of continuing and adult education meets these needs. This programme must cater to a wide cross-section of citizens, including those who need programmes in literacy and numeracy, parenting, child care and child rearing as well as those persons who need training and retraining programmes and programmes which offer them a second chance after a disappointing secondary school education. The Ministry of Education is committed to the following strategies: -

- ◆ A shift of focus from formal education to informal education for those persons who have not been able to access formal education.
- ◆ The continuing use of Non-Governmental Organisation (NGOS) in the programme.
- ◆ Increase funding to BCC and Erdiston to further such programmes.
- ◆ Introducing literacy and numeracy programmes at the community level in existing community centres using areas of functional knowledge for living.

2.8.5 Teaching Profession

8.5.1 Teacher Training & Development

Develop a cadre of trained teachers/professionals at every level to ensure effective management and teaching in all learning institutions and who are committed to the achievement of common national goals.

- Provide on-going state of the art training for teachers and all personnel involved in the delivery of education which emphasises student-centred methodology and the requisite skills and attitudes for effective implementation.
- Implementation of mandatory retraining programmes, commensurate with incremental and promotional incentives
- Implementation of teacher training programmes that emphasise the development of desirable character traits, attitudes and values; sound human relations skills, motivational/transformation leadership skills, teambuilding, counselling, conflict-resolution skills; entrepreneurial development skills.
- Establishment of a Teachers Service Commission early in the plan period to function as the Ministry's representative body to review the terms and conditions of service of its teaching profession.

Provide effective on-going Human Resource Development Programmes for teachers which focus on individual career development, succession planning and employee assistance (which complement the professional teacher training programmes) to achieve improved motivation, and full development and utilisation of teachers skills and potential.

- Compile a skills bank outlining the skills of teachers and other resource person such as parent, persons from the community and private sector to facilitate skills matching for selection purposes, twinning the skills to teachers with other resource personnel, training needs identification, etc.
- Provide programme for teachers which assist them to identify, manage and relieve job-related stress in themselves and others.

Train teachers to be on the leading edge of computer technologies to effectively guide students' learning in a computerised learning environment and to achieve effectiveness in using such technology to increase productivity and efficiency.

8.5.2 Institutional Support

Erdiston College will be assigned the task to effect this pedagogical change by:

- (a) Helping teachers to demonstrate competence in the classroom through clinical supervision.
- (b) Developing a reflective and individualized approach to teacher preparation, which will take into account each teacher's individual instructional and management style.
- (c) Conducting more Action Research, which will help teachers develop the ability to understand the classroom events through professional enquiry.
- (d) Encouraging teachers to make effective use of multi media resources and other modern information and communication technologies in their teaching, and
- (e) Helping teachers develop a commitment to the communities they serve.

In addition, in order to improve the general self-esteem and professional profile of teachers, the Ministry is committed to: -

- (a) The introduction of a teacher appraisal system.
- (b) The introduction of a scheme, by the year 2008, for the licensing and certification of all teachers within the system.
- (c) The broadcast consensus in the awards and incentives to teachers who exhibit excellence in specially designated areas.
- (d) The establishment of a consultative committee to look at :-
 - the compensation of effective teachers who do not want to proceed to management;
 - the recognition of teachers who have achieved acceptable levels of excellence in their profession.
 - the establishment of a Teachers' Service Commission.

2.8.6 Curriculum Reform

The Ministry's view is that the curriculum should mirror the social and economic changes in society, thus the need to up-grade its contents. As Barbadian society continues its metamorphic change, new challenges have emerged in the form of the changing nature of jobs, environmental issues, citizenship issues, and the pervasion of information technology and globalization. The challenges within the last two decades have focussed attention on the relevance and suitability of the curriculum. There has therefore been a reconstitution of the Curriculum Development Council to devise new curricula to meet the changing Barbadian environment.

An integral part of curriculum reform process has been the integration of information and communication technologies into the curriculum. One of the strategies to be employed is to vary the teaching methodologies available to the teachers. Through this medium, it is hoped that children will be more involved in their own learning and the teaching-learning process will be more effectively shared between teacher and student. This constructivist approach will open more and exciting ways of learning in the classroom at both primary and secondary level. The teacher must now become

a facilitator of pupils learning and thus organize activities, which will optimise this process.

The Ministry is now in the process of revising the curricula at both the primary and secondary levels to include the following topics in a “core” curriculum.

- ◆ Heritage Conservation
- ◆ Health and Family Life Education
- ◆ Constitution and Civics
- ◆ Tourism Education
- ◆ Drug Prevention
- ◆ The Work Place and the Union Movement
- ◆ Moral and Religious Education
- ◆ Environmental Education
- ◆ Conflict Resolution

Curriculum development is a continuous process and this reform is taking place at both the secondary and primary levels in order to meet the changing demands of the society. Curriculum reform forms a major aspect of the education reform programme and runs parallel to the EduTech 2000 programme. In this regard, consideration has been given to the provision of a learning environment which will provide the opportunity for students to construct much of their learning, and to develop skills, concepts and strategies with which to extract meaning from all of the information presented to them.

To this end, the new thrust in curriculum reform has taken into consideration the constructivist philosophy of learning which places emphasis on the students being actively involved in the learning process. In addition, emphasis is being placed on creating curricula that are nationally owned, and which reflect the aspiration, mores and values of the nation. In developing these new curricula, deliberate consideration continues to be given to:

- (1) the significant role that technology will play in education in the 21st Century.
- (2) the need to teach children to communicate orally and in writing with clarity.
- (3) the need to teach children to reason and think through their ideas before they act on them.
- (4) the development of skills, concepts and strategies instead of the mere transmission of information.
- (5) child-centred tasks and experiential learning which encourage active engagement of the students.
- (6) a common, integrated core including ethical and moral issues and programmes of cultural relevance.
- (7) the infusion of critical and creative thinking skills across the curriculum.
- (8) provision for the development of characteristics which allow the students to function effectively and efficiently in the society.
- (9) the utilization of tools and materials which maximize students' interest while at the same time allowing students to develop a competitive edge in preparation for entering the world of work.

In the curriculum reform process strategy, the Ministry has given consideration to the fact that certain learning areas must constitute the foundation of a well-rounded education for our young people. These are:

- Communication, Literature and Language Development
- Numeracy and Mathematics
- Social Studies
- Natural Sciences
- Aesthetics Studies
- Health and Family Life Education
- Technology

To effect this shift in orientation and to ensure that the local school system adequately prepares students to fit into the society of the future, it is critical for a

constructivist philosophy to undergird our curriculum reform process. This philosophy proposes that learners use existing knowledge as a building block to evaluate and understand further knowledge. In an effort to ensure that our best practices from the “traditional” classroom are not lost, these best practices will be fused with the elements of the constructivist approach. Arising out of this constructivist philosophy is the notion that students who are *actively* engaged in their own learning are likely to experience greater success in the classroom. Instruction that facilitates such active learning is child-centred.

In this regard, the Ministry intends to pay special attention to the strengthening of these learning areas in the reformed curriculum. The new curriculum will therefore feature learning activities which emphasise problem-solving and critical thinking skills, an infusion of values, integration across subject areas, meaningfulness and relevance, a variety of modes of assessment and foster the development of individual differences. Schools will be expected and encouraged to operate as caring communities, which enhance social and emotional learning and provide opportunities for the application of knowledge and skills.

Attainment Targets

Another innovation will be the introduction of an Outcomes-Based Education approach. This strategy will focus on the development of expected learning outcomes or attainment targets for each grade level in the various subject disciplines. Outcomes-based education seeks to link teaching and learning strategies more directly to student performance. Parents will also be able to monitor their children’s progress more closely. Attainment targets outline specific student outcomes for each module to be covered in the various subject disciplines, and they will be used as guides for the development of national standards.

Special Needs

Furthermore, to ensure that every child derives maximum benefits from the programme, the Ministry's will adopt a policy of mainstreaming students with special needs wherever possible. This policy of inclusion will ensure that there is equality in educational opportunity and that all students benefit from the same quality of education being offered.

Assessment

The curriculum reform will also include changes in the modes of assessment. It will see a moving away from traditional tests which are primarily product-based (pencil and paper, norm-referenced tests) to more authentic assessments which are based on a combination of both process and product methods (orals, interviews, peer and self-assessment, performance assessment, exhibitions, portfolios, project-based work, written achievement tests and norm-referenced tests). By implementing authentic assessment strategies, students are expected to become active participants in the process of assessment. As they become responsible for their own learning and assessment, the process transforms into a tool for learning. One of the hallmarks of authentic assessment will be the heightened participation of parents in the process.

In this new system, assessment will be delivered as part of the instruction process. This reinforces the notion of education as a continuous process, rather than as a hurdle to be overcome. Thus, more time can be allocated to assessments that take longer than a class period as assessment becomes an integral part of the instructional process. A natural outcome of this will be the move away from automatic promotion towards developmentally appropriate learning levels; children will be promoted in the main only after they have demonstrated satisfactory performances in their subject disciplines. Bearing psychological and social factors in mind, there must however still be a finite period of time during which children will be allowed to remain in primary and secondary schools.

Assessment Instruments

Beginning September 2001, the Ministry will introduce the Basic Skills Assessment Battery (BSAB) to measure pupil readiness to begin the curriculum in the first grade of primary school. The Ministry will require that readiness test be administered to all public school pupils on entry to Reception. In addition, criterion-referenced test have been introduced at the end of Infants B and Class 11 to identify the skills areas in Language Arts and Mathematics. Comments are provided on each skill as to the level of understanding reached by the child, and these in turn are fed into reports which are then submitted to the school for review and discussion by the teachers who in turn share them with the parents. In addition, at the end of primary school, profiles are developed on students' skills and competencies in Language Arts and Mathematics. These profiles are forwarded to the secondary schools to be used by teachers in the formulation of appropriate programmes of study. This level of analysis and reporting will not be done at these specific ages only, but throughout the child's entire school life.

At the secondary level schools will ensure that within the first six (6) weeks of entry into school every student will be assessed by the teachers and an Entry Profile of that student compiled. This profile will be used as a baseline and will allow teachers to track the student's overall progress and development in the secondary school.

Social and Emotional Learning

In an effort to reduce acts of lawlessness and vandalism and to reduce the incidence of drug usage among the school population attention will be paid to the Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) needs of our population. This is a new area of focus for both the Ministry and the schools. It is through the directing of attention to these needs that we will put "heart" back into schooling. The SEL content will be integrated across the curriculum and will cover the following areas, *inter alia*:-

- ◆ values,
- ◆ self-management,

- ◆ problem solving and decision-making,
- ◆ communication, and
- ◆ conflict resolution.

This Ministry also recognises the importance of ensuring that an increased number of students pursue healthy lifestyles. It is therefore very important that the home and school facilitate the inculcation and practice of healthy habits in our children from an early age. Hence, the primary school serves as an excellent forum for the commencement of a rigorous Health and Family Life Education Programme. The Health and Family Life curriculum will provide a variety of activities and learning experiences which are designed to promote flexibility in planning and preparation of lessons.

Successful integration will require careful and systematic monitoring. Monitoring will require form teachers and class teachers to meet and to report on the inter-personal development of students. This information will also be included in the formal reports to parents. Given the Ministry's focus on the development of the individual learner, it will be necessary for schools to change from this form of reporting to one which reflects the skills, competencies and attitudes of each students.

Information Technology

Information and communication technologies will be used as additional tools in the classroom and will be integrated into the teaching and learning process to ensure that learning becomes exciting and enlightening for students. The Ministry plans to introduce basic technology mastery in Class1 of he primary school and the first year of the secondary school beginning September 2000, in the first group of schools under the Education Sector Enhancement Programme. It is envisaged that in the next five years all primary schools pupils will have been exposed to technological literacy programmes, and therefore, it will not be necessary to continue the mastery programmes as part of he curriculum in secondary schools.

2.8.7 Institutional Strengthening and Capacity Building

MES is fully cognisant that, in order to meet the challenges of a changing domestic and global economy, the need to train and retrain its senior and middle managers will be of paramount importance. This training initiative also extends down the line to front-line employees. This realisation has led to a number of past and current consultations on institutional strengthening and public sector reform to address organisational and managerial issues and manpower needs. The policy is not to train and retrain for the present but to train in anticipation of the future.

The process of institutional strengthening has already begun and through its own in-house committees, this Ministry expects to see gains in its efficiency. Proposed reforms will include:

- ◆ Some internal sections are actively engaged in areas of institutional strengthening aimed at restructuring the sections and upgrading the competencies of staff through training and retraining to improve the overall efficiency of said sections.

- ◆ A Succession Plan for Education in Barbados.

8.7.1 Succession Plan

The development of a succession plan has become a matter of priority for the education system. At a recent Budgetary Estimates meeting, it was made clear that for the education system to continue to perform as expected, plans must be put in place to ensure that the future reins of leadership and management be addressed in a systematic, structured way.

As a result, it is the intention of the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports to

invite expressions of interest from teachers within the system. The process will consist of:

- (i) Screening to determine suitability;
- (ii) Training in a group setting
- (iii) In-service application of knowledge and skills gained;
- (iv) Post-training selection;
- (v) Further training for applicants considered to have passed the initial tranche of training; and
- (vi) Compilation of list of suitable candidates for management places.

8.7.2 Devolution of Management at the Primary Level

This devolution of management is the catalyst to facilitate and encourage a ‘test and fix’ mentality right down the line where employees can use their own initiative and trouble-shooting skills. It is hoped that this empowerment mechanism will help in the ‘buying-in’ process. As part of its initiative for the devolution of management at primary level, the MES proposes:

- that every primary school should have access to the services of clerk/typists to handle the increasing clerical duties at the primary schools; and
- the establishment of fully functional school committees for each primary school.

This employment of clerk/typists will serve to release principals and teachers who would otherwise be burdened with clerical and support staff duties. Its implementation will allow these persons to return to their roles as instructional leaders and effect the proper management of their respective institutions and thus reduce the level of spoilage whilst increasing quality.

MES is aware of the bureaucratic inefficiencies in managing the daily administrative affairs of school plants, which are geographically removed from Central Administration. The establishment of school committees is a move on the part of MES to afford some level of autonomy to primary schools in handling their day-to-day affairs. This initiative is seen as a catalyst to facilitate and encourage a high degree of employee empowerment, community involvement and private-public partnerships throughout the primary education system. In this way, the Ministry will adopt a role of regulation and supervision, leaving the schools with the responsibility of managing at the functional level.

Both proposals are already partially implemented, however, MES expects that full implementation of both programmes will be in effect early in the plan period.

2.8.8 Support Services

8.8.1 Audio Visual Aids Department

The Audio Visual Aids Department, a division of the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports, will also assist the strategic process through its mission: Quality Education through Media Resources.

The Department has the equipment and trained professional for production in offset printing, desktop publishing, lithography, design, graphics, photography (colour and black and white), audio, video and information technology and offers a wide range of training and advisory services to schools and educational institutions as part of its mandate.

8.8.2 School Meals Department

The Scheme will continue to:-

- (a) Provide a meal that supplies at least 1/3 of the child's daily requirements of nutrients.
- (b) Provide a nutritious, tasty attractive served meal.
- (c) Serve a variety of foods to encourage the development of good eating habits.
- (d) Rationalise the preparation and delivery of meals from strategically located areas.

A major initiative planned is the construction of a new School Meals Centre to consolidate the headquarters and some of the satellite centers to offer a higher level of operational and administrative efficiency to this service.

8.8.3 Transportation of Pupils

The Ministry is committed to the establishment of an effective and efficient school transportation system. To this end, the Ministry has initiated talks with the Ministry of Transport and the private sector aimed at reaching a general consensus on the development of a new transportation system to facilitate the transport of primary and secondary students to and from school and other school related activities. In addition, the Division of Youth Affairs, in conjunction with the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER), conducted a study on the effects of the current pupil transportation system on the psycho-social behaviour of students.

2.8.9 Education Project Implementation Unit

During the period 2000 – 2010, this unit will continue to look after: -

- (1) The rehabilitation and repairs of primary and secondary schools.
- (2) The supervision, monitoring and building of new primary and secondary schools as needed.

- (3) The implementation of major projects in education.

2.8.10 Student Revolving Loan Scheme

The Student Revolving Loan Fund will strive to:

- (a) Increase post-secondary technical and vocational education opportunities to applicants of limited financial resources;
- (b) Increase the external efficiency of the post-secondary educational system by assisting students to pursue studies in areas of greatest demand in the country;
- (c) Provide adequate funding by the efficient and timely collection of outstanding debts with financial support from Government;
- (d) Provide guidelines and placement services to applicants and beneficiaries;
- (e) Undertake annual surveys to assess the impact of the Fund in assisting Barbadians to reach a high level of educational attainment;
- (f) Utilise the information technologies to provide current information to borrowers and potential applicants.

2.8.11 Legislation

The Ministry is committed to the development and realisation of a new Education Act that will clearly define the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders in line with the new and emerging demands being visited upon the system.

2.8.14 Development of a Maintenance Plan for the Education Sector

As a complement to the Education Sector Enhancement Programme, a plan has been put in place for regular and sustained maintenance of all public school facilities. This maintenance plan is an extension and continuation of efforts initiated under a previous loan agreement and will seek to extend the life of those school plants to be rehabilitated under the current Education Sector Enhancement Programme (ESEP). The plan for maintenance of the schools is two-fold:

1. "Emergency" response to correct faults; and
2. Planned or systematic preventative programme to be carried out in a five-year cycle for each school.

Despite the limited resources (human and financial), the maintenance programme continues to achieve a high level of success. Ideally, all maintenance should be preventative or predictive in nature. That is, all maintenance should be performed prior to any component or equipment failure

8.12.1 Rationalisation of School Plant and Facilities

The rationalisation of school plants is both a qualitative and efficiency measure to ensure that education is delivered and administered in an adequate physical environment that is conducive to the overall effective teaching:learning process. The principal activity of this rationalisation process will be the amalgamation and closure of some primary schools where the present and projected student rolls are reflective of such actions. As part of this rationalisation process, the Ministry commissioned a study to identify primary schools for future redevelopment, relocation and/or amalgamation.

Already the Ministry has taken action to:

- i. Amalgamate St. Andrew's and St. Simon's/St. Saviour's; and
- ii. Rationalise the student roll at Erdiston Primary

2.8.13 Education Sector Enhancement Programme

The Education Sector Enhancement Programme (ESEP), more familiarly known as *EduTech 2000*, is a seven-year education reform programme that, in the words of the political is destined to forever change the educational and economic landscape of Barbados. This reform initiative clearly requires a major cultural change. It represents a fundamental shift – a line of fracture – in the thinking of the political directorate to move to a customer-driven, market-building vision and away from the traditional bureaucratic committee, provision-focused and dependency-creating approach.

ESEP is the single largest capital investment initiative ever undertaken by the Government of Barbados (GOB) and is expected to cost US\$175 million, inclusive of recurrent and capital costs, exclusive of financing charges. The Government of Barbados will underwrite the recurrent cost of the project, estimated at US\$58.5 million, while the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) will provide US\$85 million and US\$31.5 million respectively in loan financing. The programme will turn the traditional domain of MES – its delivery, processes, structures and people – on its head.

The vision underlying this programme is that the integration of technology into the classroom will encourage and facilitate greater creativity and flexibility in the delivery of and administration and regulation of education. The fundamental objective is to effect a paradigm shift in the teaching:learning experience from a didactic, teacher-centered to a pedagogical, child-centered methodology. This Programme is directly related to, in response to, and in anticipation of labour market demands for a multi-skilled, team-oriented and easily adaptable workforce. Implementation of the ESEP will allow for:

1. the development of greater creativity in individual instruction;
2. more effective and powerful administrative tools;

3. the management of school databases, class and curriculum scheduling, data compilation and analysis, and tracking school finances; and
4. the creation of on-line communications between schools and MES to facilitate a faster, more efficient exchange of information.

The programme has a nine year-life cycle. The period 1996 to 1997 focussed on the design and preparatory activities for the programme. Actual execution and implementation of the programme will be phased over a seven-year period beginning in 1999 and ending in 2005/2006. The programme consists of four (4) main components:

- (i) Civil Works;
will involve extensive repairs and rehabilitation to all (public and private) primary and secondary schools.
- (ii) Human Resource Development;
all teachers in the system will receive initial training within the first five years of the Programme in a wide range of areas – child-centred learning, special needs education, and the integration of information technology (IT) into the teaching/learning process. Training will also be extended to other education professionals who provide technical and administrative support to the system.
- (iii) Institutional Strengthening;
the establishment of support Mechanisms and structures for the programme within Central administration, e.g., establishment of the EduTech 2000 Programme Co-ordination Unit, a Software Review Centre and an Education Evaluation Centre.
- (iv) Hardware and Software Procurement and Installation.
will provide for the widespread introduction of technology into all primary and secondary schools, and will include the provision of

hardware, software and the necessary networking infrastructure.

2.9 REWARDS AND RISKS

2.9.1 Rewards

The strategic initiatives of the Ministry of Education should result in substantial gains to the social, political and economic development of Barbados. The end result of these initiatives should be:

- a) a more professionally competent and technologically trained teaching professional;
- b) a motivated student body that is eager to absorb new knowledge;
- c) teaching methodologies whose relevance and appropriate application will enhance learning;
- d) an expanded special needs programme embracing all levels of challenged persons who are able to benefit from such an education;
- e) an access rate of 30% - 40% for all those passing through the secondary system;
- f) greater financial support to public education by the private sector; and
- g) a greater opportunity for the artistic, aesthetic and literary talents of our youth to develop.

2.9.2 Risks

The strategic goals and objectives of the Ministry of Education can be undermined by the following:

- a) the increasing number of students and teachers who are being affected by AIDS/HIV;
- b) the lack of adequate public transportation services which still account for a significant number of students reaching school late;
- c) the negative impact of the ZR culture on students' behaviour and attitudes;

- d) the poor attitudes of some parents towards the education of their children;
- e) the prevalence of the drug culture that constantly threatens the learning environment of the school.

2.10 CONCLUSION

It is said that the only way to effect long-term solutions to address the economic problems of a population is to raise the education level, particularly for the low socio-economic groups. Faced with this reality, the Government of Barbados is committed to improving the quality, cost and management efficiencies of the education system. To quote from the *White Paper on Education Reform (1995)*, ...”given that economic and technological change is continually presenting new variables, education and training need to be on the cutting edge of national development”.

There is a rising demand for state-sponsored education, especially in light of the recognition that the global labour market is becoming more skills-intensive and that the old notion of “a job for life” is no longer a viable option. The challenge to the Ministry then becomes one of delivering a quality product, rather than one of access and equity, hence the theme, “*each one matters... quality education for all.*”

The strategies for the period 2000 – 2010 clearly demonstrate the Ministry’s commitment to the delivery of quality education while at the same time not compromising its standards on efficiency or cost.

3. DIVISION OF YOUTH AFFAIRS

3.2 REVIEW OF YOUTH DEVELOPMENT 1990 – 1999

The Government of Barbados entered the 1990's with a more concerted and deliberate attempt to address the issues confronting young people in a systematic way. A National Commission on Youth was set up in 1991 against a background of an increase in social problems in the latter half of the 1980's involving youth and the intense debate which followed on youth issues. Two new policy initiatives which emerged in the early 1990's were the Barbados Youth Service and the Youth in Business Project under the Youth and Community Development Department.

The Barbados Youth Service was established in October 1991 as a one-year programme for out-of-school youth with the objective of providing a disciplined, structured environment in which to facilitate their development. It was launched with an intake capacity of one hundred young persons aged 16 to 22 and a phased programme of personal development, skills development and orientation to the world of work.

The Youth in Business Project was launched in 1992 with the primary aim of generating non-traditional self-employment among young people. This programme, however, never managed to realise its full potential as it catered primarily to existing entrepreneurs and focused on provision of avenues for marketing of products and services. The broader needs of emerging and prospective entrepreneurs were not catered to by this programme.

In January 1995 the Government convened a national consultation on youth with the main objective of formulating a national policy on youth. This was followed almost immediately by a Regional Seminar on Youth Employment and Youth Enterprise and the preparation of a Concept Paper on Youth Development in Barbados by the newly formed Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs & Culture.

In April 1995 the Youth Affairs Department was established as a coordinating, facilitating and collaborating agency in respect of matters concerning youth. The Department which now has the specific responsibility to fulfil the Government's mandate as it relates to youth development operates through three programming channels: The Barbados Youth Service (BYS), the Youth Development Programme (YDP) and the Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme (YES).

Since 1995 the Department has embarked on a research-driven, consultative and participatory approach to youth development. One of the principal planks in this approach is a National Youth Survey which is conducted every five years and which attempts to interview all young people in the targeted age group. In addition the Department organises annual National Consultations with youth organisations and there is the ongoing direct consultation with young people at the community level through the Youth Development Programme where 32 Youth Commissioners work to facilitate the development needs of young people.

The Barbados Youth Service, which formerly operated out of the Grazettes Community Centre, was relocated to Harrison's Point since the Grazettes Centre did not have the physical infrastructure to support the programme. The location of the BYS in the middle of a residential district was not conducive to the nature of programming being undertaken and there were neither facilities for the residential component of the programme nor adequate accommodation for the staff. The intake capacity of the BYS has now been expanded to 375 persons per annum and the programming has been diversified to the point where it now provides the most comprehensive developmental training programme for young people in Barbados at the post-secondary level.

The training programmes of the Department have seen an average of 1 500 persons being trained annually in cultural and sporting disciplines and the National Summer Camps have grown catering to 4 000 children annually over the last five years. The Department has also embarked on a number of proactive programmes such as the

Annual School Leavers' Tracer Survey which, since 1996, has been targeting school leavers with a questionnaire about education, training and occupational aspirations and a follow-up and referral system through direct contact by Youth Commissioners. The Department has also produced directories relating to Higher Education and Training, Youth and Community Groups and Social Services for the information and usage of young people. At the community level community projects are organised with the assistance of Youth Commissioners and the financial support of the Department to foster a spirit of community involvement and development by young people. Within the Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme more than 700 young people have been assisted with the start-up or expansion of their businesses or with assistance through the integrated package of services provided. In addition the Scheme has contributed to the thrust of building an entrepreneurial climate among young people through its community outreach and training programme and the production of its quarterly newsletter.

3.3 ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Methodology

The Division of Youth Affairs has followed a consultative and participatory approach from its inception given the nature of its client group and the considerable social distance which exists between this group and social planners. In addition, the Division also participated in the major 3-day consultative retreat in 1997. The established annual system of surveys and national consultations with young people as well as the ongoing face-to-face interaction with young people at the community level through field officers has been fed into the process of consultation.

3.1 Summary of SWOT Analysis

3.3.1 Strengths

- Strong network support and capacity
- Research-driven participatory approach to programme development
- Personalised, community-based approach to programme delivery.

3.3.2 Weaknesses

- Lack of programming flexibility in current organisational structure
- Inadequate physical plant for youth programming
- Human resources deficiencies

3.3.3 Opportunities

- Imperative of youth training and development
- Inter-agency networking
- Diversification of training programmes

- Marketable pool of resource materials and technical expertise

3.3.4 Threats

- Changes in cultural values and attitudes
- Weakened role of the home and community in youth development
- Increased litigation

3.2 Key Strategic and Contextual Issues

One of the major challenges of Youth Development in Barbados, as elsewhere, relates to the cynicism of young people about the efficacy of youth development initiatives – especially governmental programmes. Although much progress has been made in this area in the five-year life of the Youth Affairs Department, the building of trust among young people and motivating them to act in their own interest continue to be the principal tasks and challenges of the Department. The situation is compounded by a socio-cultural environment in which some elements of the prevailing youth culture actively promote a resistance to mainstream cultural norms and values which may themselves be at the centre of youth development programmes.

The ongoing research of the Youth Affairs Department among young people provides further insight into the socio-cultural milieu of young people and the challenges which this milieu creates. The ongoing National Youth Survey conducted by the Department among young people (aged 15-29) indicates that 44.3% of respondents have no religious affiliation; that three-quarters remain uninvolved in any structured or organised activity such as a youth/community group and that unemployment, crime and drug usage remain the major problems facing young people in Barbados.

The Division of Youth Affairs and Culture is generally responsible for the management and implementation of Government's programme for youth development. The Division follows a consultative and research-driven approach to

youth programme formulation and therefore seeks to determine the status, issues and concerns of young people and develop programme responses through a process of research and consultation and within the general framework of Government's policy. The central administrative arm of the Division provides administrative support for the technical work of programme development and delivery. The Division also serves as a Secretariat for youth organisations and provides institutional support to strengthen their capacity to function in the process of youth development.

The Division has maintained a strong emphasis on the development and dissemination of resource materials to facilitate the development of young people. In this regard, directories of social services, youth organisations and post-secondary education and training have been produced, all of which create the capacity for young people to network and pursue their own self-development. In addition, the Division offers a range of technical assistance services to youth and youth organisations in recognition of the fact that the process of youth development will require the full involvement and empowerment of all stakeholders.

Recognition of the important role of entrepreneurship has propelled Government and the private sector to actively support the establishment and maintenance of an agency formally charged with stimulating entrepreneurial activity among Barbadian youth. There is thus a general environment of support for and goodwill towards the activities of YES. There is also growing public recognition of the valuable contribution that YES has made to date. The Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme (YES) exists as part of the public sector, being located within the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs, and Culture. This context provides the framework within which decisions are made about the agency, and resources are allocated.

It is therefore anticipated that Government will provide adequate funding for the work of YES. The recent developments in the international economy, that is the movement towards globalisation for example, will serve to make the achievement of successful business start-ups more difficult. Moreover there are currently several

Government and other agencies offering some of the services offered by YES. The Barbados Investment and Development Corporation (BIDC), for example, has established a Small Business Division. Based on feedback from some clients who have accessed these services, or solicited information on what is available, has suggested that there is a concern that resources are being diluted to the detriment of the Barbadian entrepreneur.

The Barbados Youth Service (BYS) operates in an environment in which there continues to be substantial numbers of young people leaving school with no or low formal qualifications and negative self-concept. One consequence of this is diminished prospects for integration in the process of national development through the pursuit of higher education and training or entry into the formal labour market. Though there has been an unprecedented increase in the facilities and opportunities for higher education and training over the last decade such as expansion at the Barbados Vocational Training Board and the Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic, there continue to be critical deficiencies in the social skills of many young people which prevent optimisation of these opportunities. It is within this context that the BYS has developed a distinct comparative advantage, marrying personal and social development with technical and skills acquisition.

The stigma which continues to be associated with the BYS as an institution catering to drop-outs and deviants still needs to be vigorously countered if potential beneficiaries are not to be dissuaded from accessing the opportunities which it offers. At the same time, the BYS must continue to be an institution offering a chance of full integration for those outside of the societal mainstream.

The Youth Development Programme seeks to promote the holistic development of young people through direct, personalised intervention by field officers of the Division. The development of an efficient system of referral and networking with social service agencies is therefore critical if this objective is to be realised since the social services sector is still plagued by lack of horizontal articulation and territoriality.

Whereas substantial progress has been made with respect to those young people who are disposed to engaging in mainstream structured group activity, those young persons who remain outside of the mainstream now constitute the major challenge for the Department. The essence of this challenge is to design meaningful programmes that will attract and maintain the interest of this group. Since it is clear that such programmes must originate with the young people themselves, the Department must so organise its intervention as to enable the fullest expression of the creative potential of such young persons within the context of government sponsored programmes.

3.5 Critical Success Factors

The Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports has identified the following as the critical success factors on which a successful strategy will be implemented and measured:

- Identification and mobilisation of clients
- Vibrant private sector network
- Excellent communications and interpersonal relations
- Efficient service delivery through collaboration with other sectors and agencies
- Finance at the individual, institutional and Ministry level
 - Provision of adequate financing with a view towards cost efficiency.

3.5.1.2 Identification of Right Clients

The ability to identify the right clients, that is persons committed to starting their own business, or individuals who currently own and operate a business, but who are

searching for assistance in growing the business is critical to the success of the entrepreneurial thrust of the Division of Youth Affairs.

3.5.1.2 Vibrant Private Sector Network

The establishment and maintenance of a vibrant private sector network is critical to the success of the Division of Youth Affairs since many of the critical competencies required for the development of young people must be sourced from within the private sector. In addition, the process of national development of youth requires a buy-in of all the stakeholders and the support of private sector agencies is therefore of considerable importance in this regard to provide technical assistance and resources for mentorship.

3.5.1.3 Excellent Communications and Interpersonal Relations

Communication and inter-personal relations within the organisation must be improved. Young people who form the target group of programmes and with the strategic partners are vital to both the effectiveness and the efficiency of the Division of Youth Affairs and therefore systems must be put in place. As structured, systematic approach to the development of formal systems of communication is therefore necessary for the implementation of the programmes of the Division.

3.5.1.4 Efficient Service Delivery

The effective determination and efficient delivery of the services identified by young people themselves is critical to the maintenance of trust which is so important in serving the needs of young people. The general cynicism regarding government and the natural reluctance of young people to approach social service agencies requires that both the atmosphere and the mechanisms of service delivery maintain and build their trust.

3.6 Key Directional Statements

Over the past ten years developments in youth development have been guided by initiatives outlined in the following documents:

1. National Development Plan 1993 – 2000/ Education Sectoral Plan 1993 – 2000
2. Policy Statement on Youth Development, 1995

The National Development Plan 1993 - 2000

The National Development Plan 1993 – 2000 represents a deliberate departure from previous plans. The thrust of this plan was its emphasis on increasing the productivity of the Barbadian people. The Plan had as its motto “Prosperity through Increased Productivity” and sought to adopt a strategy that was more export-focussed and –driven. As it relates to the education sector, emphasis was placed on strengthening the linkages between education and the world of work.

The Policy Statement on Youth Development, 1995

The *White Paper on Youth Development in Barbados* spelt out the framework for the establishment of a Youth Affairs Department which had previously never existed as a distinct agency in Barbados. The fundamentals of a National Youth Policy were also articulated in the White Paper. It was on the basis of the White Paper that the Department was established in 1995 and the three main programming channels of youth development organised.

3.7 Strategic Goals and Objectives

The following strategic goals have been identified to guide the youth development focus of the Ministry over the next ten (10):

1. Development of highly motivated employees
2. Development and maintenance of a system of sound human resources development
3. Development and maintenance of appropriate physical plant
4. Expansion and maintenance of a vibrant private sector network
5. Establishment and maintenance of excellent communications and interpersonal relations
6. Increasing the client base and reach of programming
7. Expanding the range of services in response to identified need
8. Improving the use of Information and Communications Technology
9. Deepening the level of involvement with the wider community

3.7.1 Highly motivated employees

The creation of an organisational culture in alignment with the Department's mission and vision and that is characterised by change, flexibility and continuous improvement within a stable and secure environment.

- Channel the creativity, resourcefulness and talent of employees towards achieving the organisation's goals while creating an environment where team spirit and harmony are fostered.
- Develop a management philosophy that is consistent with satisfying the needs of employees and beneficiaries of the programme.

3.7.2 Attraction and retention of the “right” clients for the Youth Entrepreneurship Scheme.

Attract and retain a pool of clients who have a serious commitment to owning their own business, or improve an existing business, and using the services of YES to realise their aims.

- Develop a Comprehensive Screening Procedure which documents screening Procedures and identifies sources of appropriate screening or Profile Tests.
- Restructure training programmes to include profile tests in order to uncover the strengths of participants, and to channel them in the most appropriate direction.
- Introduce a reporting and referral system for results of the profile test.
- Provide participants with a report on their strengths and weaknesses and provide assistance to persons not accepted in the programme.
- Solicit the support of other social and development agencies, for example the Ministry of Social Transformation, to ensure the referral of suitable candidates.

3.7.3 The development and maintenance of a system of sound human resource management.

3.1 Recruit and select a cadre of officers who are technically competent and committed to the vision and mission of the Division.

- Recommend the recruitment of additional technical and administrative staff to manage the increasing demand of young people for the services of the Department.

- Enhance the technical capability of Youth Enterprise Officers through training in Financial Analysis and Planning, Marketing management, Strategic Planning and Management and Counselling.
- Develop a roster of facilitators capable of delivering the mix of Entrepreneurial and Personal Development Training offered.

3.2 Develop the quality of staff and encourage high performance and achievement.

- Develop a general induction/orientation programme for all new staff whether full-time or part-time.
- Provide opportunities for all staff to participate in appropriate staff development programmes.
- Develop and implement an appropriate system of Performance Appraisal and Evaluation which reflects the activities of technical officers, and which can be used as a developmental tool.
- Facilitate the development among staff of high quality research, presentation, programming and other technical and administrative skills as appropriate.
- Provide a challenging and supportive work environment rewarding outstanding achievement through recognition and the promotion process.
- Provide appropriate support during periods of probation and exercise rigorous judgement in the confirmation process.

3.3 Develop management structures that will enhance the management capacities of staff.

- Provide management and leadership training for heads of sections and their support staff.
- Delegate to senior staff the responsibility for encouraging and monitoring quality provisions in their respective sections or activities.
- Implement programmes for the development and maintenance of staff morale.
- Encourage and support effective strategic planning, budgeting and financial control especially to conform to the requirements of the Financial Rules.
- Further develop among the staff the understanding of and support for departmental goals and foster better teamwork between departments.

3.7.4 Expanded physical facilities

4.1 The availability of adequate physical facilities, providing sufficient space to facilitate the maintenance of confidentiality and privacy as clients interface with the staff of the Department. In addition the facilities must be equipped with state of the art equipment which allows the organisation to deliver its services offered.

4.2 Locate and/or develop physical facilities that offer adequate space, and resources to facilitate the delivery of the agency's programmes in an atmosphere conducive to high quality interactions between staff and clients.

- Make recommendations to relocate the offices of YES, and outline the level of financing that can be made available for this exercise.
- Develop dedicated counselling facilities at the Barbados Youth Service.
- Develop the field offices of the Youth Development Programme into full-fledged resource centres.
- Develop an inventory of needs, and equipment to be accommodated in the new facilities.
- Develop policies and practices that will improve energy management and environmental awareness throughout the Department.

3.7.5 Establishment and maintenance of a vibrant private sector network.

5.1 Identify a pool of individuals experienced and or trained in management and other related areas to join a network of friends of the Department, advisors and mentors who will offer their services their services on a voluntary basis, in areas such as mentoring, coaching and counselling.

- Recruit individuals in an effort to reach a target figure of 70 mentors by March 2002.
- Develop a training programme to provide basic and advanced training for mentors and other volunteers.
- Establish a Mentors' Association.
- Develop a programme for the integration of volunteers into the programme delivery of the Department.

3.7.6 The establishment and maintenance of excellent communications and interpersonal relations, internally among staff and externally with target groups and strategic partners to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Youth Affairs Department.

6.1.1 Implement a formal procedure for the documentation of decisions taken and responsibilities assigned at staff meetings, and meetings between the section heads and individual staff members.

- Design and implement a programme for the sensitisation of key stakeholders, primarily personnel of the Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports, who influence or make decisions about matters relating to any aspect of the operations of the Department.
- Assist present and past clients to form a network of resource persons to facilitate information sharing, resource pooling and mentoring.
- Develop the existing newsletter to provide past and present clients and other readers with practical guidelines for improving their businesses and or getting started in business. It would also provide the mechanism for mentors and other business leaders in the community to share ideas and experiences.
- Develop a plan to redesign the newsletter as a revenue generating vehicle through the sale of advertising.
- Encourage and support effective vertical and horizontal communication at all levels to ensure that staff members have the necessary information to perform their roles.
- Develop an approach to management at all levels of the agency that is flexible and accessible to all sections of the Department.

6.2 Provide an efficient service to target groups, stakeholders and the wider community.

- Develop appropriate performance indicators to measure output levels.
- Improve the public perception of the youth programmes especially the Barbados Youth Service through a specifically designed public relations exercise.
- Upgrade the administrative processes and systems to meet the needs of current and prospective clients of youth programmes.
- Develop networked information resources.

3.7.7 Increased client base

7.1 Devise and implement a promotional strategy that will generate greater public awareness of YES and the products and services of entrepreneurs enrolled in the programme by May 2000.

- Deliver business consulting services to an estimated 225 young people per year.
- Increase the level of subscription of the Marketing Service to sixty (60) businesses in 2000 with a subsequent increase of twenty businesses per year thereafter.
- Increase the number of persons subscribing to the Accounting Service to forty (40) businesses in 2000 with a subsequent increase of twenty (20) businesses per year thereafter.

3.7.8 Expanded range of services.

8.1 Develop a business incubator that grows and establishes thirty (30) new businesses per year by 2006.

- Establish the facility for clients to access the Internet for information especially as it relates to Market Research.
- Continually review the training modules to ensure a more cost-effective and relevant programme and implement a restructured Entrepreneurial Training Programme to cater to 360 young persons per year.

8.2 Develop a programme of integrated social service delivery at the community level.

- Establish integrates service programmes with agencies such as the Community Development Department, the Child Care Board, the National Council on Substance Abuse and the Police Community Relations Department.
- The development of a support network for junior clubs as branches of existing youth organisations at the community level.

8.3 Develop a mandatory National Service Programme.

- The preparation of a Concept Paper and Proposal for a National Service early in the plan period.
- Public education on the role and intent of the National Service.

- Implementation of the National Service through data collected by the School Leavers' Tracer Survey by January 2001.

3.7.9 Fostering an entrepreneurial climate throughout Barbados.

9.1 Intensify outreach efforts in educational institutions, linkage agencies and throughout communities.

- Implement the pilot phase of the YES Juniors Programme in primary schools early in the plan period.

3.7.10 Effective and efficient use of all the organisation's resources

10.1 To ensure the effective management of available financial resources

- Ensure that the decision-making process for the allocation of financial resources is simple and transparent.
- The maintenance of records for all financial transactions.
- The submission of monthly reports to the Accounting Officer.

3.7.11 Improved use of Information technology.

11.1 Improve communication and decision making at all levels of the organisation by establishing an Information Technology System.

- Develop and establish a web site for the Department to augment its information sharing capacity.
- Establish a virtual sales outlet to promote the product and services of YES clients.

- Develop the capacity for on-line registration for programmes of the Department.

3.7.12 Involvement with the wider community

12.1 To create and maintain a deep level of interaction between the Department and the wider community.

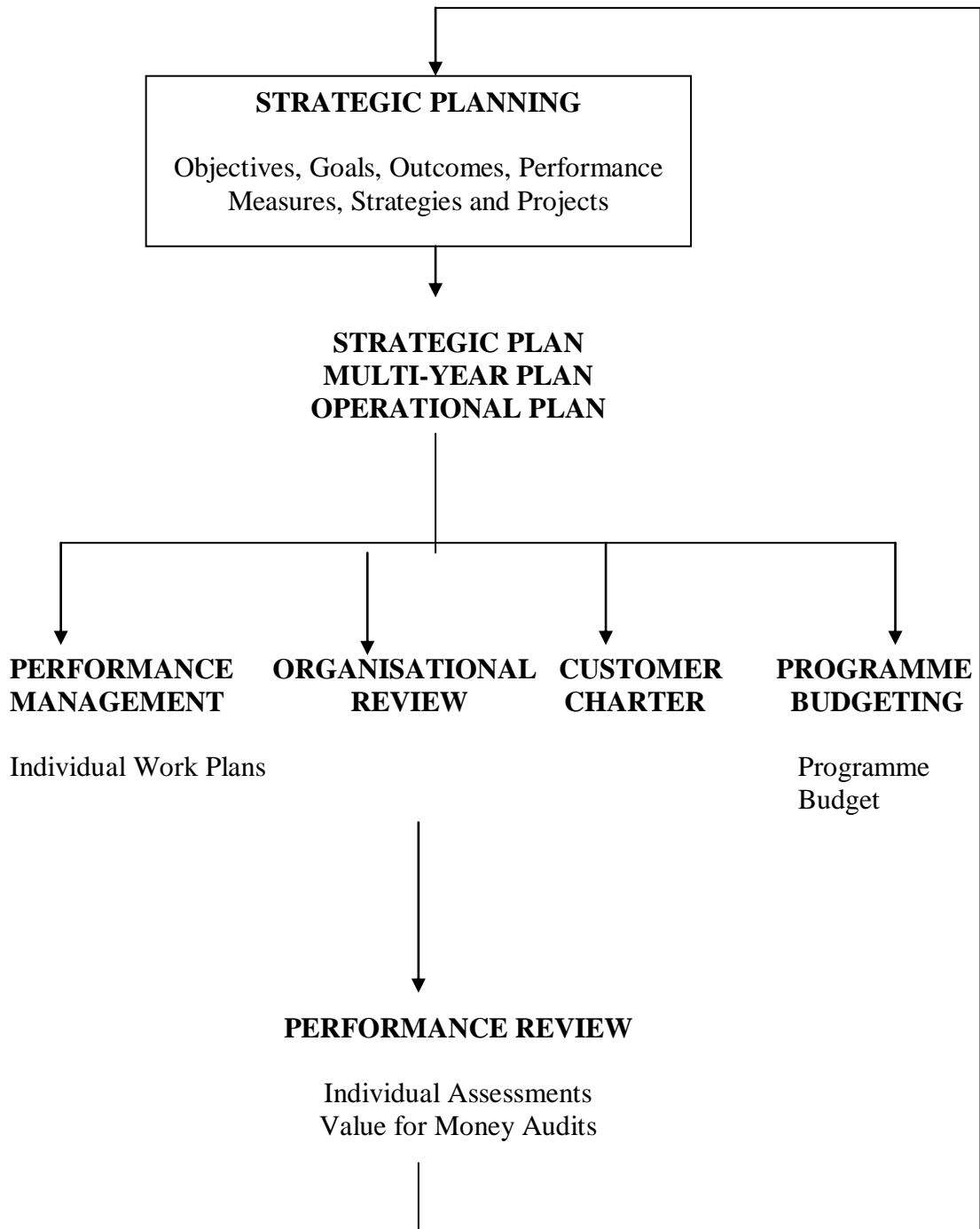
- Establish a two-way flow of information with the print and electronic media.
- Promote the Department's programmes at the level of the community and encourage communities to participate through outreach programmes.
- Use former clients, trainees and beneficiaries who are success stories to assist in the marketing of programmes at the community level.
- Solicit views from the wider public on the Department's programmes through consultations.
- Develop a comprehensive programme to market the Department within the secondary schools and within strategic communities.

12.2 To support the artistic and cultural development of the community.

- Develop closer links with cultural groups.
- Increase public exposure for trainees, clients and beneficiaries at the level of the community.
- Expand opportunities for appropriate public presentation for the creative work of trainees, clients and beneficiaries such as exhibitions, shows etc.

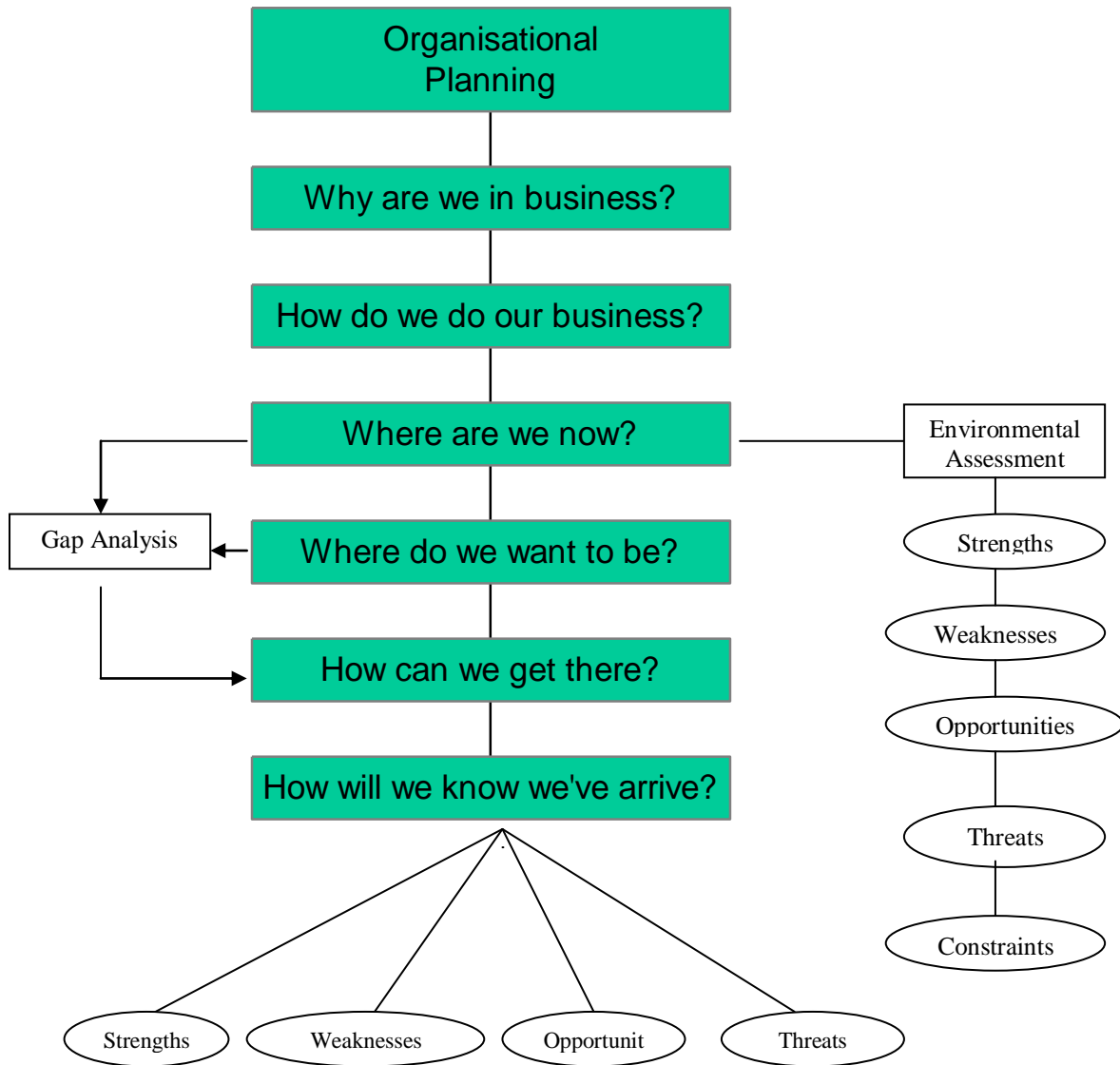
SECTION 4. APPENDICES

The Planning Cycle



(Ref: *Strategic Planning in the Barbados Public Service; Guidelines for the Development of Strategic Plans, pg.3*)

Strategic Planning Process (as practiced by MES)



July 2002