



FINAL REPORT
Volume 3 – Institutional Assessment

December 2010

COUNTRY POVERTY ASSESSMENT – DOMINICA

Dominica: Reducing Poverty in the Face of Vulnerability

COUNTRY POVERTY ASSESSMENT DOMINICA

VOLUME 3 INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT

**Submitted to:
THE CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT BANK**

**Submitted by:
KAIRI CONSULTANTS LIMITED**
14 Cochrane Street, Tunapuna, Trinidad and Tobago, West Indies
Tel: 868 663 2677; Fax: 868 663 1442
Website: www.kairi.com

**In collaboration with the
NATIONAL ASSESSMENT TEAM OF DOMINICA**

CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES.....	IV
SECTION 1: INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT	1
1.1 APPROACH TO THE INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT.....	3
SECTION 2: GOVERNANCE	6
2.1 LOCAL GOVERNMENT	6
2.2 THE CARIB COUNCIL	8
2.3 THE PORTSMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL.....	9
2.4 POINTE MICHEL VILLAGE COUNCIL	12
2.5 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT.....	13
SECTION 3: INSTITUTIONS AND THE ECONOMIC SECTORS.....	16
3.1 ECONOMIC FACILITATION	18
3.1.1 <i>Directorate of Planning</i>	18
3.1.2 <i>Management of the Public Sector Investment Programme</i>	21
3.1.3 <i>Central Statistical Office (CSO)</i>	23
3.2 AGRICULTURE	25
3.2.1 <i>THE BANANA ADJUSTMENT</i>	28
3.2.2 <i>Dominica Essential Oils Association</i>	42
3.3 FISHERIES.....	43
3.3.1 <i>FISHERIES DEPARTMENT</i>	43
3.4 TOURISM.....	49
3.4.1 <i>Dominica Hotel and Tourism Association</i>	50
3.4.2 <i>Ministry of Tourism</i>	50
3.5 DOMESTIC INVESTMENT AND FINANCE	55
3.5.1 <i>The Cooperative Division</i>	55
3.5.2 <i>Cooperative Credit Union League</i>	56
3.5.3 <i>National Development Foundation</i>	58
3.5.4 <i>AID Bank</i>	60
SECTION 4: INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSING AND PUBLIC UTILITIES	65
4.1 THE PUBLIC WORKS CORPORATION	65
4.2 HOUSING DIVISION.....	66
4.3 DOWASCO	68
4.4 DOMLEC.....	71
4.5 DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEYS	72

COUNTRY POVERTY ASSESSMENT

Dominica 2008/09

SECTION 5: ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT	76
5.1 PHYSICAL PLANNING DIVISION	78
5.2 ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATING UNIT.....	79
5.3 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT	83
5.4 OFFICE OF DISASTER MANAGEMENT.....	86
5.5 GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY (GEF).....	88
5.6 DOMINICA SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMPANY	89
SECTION 6: HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT.....	91
6.1 EDUCATION AND TRAINING	91
6.1.1 Ministry of Education, Human Resources Development, Sports and Youth Affairs.....	91
6.1.2 Education Trust Fund	92
6.1.3 Adult Education Division	93
6.1.4 Documentation Centre and Library.....	94
6.2 HEALTH	95
6.2.1 Ministry Of Health.....	95
6.2.2 Hiv/Aids Response Unit.....	96
6.2.3 Health Promotions Unit	98
SECTION 7: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND WELFARE	100
7.1 DOMINICA SOCIAL INVESTMENT FUND (DSIF).....	100
7.2 BASIC NEEDS TRUST FUND PROGRAMME.....	103
7.3 YOUTH DEPARTMENT	105
7.4 THE PRISON	108
7.5 CENTRE WHERE ADOLESCENTS LEARN TO LOVE AND SERVE (CALLS)	109
7.6 YOUTH QUAKE	111
7.7 WATERFRONT AND ALLIED WORKERS UNION (WAWU).....	113
7.8 SOCIAL WELFARE DIVISION	115
7.9 DOMINICA ASSOCIATION OF DISABLED PEOPLE.....	118
7.10 CARIB AFFAIRS UNIT	118
7.11 LEGAL AID DEPARTMENT	120
7.12 CHRISTIAN CHILDREN'S FUND	122
7.13 HOME FOR THE ELDERLY	123
7.14 DOMINICA COUNCIL ON AGEING	125
7.15 HAITIANS FOR CHRIST PRAYER GROUP	126
7.16 RED CROSS.....	127
SECTION 8: OVERVIEW OF INSTITUTIONS IN A CHANGING ECONOMY AND SOCIETY.....	131

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1: Governance - Assessment of Institutional Efficacy	14
Table 3.1: Economic Sectors - Assessment of Institutional Efficacy.....	63
Table 4.1: Infrastructure, Housing and Utilities - Assessment of Institutional Efficacy	75
Table 5.1: Environmental Management and Disaster Management - Assessment of Institutional Efficacy	90
Table 6.1: Human Resource Development- Assessment of Institutional Efficacy	99
Table 7.1: Social Development and welfare – Assessment of Institutional Efficacy	129
Table 8.1: Institutional Initiatives And Poverty	133

SECTION 1: INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT

Over the last quarter of a century, there has developed a far better understanding of the role performed by institutional structures in the development process. Highly stylised econometric models have not explained the divergence in rates of economic growth, as has the resort to explanations in terms of differences in institutions across space and time. Noted economists like North (2005), and earlier, Lewis (1950 and 1955) identified the role of institutional factors in the growth of economies and the transformation of societies.¹ Indeed, key institutions like the World Bank and the IMF, which are noted for their prescriptions deriving from Neoclassical Economics, have been forced to take account of the institutional variables in the development process, even though they may stop short of explaining the East Asian experience as a thrust in 'getting prices wrong'.²

For present purposes, institutions can be examined both as organisational forms and as regularized patterns of behaviour, and shaped by the culture and mores of society. There are both formal structures and organisations, the former relating to formal governance and administration in the society, while the latter may lack formally codified rules and procedures, but are no less important in the society or social group. Informal structures may be highly influential, and are no less important for their being informal, since they determine people's behaviours.

The institution of the chieftaincy in which the Carib Chief wielded certain powers in the community of Caribs, might not have been recognised in the laws of Dominica, for much of its early colonial history, but was not unimportant to the Carib people of the country. Land is still owned communally in the Carib Territory, and in supplying the housing needs of the community, accommodation has to be made for this institutional reality. Mortgage arrangements that apply in the rest of the country, cannot be utilised there. In a diverse society, institutional structures may vary considerably among groups.

In addition to the formal structures and institutions created within the public sector, and supported by legislation defining the various roles of the state, there are structures that develop out of the right of association accorded to members in society to organise themselves in whatever way they see fit, to achieve social and other objectives, that are deemed to be legitimate in the society. This is the basis for the formation of NGOs and CBOs, some of which may populate in areas and with responsibilities normally

¹ North, Douglass, *Understanding the Process of Economic Change*, Princeton University Press, 2005.

Lewis, W.A., 'The Industrialisation of the British West Indies,' *Caribbean Economic Review*, 1950.

Lewis, W.A., *Theory of Economic Growth*, Irwin, 1955.

²World Bank, *World Development Report 2002: Building Institutions for Markets*.

discharged by agencies of the Government. In that regard, they may even be more effective than Government agencies set up for these very purposes.

Existing living conditions in Dominica can be seen in the context of the evolution of a society and economy that have been part of the international system since colonial times, even though it has been a peripheral country for the most part. In the period of the Cold War, and of the challenge for influence between the two super-powers, Dominica might have held some importance much beyond its size.

In the aftermath of its own political independence and then a change of political party, it experienced the most devastating hurricane in living memory, Hurricane David. In the circumstances of the time, the Grenada Revolution might have inspired elements in Dominica that having failed to retain or secure power by the ballot box; they might attempt force, in the name, presumptively, of the people. However, coup attempts against a right leaning Government, merely served to strengthen its resolve against the so-called progressive forces of the time, and to deepen its alignment with conservative administrations within the region and in the North Atlantic.

In the debacle that led to the collapse of the People's Revolutionary Government of Grenada, the Government of Dominica could parlay economic and other resources by providing cover for intervention to a political administration in Washington seeking to stem the tide as Cuba and the then Soviet Union came to have influence in the Caribbean Sea and in Southern Africa, at that time dominated by the military might of apartheid regime in South Africa.

Grants and other forms of assistance from Washington contributed to the effort of the administration in Roseau to settle the economy of Dominica, and to return it to some level of viability following the devastation that was caused by the Hurricane of 1979. As the banana industry recovered, Dominica was able to achieve decent growth rates again, especially in the context of protection afforded to the country under the Lome Treaty, and to a more limited extent by the Caribbean Basin Initiative. The latter years of the 1980s were to prove to be a period of relative stability in Dominica, which continued into the first years of the decade of the 1990s.

The year 1990 saw the symbolic collapse of the Berlin Wall. In the new dispensation following the collapse of the Soviet State and the end of Communism in Eastern Europe, Cuba continued to have some influence in the Caribbean Region, in part because of a more genuine commitment to assisting in the development of the health sector of the countries of the region, as well as in the provision of tertiary and high level technical education to citizens of poorer countries like Dominica.

Although the country was under British colonial control for most of the colonial period in the post-Columbian phase, the French presence in an earlier phase is reflected in the French patois which is still the *lengua franca* among the older generation of its people, and in the place names and family names of most Dominicans. Dominica and St. Lucia have an abiding connection with neighbouring Martinique and Guadeloupe. As with other islands of the region, the economy of the island was founded on its supplying primary produce to the metropolitan economy. Coffee, citrus and bananas have been the more important crops over the years. Limited development and the failure to diversify led to external migration becoming the characteristic response of those seeking a better future. Going away has been institutionalised as a response to social and economic problems.

The early acceptance of a republican constitution may have not a little to do with the fact that even in the early 19th century there was pressure to ensure representative government with the franchise being accorded even to the people of African ancestry, or of an ex-slave background, once they passed the economic means test of the period. Although the local representation was to be eventually sidelined in the politics of the late 19th century when the country came under the Crown Colony system, the insistence on representation might explain why formal local government had to be instituted in the late 19th century, with town councils in Roseau and Portsmouth.

1.1 APPROACH TO THE INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT

This volume examines the contribution of a number of agencies and organisations to the nature of living conditions and to inter-relations among the people and residents of Dominica. The selected agencies were surveyed to establish their efficacy in assisting the population in coping with their economic and social realities. Time and resources did not permit for any consultation with informal groups and organisations, except in so far as the focus group discussions in communities during the Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPA), would have unearthed perspectives on less formal organisations in the society.

This volume will examine the contribution of formal organisations, in the provision of services in the four main areas into which services could be disaggregated for present purposes – developmental, preventive, remedial, and supportive. Developmental institutions contribute to capacity building, and equip individuals and/or groups with the wherewithal to grow and expand. They assist in empowerment and are critical to the long term reduction of socioeconomic inequalities in countries experiencing economic growth. Such institutions also represent a vital tool in efforts to break the cycle of

deprivation associated with chronic or intergenerational poverty. Their absence or lack of proper functioning can lead to the growth of social tensions, alienation, marginalisation and the growth of inequality in such countries. Training institutions, for example, are engaged in developmental work.

Institutions that perform functions that are preventive in nature assist in protecting individuals or groups from risks or vulnerabilities, and from succumbing to particular problems. Youth programmes may focus on preventive work by encouraging young people to become involved in constructive activity, as a counter to enticing alternative models that may exist around them, but which are a function of anti-social behaviour – for example, high income generating drug-running. They can also engage in behaviour modification strategies to change those patterns of action that have a demonstrated relationship to negative social and economic outcomes- for example, behaviours and attitudes associated with teenage pregnancy, especially among poor youth.

Remedial organisations restore individuals or groups to a state of wholesomeness following their having been subjected, or having succumbed, to particular social challenges. Supportive agencies provide assistance to those in need, without necessarily being concerned with their capacity to respond to social and economic challenges on their own.

There are many organisations and institutions whose role is regulatory in that they discipline relations among sectors of society. While they impact on households and individuals, their *raison d'être* is not so narrowly focused to allow their being assessed on the criterion variables outlined above.

In the conduct of this Assessment, institutions were rated and given scores. A rating scale from one to five was utilised, with five representing the highest level of effectiveness in reducing poverty or in positively contributing to the quality of life of residents of Dominica. While the use of any rating scale cannot escape elements of subjectivity, the information presented in the summaries in this document does assist substantially in establishing how well the institutional networks have performed. Additionally, being at some remove, the TOC can argue for its being a dispassionate observer in presenting an independent review.

1.1.1 Research Process

The National Assessment Team (NAT) had the responsibility of selecting the organisations and institutions for the conduct of the research for the institutional analysis, and developed a list in conjunction with the Team of Consultants (TOC).

A team, comprised of one or two members of the TOC, and occasionally of one member of the NAT, visited with and conducted an interview with the head or with someone designated to speak on behalf of the organisation or institution. The interview followed the pattern set by a semi-structured format which was adjusted in keeping with the nature of the organisation and its primary focus. The objective of the interview was to establish:

- The primary remit of the organisation, that is what was the objective in its establishment and the date of its establishment;
- The perspectives of the leadership of the organisation in respect of the task at hand and their perception of the external environment that it faced and which is the locus of its attention;
- The modalities of its current operations, and the source of the resources at its disposal;
- The extent to which its leadership felt that it was contributing to the improvement of living conditions of the people of the Dominica and, in particular, of the poorer members of the society; and
- The ways in which it might be possible for the organisation to improve its contribution to the society, if more resources were available to it.

In total of forty-nine governmental, private sector and non-governmental organisations were interviewed.

SECTION 2: GOVERNANCE

The governance system of the country disciplines the mobilisation and distribution of resources and thus has an impact on how the poor are treated in society. Poverty reduction is more likely to be a major social objective in a society where the poor are active participants in the political process. In the vibrancy of a two party system in Dominica, poverty reduction is likely to feature prominently in the political manifestoes of competing political parties.

2.1 LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local Government has had an interesting evolution in Dominica, and dates back to 1896. At that time, the representation was comprised of only persons nominated by the Authorities of the time. From 1896 to 1920, only two local authorities had been established and functioned – Roseau and Portsmouth. The system has evolved considerably since then, to the largely representational model that now exists. Officials were first elected in 1937, and Village Councils were first introduced in 1954. The Carib Council was formally established in 1978, but there is a sense in which the Caribs operated their own system of governance, irrespective of the stance of the central government.

The country has a range of individual Community Councils around which local governance is organised. There are four tiers of in the local government governance system:

- City Council/Town Council or Municipal Councils: eight persons are elected and five are appointed by the Government;
- The Canefield Urban Council;
- Village Councils – residents elect 5 persons and the Government selects 3 persons to serve
- The Carib Council: this is the only Council in which all the Councillors are elected: there is a special election for the Carib Chief.

The Carib Council is the only one that serves for five years. Others serve for three years. There are 41 local authorities – 37 village councils, one city, one town, one urban council and the Carib Council.

The country has been long practised in the field of governance. Revenues are provided to the municipalities by the Central Government. However, it is not mandatory that

there be councils and, at the time of the interview, there were five communities that did not have councils – Salisbury, Belles, Warner, Massacre and Good Hope.

The City Council is responsible for side walks, roads and garbage collection. The Village Councils are responsible for village roads. The Government provides the subvention. The Department of Local Government and Community Development provides oversight, and also training and capacity building. There are District Officers who are responsible for the discharge of the oversight activity.

The Village Councils have some level of autonomy. They can raise funds and utilize whatever is raised in communities. City and town councils have authority to borrow from lending institutions up to a certain level with the approval of Central Government. Currently, the Central Government has implemented a pilot project in which a few councils have become involved in administering postal services.

With some of them having performed very well at the establishment and running of large resource centres, they can take charge of smaller infrastructure projects at the community level and may get involved in income generating programmes including managing ecotourism sites.

Under the Councils, there may be Development Committees, which are quasi CBOs. The National Day of Community Service which leads to a climax with the Independence celebrations, has, in recent times, served to rally local government entities and their residents in undertaking projects that are all community driven, including doing a face-lift to public buildings, engaging in drainage projects and cleaning of rivers, collection of garbage and the beautification of public spaces. There are communities that are able to sustain mobilisation over a longer period and can maintain public precincts of high quality.

At the time of the interview, there was an ongoing study into local government reform, which was funded by the CDB and Government of Dominica. It was expected that a national policy would emerge, and will be supported by a new Local Government Act. There was considerable consultation at the community level in respect of the reform process.

The large number of Councils and the fact of a presence of people of all walks of life in them suggest that democratic participation is firmly anchored in the body politic of Dominica. The Department rates itself highly for the profile that it has secured in respect of local government administration and community development.

2.2 THE CARIB COUNCIL

The Council has maintained its traditional governance structure over generations. There was an uprising in 1930 which led to the banning of the Carib Chief. The Central Government refused to recognise the authority of the Chief, but the people never wavered in so doing, and would always consult with him in respect of the affairs of the area.

The ban was lifted in 1952. The Carib Act was officially instituted in 1978 and is the framework under which the Carib Community operates to this day. The position of Carib Chief is not hereditary, but democratic. All persons 18 years of age and older in the Carib Community can vote for the election of the Chief. Once one resides in the Carib Community for six or more months, one is entitled to vote.

The estimated population is about 3000 persons, 65 percent of whom are in the younger age cohorts. There are eight hamlets in the Territory, and the Council is proposing to establish a development council in each of the hamlets.

Public servants in the Carib area can now get access to homes in the area, financed by the Government: this has meant that the mechanisms have been developed to reconcile private property rights and communal property rights, which latter is consistent with Carib culture.

There is no tax system in place for the Carib Council to raise money. The Council receives an annual subvention of \$50,000. It is up to the Council to raise money for projects as it sees fit. The Council has succeeded in raising money internationally and locally in the sum of \$2m recently. Most of it was allocated to a medical facility.

The Central Government was responsible for putting a road into the territory, but the Council would like to retain the responsibility for maintaining the road. At the present time, the Public Works Department maintains the roads.

Funding from the CDB has been instrumental in providing facilities for the display of Carib artefacts and museum pieces. However, the relationship has not been all positive, since some of the personnel at the Bank allegedly wanted to dictate a modus operandi to the Carib Community. The Ministry of Tourism maintains the facility, but again, its personnel has not given respect to local knowledge, in the view of the leadership of the community.

Students in the Community have access to primary and secondary education and there is a bus service to ensure attendance. It is now possible for those of school going age in the Carib Community to have full time attendance from primary to secondary level. This has been an important area of advance for the community. However, the Council is concerned that students have not been performing at the expected level, and has established its own task force to investigate the causes of underperformance.

The Council has maintained a dynamic representation for the Carib Community, and there are many areas in which its members have been able to correct for the historic marginalisation that the Community might have suffered in the past.

The major issue that it faces is financing the development and transformation of the Carib Territory, without being limited by the subvention that might be provided by the Central Government. The economic base of the community was once small scale banana production: the Carib Territory once had one of the highest percentages of small banana farmers.

The decline of the industry has been devastating. The revival of the craft industry has partly compensated, and there are about 150 families involved in the production and vending of craft items. Craft production is organised around private market. The lack of economic activity in the area has prompted young people to join the trek in rural-urban migration, and even migration to neighbouring islands.

The Council is exploring ways of encouraging investment within the Territory, in addition to developing entrepreneurial skills within the community. The area has potential in eco-tourism and the matter of a hotel and guest accommodation in the Territory is being considered.

2.3 THE PORTSMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL

This Council in its present form has been in existence for over 57 years. Before the establishment of the Council with its present powers, there was a Town Board. The Act of Parliament changed the Boards into Councils, with different Acts for Roseau and Portsmouth and for the Canefield Council and the Village Councils. There are four wards in Portsmouth and each ward elects two persons to serve on the Council. The Mayor is elected every year.

House and Land taxes are collected by the Council. Any matter relating to the fixing of rates has to be sent to the Central Government. The Council receives a subvention from the Government which is used to pay the salaries of people working with the Council, in the discharge of its responsibilities.

These include Sanitary Workers, and Caretakers. The Council is responsible for some roads, mainly smaller roads. It used to be responsible for drains, but this has been given to the Public Works Department. The Council is responsible for the removal of dead animals: 'Dead dogs have no owners.' The Council is responsible also for the market and the stalls. The Town Constable supervises the sanitary workers.

Ross University which is the largest economic organisation in the community, does not pay anything to the Council. However, the boundaries of the Council now include the area occupied by Ross University. A valuation has been done and it is expected that the University will cooperate by paying its land and building taxes. There are a number of small food vendors operating in the vicinity. It is known that Ross financed some of the upgrade that has taken place with respect to the food courts in the area.

With the coming of Ross University to the area, a number of foreigners have bought lands in the area. A number of local residents – ex-estate workers - secured lands in lieu of gratuity, when GEEST left, and have been selling out to foreigners.

Ross University is the life blood of Portsmouth. The university has impacted life in the town, and has contributed to the development of a hospitality sector. It is a non-religious school, but there are adherents of all the major faiths attending the school: Moslems, Hindus and Catholics. The only Mosque in Dominica is in Portsmouth, and caters mainly to students at the University.

The Council is not responsible for the port, although it would welcome the opportunity of being so. There is an environmental levy on all imports, but the Solid Waste Department receives its subvention from this source, and not the Council.

There has been a decline in other areas of the economy in the last two years. There were 900 registered banana farmers in the area. The number has been reduced to 300 farmers. Output was once about 70,000 tons but this has been reduced to 12,000 tons.

There has been some closure of hotels as well, with the decline of tourism. One of the hotels has been taken over by Ross for housing students. There has also been a decline in the soap industry as well.

COUNTRY POVERTY ASSESSMENT

Dominica 2008/09

On the social front, there have been some developments to note. There is a school feeding programme in the schools. It has become necessary as a result of evidence of children fainting in the school. Contributions come from voluntary sources for this programme. The Lamb's Feast, the effort of an Evangelical Group, has been helpful in providing support to the needy in the community. There are vagrants in Portsmouth and this has been attributed in part to the spread of drugs in the area.

There is also evidence of girls succumbing to sugar daddies. There is prostitution among girls in schools in Dominica. The respondent relates the case of girls organising a 'bomb' to secure materials for the Home Economics Class: the girls would engage in transactional sex to secure the necessary fund to purchase supplies for their class project.

At Wesley High School, girls may be advised by their mothers to get money to pay for their exams.

"go and sell what God gave you to get money for the exam."

Some seek to secure money to top up their expensive phones. Parents are turning a blind eye to prostitution in the community.

There are organisations involved in a number of initiatives in the area, and contribute to the quality of life of the vulnerable in Portsmouth. There is Care for the Elderly, which operates throughout the country. There is another organisation involved in the provision of educational materials and assisting with school fees. There is also CALLS - Centre where Adolescents Learn to Love and Serve. It is a second chance programme. Many of the young people involved in the programme, could not read or write when they entered the programme. They were violence prone as well.

In respect of new immigrants, the Council has noted a number of factors. There are Haitians coming to the country in some numbers. There used to be no requirement for visas. However, a visa is now required. Many use Dominica as a transit point on the way to somewhere else. They work in all kinds of fields to raise money. More women and children are joining the men folk. Their children seem not to have problems of integrating and are performing well in schools and have even secured scholarships in some cases.

The Chinese have been entering to set up business. It is noted that there are about nine Chinese restaurants in the area. There are also Indians coming in from the subcontinent. Most local small businesses in Dominica cannot cope with the competition from these sources. In the face of this competition, many locals have been forced to close their businesses.

The Council rates itself at being only average, ie '3', largely because of the problem of finance. There is an implicit wage freeze and that ensures that there is limit to the kind of personnel that it can secure, and the quality of service it can deliver to residents of the town.

The Councillors are sensitive to the numerous socio-economic issues facing their community, including the integration of new migrants into the community, but are not endowed with the resources to make required interventions, nor does there seem to be a forum in which their information can be processed in national policy planning and implementation.

2.4 POINTE MICHEL VILLAGE COUNCIL

Pointe Michel is a coastal community to the south of the island and thus is no stranger to the wrath of hurricanes. The area was severely affected by hurricane David in 1979. In 2008 they experienced hurricane Homer. In the 1979 hurricane (David) all buildings were destroyed in the area; there was no church and no school. After the passage of the hurricane there was no food and no shelter and there was a lot of debris piled high. In response, committees were formed in the area for the distribution of food and also for a rebuilding thrust.

The experience prompted the formation of a Disaster Committee. This committee was very effective and all activities were undertaken voluntarily. One feature of the work of the Committee is the identification of persons in the community who have structurally sound homes and who have volunteered to have their homes used in the event of a hurricane.

The area also experienced a lot of earth tremors in 2003 and as such tried to reconstitute the committee as they came to the realisation that hurricanes were not the only type of disasters that they could experience. Tremors have destroyed the jetty as well as a church and other buildings. Plans are made however; nothing can be done as there is no money available to implement plans. It is hoped that the Government would provide some assistance but this has not been forthcoming at the time of the interview. The Red Cross has been assisting and has provided a water tank and equipment.

The Committee collaborates with the Red Cross, which invites committees for training as well as the Office of Disaster Management which provides literature and advice.

2.5 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The Community Development Department of the Ministry is mandated to carry out community development programmes on behalf of Government. A major component in this is the Social Protection Programme, which consists of:

- a) Short term employment projects which are community driven: roads dominate this portfolio;
- b) Community education and skills development - CESD - which is managed by Adult Education Department; and
- c) Micro credit programme - NDFD

A critical element in the community education and skills development programme has been the establishment of Community Resource and Internet Centres with the objective of eliminating the digital divide and creating access for less fortunate in society. The hope is that large numbers of people would learn how to use a computer and would be able to employ access in improving their livelihoods.

The agenda of the Department dovetails with the national agenda which is focused on poverty reduction and alleviation. The Growth and Social Protection Strategy has been developed for Dominica, with the assistance of the CDB. The Department is expected to play a leading role in meeting the targets in this strategy. It is the intention of the Department to place capacity building and the improvement of housing of residents as high priority in fulfilling its responsibility.

The Village Councils show variable capacity across the island. Grand Bay has a very strong capable council, with high quality human resources, including ex-public servants, people who participate in civil society. The weaker communities are being assisted to improve capacity for planning and implementation of local activities. The Department seeks also to train councils to write project proposals and to manage their funds.

One factor contributing to weakness among communities has been the decline in volunteerism. During the heyday of banana agriculture, rural residents had money but could afford to put in time into community activities. With the decline of the sector, many are engaged in basic survival mode and lack the time for community action. Many now work outside their communities and are unable to devote time to their communities. Television and home entertainment are playing a role in keeping people more in their homes.

Disaster Management is also one of the responsibilities of the Department of Community Development. It discharges this function by:

- Organization of local Committees;
- Training of residents in disaster management and in damage assessment and rehabilitation

The Department has links with a number of government departments. However, it remains the primary organisation in bridging a relationship between the Central Government and local government agencies.

In Table 2.1, are listed the organisations discussed above with scores that represent the assessment of the TOC on its contribution to improving living conditions and quality of life for the population. As can be seen in the table, they are developmental especially since they seek to empower individuals and communities to take better charge of their own transformation.

TABLE 2.1: GOVERNANCE - ASSESSMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFICACY

NO.	NAME OF ORGANISATION	PRIMARY FOCUS	KEY ACTIONS FOR IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIVES FOR DOMINICANS	SCORE
1.	Department of Local Government	Developmental	Facilitates localised governance in several areas to municipalities.	3.5
2.	Carib Council	Developmental	Advocates on behalf of the members of the Carib Community.	4.5
3.	Portsmouth Town Council	Developmental and Regulatory	Responsible for the governance and management of Portsmouth and does have some level of autonomy.	3.5
4	Pointe Michel Village Council	Preventative, Supportive	Provides a model of community mobilisation and self-help in face of natural disaster. Engages in sensitisation of people of community to the requirements and approaches in face of disaster.	3.5
5.	Community Development Department	Developmental	Works at the community level to undertake programmes on behalf of the government which fosters development.	4

In sum, even though finance might have been a constraint in their operations, in recent years, local government and community based organisations continue to be an important feature in the landscape of Dominica. The rural urban drift, occasioned by the decline in banana agriculture and the lack of viable alternatives, have impacted rural communities. Remaining residents are preoccupied with survival, and have to spend

more time commuting to engage in employment outside of their communities. The annual festivities surrounding the celebration of Independence are still a mechanism for community mobilisation.

In spite of the vibrancy of community development, there are social problems arising that are posing a challenge: prostitution among school girls, underperformance in school among male youth, violence among the youth, and the lack of competitiveness of locals in face of competition from recently arrived immigrants. There is no evidence that various local Government agencies meet in session together to exchange information on the problems and issues in community development across the country, although each may be well aware of the challenges faced in their respective communities and the impact these may have elsewhere.

SECTION 3: INSTITUTIONS AND THE ECONOMIC SECTORS

The economy of Dominica has been emerging out of one of the most difficult periods in its transformation. The last decade of the 20th century was traumatic as the Banana Industry, its main foreign exchange earner, was forced to adjust to the formation of the European Union, then to the establishment of WTO, both of which created more competitive conditions for the main export of the country. Dominica remained the island in the Windward Islands that was most dependent on banana exports for the earning of foreign exchange. The test of its institutional infrastructure is then its capacity to manage the transition required in its remaining a competitive participant in the international economy, capable of providing for its population in the emerging dispensation.

For all of its past since becoming a colony of Britain in the 18th century, its economy has been heavily reliant on agriculture. Its initial efforts at agricultural diversification in the post-independence period, have not yielded much by way of expanded and diversified exports, although food production for domestic consumption has not been insignificant.

Attempts at more broadly based diversification into other sectors brought some limited results. Prospects in export oriented light manufacturing had foundered a decade earlier with the formation of the North American Free Trade Area. Dominica had never been able to arrive at the level achieved by some of its neighbours in such areas as garment production and electronic assembly operations. Its most important manufacturing operations were in soap production, with upstream inputs from its coconut industry. This important model of processing of raw materials by local entrepreneurship was not emulated in other areas. In the end, indeed, this important domestic operation was absorbed, possibly for strategic reasons, by a transnational.

Like other countries of the region, in the latter years of the decade of the 1990s, there were attempts to develop a presence in the offshore financial services sector. The sector had hardly emerged in Dominica when it came into focus as a tax haven, in the definitions used by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and other agencies, including the IMF.

The Government has been forced to participate in the OECD's Initiative on Harmful Tax Practices, committing itself to abide by the principles of transparency and effective exchange of information.³ Dominica has been deemed to be one of the countries that have committed to the internationally agreed tax standard, but have not yet

³ <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/38/52/2071679.pdf>

substantially implemented the required measures.⁴ Given the announced commitment of the Obama Administration to eliminate the use of tax havens under any guise, there seems to be little possibility of any institutional arrangement being created in Dominica that can make the sector a major factor in its economic development and transformation.

Dominica has been successful in creating a niche in international tourism. Not having the sun, sea and sand of its Caribbean neighbours, it was spurned by the large hotel chains seeking to provide the traditional tourism product. A few of its entrepreneurs and the Government recognised the alternative possibility created by its apparent remoteness as a result of the lack of facility for receiving long haul jet aircraft. The country could offer the attraction of being off the beaten track and much else from its pristine natural environment. Its inestimable eco-credentials provide major opportunity.

The difficult transition that the country has had to manage in recent years has impacted on the perception of its people on their life chances. Many have followed the trend that became more dominant in the latter half of the 20th century of seeking employment abroad for the medium to long term. Emigration has been institutionalised for more than a century as a response to difficult economic times among people of the Caribbean, and Dominica has always been part of this trend.

Indeed, so deep has been this pattern that the 'Home-coming' has been institutionalised around the annual celebrations of Independence and with it, the Creole Festival. Thus, Festival Tourism linked to Creole Festival provides for the Homecoming of large numbers of the Diaspora, who return to renew ties. At the base of this is the high reliance of the country on remittances from its nationals abroad.

The citizens shape structures and develop institutions to manage change and the problems they face in an economy and society in rapid transition. At the same time, the institutional infrastructure structures the response of the society to the economic and social realities and the ongoing change that the country has to adapt to as a small peripheral economy and society. In the most recent Budget Speech, the Prime Minister, and Minister of Finance identified the impact of the crisis of the final years of the last decade. These included:

- A reduction in the remittances that non-resident Dominicans and other West Indians would normally send to their families back home;
- A reduction in tourist expenditure as fewer persons in the source countries are able to afford vacations and those who do, end up spending less than they normally would;

⁴ http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/R40114_20100311.pdf

- A reduction in the foreign direct investment needed to increase the capacity of the country's productive sectors and generate employment;
- A reduction in government revenues as a result of a likely reduction in imports through reduced spending power; and
- Some reduction in exports as buyers in affected countries have reduced access to credit.

These are the conditions under which the Government and the country have been trying to mitigate or eliminate poverty. There is now the other task of adapting to trade agreements within the region – OECS Political and Economic Union – and restructured international economic relations like Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union.

3.1 ECONOMIC FACILITATION

The economic performance of the country depends on the agencies of the Government engaged in the facilitation of economic and social transformation, and the degree to which the main productive sectors have been able to carry the country in terms of income and employment generation and foreign exchange earning.

3.1.1 DIRECTORATE OF PLANNING

The Government has sought to ensure that its budgeting of revenue and expenditure is pro-poor in its thrust. This has been the approach for some time now. There have been attempts to promote small business. The AID Bank has rates below market rates for some types of businesses. There is also the Youth Business Trust that has been designed to encourage the entree of youth into business. Inevitably, some measures require a long gestation period before they bear fruit.

A number of challenges were witnessed in the year 2009. Beside the difficulties with the export of bananas, remittance income had declined. Construction workers were returning from Anguilla and the decline in the economies of both Anguilla and Antigua and Barbuda were immediately impacting Dominica.

The period of deep crisis in 2000/2001 has helped the population of Dominica to appreciate the requirements of adjustment, both fiscally and structurally. Since then, the debt situation of the country had improved, and the creditor situation correlatively. As recently as 2005, public servants got their salaries at the middle of the month rather than at end of the previous month. Purchase orders from Government were not accepted by

some firms. Overdraft to Government agencies had dried up. There was a catastrophe in the operations of the Government.

For awhile, the only viable banana plantations functioning were a few foreign operations. From a high of over 6,000 farmers in the period when bananas dominated agricultural activity, the number of farmers was reduced to 1,000.

The country has benefited from the capacity development programme of the CDB, which is multifaceted and includes Small Business Training, and the Empowerment of the Carib Community. The desired impact of earlier investments has not been fully realised because of limited capacity. Clearly, more people have been integrated into the economy, although there may be problems with spatial distribution.

Local Government initiatives will need to correct this. The spatial mal-integration is evident in the shift in the population from the east to the west, with certain parishes increasing their share of the population and others losing. St. John has increased, while St. Andrew and St. David have declined. Portsmouth and Roseau have absorbed people coming from St. Andrew. In the case of Portsmouth, the development of Ross University has triggered construction activity in the town to cater for students, but there has also been some spontaneous or unplanned settlement as well.

The Government has sought to regularise squatting and actually to contain it. The Yampiece area has seen some encroachment of squatting. Silver Lake has been regularised although there is little that is aesthetic about the place, given that it betrays so much of the socio-psychological deprivation of the people of the area.

Some of the settlements with problems have developed in the wake of catastrophe. Hurricane David led to the displacement of people in the Tenement Yard on Old Street. Cutter Village started following a fire in the 1970s. Since then, other people have joined the village.

Indeed, this community as well as Tarish Pit have had more recent inflows of population. There have been marginal improvements in these communities, in so far as some individuals have been able to secure titles for their land. What is being witnessed in Dominica, is the phenomenon of a gradual rural urban trek, gaining greater speed in recent times. There are new inflows and new settlers, with new pockets in places like Bath Estate. One witnesses both formal private and public housing developments, but also substantial unplanned development as well.

In respect of business development, there is evidence of a few small companies becoming involved in agro-processing. There are two local companies engaged in herbal soaps and related products and others engaged in hot peppers and condiments as well as fruits. Bellots have been processing herbs and spices and a new company is involved in turmeric and peppers and other condiments for cooking. The companies have availed themselves of the services of the OECS Export Development Unit.

Non-banana agriculture has increased and there are indicators of fresh produce coming onto the market. There was a time when the Farmers' Market operated only on weekends. There is evidence that it starts on Thursdays and there are more vendors engaged in the market place. Some of this new activity can be attributed to the increasing involvement of the Haitian community, both in production as well as in distribution of agricultural produce. Some are leasing fields and planting, in addition to their supplying direct labour to some farmers.

On the social side, there are a few noteworthy developments. Planned Parenthood has been effective: there are free condoms that the population may access, and the presence of a large Roman Catholic congregation has not been a barrier in the use and acceptance of birth control. The population apparently uses birth control devices and seeks forgiveness when they go to confession.

The Local Government Agencies can address certain problems at the local area. This has been evident in respect of buses for school children. There are district programmes that have made the difference in communities. In the Trafalgar District, for example, school uniforms are being produced by 15-20 women. There is also the Adult Education Programme that engages mainly women who are not working but are committed to becoming self-employed to assist their households. There is an IT project at Mon Prospect. There is an erosion project at Pointe Michel Village in which the community is involved. Hurricanes Dean and Omar affected the seawall and there is need for a massive expenditure.

In the critical area of housing, it could not be contradicted that the country has had a housing revolution, in the midst of all the economic and social challenges. The Community Development Department has reach into most communities but needs to be better resourced to fulfil its task. There are communities like Dubic that needs a major intervention. The Government needs to target directly such that certain programmes do reach the poor. There is need for a good data base on who are the poor.

There is need for better targeting to establish the extent to which the Social Protection Strategy has been effective. The PRSP has been in place since 2006 and there are annual

reviews. This programme is funded by the World Bank. Complementing this, there has been the SIF which is funded by the European Union.

However, the country has not fully followed the prescription of the IMF. In that regard, it has been able to secure support for its programmes from the Government of Venezuela and ALBA. Judicious utilisation of assistance from the international community has allowed the Government and the country to survive a difficult pass in the international economy.

There is need to work the existing institutional structures in dealing with the problems of the society. The National Assessment Team was not continued from the last poverty assessment exercise. However, there is need to maintain it on this occasion.

3.1.2 MANAGEMENT OF THE PUBLIC SECTOR INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

The Public Sector Investment Programme represents a critical allocation in the investment profile of the country in so far as it identifies the investment priorities of the Government over the short to medium term. The programme has major macro-economic implications and has the capacity to trigger private sector responses that lead to the growth in income, employment and foreign exchange earnings. It can also lead to increases in imports and depending on its funding can result in an expansion in the public debt. Given the problems experienced in the first decade of the present century, the PSIP, and its management are important in determining the production possibility for an economy and society in transition.

A Value Added Tax has been introduced and there is evidence that it is achieving the intended result of increasing revenues of the Government augurs well for the Government and the country. There is the expectation that the Government will be better placed to ensure that revenues can sustain proposed recurrent and very importantly capital expenditure. This is the context in which the PSIP can be assessed.

There have been a number of major projects being completed or in process that impact the society and the economy. The Soufriere Sea Wall Project represents a major investment in the ongoing programme of sea defences for the country, and is part of the economic infrastructure. The challenges of sea rise and coastal erosion has to be faced and makes imperative considerable expenditure in saving a number of communities in a country where the narrow coastline has been an area of settlement for a large percentage of the population.

The extension of the runway at the Melville Hall Airport and the installation of lighting on the runway have been undertaken and will improve the profile of the country in the

international tourism market place. Night landing by aircraft will soon be possible in Dominica, thus extending the hours of operation of its main airport. There is need for complementary investment in fire fighting equipment and for an upgrade of the Fire Station at the airport.

The expansion of capacity in its airport infrastructure is no guarantee of a better service by LIAT. The air service needs to be supplemented by a Ferry Service. There is a ferry service from St. Lucia and from the French Islands, but there is need for this to be expanded. It is currently private sector driven. Meanwhile, with earlier port development, cruise tourism has improved. In the context of the difficulty with air travel, cruise tourism is critical to Dominica.

The Housing Renovation Project and the Housing Programme generally are part of the social infrastructure. In the former, it has been possible to secure partnership arrangement in which, with the supply of material by the Government, communities engaging in traditional mechanisms of self-help and 'coup de main', have been able to improve housing for the elderly and for the poor. These initiatives seemed to have been particularly successful in the Roseau area and in the Charlotte Valley.

There is also the major housing programme of the Government which is adding to the social infrastructure. The expansion in this area might not be dictated by the poverty reduction strategy, but rather by the more general objective of supplying quality housing to the population at large in a least cost framework.

The topography of Dominica makes road development a very costly component of its infrastructure. In the past, the country might not always have observed international standards. Road development has also been an area of cost overruns, thereby imposing a greater burden on the fiscal management of the country.

The road from Melville Hall to Portsmouth was built with the assistance of the Government of Canada and has set a standard that should be emulated. The road from Canefield to Melville Hall is to be upgraded with assistance from the French Government. This road is vital to the road transport system of the country but is one of the more difficult to rebuild and maintain.

In other areas of the physical infrastructure, the country has done well. There is universal access to electricity, and cellular technology in place ensures that all communities have access to service. Cellular usage has expanded. Also broadband services are rolling out and most communities have access to the internet. The country may be able to make a quantum leap with the application of ICTs. A National E business incubator has been established, which might portend developments to come.

On the interface between the PSIP and the directly productive sector, the institutional structures of the economy do not allow the Government much latitude in extending the PSIP into the mode of creating stimulus package in the ways prescribed for some of the advanced and emerging economies. However, there are a number of developments worthy of note. The Government has promoted the small scale sector. Small hotels have been able to secure certain duty free concessions allowing them to upgrade their operations. The Small Enterprise Development Unit, which is funded by the Government, is being resourced to encourage micro-enterprise development.

In the major area of industrial development, the country has experienced some regression. Soap production which is now dominated by a transnational firm has been falling possibly because of industrial strategy of the firm in question, given that Dominica might hold little significance in its international operations.

With the decline in bananas, most ex-farmers and workers were seeking employment outside of agriculture. The nature of banana production and of the income flows that it created posed a hurdle for people transferring to alternative agricultural activity with a different rhythm. The difficulties with extension services and pest control for alternative agriculture have not helped.

The IMF provided a loan for agriculture and this has helped in a few areas. It was the stimulus for the expansion of pork production and for investment in the Fisheries sector. There has also been investment in multi-packing facilities in Roseau and Portsmouth, with the objective of handling agricultural supplies, in addition to bananas. However, the agro-processing sector targeting domestic consumption was not showing evidence of dynamic growth, nor was agricultural diversification proceeding at the pace that had been anticipated.

There has also been a reduction in the production of beverages and in beer, which suggests that the international recession was having its effect on Dominica's economy most directly, through the slowing or decline in personal incomes and a decline in the derived demand underpinned by falling tourist arrivals.

3.1.3 CENTRAL STATISTICAL OFFICE (CSO)

The CSO is the main data collection agency in Dominica and its operations are covered by specific legislation. It collates a range of socio-economic and other data on the country. It is also responsible for information on money transfer service providers such as Money Gram and Western Union.

The Department has become aware of important changes taking place in the population. The country is now receiving immigrants: it is no longer the case that all movement is by way of emigration, which has been the centuries old tradition of Dominica being a sending country. The work of the CSO confirms that there exists a growing Haitian population in Dominica. The CSO is seeking to conduct a census on the Haitian population on the island. The CSO has noted that there is the need of social and economic research on immigrant groups generally as this would inform policy, against the backdrop of the fact that conditions in other Caribbean countries may drive would be migrants to Dominica.

The CSO conducts special studies from time to time. A survey was conducted recently on students with migrant parents, and the results are being analysed. The heavy emigration in recent years has made such a study extremely relevant for policy making and planning. Some of the information obtained related to sexual, physical and verbal abuse. Another important survey has been the health survey which was recently completed. The Department collects data in areas where there are important reporting requirements *vis-a-vis* the international community. The CSO collects also information on the MDGs. A MDG Monitoring Unit is to be established and it would be the first in the Caribbean. The institutionalisation of studies like the Poverty Assessment and reporting on the MDGs would require that the CSO expand its number of personnel to permit for the timely delivery of data.

There is also information and data collated on technical areas beside the socio-economic like demographics, income, and housing. More recently, there has been interest in generating information on the environment. There is also the need to address the problem of deforestation, as trees are indiscriminately being cut down to expand agricultural activities.

In sum, it is evident that those in the management of the agencies involved in the facilitation of the economic activity and socio-economic development within the Government have an effective grasp of the major issues facing the country. However, a major challenge for the country is the degree to which this larger perspective is informed, and can be informed, on a continuing basis by key players outside of the Government, in the private sector, the labour movement and civil society organisations, the better to mobilise the limited resources of a mini-state.

3.2 AGRICULTURE

While Dominica had long been a producer of bananas, the intervention of GEEST in the early 1950s in the Windward Islands led to the establishment of a viable export industry. As the United Kingdom sought to restore its war-ravaged economy avoiding as far as possible reliance on imports from areas outside of the Sterling area, the Caribbean islands became a natural source for primary supplies like bananas, and sugar. John Van Geest was instrumental in creating an integrated Windward Island banana producing and distribution system. Climatic and topographical conditions, along with the then existing land ownership structure allowed Dominica quickly to become a major producer of bananas, and moreover, for the crop to become the dominant activity in its agriculture.

British preferential treatment subsequently morphed into Commonwealth protection, as the colonies became independent countries. When the United Kingdom joined the European Common Market, the provisions of the Lome Accord continued to allow Windward Island Producers access mainly to the United Kingdom market. The industry grew and provided substantial income to farm families in Dominica and elsewhere in the Windward Islands. The Industry experienced its halcyon days right into the 1990s. However, the deepening of the Common Market into an Economic Union spelt trouble for Windward Island producers and the writing was on the wall by the early 1990s.

The Windward Islands Banana Exporting Company (WIBDECO) was established with the objective of the reorganisation of the Banana Industry in the Eastern Caribbean, the better to face the challenge of international competition as it was seen then. With the establishment of the European Union, Windward Island producers needed to adjust to accommodate to a regime that was going to apply across an integrated European Market. The trade privileges enjoyed by the Windward Islands Producers in the British Market were going to be eroded by the harmonised system that had to be developed for an integrated Europe. A number of European countries - Germany in particular - was not about to accept higher prices for bananas, when sources of supply from Central and South America had guaranteed good quality product at lower prices for years.

The primary objective of policy over the last ten years has been the diversification of the economy and, along with that, the diversification within the Agricultural Sector itself.

Even in its earliest incarnation, it was expected that WIBDECO would have been the vehicle for diversification. It was developed to support farmers in transition: those who could survive under more competitive conditions needed to upgrade their operations

and the company was going to be the forward link from the farm-gate to the market and would provide all the technical advice for on-farm operations that would allow the remaining banana farmers to survive. WIBDECO would allow them to make the transition to competitive banana growing in the new dispensation.

On the other hand, those who were not able to survive would have, through WIBDECO, an infrastructure in close contact with the market place in undertaking their diversification programme. Market access was assured with WIBDECO being in the market place and committed to securing entry of non-banana produce that could comply with the relevant standards. In effect, WIBDECO was committed to following a model that had been developed by Jamaica Producers.

The apparent failure of the country in making a transition from bananas to other forms of competitive agriculture could not be placed entirely at the door of WIBDECO since the countries of the region had never developed instruments for trade adjustment, let alone trade adjustment in Agriculture.

In 2009, WIBDECO finally rebranded itself as Winfresh, with a commitment to market and export other crops produced in the region. The difficulty that Dominica has faced is that it was more dependent on banana exports to Europe than the other St. Vincent and St. Lucia, even though it has not been not the largest supplier among them. The decline in competitiveness in bananas and the failure to ramp up production in other areas has resulted in a decline in Agriculture overall.

The efforts at agricultural diversification are yet to realise the goals. In the view of the Planning Authorities, non-banana agriculture is yet to take off, although there have been some sporadic moves in the sector. Major hurricanes have taken their toll as well. The Minister of Finance reported in the budget address of 2008/2009 that while the agricultural sector and banana showed an above average performance in the beginning of 2007, Hurricane Dean rolled back the gains leading to overall contraction of the agricultural sector by 5.2 percent on the previous year.⁵

However, in spite of the challenges of the market and the adverse weather conditions, the Government of Dominica maintained its commitment to the banana sector specifically and the agricultural sector generally. The investment of the Government in the sector has been framed in part by in the 'Invest in Dominica – Secure Agriculture Investment Plan' which provides a revolving fund, propagation services for a range of plant varieties and vegetable crops, the development of legislation and regulations for

⁵Minister of Finance, Budget Address, July 2008, "Confronting Today's Challenges, while Seizing Tomorrow's Opportunities"

land use and for the establishment of a land bank, post harvest handling methods as well as safe processing of poultry, pigs and small ruminants, demonstration units for crop production, and provision of technical information on a regular basis for farmers and agro-processors.

Its support has also been evident in the rehabilitation of farm access roads, the establishment of multi-purpose packing houses the creation of the Centre of Testing Excellence, the construction of two inland reception and distribution centres, the construction of certified citrus propagation facilities and the implementation of the agricultural information management system, most of which projects being financed with resources from the European Union, namely from the Special Framework of Assistance.

The country has had other external support including from ALBA, the FAO and the People's Republic of China. Such support has been important in the following projects which underpin the general thrust at agricultural diversification and at achieving some level of food security:

- Construction of a facility for citrus rehabilitation
- Propagation and distribution of vegetable seedlings and the training of farmers at the Hillsborough Horticultural Centre
- Completion of a captive breeding facility for mountain chicken
- Introduction of legislation for better management of genetic resources and biodiversity

The Budget Address of 2009/2010 reiterated the commitment to the agricultural sector.⁶ The focused investment in the sector succeeded in securing recovery and in the rise in output across a wide range of products, including in fishing, the operationalisation of the Marigot Fisheries Complex being one of the more significant developments in the sector. The Minister of Finance noted increases in output in ground provisions, peppers, pineapples and vegetables. Concerted efforts were also made to encourage linkage between tourism and agriculture, with contract farming being encouraged by the Government.

There has been a more recent loan from the IMF that provides for an initiative in agriculture, namely in the development of pork, horticulture and the fisheries sectors. However, the demand for institutional arrangements to modernise and to support the changes needed in agriculture might not have been fully appreciated.

⁶ Minister of Finance, Budget Address, July 2009, "Securing a Brighter Future in the Face of Global Crisis"

3.2.1 THE BANANA ADJUSTMENT

The Banana Industry continues to be dominated by small and medium family owned farms. Current perception in Dominica is that the farming population is aging and that most of the farmers range between 50 to 70 years old.

Many of the small producers have less than 3 acres in bananas. One extension officer estimated that to survive in the banana industry one would require at least 3-5 acres under single stand banana production and that there were few producers with 12-17 acres solely in bananas. Depending on the size of the operation, a typical banana farmer could hire farm labourers at \$50-\$60 EC per day when work is available.

The banana farmers interviewed for this section of the study more or less fitted this general description. Farmers were interviewed from the districts of St. Joseph, Grand Bay, Castle Bruce, Carib Territory, and Calibishie. The sample was selected for variation in age, gender, years of farming, and levels of success in banana production. There were five women and four men, the youngest member was 30 and the oldest 65 years. With the exception of two, the farmers were small producers cultivating less than 5 acres of land and even less in bananas.

PROFILES:

Farmer	Age	Gender	Family Status	Education	Years Farming	Size of Farm
1	56	F	Married with adult children	School Leaving Certificate	<30 years	1.4 acres
2	50s	M	Married with children	Tertiary level - Technical School	30 years	<5 acres
3	45	M	Single	Tertiary level - Technical School	3 years	15 acres
4	30	F	Single	Tertiary level - Technical School	5 years (part-time)	1.5 acres
5	53	F	Single with daughter	School Leaving Certificate	< 20 years	5-6 acres
6	40	F	Married with children	In college	< 14 years`	3.5 acres
7	52	M	Married with children	Secondary School - 6 th form	< 27 years	12 acres (2-3 in bananas)
8	50s	F	Married with children	Primary level	< 20 years	?
9	65	M	Married with children	Cannot speak or write English well	50 years	5 acres (currently not in bananas)

The Culture of Banana Production

The production of bananas has dominated agricultural production for almost half of a century. It has been difficult for farmers to switch allegiance totally to any other crop.

The farmers all practised some degree of agricultural diversification with small plots in banana production for export. Other crops planted included plantain, root crops, and vegetables such as sweet pepper, carrots, cabbage, celery, etc.

One of the farmers from the Carib Territory was forced to stop completely banana production because of health reasons while the others confessed a certain loyalty and need for growing Dominica bananas for export.

According to one farmer ... *Dominica bananas is the best tasting bananas in the entire world...I feel confident that there will always be a preference for our banana and therefore a market.*"

A 56 year old female farmer declared that she:

"..... will continue to grow bananas...once not too discouraged"...the children say as long as they know me ...they know me for bananas."

Another farmer said that he *"just loves farming"* and that *"farming is part of me."* One farmer who has more than 30 years of farming experience said that *"I do not want to leave the land."*

Most of the banana farmers admitted that they are from families with a long history of farming but that this trend is slowly changing.

"my grandparents took me out of school to help them grow bananas...this do not happen now...I have one son who is home and not working I have to beg him to go on the farm to help with the harvest."

In many farm families agricultural production including banana farming was one of the few income earning options for Dominicans. One woman farmer said that it allowed her to *"made enough money to see my way"* while another suggested that *"some time the money is good"*

The farmers said that they would continue farming because of these reasons and also because some of them viewed farming including banana production as a means for employing others as well as *"providing food for others"*

A female farmer from the Grand Bay district reported that most banana farmers will hire 4-5 labourers at harvest time: 2 carriers, 1 washer, and 1 packer who worked alongside the farmer and spouse. She also pointed out that if one partner is forced to leave in search of other work it creates hardship on the other in managing the banana cultivation. According to this farmer *"banana farming was easier in the past...just cut and bag."*

All the farmers admitted a love for farming but some admitted that they would have preferred something different *" would have like to go on to high school and become a nurse"* if the opportunity was there.

Intergenerational farming resulted in the passing on of knowledge on how to grow, maintain, harvest, and pack bananas. Farming techniques and changing technology required by markets and trade agreements are commonly transmitted directly from the banana industry extension officers from WIBDECO.

It was suggested by an extension officer that small farmers *"do not have a business approach"* and as a result could not survive the changes in the banana industry.

However, all the farmers interviewed in this study indicated that over the years they and other banana producers have withstood the many changes in market requirements adopting the techniques and practices suggested even though this meant an increase in cost of production.

According to one farmer:

"as a dedicated banana farmer I consistently followed through with required changes in the banana practices...from conventional practices to those required by Fair Trade."

Gender and Banana Production

Within the banana industry there are distinct gender patterns in ownership and farming practices. Women (grandmothers, mothers, daughters) usually begin by working in the packing houses and then later purchasing lands of their own to grow bananas. Men are introduced to banana production by working as farm labourers.

Interestingly, women believe in owning their separate plots of land from their husbands although most times they assist each other on the separate farmlands. The sentiments by these women are typical of most farming/rural women in the Caribbean who like the idea of *"being my own boss"..."work for self"*

Also typical of some Caribbean farm/rural households, money sources are kept separate – “his” and “hers”. The female respondents reported that while husband and wife help each other on the farm, decisions are made separate. According to one of the women “*I like to work and be independent.*”

There is also a distinct gender division of labour in the farming practices. It was reported that women generally do not engage in planting but typically “head” the bananas and dominate in the preparation and packing/packaging of the fruit into boxes. One farmer attempted to assess the ratio of active female to male farmers in her district as 6-7 female farmers: 20 male farmers.

Bananas and Equitable Development

Farmers all attested to the many economic and social benefits that were derived from participation in the Banana Industry. Given the dominance of small scale operations, incomes and employment could be widely distributed across the farming community once the process permitted for viability of operations.

Monies earned sustained and educated families, improved housing and standard of living for rural households. Many of the farmers interviewed spoke about the late 1980's- 90's when income earned from banana sales were used improve the dwellings of their families or build new ones. They described how they converted their wooden homes to brick exteriors with galvanize roofs, and move from the use of a pit latrines to indoor plumbing.

Many also added basic amenities such as electricity and telephones. One male farmer happily reported that in addition to making similar improvements to his home he was also able to purchase a vehicle that was one of his pride and joy in life which he unfortunately had to sell in hard times.

“fig make them have what they have today”

Years of a successful Banana Industry also supported the growth and development of small rural villages and towns.

Banana production has remained an institution in agricultural production in Dominica, in spite of the travails of the international market, to which farmers have had to adjust. If given the option, most would prefer to remain with what they have been associated with by tradition. There has always been some amount of other crops, but this has been seen as a supplement. The new realities have forced farmers to put greater reliance on these crops.

Negative Impacts

The decline of the Banana Industry in Dominica seriously has seriously impacted the producer, the family/household, and the small villages and towns in negative ways. Further, the impact has been felt and can be observed at various dimensions. According to one farmer:

“communities are crying for a start...to get on their own feet...some have the training but no resources”

“ communities are disappointed...do not know what to do or say...they are very insecure”

Needless to say, the least developed villages are those most negatively affected. For example, a Community Development Officer for the Eastern District, Parish of St. David described as one of the poorest areas in Dominica reports that most families in this district were previously heavily dependent on banana farming. She recalls a time when banana farming was profitable and monies earned were used to send children to school...a statement expressed by every single respondent interviewed for this study. The decline in income from banana production has had many observable material and non-material dimensions many of which can be linked to characteristics of poverty.

Materially, it has been observed and reported by those most affected that people are unable to build, extend or maintain their homes and vehicles. Moreover, basic amenities such as electricity, water, and telephones are not affordable. The Community Development Officer said that it was quite noticeable that in many homes in some of these communities that electricity and water services have been disconnected.

“More people are dependent on the stand pipe or river for water.”

An Extension Officer spoke about the “run down” homes in which people are living.

A most glaring psychological shift observed is the extent to which families and communities have shifted from a state of self reliance to one of dependency.

Many of the respondents gave examples where families previously supported the education of their children from banana monies, have found themselves needing to rely on social support services.

“Now depend on Dominica Social Investment Fund (DSIF), Christian Children's Fund, Education Trust Fund, etc...for assistance in school transportation, books, etc.”

There is also a growing trend where individuals move from self employment as a banana farmer to becoming a worker or farm labourer or working on someone's farm, boat, etc.

According to the Community Development Officer, between 1995 and 2000 as banana production declined in some of the banana growing villages, men were forced to leave their families in search of work. This has resulted in an increase in single-female headed households. Some of the men also migrated to other Caribbean countries such as the Virgin Islands. It was suggested that the decline in the banana industry affects men and women differently and that women suffer most because they are left to take care of the farm, the home and the family.

"women cope better...men drink and go their way"

In other situations, entire families migrate leaving many homes vacant, noticeably more in some communities such that:

" Castle Bruce is empty"

" houses empty"

Similarly, one farmer reported that when the banana market became hostile 10 years ago, farmers lost their protected markets.

"Survival of the fittest...was the order of the day."

He suggested that *"farmers left in droves."*

The impact was so grave that there was no banana production in some communities, eg Dubic.

The increase in economic hardships is also observed having an effect on family life. Relatively high migration from the villages to the main city has resulted in the noticeable rise of squatter settlements e.g. Tarish Pit near Roseau. In many instances, squatters are mainly men who were in the past "helpers" on the banana farms with or without their families. From the Carib Territory, some of these "helpers" have moved to Layou.

The migration of men in search of work is slowing but consistently reflected in a rise in family break ups, domestic violence, child abuse, and school drop out. It was observed that more children are forced to live with grandparents. Children who stay in school are primarily receiving assistance/scholarships. In general, a decline in income earned from

banana production has resulted in a greater financial dependency on government and non-government agencies for public assistance.

"Government has had to take up the slack...scholarships for school children, transportation, etc...community development and housing".

"Can see the houses in disrepair...in need of paint, etc"

In the Carib Territory it is believed that the economic hardship arising from the decline of the banana industry catapulted child adoption by the French in Guadeloupe and Martinique which had to be regulated. Over time, some of the adoptees return home but with weak social ties and as a result many displayed delinquent behaviour.

Overall, an increasing number of young men sitting at the side of the road with nothing to do, even on a Monday has been observed. It was also reported that there are more teen age pregnancies than before.

Some believe that because of the overall decline in the banana industry and its impact on families that the social fabric of the community and society in general is under threat. For example, one farmer made the observation that:

"Old days we had the extended family...a sense of community...now all fighting for the same bread"

She suggested that the economic life of communities was regressing and that although the

"government trying to paint a good picture but things not well"

Many reported that they observe increase in the sale and use of drugs, of theft - including of food produce, and cars. According to one observer:

"boys sell drugs...girls peddle the drugs ...drug mules out of Dominica"

Another female farmer suggested that:

"youth not seeing an end ...follow peers...they leave to take care of self"

"...youth getting frustrated"

The impact of the decline in the banana industry on local businesses was also reported by many. For example,

"in the Carib Territory the craft market is suffering...low sales..."not selling...except at peak tourist season."

Many of the respondents also noted that small businesses in towns/villages were closing down. The effect on communities was alarming with desperate calls for help. According to a Community Development Officer:

“communities are crying for a start...to get on their own feet...some have the training but no resources....they are disappointed...do not know what to do or say...they are very insecure”

Many banana producing farmers are holding on to banana cultivation because,

“it is the only thing that brings them some money....little money but it still help pay bills”

Surviving the Impact

Because many families “*can not make ends meet...use to make much more from banana*” they have adopted strategies to survive. For example, former banana farmers, workers, and/or family members now rely on short term employment (government road works, etc).

Interesting, in the past landownership was much valued and farmers would be very hesitant to do anything that would put this at risk, including taking loans using the land as a collateral or even selling part of their acreages. This has since changed.

For example, one farmer reported that he:

“did not believe in loans because I was afraid of loosing my land...but recently I did to help my son buy a car”

Another female farmer reported that more recently she sold part of her land and used the money to repair her house.

The selling of agricultural lands for other use is becoming a major trend in some communities. For example, one respondent noted that Calibishie has a growing problem where more land (including agricultural lands) is being sold to foreigners, primarily Americans and Canadians.

Many farmers have also embarked on agricultural diversification projects growing other crops such as, tomato, cucumbers, peppers and other vegetables, root crops, fruits, plantains, etc.

They have also modified their labour systems, for example, previously where they would hire labour to help on the farm. They now team up with neighbours to work on the farm.

Moreover, banana producers engaged in other forms of income earning by diversifying their crop production, working as a labourer on other farms, or getting involved with huckstering activities. Others found off farm casual labour jobs for wages such as part-time construction work.

Inside the home, families cut back on meals or do not buy text books, etc for school. A Community Development Officer reported that she frequently witnessed the repossession of people's furniture. There were more court cases because people are unable to pay their bills, etc.,

Coping strategies include growing more food, buying cheaper goods, withdrawing savings, etc. In other words,

"people exercise day living...one day at a time...they are living hand-to-mouth"

These responses were echoed by others who reported that in order to manage the decreased income because of the decline in the banana industry that they:

"try and make ends meet"

Moreover, the respondents adopt strategies similar to those who live in conditions of poverty in that they *"lower our standard of living and diet."* This includes:

"do not take much to live" and "eat whatever we grow" or "buy chicken necks"

Other farmers interviewed, specifically the women farmers, spoke about relying on the informal credit system of *"Junoit"*, and/or women's group social league, eating local (recipes).

There were also the increased practices of family/sibling helping more on the farm and/or home (cooking meals, etc), and looking after the elderly and children left behind.

In addition to the strategies adopted at the household level, government and non-governmental social welfare and employment programmes have been implemented. For example, through the EU a series of assistance programmes were operating at the time of this study. Respondents were aware of a Short Term Employment Programme

(STEP), a social protection package, community education and skills development project, and a social investment fund programme. The government also offered an education trust fund, scholarship and bursaries, social welfare and public assistance, funds for social investment funds.

In addition, through the Ministry of Education, Youth Division, there were leadership and skills building programmes and through the Ministry of Health, Health Centres throughout the country, although now patients had to pay for medicines, surgery, etc. One NGO that was consistently mentioned was the Christian Children Fund now widely depended upon by banana growing families for assistance with their children's education.

Roles of Government

With the dominance exercised by the Banana Industry over agricultural production, farming services remained essentially those provided by the organisations/agencies set up by the industry including extension services. The Ministry of Agriculture played a supporting role on the assumption that the Banana Industry would remain preeminent. Its last major intervention had been in the land redistribution programme of the 1980s when many ex-labourers received tracts of land and became banana farmers. As a result, there was no urgency for a comprehensive Land Use/Development and Agricultural Plan and Dominica even as a crisis loomed in the Banana Industry.

The risks attendant on mono-crop agricultural production, and the resulting crises deriving there from are not new. A similar experience was noted by the Ministry of Agriculture Officials in respect of the coconut industry and its oil output when corn oil displaced coconut derived oils in the Caribbean.

The officials observed this trend in the current decline of the banana industry and noted that as a defence mechanism farm families usually use income earned during peak periods to invest in their children in careers out side farming.

The MOA interviewees revealed that there had been attempts and drafts of various Land Use and Agricultural Diversification Plans. The Government has in the past bought large tracts of land and offered leases for village, town and agricultural development. The last sectoral plan published was in 1994. Other agencies such as the FAO and IICA had worked with the government in developing draft agricultural economic development plans, for example, the National Mid-term Investment Program. These drafts policy frameworks addressed the traditional themes of food security, employment generation, increase in foreign exchange, and import substitution. However, implementation posed a challenge.

The realization of any government Agricultural/Land Use policy framework had come at a time when the Dominican economy was reeling from the decline of the banana industry and finance for any plan was problematic. There had been a government response to the decline of banana industry that encouraged farmers to diversify away from banana production to grow other tree crops such as coffee, etc, root crops, vegetables, and fruits. However, the infrastructure and services required to make any of these options as successful as banana production were limited. These include services and resources for post-harvest technologies and packaging, collection and marketing support including guidance in standardization of any of the new crops.

As the banana industry grew in earlier years, financial resources and services, including extension services, shifted from the MOA to the banana industry. With the industry in decline, these resources had also declined and were not returned to the MOA.

The Government of Dominica had mounted special projects through the MOA to encourage diversification in agriculture and enhance rural development. These attempts were initiated during the peak of the banana industry through collaborative projects under DREP, DFID, EU, NDFP, etc. However, at the end of the projects, there were no follow ups and/or sustainability.

The officials believe that this was due in part because projects such as DREP operated outside the MOA and once ended, the synergy was gone. The MOA benefited in some ways from the DREP and other similar projects in that there were some infrastructural developments, transfer of vehicles, livestock, and propagating stations, etc. However, the marketing initiatives and other service oriented elements were not integrated or passed on to the MOA and therefore not sustainable. A similar experience was found with successful crop specific projects (e.g. with Asian ginger) operated by IFAD and IDRPs for small producers in which regard, the government through MOA was unable to assume the responsibilities at the end of the project.

Fair Trade and Survival

The survival of the Banana Industry in Dominica had been dependent for a long time on the Banana Protocol of the Lome Convention. As the cost of production rose over the years and as Central American producers secured greater market access in Europe, the industry in the Caribbean and in Dominica has declined. Fair Trade, however, has allowed for some degree of product differentiation and has provided farmers with a life line, and a new institutional mechanism to save the industry.

The goals of Fair Trade are to:

1. improve the livelihoods and well-being of producers by improving market access, strengthening producer organizations, paying a better price, and providing continuity in the trading relationship;
2. promote development opportunities for disadvantaged producers, especially women and indigenous people and to protect children from exploitation in the production process;
3. raise awareness among consumers of the negative effects on producers of international trade so that they exercise their purchasing power positively;
4. set an example of partnership in trade through dialogue, transparency, and respect;
5. campaign for changes in the rules and practice of conventional international trade;
6. protect human rights by promoting social justice, sound environmental practices, and economic security.

Fair Trade in Dominica

In Dominica and other countries in the Global South, Certified Fair Trade offers direct benefits to producers, workers, and banana growing communities in four major ways.

First, Fair Trade Agreements provide guaranteed prices that are higher than conventional world market prices.

Second, it supports the capacity building of small community-based organizations and groups that are required to represent the producers (cooperatives, etc).

Third, it enhances production and marketing skills overall and beyond the production of bananas for Fair Trade Certification.

Fourth, it attaches a social premium to banana sales that can be used for community projects such as local health clinics, schools, roads, sanitation, and other social services.

At the time of the field study (2009), communities in Dominica were already reporting such benefits.

According to one of Dominica's Fair Trade leaders, the labels of Fair Trade were approved and accessed through WINFA, which had envisioned a niche market for the Dominican farmers. He believes that the Fair Trade market in Dominica was also a result of demand by TESCO, the British supermarket chain.

In Dominica FTO started as the 3 Cs: Castle Bruce, Carib Territory, and Calibishie in 2002-2003. In 2007 (at the time of this part of the study), there were 17 groups of farmers who were participating in the FTO. Within 17 groups, these approximately 30% of FT farmers were women and 15 % single female-headed households.

The FT leader suggested that 75 percent of all FT farmers are small farmers with approximately 3 or less acres of banana farm lands. The estimated membership was 700 FT farmers with approximately 500 considered as active farmers. The role of the National FTO was to ensure that farmers follow the criteria of the FTO and to disseminate pertinent information.

Specific to the region of Calibishe, the respondent reported that social premiums earned from sales of bananas with the FTO were used to purchase a school bus. There were at the time of the study 2 groups with over 90 members. One group consisted of 5 women and 46 men. In general, he noted that most women usually work together with their husbands.

Other farmers belonging to the FTO were interviewed in Castle Bruce. One of the female farmers reported that in the peak of the banana industry, she harvested 150 boxes of fruit per week. She harvests 30-40 boxes every two weeks and sells to the FTO. Both mother and daughter are members of the Fair Trade Group: in Castle Bruce. In this group there were 12 females, 8 males, with the majority of women from single female-headed households.

Anticipated drawbacks of the Fair Trade system in Dominica were aired by a few, these include:

"the new arrangement requires that farmers work in groups...but some individuals do not know how to work in a group...also the poorest of the poor is usually not part of a group...so how do you reach these people".

"giving them hope for a hopeless situation"

Fair Trade and Policy Clarity

At the time of this part of the study Fair Trade negotiations were being discussed. The officials themselves seemed not to know in much detail of the role of the government in the new arrangements being negotiated. From the farmers' perspectives there were a lot of ambiguities as to how the new and old arrangements would play out. Moreover, there appeared to be an expectation by farmers that the government would intervene on their behalf. For example, the following comments were made:

"they (farmers) think that not enough is being done by the government to secure a proper market and price so that they can continue selling bananas"

"expected government to lobby for them on their behalf"

"government doh care" or "government does not help enough"

"not enough information...people confuse about fair trade"

Another farmer expressed similar concerns, her main problem being fear of the banana market. She: *wanted "... the government to step in...a strong voice"* because currently she is *"confused...not sure who is telling the truth..."fair trade vs DBPL and farmers suffer"*

In sum, the impact of trade adjustment on the Banana Industry in Dominica has been devastating. While there remains considerable potential in its agricultural sector, the institutional requirements for diversification might have been underestimated, or if identified in planning documents and policy frameworks, have not been followed with early implementation of critical measures.

This had led to despair in some sections of the farming community and to a consequential rural urban migration or even external migration and to the idling of good agricultural land, or worse, to its premature alienation to other uses, including sale to foreigners for the building holiday homes. The Ministry of Agriculture officials themselves recognise that they have not yet been able to replicate for the new crops the range of capacities and institutional structures that supported the banana industry in its heyday. Each crop in the diversified agriculture will require extension services, information on pest management regimes, post harvest technology, access to planting materials, let alone arrangements for orderly marketing. The institutional infrastructure for a diversified and vibrant is still to be built.

3.2.2 Dominica Essential Oils Association

Bay oil production in Dominica generates approximately \$3 million in foreign exchange. Bay oil is normally sold in the US, as well as Europe through in small amounts. Bay rum is also produced for the local and regional market. The Dominica Essential Oils Association has been a registered society since 1968 and engages in the production of bay oil. The southeastern belt of the island is dependent on bay oil production and due to the situation in the global economy, sales have declined. There are 30 distilleries island wide which are all privately owned.

There is a rust which has been affecting the bay tree and this has reduced production by 50 percent and in some cases there has been total destruction of trees. Currently bay trees are planted in Petite Savanne, La Plaine, Delices and Fond St. John. The disease was first observed in 2007 and started to spread. The disease works by affecting the young leaves of the trees, thus stunting the growth of the trees. At the time of the interview efforts were being made to control the disease. Another challenge being faced by the industry is the fact that compensation is not given to bay tree growers such as that which was given for fisheries due to damage.

The cost of production of bay oil is high although diesel which is a cheaper fuel is being used. 90lbs of bay oil generates a fuel bill of \$700. The Association has approached the Government to obtain a reduction in the fuel cost through the waiver of the tax on fuel. However, this application was declined.

The bay leaf tree has a tap root system which protects the soil from erosion. The trees do better in the under hotter conditions as too much rain encourages flushing and rust. There now exists a Government Plant Pathologist and Extension Officer which works closely with farmers, each of whom have several plots. There is also cooperation among farmers. 1 acre of bay leaf trees normally produces 300 lbs of oil.

The Association is trying to access funds to diversify into the production of other essential oils such as sweet basil, ylang ylang and petroelle oils. The Association is also thinking of getting into ginger production, but lacks the technology required for extraction.

3.3 FISHERIES

The Fisheries Sector, like the rest of the Agricultural Sector is part of the traded goods sector, producing goods that can compete with imports or can enter export markets. While the sector is small and may not be significant in exports, there has been evidence of its increasing importance in providing for domestic consumption and creating a source of supply to the hotel industry. The skills learned in operating in the marine environment through fishing have been useful to some nationals who have become involved in ferrying visitors or tourists to dive sites and on whale and dolphin watching in the offshore of Dominica.

Much of the organisational structure of the fishing industry is built around informal relations of fishers in their respective communities, and up until recently, fishing included a fair measure of seine fishing which entailed involvement of community residents in assisting in the hauling of the seine. The expansion of the market demand much beyond the needs of communities has prompted more formal arrangements in the sectors and a change in the institutional order, with informal networks being replaced by cooperatives, for example.

3.3.1 FISHERIES DEPARTMENT

The Department is responsible for the implementation of policy with regard to the Fisheries Sector of the country. In that regard, its work is comprised of a regulatory component, and a development component in addition to its also contributing to the elaboration of policy as well. Thus, it contributes indirectly to poverty reduction and also to food security for the country.

A major concern of the Department is the sustainable exploitation of the fisheries of the country. Once the health of the system is compromised, the productivity of the Fisheries sector drops. The country has witnessed a depletion of the fisheries stock in recent years as a direct result of the quarrying operations that have expanded a pace in a number of communities. There have also been disasters with the collapse of part of a mountain slope in the Layou area which has led to a decline fish catch from net fishing in the near shore waters, on which this community had relied. There were some 40-50 fishers at Layou, let alone those persons who were involved in vending.

Coastal fishing or beach seine operations were reasonably productive as recently as the 1990s, with many coastal communities involved. However, with the impact of quarrying

and the wanton discharge of construction waste, such fishing activities have been negatively impacted. Most fishing activity has moved to the offshore with harvesting of pelagic.

The transition of net fishers into line fishing in the pelagic fisheries has not been easy since there is need for different equipment, and for fishers to spend a longer time offshore.

The Fisheries Department has worked at having a code of practices developed for the quarries industry, and to get stakeholders in the sector to abide by certain rules. These were to be submitted to the Cabinet for its endorsement in 2008 at the time of the interview. The country has embarked on a strategy of exploring the possibility of a vibrant niche market in the export of fish, in addition to increasing supplies for the domestic market. The challenge is to ensure sustainability and to prevent consumption and harvesting from threatening stock. The Department has to update Fisheries Act of 1987, to ensure that regulations are in place to maintain sustainability. It is not encouraging that regulations drafted in 1991, had not been gazetted almost twenty years later.

Admittedly some limited number of the regulations had been introduced, but the existing framework lacked coherence because of the piecemeal approach in the acceptance and application of regulations. At the time of the interview, the Department was seeking to develop an overall framework for the management of the coastal and marine zones.

In respect of the organisation of the fisheries sector specifically, the Department had made considerable strides in recent years, in spite of the difficulty in securing technical personnel to fill existing posts. The Department benefited from assistance provided by USAID and by CERMES. This had led to the introduction of socio-economic monitoring of the fishing communities. In this regard, the Division has worked with the Fishing Cooperatives of which there are ten registered units.

The social networking and collaboration that have developed, have led in turn to the sharing of ideas within and among communities, and to the development of work plans among fishers. These monitoring programmes have resulted in raising the profiles of fishers and have helped them to reenergise themselves. As a correlate of this initiative, the Department has sought to rationalise the number of landing sites and too engage in some amount of aggregation of the existing 32 sites into about nine consolidated sites which would allow for improved quality of service and of facilities available to fishers.

Data from the nine landing sites are being collected routinely and this has permitted the Department to undertake extrapolations and to gauge total landings for the country as a whole.

On the demand side, the country has also benefited from technical assistance from the Government of Japan. There has been made available a volunteer from the Japanese Volunteer Overseas Service who has exposed persons engaged in the school feeding programme to different ways of preparing fish dishes. This type of training and exposure has been extended fishing cooperatives and PTAs in a number of communities.

There do seem to be gender issues in the Fisheries Sector. At the level of the Fisheries Department, the management is comprised entirely of male Fisheries Officers, but there are women working as Fisheries Liaison Officers and as Data Collectors. In the operation of the sector, certain activities are gender biased. Fishers are men mostly and vending is dominated by women. There are almost 100 male fishers and 9 women. There are also a large number of unregistered part-time fishers, and a range of associated operators as mechanics, vendors, and boat owners, some of whom do not go fishing.

The few women who have got into fishing seem to be better organised than the male fishers. Also there are a few women in the cooperatives and on the boards. One of the challenges faced with male fishers is to get them to exercise greater prudence in their expenditure. There has been a culture of living among fishers that has been prejudicial to their improving their socio-economic status. They drink a lot, smoke a lot and spend a lot. There is need to treat with the self concept of fishers. In recent years, younger fishers have been entering the sector and they come with a different orientation to the subsistence approach displayed by some of the older fishers.

There is basic training programme in place and, because of this, the Department has found there is greater interest in the sector from young people. There is focus also on financial management with a series of programmes mounted to expose fishers to essentials, and to help them to improve their performance. It cannot be denied that there are fishers who have succumbed to the trade in drugs and even allegedly to human trafficking. There are persons who use fishing as a cover for underground activities.

The entry costs to the industry substantial. The initial investment is about \$40, 000 for a boat and equipment and daily fuel cost are about \$300. But even with such expenditure only vessels of limited scope can be acquired. These are 'day boats' which have a limited range. This poses a restriction on incomes that can be earned in the industry. There are

very few fishers with boats and equipment that allow them to spend a few days out at sea.

It is possible to differentiate among the fishers in terms of level of effort and extent to which a business-like approach is applied. There are those who enter the industry as an occupation of last resort. They literally jump on a fishing boat on a day to go fishing. The owner of the boat is entitled to have costs of fuel set off against all takings from the catch, with the remainder being shared 2:1, between the owner and the operator. One boat can accommodate 2-3 fishers.

At least 10 percent of fishers are doing well and operate with a business-like approach. They may earn in excess of \$200,000 per year. There is potential for a larger number to secure good incomes in fishing. There is a certain level of social intervention required to treat with the mind set of fisher folk many of whom end up in a dependent mode and with high levels of debt.

With sustainable use of the marine and fisheries resources, the country can achieve some level of food security, there will be a forward linkage to tourism and with the increased use of fish domestically there can be an improvement in the health status of the nation.

The Department has been making a wider contribution to national development. It collaborates with the Ministry of Trade, with law enforcement agencies and the Coast Guard. It has been able to get the utilities to rethink how they lay down their infrastructure to avoid negative impacts on the marine environment, given that the biggest factor in the decline in the marine environment is land based activities.

A major gap in the Fisheries Sector is in respect of technical training and education in marine related areas. The Department had contributed to a course in marine resource management at the State College, but this was discontinued because the college undertook some restructuring of its programme. The course is likely to be reintroduced presently.

Another challenge lies in the fact that the Department is short on personnel and key positions are filled by officers without permanent positions. There is the wider problem of the social perception of the industry. Those involved in the sector are seen as outcasts in the society. There is need for a thorough going assessment of the economic and social contribution of the sector with a view to developing a framework in which it can be better geared to contribute to national development. Any such work has to be complemented however with a Fisheries Census so that a proper data base can be

established on the industry, and the country will become more aware of limits to sustainability.

TWO FISHERS ON THE WEST COAST

An Elderly Fisher

This case study of Victor Jean-Baptiste illustrates the problem of an elderly fisher attempting to earn a livelihood in this sector: Victor, who is in his mid 70,' started fishing in the 1970s. He owns an 18 foot boat. Before getting into fishing he had worked for Government as a labourer cleaning roads and as he acquired some skills, he did some masonry occasionally.

Life had not been kind to him since childhood. He had little schooling and his mother who had been abandoned by his father, had to send him out to work early. He himself never had a family or any children. He spent some time in St. Thomas and that allowed him to put together some savings to acquire his first boat but this was destroyed by hurricane David. He lives alone in the house left to him by his mother. He would like the Government to assist him in finding a decent home. He claims to have a friend but she does not live with him.

Fishing is his sole source of income. Victor does not have an outboard engine. He relies on his own rowing and occasionally that of a friend to get to the three pots that he has in the in shore waters. This friend is an amputee and is not very strong.

The Fisheries Department has not helped him in the provision of wire to construct new fish pots. Without an outboard engine, he cannot venture too far seeking other fish. His fish pots may yield him at best twenty to thirty in a day. He would go out twice per day to see what was caught in his pots.

When he has enough of a catch, he would go and try vending for himself. This will give him cash that he needs to provide for his other requirements. He makes a special effort to secure a fish catch before the weekend. During the week, he may barter whatever he catches with other people in the community for provision or other food that they may have. Life remains a struggle at subsistence level.

A Successful Fisher

Pascal Antoine lives in a west coast village in Dominica. His is a success case in fishing, in which the traditional institutional mechanism of temporary migration to secure a capital base, was utilised in the acquisition of his first boat.

Pascal is 50 years of age. He was inducted into fishing when he was just 13 years of age, while still at school. He did not go to high school: his parents could not afford it. He went to work in Martinique after Hurricane David and that allowed him to acquire his first boat. Other employment stints in Martinique where his father lived for a while allowed him to acquire another boat. He now owns three boats, two of 22 feet and one of 21 feet, all equipped with out board motors, and all with fibre-glass coating.

It has no longer been necessary for him to go to Martinique since with three boats he makes a decent income. His wife helps in selling the fish. None of his children is involved in fishing. However, he has been able to take care of the needs of all of his children, including those he has had by other women and now live elsewhere in Dominica.

There is talk of a cooperative being formed in the village. It is yet to become operational, and to acquire a building and show other elements of organisation. There are other successful fishers in the village which has expanded in recent years. Generally more fish is being caught, and there are more boats involved. Women are not involved in fishing on the boats. They are engaged in vending and in running bars and other outlets allowing them to earn off the fishers.

According to Pascal, the Fisheries Department has been very instrumental in the development of the fishing industry. The Department saw to it that Fishers adapted their boats to allow for the chilling of fish and advised on the type of fishing. The Department mounts training programmes from time to time, and these have helped fishers to improve their performance. The Department has also provided advice on stocks of fish and has advised against their catching small fish.

While the activity is still a day time task of going out in the morning and coming back in the afternoon or evening, boats venture up twenty to thirty miles out. The fish targeted include Dolphin, King fish, Marlin and Tuna. Snapper may be caught through fish pots. The catch is normally sold at the fish complex. Some might be sold to the hotels which send their people to the village. Pascal has his own pick-up truck and can make deliveries to selected clients, as well as distribute and vend through his wife, when necessary.

Pascal's work force is comprised of young men from the village. The relationship is satisfactory. There is a formula that is applied and it seems to work reasonably well. After the cost of gas is subtracted, the takings are shared in parts: one part for the engine, one for the boat, one for the employer and one for the worker. Gas prices have escalated in recent times and this has reduced profits in the sector.

Pascal does have some concerns over the sustainability of the industry. Mackerel is no longer available like before and Bonito has become scarce also. There are other fish in short supply. There may be a problem with stocks in the future, with enormous consequences for people of the village.

In sum, the Fisheries Sector seems to have made an important contribution to development in recent years, providing for domestic demand and creating a source of inputs into tourism. A number of fishing villages have benefited from the facilitation provided by the Fisheries Department, in spite of human resource and other limitations that it may experience. On the other hand, the sector has been negatively by land based activities and there is a perennial challenge in reconciling the needs of the sector, with a growing foreign exchange earning activity, namely the Quarrying Industry.

The sector seems well served by the Department which has been also an excellent advocate for its needs. The industry remains however, artisanal, with just a few fishers seeing themselves as business people in the sector. There is some evidence of younger people entering the sector, and wanting to become engaged at levels beyond subsistence. On the negative side, there is also some indication that there are some fishers who use the cover of the industry to engage in underground transshipping trade in narcotics.

3.4 TOURISM

The tourism sector is a small but growing sector in the economy of Dominica. The country is a relative new comer in international tourism. According to the Minister of Finance, the sector provides about 2500 jobs.⁷ The island is not the typical Caribbean island offering sun, sea and sand. While it lacks beaches, and cannot lay claim to white sand beaches, it is blessed with mountains and rivers, and lush green forest vegetation across most of the island. It is famous for its rain forest which provides some very picturesque landscapes in various parts of the country, and has allowed its tourism authorities to brand the island as the 'Nature Island', and through "Defy the Every Day - The Nature Island - Dominica".

The sector has contributed to diversification of the economy of Dominica. The growth of stay-over visitors was flat in the latter part of the decade just ended and the number of cruise ship visitors showed signs of recovering to levels achieved earlier in the last decade, before the deep recession struck. Generally though, over the last two decades, the sector has become a source of employment for a growing percentage of the labour force, and especially the female labour force. There has been a conscious attempt to create linkage between the sector and the domestic agriculture and fisheries sectors. There are a number of institutions that have contributed to the process.

⁷ http://www.dominica.gov.dm/cms/files/budget_address_2009_2010.pdf

3.4.1 DOMINICA HOTEL AND TOURISM ASSOCIATION

The Dominica Hotel and Tourism Association is the main advocacy group representing stakeholders in the industry before the Government and other agencies. Under its umbrella, can be found the hoteliers, taxi drivers, tour guides, dive organisations and translators. Its membership has declined in recent years and now numbers about 80, down from 100 or more, which might be explained by the difficulties that the Industry has faced in the more recent past.

The mission of the Association is to promote tourism and related services as a critical sector in Dominica's economic development, and to work towards the improvement of standards and products and quality of services. Training programmes mounted by the Association assist in the upgrading of members, and especially the staff of establishments. However, given that most operations are family owned and family operated, it is usually challenging for them to release personnel to attend training programmes. Another difficulty seen by stakeholders in the industry is the fact that the incentives are not friendly to local Dominican operators.

The association is financed by subscription of its members. There is no direct assistance from the Government, but there is a continuing collaboration between state agencies and the association in the development of the industry. The association works closely also with the Chamber of Commerce.

From the perspective of the Association, the major handicap that the tourism sector in Dominica faces is the weakness of the transport infrastructure: the country does not have the airport infrastructure to receive commercial jet aircraft. There is considerable effort being made to upgrade the airport and to improve the runway, including the installation of lighting. However, this very handicap in the lack of facilities for long haul aircraft can be used in the promotion of the island: it lies off the beaten track and this should count for something. It is not like any other country. The position has underpinned the approach of the association in marketing the country's tourism product.

3.4.2 MINISTRY OF TOURISM

The *Ministry of Tourism* has made major efforts at the facilitating the development of the tourism industry in the country. There is a Tourism Master Plan, 2005-2015, which seeks to reposition Dominica from being a purely nature destination to becoming a broader

tourism product. The objective is to ensure that it is more than the 'green island'. The most recent thrust and interventions of the Ministry can be categorised in terms of:

- The development of eco-tourism brand;
- The engagement of the population at large through community based tourism;
- The provision of the infrastructure to support the above;
- Stimulation of activities to reduce seasonal fluctuations.

There are some eleven communities across the island whose natural attraction and amenities provide special appeal and are being marketed in that regard. They include such attributes as beaches, waterfalls, sulphur springs, organic farms, adventure trails, facilities for snorkelling, and bird-watching. The Government, through the Ministry, has been promoting Rural Tourism.

The coastal waters and environs offer the opportunity for whale and dolphin watching and allow for diving, for enthusiasts in this sport. There are fishing communities which can now provide local cuisine on fish-fry nights. The country is also being marketed in terms of its offering an environment for those concerned with improving health and promoting wellness.

The Community Tourism project is funded by the European Union under the Framework of Assistance to the Government through the Ministry. This has allowed for the provision of some basic facilities in each community, in terms of washrooms, and seating accommodation where visitors can rest.

In undertaking its task, the Ministry is committed to working with the Hotel and Tourism Association, as well as with the Ministry responsible for Community Development. It works with Village Councils and with District Development Officers and has succeeded in creating a sense of team-ship, and participation, among stakeholders.

The Ministry is concerned about the difficulties that the industry has faced in more recent times. There has been need for some refurbishment following the last hurricane. Most of the properties have been struggling with debt, and some are in the throes of a debt crisis and facing foreclosure. AID Bank has been the main lender. The matter of working capital is also a challenge.

The taxi operators seem to be surviving however. The Government has put in place an incentive regime that provides duty free access for buses. There is now training offered at the State College in Tourism related fields. Students can secure Diplomas in the area, at the School of Hospitality.

Other Government Ministries recognise the contribution of the sector. There is a monthly meeting held on the Public Sector Investment Programme to examine how the sector is performing in the light of expenditures. The Ministry through its advocacy has succeeded in getting a widening cross-section of the public service to understand the vital importance of the sector to the country's growth and development.

Tourism Sector Development Project

This is a special project established with funding from the Special Framework of Assistance of the European Union. Its focus has been on the development of tourism facilities in rural areas, the marketing of the destination and the provision of advisory services, especially by way of technical support to the Ministry of Tourism. This project is the successor to an earlier project that focused on Community Based Tourism.

The current project helps to drive the Tourism Master Plan, which has as its primary objective, the branding of Dominica, and the involvement of communities in the promotion of tourism.

There are a number of issues to be faced in the sector. These include:

- The fact that the sector is still in its emerging phase, with all the attendant problems of growth in the early stages;
- The access issue that Dominica is confronted with, given its transportation links;
- The competitiveness of the product, quality of service in the emerging establishments: tourism facilities are basically home grown, and are not in the same vein as other locations where foreign investors more familiar with the demands and requirements of the tourism market place, have set up in competing destinations;
- The lack of critical mass: the island still has a relatively small number of rooms;
- The human resource base in the sector;
- Tourism's role in the replacement of agriculture in rural areas: there is need to ensure that local communities are equipped to derive benefits from the growth of the sector;
- The rural nature of the society: much of the population is still linked to the rural economy;
- The protection and conservation of the environment at the same time as one seeks to exploit it as part of the amenities driving tourism; and
- Community based tourism as a process.

Work has been done in building awareness among the population, especially since 2005. The European Union has helped immensely with the physical infrastructure. There are beach facilities along the coast. There have been trail development, and reception facilities as part of the infrastructure. The project has supported community based tourism around niches, like water-falls, river sites and trails.

Other emerging projects are in the area of floriculture and farm tours. There is room for agro-based tourism. Much of what exists is supply driven. There is need for considerable training. Twelve communities have been targeted for development of facilities, most of which are along the west coast of Dominica. But there is also some concern to support urban sites in the context of urban renewal programme to be undertaken. There is considerable potential for economic activity.

The creation of cubicles for vending, the extension of the Bay Front area, etc are all part of the investment that needs to be implemented. There is need to target developers and investors. There is need to redevelop the area around the mouth of the Roseau River.

While small scale tourism activity has to be encouraged, there is need for substantial capital injection to raise the profile of the island and to arrive at the level of critical mass such that the industry can contribute to higher employment creation and to wealth generation. The Tourism Master Plan recognises the importance of inflows of foreign investment into the sector. There is only a limited number of hotel rooms on the island and fewer still of high quality.

There is need for major complementary investment on the part of the state. One such area is in respect of coastal defences. There are establishments that are threatened because of their location, on the coast line and coastal protection has to receive high priority in the physical infrastructure planning of the Government.

There is the view in some quarters of a need for legislation and a regulatory environment to frame all the work that has to be undertaken in support of the industry. The existence of some structure for the implementation of the Tourism Sector Development Project has allowed for many of the issues to be aired and addressed frontally.

Cruise Tourism and Dominican Taxi-Drivers

Many taxi-drivers seek to take advantage of the increase in cruise tourism and the involvement of the island in this area of tourism. David Philbert has been in the business for five years, and welcomes the opportunity afforded him by the involvement of the country in cruise tourism.

Usually in the off-season, that is from May to September, only one ship may visit per week.

During the high season, on the other hand, from late October to April, there might be a total of 3 to 4 ships coming in per week, and they might come on a minimum of two or three days in the week.

Ships usually come in starting on Tuesdays, whatever the season.

Drivers usually charge \$25US per passenger to be taken to one of the designated tourist sites on the island. However, passengers may form groups and may negotiate a lower fare.

Maxi Taxis with 10 to 12 seats, have the potential of earning \$300US per trip. Thus, in a good week, David can earn as much as \$1800US for the week from the cruise business.

In sum, the sector has made an important impact on the development of the country and the institutions involved have been very sensitive to the need to brand the island as offering a niche product of rarity. Community involvement is possibly unparalleled in the region. The Carib Community has been encouraged to participate and facilities of good quality have been installed including documentation and signage, with support of the European Union and the Caribbean Development Bank. Cruise tourism might have a special significance given the limitations of air transport in and out of the country. Cruises ensure a large visitor population, albeit for the short period of a day.

There is sensitivity in some quarters to the need for greater linkage between agriculture and fisheries with demand deriving from tourism and stay-over visitors. However, the promotion of local foods as part of exquisite or haute cuisine still raises eyebrows at the better hotel establishments.

There remain other major challenges which betray resource limitations and institutional response. Road access from Roseau to the Melville Hall Airport requires major upgrade, and the control of coastal erosion and the rehabilitation of a number of establishments

along the narrow coast shelf need to be addressed as a matter of urgency, with one of the better establishments actually being gradually taken by the sea.

3.5 DOMESTIC INVESTMENT AND FINANCE

Institutions that promote the development of domestic business and entrepreneurship mobilise savings and provide credit are vital to the process of internal economic transformation, unless a country seeks to rely mainly or only on foreign direct investment. The history of the region over half of a century suggests that it would be rash to premise development only on foreign investible resources. Much depends therefore on the architecture of the domestic finance infrastructure.

3.5.1 THE COOPERATIVE DIVISION

The Cooperative Division dates back to the 1940s when the movement was formed in Dominica. The Division falls under the Ministry of Community Development and Gender Affairs, and is responsible for the regulation and development of the sector.

There are currently fourteen credit unions as a result of amalgamations and dissolutions. There are twenty-six other cooperatives, mainly in agriculture and fishing. There is also a candle industry cooperative and a caregivers' cooperative. The movement can be divided broadly into the financial and non-financial cooperatives.

The former has been the booming sector of the movement. Even credit unions in the rural areas did well once upon a time. The decline in the economy has impacted on credit unions as well as other cooperatives. Non-financial cooperatives are dominant but mainly in terms of numbers.

As the farming community found itself in difficulty, the Cooperative Department was not well geared to assist farmers in their predicament. The cooperatives or their members have not taken full advantage of SIF. The BNTF and SIF while having funding available, have not been able to assist banana farmers, according to the Management of the Cooperative Division. It might be that their reporting requirements were not well geared to the needs of the farmers and workers in the Banana Industry.

The Financial Services Unit (FSU) has come into being, with the financial cooperatives being the focus of attention. Both the Credit Union League and the Cooperative Division are involved in monitoring the credit unions. However, the FSU works more closely with the League than with the Cooperative Department, in monitoring the credit unions.

In more recent times, six more credit unions have been registered, with a substantial number of members. Over the period 2007-2008 actually nine cooperatives were formed.

Credit unions and cooperatives remain a force to be reckoned with, and the people participation factor has worked in Dominica. In spite of the challenges faced in the economy, interest in cooperatives, and in credit unions in particular has remained high.

3.5.2 COOPERATIVE CREDIT UNION LEAGUE

The League was established in 1958, as the umbrella organisation for credit unions. There are fifteen credit unions and they are all community based. The largest is the Roseau Credit Union, with an asset base of EC\$240M. It is just slight smaller than the National Bank in terms of asset base. Indeed, for much of the past, the Roseau Credit Union in particular and the credit unions, in general, were the main players in the mobilisation of savings in the country.

The League works closely with the movement such that there is a high level of self regulation. The League engages in advocacy and training. Off-site examinations are done by the Cooperative Department while the League conducts on-site examination among members units. In that regard, the League works closely with the Cooperative Department and the Financial Services Unit in the conduct of supervising the operations of credit unions. There is no problem with integrated supervision. Indeed, credit unions are pushing for better regulation in Dominica which would involve the bringing of credit unions under the same regulatory regime as the rest of the financial services sector.

The Roseau Credit Union is the largest of credit unions. It serves not only its individual members, but has been involved in providing loans to businesses. In that regard, it has contributed to business development. The Roseau Credit Union goes after a different type of business from the banks, and poses no challenge to the Banks: it has had to work very hard to bring borrowers up to the required level in their doing the needful in complying with the requirements for loans.

For example, financial statements have to be done but this is not well understood by borrowers. People do not understand the demands of the market place. There is clearly need for vibrant extension services to small businesses in Dominica, which can only addressed partially by the likes of the Roseau Credit Union.

This deficiency among borrowers might explain the difficulty that has been created for the National Development Foundation, which has been struggling with one of the highest delinquency rates in the region. Its role has been mainly to provide a window for cheap credit for micro-enterprises and small business.

A major issue to be faced is the imminence of integrated supervision. The ECCB has given its input into the revised cooperative Act for Dominica. The FSU is an interim arrangement, in anticipation of the passage of the Act. There is a drive to amalgamate credit unions. This is a necessity especially in the context of their having to upgrade their technology and in the light of the costs of technology. There is continuing need to mount workshops to upgrade board members.

It is still necessary to recognise the role performed by the small credit unions which serve communities across the island. They might be found open on Saturdays, taking care of the needs of farmers in rural areas: they are more facilitative of such clients than any other institutions.

The League has been sensitive to some of the problems in the Housing Market. There have been some changes in this market, partly as a result of initiatives of the AID Bank which secures money cheaply through the Government at rates of five percent and borrowers pay about eight percent. However, the mortgage market remains small.

The movement is concerned that although credit unions have operated as financial intermediaries for the Government over the years, they have been excluded from the financing of the housing expansion that has been promoted by the Government in the more recent past.

The League had no fear of the impact of consolidation. Technology upgrade is the driving force in this process, and it is not cheap. The credit unions have to ensure that they are not left behind in the application of technology. On the other hand, it allows for the creation of strategic alliances, including with the National Bank which can be the Bank for Credit Unions.

Another concern of the League is the fact that the education of the membership has fallen by the wayside among member units. There remains a problem getting members to attend Annual General Meetings. There is continuing need to mount workshops to upgrade board members, especially in the light of the more demanding responsibilities that will be reposed on boards of management in the wake of the new regulatory regime

On a more positive note, there is evidence that in spite of high emigration (evident in the closure of homes) people tend to maintain active balances in credit unions. However, with entire families leaving Dominica, family connections in Dominica will become more tenuous, and over the next twenty years, ties may become more tenuous. Remittance income has been falling, partly because emigrants have fewer relatives back at home to take care of.

3.5.3 NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION

This organisation was formed in 1981, and retains poverty reduction as its focus. However, over the last decade, it has had to fend for itself because of its difficulty in securing funding from the donor community. The organisation which previously supplied it with loan funding, came to consider it too risky and its loan portfolio could no longer be self-sustaining. There was high delinquency in loans made to low income groups. Noted characteristics of these groups were the presence of large families and limited resource base which created the temptation to 'eat the capital' when faced with straightened circumstances. USAID had been the main source of support. The Foundation no longer receives grant funding.

Over the first half of the last decade, there was a sharp decline in the number of clients. The Foundation sought to widen the fields in which it provided loans. However, in a shrinking or slowly growing economy, there was a decline in the number seeking business loans.

The Foundation has reduced its loan portfolio to the granting of credit to persons with jobs and with a regular income or salary and requiring loans to go abroad, to acquire home appliances, or for home income improvement, or for travel abroad or holiday.

This new approach on the part of the Foundation became necessary in reducing the depletion of its reserves and stemming a widening gap between its income and its expenditure. The Government provided the Foundation with a substantial loan, but it was forced to request that some part of this loan convert into a grant.

While the focus in the past was on the provision of loans, there was a shift in NDF to business development. Given a clientele of almost 1,500, and with 500-600 loans non-performing, and responsible for almost 50 percent of the loan portfolio, NDF had no choice. Some of the borrowers had been in agro-processing operations, and had sought to find external markets or niches for their products and encountered difficulties.

External factors posed a challenge, and difficulties were exacerbated by domestic labour problems.

The Foundation has had to modify its focus from the provision of loans but remains committed to improving the quality of life, especially of people in rural areas. It works at teaching its clients in marketing their products, and engages in 'hand holding' and generally in entrepreneurial development among poorer people.

It provides technical support and short training programmes. This service of business support has been extended to even larger enterprises and more established businesses. For example, it has provided help to a few large corporations in the Dominican context in Total Quality Management. The Foundation has also delivered skills training programmes especially in the north-east of the island, which is one of the poorer areas.

NDF currently provides support in some social programmes by way of training and education of clients of the Youth Skills Programmes and the Entrepreneurship Development Programme. The withdrawal of NDF from loan funding in the key area of the promotion of non-traditional exports and agro-processing has left a yawning gap.

There are a few products of Dominica that can enjoy larger market space. Its mineral water is not being marketed effectively. One of its better known brands in condiments has been failing to achieve its full potential. Access to credit might be one of the factors. The teas of Dominica have been also an area with substantial possibility but there have been management problems in the operations involved.

The OECS Agency involved in export promotion had been helpful to some of the clients of NDF, and thus indirectly supported its work. However, local firms were not always up to the task. One critical challenge had been in making Dominican producers HACCP ready. There was need for cultural change in that regard.

Raw materials were also limited. Dominica was forced to rely on imported raw materials because of failure in the development of domestic supply sources from the agricultural sector. CARDI in Dominica developed a particular variety of pepper as a base for export market penetration. However, Costa Rica had made inroads into the market previously enjoyed by Dominica and might have secured the Scotch Bonnet initially from Dominica.

The major problem faced by the country is the lack of entrepreneurship. Many people have been trained to the University degree level. However, the vast majority look to the

Government for work. There is need for new breed of entrepreneurs to develop industries, and in respect of location, these need not be limited to Roseau or the industrial estate in Canefield.

NDF has collaborated with AID Bank, the Credit Unions and Youth Enterprise Development. It has accumulated considerable information on the micro-enterprise and small business sector. However, its limitations in funding and personnel prevent its being able to contribute much to the development of the SME sector.

3.5.4 AID BANK

The bank was established in 1971 as an official initiative. It attempts to provide loans to all economic sectors, and as well to service the market for mortgages and for student loans. The Bank constantly seeks to identify areas demonstrating a capacity for growth, such that financial resources can be allocated to activities that can contribute most to transformation. While AID Bank has an abiding interest in the sector, agriculture has been on the decline, and there has been little by way of new agricultural activity, as a replacement for bananas.

There has been an increase in poultry production, but output has not been competitive with imports. Coffee and cocoa production is being promoted, and vegetable production in green houses is part of the new thrust. A new policy document has been drafted on Agriculture and there is some hope about diversification.

The fishing industry is also being upgraded, and with Japanese assistance in the establishment of a fishing complex, there is now larger supply on the domestic market. Larger boats are being built and acquired (30 feet or more) and there are a few fishers prepared to spend two to three days at sea.

In the more recent past, there has been an expansion in infrastructural development and this has lent some dynamic to the development of the country. AID Bank has mounted an outreach programme which aims to help people to understand the field of business development. There is also a national e-business incubator. People do have ideas but no concept of a business plan. There is need to get the schools involved in the process.

The business of enterprise remains a cultural problem. People are slow to take up challenges. There is a course offered in the school system – Principles of Business - but it does not seem to provide the orientation that allows people to set up their own business. There is need for a mentorship programme and the Dominica Youth Business Trust has

been the answer. USAID has provided some help through Coal Pot Project and the Grand Bay Project.

The Bank prides itself in its contribution to national development and to poverty reduction. Its student loan portfolio has been the best performing part of its portfolio, with Tourism and Agriculture being at the lower end.

The authorities in Tourism have been engaged in destination marketing and have raised the profile of the island in the sector. There has been an increase in educational. However, overall tourist arrivals have not materialized in the way anticipated after major investments were made in the sector. There is a problem of the selection of the right product. Exotic locations did not secure clients, and marketing and transport arrangements were not adequate to the task of delivering visitors to the country.

Many of the proprietors are locals, and a few are French. Few establishments have been purchased by foreigners. The industry is looking for a flagship hotel. Some of the resorts are up in the north of the island near to Melville Hall. Dive operations have been doing well and as well educational tourism by way of the demand for student accommodation.

AID Bank has been involved in low income shelter development, and the assistance of the Government of Venezuela has expanded the resources for housing. The Bank has been involved in the on lending of funds to Credit Unions, with CDB being the source of funding. There has also been grant money from Venezuela and loans funds from the CDB at 2 ½ percent. The Shelter Project of AID Bank has allowed retrofitting of accommodation but not for purchase of property.

AID Bank has been in the black for every year of its operations. There is no private sector participation but over 20 percent of the funds for disbursement of loans come from the Social Security Board. It observes all the standards set under Basle I. Some borrowing was done in Euro, and then it became necessary to deal with the weakening of the US dollar to which the EC dollar is tied.

The Bank prides itself in offering a quality of service that it regards as first rate. Its vantage point in the economy of Dominica permits it a good perspective on the challenges involved in the promotion of the private business. It is also well placed to identify the difficulties faced in certain economic sectors. However, as a lending institution it has to limit itself to assisting organisations that can keep its bottom line in the black.

The Travails of Business Start-up

The following case study illustrates the challenge faced by non-traditional Dominican business people seeking market entry in a small economy with some economic activities dominated by segments within the population.

A husband and wife business group established in 2007, a distributorship, medium sized by domestic standards. The operation started with 14 people. By the middle of 2009, the staff slimmed down to 12 persons.

The escalation in prices of food and energy towards the end of 2007, impacted household budgets, and created massive dent in sales, as the population went back to organising their expenditure around basic food. At best, households would replace household furnishings and durables but they would seldom upgrade.

The Dominican business family has found itself up against business groups from Asia that have been building networks among the regional economies, allowing them to break bulk, enjoy economies of scale and to work the sub-region as one market, as they access products from their native lands. The domestic Dominican controlled business lacks the local, regional and external networks, let alone access to the financial recourses that these groups are able to mobilise.

Lessons: *SMEs of Dominican origin have difficulty in competing against such networks. The playing field is not level in the Distribution Sector. In other areas of business, conditions are only marginally different. There is a mix of locals in road building but only at the lower level as subcontractors.*

Meanwhile, Agriculture and Tourism have been languishing and the Services Sector has not taken off. Small businesses tend to remain infants, just as they would have started, and then would die out. Critical in moving the country ahead is the role of genuine small business of Dominican origin.

The Dominican Association of Industry and Commerce is supposed to represent the private sector, but it could hardly be said that it projects the needs of this smaller scale sector. Dominica introduced the economic citizen category some decades ago. While the country might have benefited from access to cheaper products, employment creation tends to be minimal, among the enterprises entering.

At another level, there has been evidence of the entry of the Haitians in substantial numbers in certain areas of the economy. They have become involved in Agriculture and in the marketing of fresh produce. There are also a few in barbering and tailoring. They have provided a new competitive spirit in areas where Dominicans have been lukewarm in applying themselves.

At yet another level, the country had experienced a kind of deindustrialization. Its major industry, the soap industry, which was in the hands of a national, has been taken over by a transnational which seemed to be tepid to the idea of growing the industry in Dominica

There is a challenge in striking the right balance, in which inward investment from abroad can continue to be encouraged while local enterprise emerges as active participants in the development of the country, with a long term stake in its growth.

COUNTRY POVERTY ASSESSMENT

Dominica 2008/09

Table 3.1 lists the organisations outlined above and attempts to assess their efficacy in improving living conditions for the population. The focus of all of them is mainly developmental. Moreover, it appears that they are at the higher end in terms of the level of their contribution to the development process and in assisting people in general and the poor in particular to raise their standard of living. This does not mean, however, that, on their own, these organisations would have eliminated poverty in Dominica.

TABLE 3.1: ECONOMIC SECTORS - ASSESSMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFICACY

NO.	NAME OF ORGANISATION	PRIMARY FOCUS	KEY ACTIONS FOR IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIVES FOR DOMINICANS	SCORE
1.	Directorate of Planning	Developmental	Seeks to ensure that its budgeting of revenue and expenditure are pro poor in nature. There has also been a small business promotion thrust carried out by the Directorate.	4
2.	Public Sector Investment Programme (PSIP)	Developmental	Seeks to identify, prioritise and promotes investment projects which have major macroeconomic implications.	4
3.	Central Statistical Office (CSO)	Developmental	Main data collection agency whose work informs socio-economic policy.	4
4.	Fisheries Department	Developmental and Regulatory	Implements policy related to the Sector and has contributed to national food security and poverty reduction through several facilitative initiatives.	5
5.	Ministry of Tourism	Developmental	Seeks to diversify the tourism product; has provided complementary infrastructure for community based tourism in various parts of the island and implemented incentives for taxi operators.	4
6.	Tourism Sector Development Project	Developmental	Facilitates the development of tourism facilities in rural areas, the marketing of the destination and provides technical support to the Ministry of Tourism.	4
7.	The Cooperative Division	Developmental and Regulatory	Monitors and regulates the cooperative sector.	3.5
8.	Cooperative Credit Union League	Developmental and Regulatory	Advocates for the credit union sector.	4
9.	National Development Foundation	Developmental and Supportive	Provides business loans and promotes entrepreneurial development among poorer persons as well as larger and more established businesses.	3
10.	AID Bank	Developmental	Provides loans to most economic sectors as well as for mortgages and student loan purposes.	4
11.	Dominica Essential Oils Association	Developmental	Engages in advocacy on behalf of members. Has tried to get Government to develop more coherent strategy to support industry in the face of disease and difficulty in international market, and seeks in more recent times, to assist members to make transition to other types of agriculture.	3

In sum, the review has demonstrated that while there have been a number of institutions created over the years to support agricultural development, in the face of the sea change that took place in the vital export market, the country was not equipped with the institutional order to make a seamless shift into alternative productive and competitive agriculture. The vulnerability of the country is reflected in the limited institutional base for the transition to a more diversified agriculture which has been the object of policy for decades. There has been a major institutional gap in agriculture.

There are institutions involved in the mobilisation of savings and the provision of credit to micro-businesses and SMEs. Their efforts have not yet led to the emergence on a major scale of new enterprises capable of generating new products and services much of which would need to be geared for export markets.

Business development for Dominicans would involve not only the provision of credit but also addressing the psyche of entrepreneurship. These can be tackled by state agencies and NGOs. However, the development of social capital and business networks which are the only means of measuring up to the competition from oligopolistic supply chains, will evolve when native Dominican local business groups recognize the need to get together in their own interests. Even as the country seeks to attract foreign inward investment, it cannot afford to ignore the development of institutional structures to promote local entrepreneurship, and yet there is need to avoid the creation of an entitlement syndrome among its people becoming reliant on Government protection to engage in business.

SECTION 4: INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSING AND PUBLIC UTILITIES

The quality of the infrastructure is an important determining factor in the capacity of the private sector and a range of other productive organizations to deliver goods and services and to contribute to the effective functioning of the country. Much of it is financed by the Government or, as in the case of housing, is subsidised by the Government. This is because of the social benefits or social costs, either of which cannot be determined by the valuation derived in the market place from private benefits or private costs, and/or might exceed them in either case. The benefits of improved housing extend beyond the direct beneficiaries to improvement in the quality of life for other citizens who are less vulnerable to the spread of communicable diseases, crime, and other elements of social decay, consequential on poor housing conditions. This section examines the role of agencies involved in the infrastructure development of the country.

4.1 THE PUBLIC WORKS CORPORATION

The Corporation was established in its current form in 2007. By an Act of Parliament, two entities were merged – the Sanitation Division and the Maintenance Division of the Ministry of Works.

The Corporation is a corporate body with its own legal identity and a clear mission. Its mission is to provide:

“...high quality services with commercial efficiency for all infrastructure in the public and private sectors”

It is settling into its identified role, and may still be evolving into its designated functions. It seeks to become a major, well respected player in infrastructure development and maintenance in Dominica. It intends to build on its traditional core skills of road construction and maintenance by utilizing these assets in a range of other civil works such as coastal defence, river and flood control works, site preparation for building works, and by undertaking sub-contracted works with utility companies.

Funding comes primarily from Government, but it seeks eventually to reduce dependency on Government projects from the current level of 90 percent of all its work. The remaining ten percent comes from work done for other private sector entities, and

from the sale of materials to general public and from equipment rental, and machine works.

Much of its activity relates to road building and road maintenance. The Nation's roads are government's most expensive assets: the Corporation develops and maintains these assets. A maintenance schedule is maintained very meticulously observing the principles of asset management, so that the Ministry can be informed of priorities in organising projects.

Investment in roads has an impact on Agriculture. There has been some deterioration in feeder roads and internal community roads. Meanwhile, there are abandoned plots in the east of the country and a consequential decline in Agriculture. There is need for the Government to invest in road improvement works, in the rural areas, if agriculture is to be revived.

The Corporation manages projects of over \$EC 2m. Extensive works and projects may need to be contracted to private firms. Its staff of 107 includes persons with professional qualifications in Engineering and other areas. In addition to this complement of personnel, there are other employees who are engaged on a project by project basis.

The Corporation observes certain principles in its operations in communities. It seeks to create employment within the communities, by using labour from within the communities where works or projects are being undertaken. This assists in employment generation and in a spread effect in terms of income among poorer people in the country.

The approach used by the Corporation also ensures that people across the political divide do derive benefits from the public works programme. The Corporation seeks to allocate jobs on the basis of skills rather than on political affiliation. On the other hand, the Corporation finds it an uphill task to break the gender divide, in which regard, the culture of the country still dictates that women can be engaged as cleaners, and time keepers or in clerical work in the office, while the actual construction is reserved for men.

4.2 HOUSING DIVISION

The Ministry of Housing is one of the more established ministries, with its Housing Division very much a part of implementation arm of the Government. Its responsibility is to provide housing, and lands and related infrastructure for housing. In the past, however, Government's intervention in the field of housing has been sporadic.

As result of the previous poverty assessment it was agreed that the Government would take a more active role in the provision of housing, with the focus being on the poorer sections of society. The Government embarked on a Housing Revolution Programme starting in 2006/2007.

The programme has involved the building of units in some communities, a special programme established in the Carib Community, and the Squatter Regularisation Programme, which latter provides for the regularization of ownership, following the survey of lands. The lands have been sold at \$1.00 per square foot, and the legal costs are absorbed in the process of formal transfer. Moreover, the programme has provided for the retrofitting of the infrastructure.

There is also the Housing Rehabilitation Programme which provides for home repairs. Members of the public who can qualify would make requests and funds would be made available for the purchase or repair of homes. Builders and Contractors would be provided to effect the repairs.

The Unit remains a Department of the Ministry but performs the role of a Housing Corporation. There are arrangement for mortgages, under the Urban Working Class Scheme, at Field and Bath Estate. There is now provision for building of units and the potential owners secure their mortgages from elsewhere.

The Division has also been involved in the relocation of families that needed to be moved in the public interest. In this regard, legal provisions are prepared in which those being relocated relinquish their rights to their old homes.

Low income housing is not cheap, since all housing has to be built to approved standards which in the case of Dominica has to take account of hurricane and also earthquakes. There are distributions of homes being done with some regularity: 14 homes were distributed within the last year in Portsmouth and 41 homes were due for distribution in the Carib Community. Grant funding from Venezuela has been the source for much of the home construction being undertaken by the state.

The target is the low income groups in the society, but some amount of funding has been put in place for the middle income housing. The Division also works on the preparation of house lots and had at the time of the interview, about 100 lots for allocation.

In the conduct of its work, the Division works closely with the Lands and Survey Division, the Department of Physical Planning and the Ministry of Finance. The Division is at centre stage of the attempt by the Government to alleviate living conditions of poorer people in the society.

4.3 DOWASCO

DOWASCO has its origins as the former National Water Services, then as the Central Water Authority. In 1989 it was established as a fully Government owned company with a Board of Directors appointed by the Government of Dominica. The Company basically provides water and sewerage treatment and disposal services to residents on the island.

Coverage on the island with respect to water distribution is 95 percent. There are however, some pockets of areas that are not being fully served. These include area as Salibya as well as some areas on the hills that are inaccessible. Water provision is 24 hours on a daily basis. Due to the topography of the island, in addition to the occurrence of landslides, water systems may have to be shut down for short periods. However, these disruptions are infrequent.

A study which was undertaken at the time of the interview in 2008, estimated a daily yield of 15 million to 20 million gallons of water per day, and there is the intent to sell water to other Caribbean countries. However, water flow in many rivers had declined considerably to the point where it was reported that water flow was only noted after rainfall. Exploration work has been undertaken in the East of the island as well as the West. Preliminary estimations show that in there are groundwater supplies which can yield substantial volumes that can make them important sources of potable water. Despite all this potential and progress, natural disasters pose a serious challenge to the distribution system. Hurricane Dean, for example, took a toll on the distribution of supply and the cost of restoration was well over a million dollars.

Coverage with respect to sewer lines is estimated to be 15 percent of the population. DOWASCO manages 3 small central systems in Roseau and environs. At the time of the interview in 2008, the operating cost of the system at Roseau alone was EC \$4 million.

DOWASCO targets all of Dominica, and the customer count was just over 17,000 (water distribution and sewer services) at the time of the interview. The break down for water distribution is as follows:

COUNTRY POVERTY ASSESSMENT

Dominica 2008/09

- Residential - 13,719
- Commercial - 1,099
- Government - 295
- Ships - 3 (Portsmouth, Deep Harbour, Roseau)
- Metered - 15,172
- Unmetered - 2,917

The average cost per month for metered customers is EC\$38.80 per month, while the average cost for unmetered customers is EC\$42.00 per month. The break down for customers related to sewerage services is as follows:

- Domestic - 2,063
- Commercial - 395
- Industrial - 4
- Government - 47

According to DOWASCO, the work of the company contributes to poverty alleviation as water is life. There are some poorer communities that have a relatively good water supply. Poorer households tend to use rain water as their main source of water supply and as such they may not have severe water problems. However, disconnections usually arise in poorer communities. The work of the Company is guided by the size of a community rather than on poverty levels. There are communities that do approach the organisation to extend their water supply. Requests are mainly made through parliamentary representation.

In the Carib Territory, the system was being upgraded at a cost of EC\$4 million and was nearing completion at the time of the interview, which would mean significant improvements in the water supply there. In the past residents in the Carib Territory did not pay for water. There exists infrastructure for metering that has not turned on for several years, but it is the view of residents there that they would have to pay more for metered water.

There exist over 500 standpipes and incidences of abuse of standpipes have been reported. Persons use standpipes to wash their vehicles or connect hoses to them to fill water tanks which would deprive households who may be in dire need of water. There is also the matter of persons being disconnected and then they purchase a water tank and connect to a public supply, which means that the Government ends up paying for their supply which the Company cannot do anything about at the moment. Once all

homes have legal connections the number of standpipes in communities can be reduced as the cost of each standpipe per month is EC\$265,000. There is also the matter of persons with illegal connections as they are tapping into the water lines.

With regard to sewerage, operating costs for the plant at Roseau is EC\$60,000 to EC\$75,000 per month. The plant here has the capacity to do more than its current capacity. The dispersed nature of the population is a challenge. There is a commitment for a new sewerage system in Picand at a cost of 30 million dollars and the merging of a small system on the northwest coast in which the European Union is committed to finance.

There has been some home construction on the hills, going continuously further inward and this poses a challenge as the system currently is reliant upon gravity flow. This has meant that several intakes have had to be relocated to address hillside water distribution. Another challenge of DOWASCO is the fact that they are heavily reliant upon surface water, as opposed to groundwater supplies, which can sometimes contain impurities due to residents dumping waste material and undertaking agricultural activities near catchment intakes.

Infrastructure in need of replacement is yet another challenge of DOWASCO. Current infrastructure has been in place for thirty years and is in need of replacement and upgrade. Revenue constrains the work of DOWASCO. Though Government assists with capital projects, revenue is insufficient to serve needs and there has also been borrowing which has led to a debt of EC\$50 million dollars at the time of the interview. Account receivables as it relates to customers is an area of great concern but the position has somewhat improved. Non-government receivables was EC\$8.3 million dollars. The decline in the population due to other factors as well as migration has also affected the revenue position of the Company. On a monthly basis, there is on average 5 disconnections and as of March 2008, there were 2,000 disconnected accounts.

Overhead costs of the Company have increased by 20 percent. The General Manager of DOWASCO has proposed that a 20 percent increase in the water tariff could result in an EC\$5-6 increase to customers and vastly improve the resources of the company. The Company is not exempt from Value Added Tax. 3 million gallons of water is produced on a daily basis with 2.4 million gallons being consumed and 15 to 20 percent being lost.

The staff complement of the DOWASCO currently stands at 86 full time members but there are part time members who take care of water systems through daily visits. The Company endeavours to recruit local unemployed persons in the areas of maintenance

work and preference is given to contractors within communities. Collaborations exist with several institutions and Ministries.

The Ministry of Agriculture engages in the identification of water sources and protection of water catchment areas and the Department of Environmental Health has a monitoring role with regard to water quality and complaints dealing with such. The Environmental Coordinating Unit proper water management practices as well as information dissemination.

Partners include C Basin Water Management Programme, Global Water Partnership Caribbean, NOAA, CEHI, CWWA, UNDP, ECLAC, UNEP, BNTF, US AID, the Department of Forestry, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Department of Environmental Health, Ministry of Local Government and the Environmental Coordinating Unit. The fact that most communities have access to a regular supply of potable water speaks to the effectiveness of the DOWASCO.

4.4 DOMLEC

DOMLEC is the sole provider of electricity on the island. The company is owned by foreign investors. Its rates are regulated by an independent commission. Some 40 percent of electricity is generated by hydro, and other sources of renewable energy are being examined, wind and geothermal being two of them. Since part of demand is reliant on imported energy, the increases in energy prices in the latter part of the last decade created the need for a fuel surcharge. The availability of hydro protected the country from the full brunt of the escalation in fuel prices. This would have been particularly helpful to poorer people.

The demand for electricity in Dominica is low, relative to the potential supply, and the country is likely to gain from exports, and, in that regard, lower the charge made on domestic customers.

The company contributes to the improvement in living conditions and to poorer people in a number of ways. Firstly, it operates a pay as you go system which allows customers to be aware of their usage in real time and to manage consumption within their budgets, and promotes the more efficient use by customers, especially by poorer people. Those who might otherwise have had problems managing their electricity bills can find ways to cope.

There is a certain level of subsidy in the first 50 units consumed. The first 100 units are VAT free, but this is a benefit conferred by the Government rather than by the Company.

The Company is one of the largest private employers on the island, and pays among the best wages. Moreover, it has had a track record of continuous training of its employees and has made a heavy investment in the human resources of Dominica. It has partnered with the State College in providing programmes as well.

The Company has committed to sponsorship and to the provision of donations in respect of such areas as culture, health, education, and social services. It has also assisted in very specific ways. Dialysis equipment was purchased for the hospital. A mother of nine was assisted in the construction of a home. DOMLEC adopted Fond Cole, which is a school which was about to close for lack of finance.

There is also a long list of students that are provided with assistance for transportation and by way of scholarships. It has also assisted with the Youth Programme of the Government and provides attachments, such that a number of young people can be oriented to the world of work.

4.5 DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEYS

Dominica has also adopted a holistic approach to land allocation led chiefly by the Land and Surveys Division. The Division has a long history of operation in Dominica. In its early years, the Division formed part of Ministry of Agriculture in a time (during the 1960s and 70s) when Government was acquiring large estates for subdivision and sale to agricultural workers.

The Division now forms part of the Ministry of Housing which has overall responsibility for monitoring and coordinating land related activities including Land Acquisition, Land Management, Land/Property Valuation, Land and Surveys, State Lands, and overall Physical Planning and Development. The Land and Surveys Division has been charged with the responsibility for the administration of State lands (which also includes the seabed and land reclamation sites). It has a role in the distribution, sale and subdivision of State lands (which also involves the Physical Planning Division), land development control and the conduct of land surveys and topographic mapping and the authentication of land tenure and ownership for proposed developments.

The Division also provides support to line Ministries in matters relating to its key functions. Most of its funding comes from annual budgetary allocations with the sale of State lands transferred to the Consolidated Fund. There are 32 members of staff most of whom are in technical related fields.

The operation of the Land and Surveys Division is governed by several pieces of legislation including the State Lands Act and Regulations, the Land Surveyors Act and sections of the Physical Planning Act.

Externally, the Division operates in an environment where land prices have skyrocketed, with farmers selling their lands to foreigners, with Calibishie singled out as an area of note. This practice is driving up the price of land often to the detriment of locals who cannot afford to enter the land market. Government usually subdivides agricultural land into five-acre parcels and housing lots into 2,000 to 10,000 square feet lots.

Interestingly, in the past Government would sell land between \$3,000 and 5,000 USD and then people would sell the same land at market value. Because of this practice Government has placed a caveat in their sale agreements which prevent the new land owners from selling the land for ten years. However, individuals have got around this caveat.

Under law - Alien Land Holding Licence Act - a foreigner can get up to one acre without a licence. However under certain conditions, foreign business operators with a licence and an approved business proposal can buy up three acres when establishing a business but have to show plans and business proposals and the licence could lapse if development does not take place within a stipulated time

There are number of issues faced by the Division which affect its operation. Key among these is the absence of a national cadastral survey which could reduce the time and effort taken to conduct lengthy searches and surveys, and provide a base for settling contentious issues and queries with respect to land ownership and tenure. At present, there is a project for a Unified Land Information System involving for four agencies - Physical Planning Division, Lands and Surveys, Legal Affairs and Land Registry. The implementation of this project would further highlight the need for the national cadastral survey. In addition, there is need for a National Land Use Policy which would guide land management and use, and guide the operation of various departments, including the Division of Land and Surveys.

While in other territories, the Government has adopted a policy of leasing of land as opposed to the sale of land, the Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica continues the practice of the sale of State lands. It is envisaged that as the acreage of State lands declines, the future of the Division would lie mainly in the management of the land information system. Because of this, staff training is now focused on IT and GIS.

There are a lot of family land issues relating to land ownership which the Division encounters as part of its operation. The Division operates on two complimentary systems, namely the Land Registry and the Registry of Deeds. The land registration is considered to be expensive process for poorer individuals, costing about 13.5 percent of the total land cost. As such, the present pricing system puts land registration out of the hands of poor people.

Moreover, all the land in the Carib Territory is communal and that means individuals cannot receive a mortgage or use the land they occupy for collateral for bank loan. Only a portion of the land can be mortgaged by the Council for the common good, with the approval of the Prime Minister. There is the need for some kind of institutional mechanism, such as Land Bank Institution, which would allocate land and restructure development of this land within a given period of time.

Staff shortage and budgetary constraints were identified as critical factors affecting operation of the Division, particularly in respect of the field of surveying. However, this situation is temporarily addressed by contracting retired surveyors.

Using a self rating system, the Division rates itself at 7.5 over 10. There is need to improve efficiency of some of its institutional processes.

Table 4.1 lists the organisations outlined above and attempts to score their efficacy in improving living conditions for the population. The Public Works Corporation incorporates equity objectives as it seeks to expand the infrastructure. However, resources are inadequate relative to the need for road development and the country has to rely on loans and grants to upgrade its road system which is a limiting factor on economic expansion. In housing, there is a major attempt to upgrade conditions, and to arrest the deterioration from rapid rural urban migration.

Potable water is widely available, although the attempt at cost recovery through user charges might be thwarted by poor monitoring systems. In the critical area of land distribution, the Department of Lands and Surveys might have been effective in the past, but the looming crisis of land being alienated to other uses and to non nationals in a

country that will remain dependent on its agriculture for the short to medium term has not been addressed frontally.

TABLE 4.1: INFRASTRUCTURE, HOUSING AND UTILITIES - ASSESSMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFICACY

NO.	NAME OF ORGANISATION	PRIMARY FOCUS	KEY ACTIONS FOR IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIVES FOR DOMINICANS	SCORE
1.	Public Works Corporation	Developmental and Preventative	Seeks to ensure infrastructural development and maintenance in Dominica, involving communities, as far as possible, the work-force, thereby spreading income opportunities.	3.5
2.	Housing Division	Developmental and Supportive	Provides housing, lands and other housing related infrastructure, in addition to funds for housing upgrades to low and middle income groups in the society.	4
3.	DOWASCO	Developmental	Ensures a potable source of water supply to the population in addition to sewerage removal and disposal.	3.5
4.	DOMLEC	Developmental	Provides electricity supply to the population.	4
5.	Department of Lands and Surveys	Developmental	Engages in the distribution of land to the population and to poorer people in particular.	3.5

In sum, the country has made progress in the expansion of its physical infrastructure. This has to be seen against the backdrop of its high level of vulnerability and the nature of its topography that render most physical construction activity a highly expensive matter. There has also been substantial distribution of land including among poorer people. However, with the decline of agriculture and with the island opening up as tourism destination, beneficiaries are caught between wanting to hold on to land, and wanting to reap high rewards in a real estate market in which buyers from developed market economies with substantial discretionary income are entering to the disadvantage of the national farming community in the medium and long run, potentially.

Land policy is in need of revisit, given that a differently organised and diversified agriculture may require a changed approach to land distribution, and redistribution, and as well, the re-absorption of land that has become idled, into state control.

SECTION 5: ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Dominica is blessed with natural resources which are intrinsically linked to the country's development. Although the country is small and is clearly part of the phenomenon of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Dominica is a topographically complex island, with a highly biodiverse system of inland tropical rainforests on steep upland terrain punctuated by volcanoes and numerous rivers. All these resources along with a variety of marine resources make Dominica an ideal location for the pursuit of nature tourism for which the country has become known. Its fertile agricultural soils and water supplies together retain potential for a productive agriculture.

However, achieving sustainable development of Dominica requires that the Government and people of Dominica address a number of key environmental issues. One such issue is creating a balance between environmental health and socio-economic development which includes the adequate and effective provisioning of basic infrastructural development and services, such as safe potable water, wastewater management, solid waste management, and sanitation, while minimising damage to the environment and the cost of remedial action. Effective wastewater management and stormwater management are critical challenges.

The gains made in earlier years with respect to good soil and water conservation, have since been eroded. This has been identified as a major contributor to land degradation. Sound environmental management in SIDS, where land resources are limited and demand is great, is directly dependent on, and is positively influenced by an effective framework for land use planning and management, which in turn is intimately linked to the country's coastal zone management and protection regimes.

However the lack of a national physical development plan and land zoning system, coupled with absence of an effective environmental impact assessment system to ensure proposed developments operate within stipulated regulatory boundaries, could further contribute to land degradation. This is even more critical since some changes in land use, like built development, are permanent and some forms of land degradation long term or irreversible.

Another issue is the maintenance of species biodiversity. The richness of biodiversity of Dominica can be found in its inland terrestrial, coastal and marine environment and though species biodiversity remains high, human action, climatic processes and natural

disaster have led to some loss. Tourism activities, housing, and agriculture not only affect terrestrial biodiversity but the coastal and marine natural amenities as well. It is therefore important to determine the carrying capacity of these key resources.

Another major challenge is the ability of the people and Government of Dominica to deal with emergency situations brought about by the occurrence of natural and other disasters. As was the experience in recent times, tropical storms and hurricanes can wipe out a country's agriculture, tourism and other sectors and partially or totally destroy its housing stock, transport, telecommunications and power infrastructure within hours. Therefore, reducing risk and building resilience to such disasters are fundamental to any national development goals, particularly for SIDS and in times of notable global climate change.

The advent of sea-rise adds another quotient to its vulnerability, and is already evident in the increase in coastal erosion and possible changes in rainfall patterns. All of this creates a challenge for the country as a whole, especially in the kind of infrastructure that has to be put in place. The per capita cost of infrastructure geared to treat with its vulnerability has to be inordinately high, moreso since its population base is low. The fiscal implications are substantial, requiring the pre-empting of much of its budget to address these costs. There are also implications for its poorer people in particular.

While there is some information available about the potential impact of global warming and sea-level rise on natural coastal systems, such as coral reefs and mangrove forests, little is known about the impacts of climate change on topographically more complex islands like Dominica with its steep upland terrain. Moreover, in countries like Dominica, adaptation to climate change becomes critical and so does the need to establish continuous monitoring programmes that would measure impacts and to ensure that the population becomes aware and fully understands the implications of climate change to their daily lives.

Interestingly, Dominica's recent earthquake episodes have alerted many of its people to the possibility of natural disasters and the need to be in a state of readiness beyond what is required in respect of tropical storms and hurricanes. A major requirement is wide public awareness of the challenge of global warming and climate change and the potential impacts that they may have on the lives of Dominicans.

From an institutional level, environmental management is a multifaceted field, ranging from the hands-on practical management of natural resources, the coordination, monitoring and regulation of actions/activities of individuals/groups/ agencies towards the environment to policy making by state and other agencies with regards to

the use and management of the environment. This analysis takes into account the main institutions involved in environmental management in the Commonwealth of Dominica and the implications of their functioning on living conditions of the population.

5.1 PHYSICAL PLANNING DIVISION

The Division is responsible for review of all development plans, and for giving of approvals for any physical development in the country. Thus, housing development, regularisation of squatting, building of sea defences etc are subject to approval of the Division.

The Division assists the Ministry of Housing in identifying areas for subdivisions for housing development in the country. The Ministry may identify land and then seek the advice of the Division as to its suitability for housing development.

The Division is responsible also for monitoring development plans as they are being implemented. One of the biggest challenges faced is getting developers adhere to approved plans especially relating to subdivisions. The Division would need to send a notice to developers to revert to the original plans or to submit new drawings for approval.

There is still need for institutionalising in the minds of the general public, the role of the Division in Physical Planning. Individual home owners would usually apply to the Division for approval for their homes, largely because the banks require approved plans, if they are to provide loans and mortgages.

Many low income people who build their homes out of plywood would not apply to the Division. It is thus necessary for the Division to insist on setbacks from the road and other conditions. In that regard, the Environmental Health Unit may be asked to check on such structures.

There is also the other challenge of people not building according to approved plans. The Development Control Unit which works closely with the Division. However, while the Unit may send out many notices, no action is taken, rendering its initiatives nugatory.

There is also the challenge of the subdivision of agricultural lands. There are many people subdividing lands that are designated as agricultural for other uses. On the other hand, there is considerable agricultural acreage that has been abandoned and has

returned to secondary forests. This has been happening in areas where regulatory control was not effectively implemented.

The Division is aware of some of the environmental challenges, even though it is not altogether clear what are the explanatory variables. River water levels have been declining, but this may be due to land management practices or to climate change.

On the other hand, it is clear that indiscriminate development with the cutting of roads with the use of heavy equipment may add to the silt in rivers, and all the attendant impacts therefrom. There is also the dumping at the seashore, excavated materials from developments.

At a more general level, it is noteworthy that the architects do observe the building code in their practices and so also does the Planning Review Committee.

5.2 ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATING UNIT

The Environmental Coordinating Unit (ECU) was established in 1999. It is not yet a legal entity but it is governed by a number of international conventions and collaborates with other organizations in Dominica and in the wider region on issues relating to environmental awareness and sustainable energy.

The ECU's main focus is to cultivate awareness of climate change and sustainable energy alternatives to the society through its public education programmes. It makes extensive use of various forms of media; mostly in the form of press releases, radio programmes and its annual calendar, which it has been distributing island wide since 2001. The main focus of its calendar events are schools, government departments and other public stakeholders. The Unit has been partnering with the Dominica Youth Environmental Organization by engaging in school talks to promote environmental awareness, and by staging tree-planting exercises.

Some of the international conventions that the Unit is a focal point for are listed in the following:

- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) - The Cartagena Protocol 2003
- United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) - The Kyoto Protocol
- The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, 1989

- The Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, 1969
- The Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, 2001
- The Basel Convention on the Control of Trans-boundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, 1989
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), 1975
- St Georges Declaration for the Principles of Environmental Sustainability (St. George's, Grenada 2000)

The Unit lists among its major concerns issues of renewable energy and the price of energy in Dominica. It was noted that Dominica pays more on average for its energy than other Caribbean islands. Forty (40) percent of the national supply comes from hydro-electricity generation, whereas the other sixty (60) percent is generated from diesel. Recently, a one-day symposium on renewable energy was conducted, in which the use of solar energy was demonstrated to poor communities. Another innovation that the Unit was responsible for was the introduction of solar street lighting. Some of the street lights along the bay front of the capital Roseau are powered by solar energy. The Unit sees vast potential in incorporating solar energy into Dominica's main supply grid.

The Unit commissioned recently a study for renewable energy and energy efficiency for government buildings, including schools and hospitals. The study's main purpose was to determine a time period in which transformations could be made to increase energy efficiency by substituting conventional sources with cleaner alternatives. A sustainable development strategy for Dominica was also developed with Organisation Internationale de La Francophonie, in which a primary report was prepared and presented to the Minister with oversight of the Unit. However, the strategy was delayed due to circumstances in Dominica following the 2007 hurricane.

The Unit has also overseen the use of the Vet-e-Vere programme. The programme had been used in stabilising certain slopes around the island that have been prone to landslides. There was also a straw craft industry based on Vet-e-Vere, but this has declined in recent times.

Dominica's geological activities provide the potential benefit of setting up geothermal power generation to supply the island and its neighbours, Guadeloupe and Martinique. The ECU has been liaising with experts from Iceland to assess the viability and logistics of using piloting geothermal energy generation in Dominica and other Caribbean islands where it is a possibility.

The Unit has also cultivated strong working relationships with the following organizations:

- The Global Environment facility (GEF) and SGP
- The Dominica Youth Environment Organization
- The National Association of NGOs (NANGO)
- The World Bank
- The UNDP/ UNEP
- CARICOM Climate Change
- The Environment and Sustainable Development Unit of the OECS (ESDO)
- The Institut de L'Énergie et de L'Environnement de la Francophonie (IEPF).

The unit prides itself on being well poised to take advantage of opportunities to partner on an international level. It is currently seeking an opportunity to obtain a hybrid renewable energy vehicle in the case for use of renewable energy. The Unit has been able to fund its work by seizing opportunities to work in partnerships and use monies earned to fund its projects. In this sense, it has a formidable capacity to generate resources and sustain its activities.

While its work is widely known and appreciated, it is the view of the Unit that more could be done in areas such as water management, solid waste management and energy management. It was stated that the country has not done enough to manage its water resources. During Hurricane Dean, landslides lead to the damaging of some intakes. Given that Dominica has high rainfall, it was felt that the country ought to have a national rainwater harvesting system to increase its capacity to provide fully for domestic water demand and to supplement the current levels that are provided.

5.2.1 MAIN ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

One of the main issues that the ECU highlighted was solid waste management and the need for separating and sorting of refuse to ensure that no harmful or toxic waste goes into landfills.

Another important issue was the lack of any serious legislative framework to protect intellectual property rights in Dominica. This legal gap has been to the detriment of the country, as it loses some of its rights to major profitable species to unscrupulous groups from the developed world. Such groups are able to collect sample materials from the island and do not agree to sign benefit agreements. This practice has led to an

undermining of Dominica's capabilities in earning profits from its natural species and indigenous knowledge, and bio-speculating and bio-pirating have contributed to "knowledge theft".

In terms of the relationship between agricultural production and environmental protection, the Unit expressed praise for Fair Trade, since it was able to commit to large numbers to the obligation of using less chemicals in banana production. This was an improvement from methods of fertilization and pest control that obtained in the 1980s and 90s. However with agriculture on the decline in Dominica and the banana sector in jeopardy since the coming on stream of the EPA, most farmers now need to seek other alternatives for employment.

Fortunately, since Dominica has established relations with Venezuela under agreements ALBA and Petro Caribe, it has benefited substantially in putting together initiatives aimed at poverty reduction. The Ministry of Agriculture, in association with the UNEP and the SDS unit, has been examining the mechanics of transforming Dominica's agricultural sector to organic production. Some of the basic organizational foundations are there, as there is already a Dominica Organic Farmers' Association, which is the only organised group of farmers who engage in organic production.

The Unit has raised also the issue of climate change and adaptation measures for coastal agricultural communities. In the medium term, a Growth and Social Protection Strategy (GSPS) is being implemented, and this is supplemented by other programmes sponsored by the World Bank. The World Bank has been providing support in Dominica under its Special Program on Adaptation to Climate Change (SPACC) to pilot adaptation measures that address the expected impacts from sea level rise, changes in rainfall patterns and the effects of climate change on ecosystem integrity and water supply. Under this initiative, the following elements will be incorporated:

- Completion of an integrated natural resource management plan, including climate change concerns, and incorporation of the results into the national planning process;
- Incorporation of lessons on strengthening key infrastructure into local hazard management plans and building guidelines;
- Stabilization of the population of threatened mangrove stands;
- Stabilization of the diversity of coral reefs and associated species;
- Preservation of ecosystem functioning in two national parks; and
- Maintenance of the health of coastal ecosystems.

5.3 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT

The mission of the Department is to:

Undertake the necessary measures to ensure the physical, biological and chemical hazards on the environment are controlled so as not to endanger public health and safety.

Through an intersectoral collaborative approach with relevant stakeholders, it seeks to execute its regulatory mandate and foster behavioural changes. The work of Department is governed by Environment Health Services Act 8 of 1997.

The Environmental Health Department monitors a range of services directly provided by other entities which include:

- Potable water provision,
- Sewerage treatment and disposal,
- Solid waste management, and
- Vector control.

DOWASO is the statutory body responsible for water delivery and sewerage treatment and disposal on the island. The Department on the other hand, engages in sampling to ensure water quality.

In the case of sewerage treatment and solid waste disposal, responsibility lies with the Dominica Solid Waste Management Company. Vector control services are provided by a private contractor. The work of DOWASA, the Dominica Solid Waste Management Company, as well as the operations of the private contractor are all closely monitored by the Department, to ensure strict adherence to regulations and standards.

There are a number of regulations in place, over which the Department has responsibility. These relate to:

1. Food Hygiene,
2. Restaurants,
3. Mosquito control,
4. Communicable noticeable diseases,
5. Rodent control, and
6. Environmental Health Services Build Regulations.

The Department recognises the need for a Nuisance Regulation. There exists Draft Regulations relating to atmospheric nuisances, air pollutants and wastewater: however, these need to be enacted.

The Department has a laboratory where recreational and potable water supplies are tested. There is the intent to extend services offered to the monitoring of sewerage outfalls. Currently there are outfalls located at Canefield, Goodwill and Roseau, Oammitt and Portsmouth. Some of these outfalls are in close proximity to shorelines and in areas where there are high water tables and therefore proper monitoring is necessary. Ross University however, has its own sewerage system of sufficient capacity, and relies on gravel beds and is in good condition.

Complaints lodged with the Department include matters related to waste water discharge from neighbours, fumes and oil/grease discharge from woodwork and auto mechanic shops, the smell emanating from areas where animals are reared, littering on other people's property as well as the playing of loud music. One major area of complaint relates to overland runoff and seepage from soak-away systems, among neighbouring properties. Given the small size of lots especially in communities that are unplanned and the result of spontaneous settlement, there is usually not enough land to control seepage between properties.

A register of complaints is kept at the Department and complaints come from all over the island, with no one area in Dominica dominant.

In the past, the Department provided assistance to low income families, in the form of the provision of pre-cast units for pit latrines. This service has, however, had to be discontinued, for lack of resources. However, efforts are being made to get the provision of pre-casts back into the budget of the Department.

In low income communities in urban areas - Roseau and Portsmouth mainly - some persons do not have access to private toilet facilities, but do have the use of public baths and toilets. In rural communities, the situation is somewhat better, as they have better access to water and have the use of pit latrines. The Department has estimated that there exists 90-100 percent coverage in rural areas with respect to water and toilet facilities and it is quite common in these areas for households have both septic systems and pit latrines.

COUNTRY POVERTY ASSESSMENT

Dominica 2008/09

There is the problem of mosquitoes and rodents in Dominica and there have even been a couple of deaths in the past associated with rodents. However the incidence of problems associated with mosquitoes and rodents tends to increase after a disaster.

The work of the Department contributes indirectly to poverty reduction through disease prevention. Its major initiatives in the 1950's and 1960's eradicated the incidence of malaria. Great strides were made in the 1970s in respect of the control of enteric diseases. There used to be regular outbreaks of typhoid fever and worm infestation, but the country has not experienced any such outbreaks in many years, and has seen improvements in basic sanitation. Communities have access to public water supply and to sewage and sanitation facilities. There is a waste disposal service covering the entire island.

The clientele of the Department is the entire population and they are of the strong belief that everyone is being served at some level. Oversight is also exercised in respect of conditions at the prison and hospitals. The Department has even been looking into health and safety at the workplace. There have been a significant number of complaints related to "sick building syndrome" which is often times a result of poor house keeping and poor location of machines and equipment.

The Department also undertook the removal of asbestos in schools as well as other public buildings in large part. However, after Hurricane David most of the housing stock was destroyed along with most of the asbestos material. There have been no reported deaths from asbestos. One major challenge faced is the fact that coverage of on site sewerage facilities has dropped to 80 percent on the West Coast.

Internal challenges of the Department include Funding, Training and the high turnover of its staff. At the time of the interview, it was noted that in the last 7 to 8 years alone, 9 staff members of the Department have been lost. This is crucial to the operations of the Department as the actual volume of work is increasing. Furthermore, the provision of extended services of the Department is constrained by the lack of personnel. For example, if there is to be an increase in the monitoring and sampling of food at restaurants and other eating establishments, another laboratory technician would be needed to facilitate this. The staff complement of the Department currently stands at just over 35 persons with 10 Environmental Health Officers, 4 senior Environmental Health Officers and 1 Chief Environmental Health Officer.

Enforcement of current regulations has become very challenging as the Court is burdened with the heightened criminal cases and does not have the capacity to handle infractions as it relates to the environment. It is the view of the Department that existing fees for littering are too low and that there is dire need for provisions to be made in the Litter Act as it relates to the removal and handling of derelicts.

In Food and Safety, there are no facilities for retaining and refrigerating samples and there is no laboratory support to conduct analytical investigations involved. There is also the need for legal support and backing as well as advice in matters that reach the Court. Also, there are some basic International Health Regulations that are not being adhered to. There is also the lack of medical support in relation to detection and handling of outbreaks.

Funding of the Department is mainly through the government and projects of the Department as well as PAHO. Local and Regional partners with which the Department collaborates include PAHO, CEHI, CAREC, the Ministries of Education, Community Development, Agriculture, Fisheries, the Departments of Education and Forestry, the Maritime Unit, the Discover Dominica Authority and the Physical Planning Unit.

On a scale of 1 to 5, the Department rates itself as a '4' due to several challenges faced which constrain its work.

5.4 OFFICE OF DISASTER MANAGEMENT

The mission and vision of the Office of Disaster Management is to:

Ensure that the country is in a state of readiness for any disaster, human or natural.

There exists a Disaster Management Act which at the time of the interview was in the process of enactment.

The work of the Office is related to poverty as the poor tend to be more greatly impacted in times of natural disasters, as are they are more vulnerable and they may not have resources such as insurance and other safety mechanisms to mitigate against resultant impacts. The poor are the ones who usually depend on the Government for recovery. Within the Office, there is no Emergency or Recovery Fund in place as funds are mobilised from within the existing budget. CARICOM has a Catastrophe Fund; however some deficiencies have been identified which needs to be addressed. One such

deficiency has to do with hurricane strength as the Fund only becomes applicable in instances of a Category 3 or more.

Dominica has had a long history with natural disasters, hurricanes in particular. There was Hurricane Dean in 2007 which was a category 1 hurricane. There was hurricane George in 1998 which was a category 3. Hurricane David was a category 3/4 in 1979. There were category 4 hurricanes in 1979, 1980, 1989 and 1995. There was also an earthquake in 2007 that caused some damage. Compensation was received through the Catastrophe Fund. Hurricane Dean caused damages of well over EC\$ 200 million, but due to the fact that it was a Category 1 hurricane; no compensation was applicable through the Catastrophe Fund of CARICOM.

The Office has been constrained in its activities due to staffing limitations as the work of the ODM is a 4 person operation. In times of disaster, there are volunteers who work with the ODM. Volunteers mainly come in the form of broad based organisations. There is also the training of volunteers in disaster response measures.

At the community level, when a disaster occurs, there is a mimicking of what is taking place at the national level. At the national level the Emergency Operation Centre is activated once there has been a natural disaster or an impending warning of one. There exist committees in communities to deal with this, however some have been dormant. Various sections under the Community Committees include Chain Saw, Relief and Search and Rescue.

The national media station is online on the World Wide Web to facilitate the Centre as well as communities to be able to keep abreast with updates as it relates to disasters. There are also other modes of communicating such information but these have not been fully developed.

Funding of the ODM comes from the State as well as other agencies when certain Projects are being undertaken. CEDERA also provides some financial resources from time to time. Within the Department, there are 2 professional staff members and 2 support staff members.

The ODM faces some external challenges in the form of formation and adherence to Building Codes. Given the cost of construction, some home builders are trying to cut corners and the Physical Planning Department is unable rigorously monitor construction. There is also an absolute need for a building code for the informal sector. An example of the benefits of retrofitting to withstand natural disasters is seen in the construction of a model home in the Carib Territory which survived a hurricane.

On a scale of one to ten, the ODM rates itself as a seven. They are of the view that if provided with a sufficient budget, they can meet their vision of being the best disaster management agency in the OECS region and among the better agencies in the Caribbean region. The ODM collaborates with the Physical Planning Department, Local Government, the Emergency Services such as Fire, Police, Red Cross and Health. They also collaborate with the Government Media as well as the Ministry of Education with regard to public awareness campaigns.

5.5 GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY (GEF)

The Global Environment Facility was established in 1991 and helps developing countries fund projects and programmes that protect the global environment. The GEF provides grants and support for projects related to biodiversity, climate change, international waters, land degradation, the ozone layer and persistent organic pollutants. The Small Grant Programme was instituted in 1991 and now provides support to 100 countries and this number is expected to increase to 120.

Dominica has benefited from the trend, and has received grants through its NGOs and CBOs that are involved in promoting sustainable livelihoods, poverty alleviation and income stabilisation. The programme has had significant impact in a number of communities as support has been provided for improved production and training being offered to persons, particularly women. GEF programmes are also linked to the Millennium Development Goals. A success story of the GEF exists in the Trois Piton area where a floriculture business has been created.

With regard to climate change, the focus of the GEF is on mitigation for example in respect of the reduction of emissions. At the time of the interview, the office had approved two climate change projects in supporting sustainable livelihoods. One of these projects has to deal with renewable energy generation. The project is at schools and is mostly a demonstration project. Solar lighting is also being investigated as there are places in Marigot with out electricity. Renewable energy is also being promoted through public awareness programmes. Four solar stores have been purchased and are used in demonstrations.

The Dominica Youth Association has also been conducting their own demonstration in conjunction with the Environmental Coordinating Unit using stores donated by the GEF. Stores have also been donated to the Environmental Coordinating Unit, the NIA

and the Carib Territory. All stores are being used with surety with the exception of the Carib Territory as the official was uncertain as to their use there.

Since March 2005, the local programme has been in existence. The programme is not hosted out of the local UN office, but by a national institution. Previously, the programme was compact and focused on one area, however in its second phase, the programme has been extended to neighbouring communities and National Parks, as well as to the Carib Territory.

5.6 DOMINICA SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT COMPANY

The organisation is responsible for the collection and disposal of waste. One of its objectives is to get the population to understand how to reuse and recycle waste, and to recognise the value of waste, thereby escaping from the traditional paradigm of seeing waste as garbage. The organisation handles all types of waste, except that vegetation is handled only on a limited basis.

With equipment acquired from the Government of Venezuela, the organisation is now able to manage scrap metal like derelict vehicles, white goods and other bulky waste. Used batteries are being shipped to Trinidad, and recycled glass is shipped to Carib Glass.

Grant funding from the EU and other agencies was also the source for the construction of the new landfill which was opened four years before. There is zero tolerance of salvagers. Only non-biodegradable waste is taken to the landfill.

There is a household garbage collection fee, but only about 20 percent of the population seems to be up-to-date in payments. There is also an Environment Levy that is applied to all goods entering the country. The organisation gets 100 percent of this as a subvention.

There are a number of Acts of relevance to the Company. There is the Litter Act, the Solid Waste Management Act, the Forestry Act and the Fisheries Act. Enforcement remains a challenge.

The corporation has a schedule in place for collection, and provides an annual award to recognise communities that adhere to the schedule for putting out their waste. All communities are served across the island, but the frequency of service varies, with urban areas being served daily and rural communities on a different periodicity but according to a set schedule.

The Corporation has been effective in controlling pests – rodents, flies and mosquitoes.

Table 5.1 lists the organisations discussed above and attempts to assess their contribution in improving living conditions for the population. Their focus is mainly protective of the population.

TABLE 5.1: ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT - ASSESSMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFICACY

NO.	NAME OF ORGANISATION	PRIMARY FOCUS	KEY ACTIONS FOR IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIVES FOR DOMINICANS	SCORE
1.	Environmental Coordinating Unit	Preventative and Developmental	Public education, advocacy and community based programmes	3.5
2.	Physical Planning Division	Developmental and Regulatory	Responsible for approval of physical plans and for oversight of their implementation to ensure compliance	3
3.	Environmental Health Department	Preventative and Regulatory	Has responsibility for the monitoring of environmental health services such the supply of a potable water supply, sewerage treatment and disposal, solid waste management and vector control; collaborative partners include PAHO, CEHI, CAREC, the Ministries of Education, Community Development, Agriculture, Fisheries, the Departments of Education and Forestry, the Maritime Unit, the Discover Dominica Authority and the Physical Planning Unit.	4
4.	Office of Disaster Management	Preventative and Remedial	Ensures that the population of Dominica is in a state of readiness in the unfortunate event of a disaster, and to militate against loss of damage to infrastructure and loss of life.	3
5.	Global Environment Facility	Preventative	Provides funding, grants and support for projects related to the environment.	3
6.	Dominica Solid Waste Management Company	Preventative	Collection and disposal of waste, and seeks to provide public education in the management of waste.	4

In sum, reducing disaster risk requires solid political commitment and sound institutional support. The country has built a few institutions that are providing quality service in meeting the needs of the population and of the poor in particular. Given the range and extent of vulnerability, critical in all of the work of these organisations is the effectiveness of public education, since, in the final analysis, public awareness is one critical plank in protecting a population and reducing harm, in the face of a high probability of earthquake, volcanic eruption, slope subsidence, hurricane episode, and sea rise.

SECTION 6: HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Dominica, like other countries of the Caribbean, has embraced the tenets of the human capital revolution. Indeed, social demand has ensured that the state assume the responsibility for the provision of basic education and primary health care, even if in there has been a continuing notion that beneficiaries can contribute by way of user charges in both education and health services. There is an underlying assumption that the state should carry most of the costs. However, these are two sectors that are high users of higher level personnel and are therefore costly to manage. Moreover, some of the key personnel are highly mobile internationally.

6.1 EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Education System is at the base of much of the social transformation and economic restructuring that Dominica has achieved as a society and economy adjusting to the demands of the early 21st century. The knowledge factor and thus its human resource endowment will determine its competitiveness in the new dispensation of the 21st century. Its Government has been, for long committed to closing the gap between the country and its neighbours in respect of its educational standards. The most significant of these has been the universalisation of secondary education. The education system is effectively a mobilization institution determining the transformation path of the society.

6.1.1 MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT, SPORTS AND YOUTH AFFAIRS

The Primary School System has been bursting at the seams in the urban and suburban areas of the country. This is perhaps indicative of rural urban migration. By and large, there is universal primary and more recently universal secondary education: each child is guaranteed access from primary to secondary. The school bus service ensures that all students can reach a secondary school close to their residence.

All core texts are available for both primary and secondary school students, and pupils or students can access them for a rental fee at 33 percent of the cost of the text. At the secondary level, scholars and bursars get some of their books free, with a cap placed on scholars of \$400 and bursars \$100. Examination fees at secondary level are also paid for at the end of five year period.

While both primary and secondary education is free, in government secondary schools parents contribute an annual sum per student, to treat with those costs that the Ministry is unable to support. In the past, students had to engage in Belle marche to raise funds for some school supplies.

At the tertiary level, there is the Community College or State College which is run by a Board. It is a fee paying institution, with students being charged \$250 per subject. The first year of University is available through the College and the Ministry is working with the college to secure matriculation of its programmes with the University of the West Indies. The College collaborates with colleges in the United States and also with an institution in Wales which arrangement has allowed its students ease of entry into the programmes of those institutions. The Nursing School has been incorporated into the Community College.

6.1.2 EDUCATION TRUST FUND

The Fund was established by an Act of Parliament in 1981. This was done in the period immediately following Hurricane David. People needed assistance and parents were having difficulty in sending children to school. The Fund was designed to assist students at secondary school mainly but it was extended to pupils at the primary level also in extreme cases. The Board of the Fund is appointed by the Minister of Education and consists of seven members, who come from all walks of life.

In the administering of the Fund, care is taken to ensure that there is no duplication: parents are required to complete a form when seeking assistance. There is means testing of beneficiaries on an annual basis, to ensure that those whose circumstances might have changed for the better, might be graduated out of the programme of support. Other agencies may send their applicants to the Education Trust Fund, but there is no formal relationship with it.

The Board consults with school principals, nurses and even with people in Village Councils in selecting students for assistance. In the months of July and August of every year, the Trust makes its selection of students for assistance.

The Fund provides for textbooks, transportation, and for the payment of other fees or charges. Students moving from primary to secondary may also need assistance in the first year. At the time of the interview in 2008, there were sixty-six students receiving

assistance: some 748 applications had been processed, which means that less than 10 percent of the applicants got support.

There is some sense of area distribution of support in that applicants in the north east and south east tend to be more in need. By and large, though, schools are well distributed except in the south east of the island, where students may need to travel the longest distance to get to secondary school. While students may pay half the adult fare, costs of transport are very high: it may cost a student about \$8.00 or more per day to travel to and from school.

In respect of assistance for transport, the Trust would pay half of costs. In respect of textbooks, first formers are provided with \$100, second and third formers with \$150 and those in higher forms with \$200, given the price of the books. There is a revolving scheme in place, so that students have to return the books every year.

There is a book rental which has started with students in the first form. Also, the Government introduced a new programme in 2008, through which free transport is made available to students in the south east and in the north east of the island.

The sources of support for the Fund are the subvention from the Central Government, fund raising from the corporate sector, and also from past beneficiaries and other private individuals. The Government provides about \$40,000 per annum but it is estimated that \$190,000 to \$200,000 is needed to cover the requirements of those in need.

On a scale of 1-5, the Trust would rate themselves at 4/5.

6.1.3 ADULT EDUCATION DIVISION

The Unit was established soon after the attainment of political independence. The programme is delivered in the seven zones in which the country is divided. The education zones in which the country is divided are coterminous with those of the Ministry of Health. There are about eleven communities in each zone and there is an officer responsible for each zone. There was no office in the post for the South East Zone at the time of the interview.

The Department collaborates with about 50 CBOs and some 1000 learners, the largest concentration of whom is located in the South West. This is explained not only by there being a larger population in the area, but also by the fact that people who work in Roseau and reside elsewhere elect to go to classes there, and also by the fact that people prefer to attend classes outside of their area of residence.

The last literacy survey conducted in the country was in 1993. It was found then, that 18 percent of the adult population was illiterate: approximately 25 percent of males and 14 percent of females. The highest rates of illiteracy were found in St. Patrick. This is explained by the greater freedom given to boys as compared to girls.

More women participate in classes than men, in the ratio of 80:20 currently and girls have a different orientation to school and to studies than boys. In order to reach men it is necessary to develop ingenious arrangements. Classes are arranged specifically for men: one officer conducted a class in a shop. It is necessary to take the classes to the clients in this case. There are particular groups of men that have also been targeted. An attempt is made to address the issue of parenting at the same time as the literacy problem is addressed.

The unit collaborates with various agencies in developing programmes for their employees. About 20 percent of the men would be carpenters, masons and messengers. Another special programme has been mounted for farmers in Marigot, and the Department is to approach the Banana Association to get them to train their members.

There is a special programme mounted in the summer, which attracts a large clientele. It seems that interest in the CSME has prompted some number of people to seek to upgrade their education in anticipation of migration.

6.1.4 DOCUMENTATION CENTRE AND LIBRARY

The Documentation Centre has been in existence since 1990. It was originally set up to collect primarily government socio-economic documents and make them available to governmental agencies. Clients also include to a large extent, students.

Services provided include document provision such as reports and surveys and preservation of government documents. The Centre also assists students with research projects. At the time of the interview, the Centre was conducting a survey which would allow Ministries to identify documentation in their possession, so that they may be lodged at the Centre. There exists a relationship between the Documentation Centre and the Archives Centre now responsible for archives. Documents lodged at the Documentation Centre are more recent in nature, while the Archive Centre preserves records of the distant past and documents of historical and legislative value.

The Library is also part of the Documentation Centre and offers book lending services, research services, internet services as well as photocopying. There is also a mobile library Portsmouth. The Library also mounts a programme involving visits by its officers to schools to conduct sessions on book care, use of the library as well as on the gathering of information and use of a dictionary and encyclopedia.

The location of the Library poses a disadvantage for users as there was a drop in circulations when they were moved. Also in the Grand Bay area, the service was not used as much as in other areas and a survey was being conducted to ascertain the reasons as to why this was so.

6.2 HEALTH

The country has experienced the change in the health profile comparable to the other countries of the region. The incidence of communicable diseases with the exception of HIV/AIDS has declined but life style diseases have emerged as the dominant form of morbidity consequential on life style changes and the shift in diets.

6.2.1 MINISTRY OF HEALTH

The Primary Health Care System provides service to the population across the entire island, through health centres that are well distributed and within easy reach of most. The standard services are provided to all residents of Dominica, including immunisations, and all these services are free.

The Secondary System consists of the Princess Margaret Hospital and two 'cottage' hospitals. There is a flat charge made on persons using the services of the hospital. This means effectively, that there is a cost sharing arrangement since these charges invariably do not cover the costs of the respective treatments, with costs paid for by the State.

Tertiary care has to be secured overseas. Assistance to those in need of tertiary care is limited. Most persons have to engage in fund-raising to secure resources for treatment abroad. Fire officers and similar officials who may be injured on the job may be sent abroad for treatment. There has been discussion on the advisability of National Health Insurance but there is no closure to the discussion. It would be some time before this is introduced.

6.2.2 HIV/AIDS RESPONSE UNIT

The Organisation has been in operation since 2004. It was established by the Government to take advantage of the availability of funds from the Global Fund. The Unit is funded therefore with resources from the Government of Dominica and the Global Fund.

There is a National AIDS Advisory Committee, which includes representation from NGOs, the Legal Department of the Government, the National Youth Council, and the Ministry of Health. The first case of the disease was recorded in 1987 - an adult and paediatric case. There have since been 342 cases, and about 120 persons might have died since.

In addition to testing and counselling and training people to provide counselling, there is the treatment and care function and the initiatives that are oriented to prevention. In the latter regard, there are programmes geared to prevent infections, specifically targeting the youth, and the work on the prevention of mother/child infection.

The Core Treatment Programme consists of:

- Free testing: there are testing days in communities;
- The supply of anti-retroviral drugs;
- Provision of supplies to deal with nutrition, in those cases where there is need: this has been problematic area for some clients, who might have fared better if there was adequate nutrition available to them;
- Assistance with funds for transport to those in need, but with care taken to avoid the dependency syndrome.

The Unit collaborates with other agencies including:

- the Red Cross in respect of the Peer Education Training Programme which targets 150 youth per annum;
- the Catholic Diocese, through which the Catholic Youth are reached, in two nine week training programmes;
- the Out-of-School Youth Camp Rescue which is conducted on an annual basis and targets youth who need rescuing, including unemployed youth and those who have fallen by the way side;
- YAM - the Youth Advocacy Movement, established by the Planned Parenthood Association;

- the Dominica Social Centre, which treats with drop-outs and unwed mothers engaging in educational programmes, providing a second chance to disadvantaged youth.

Also with the assistance of the Planned Parenthood Association, they distribute condoms all over Dominica in 32 major centres: both male and female condoms are distributed.

There is a constant battle with the Roman Catholic Church. It is the experience of the Unit, however, that people do not follow faithfully the dictates of the Church, and this allows the Unit to treat with the problem of HIV/AIDS as a public health issue mainly.

The clients of the Unit are mainly people in the age group 20-44, but there are some in the over 50 years or even 60 years of age, mainly among the retiree population, who may engage in transactional sex. There are the sugar daddies as well.

The Unit contributes to poverty reduction in the main through its programme of condom distribution which has surely assisted many lower and middle income people to avoid unwanted pregnancies.

There are sensitisation programmes on radio in English and in Patois. The Unit would like to reach out to young people in the school system, since it is known that some number of them are sexually active.

The Unit has a link to the MSM community in Dominica, but it has not been possible to arrange for them to come for testing. There is a similar problem with sex workers. There is evidence that women go to neighbouring islands to engage as sex workers: Tortola, St. Marten, and Guadeloupe are some of the destinations. They may come back infected.

There are Haitian clients as well as a few Dominicans who are clients of the Unit. The country does not have such rules in place as exists in the Cayman Islands, where non-nationals discovered to be infected are required to leave.

By and large, the agency can reach almost all whom they need to meet, and all who need to know of the services on offer. They visit with youth on the block and are prepared to go wherever youth congregate.

The Unit collaborates with the Ministry of Education and the Welfare Department, and with the Council of Churches. In respect of regional and international agencies, in addition to the Global Fund, there is the Clinton Fund, and the links with such agencies

as CAREC and links with the OECS Secretariat. On the whole, the environment has become receptive to the discussion of HIV/AIDS in the society.

In spite of the staff problems that the agency has, it regards its performance at the level of 4.5 on the scale of 1 to 5. Its limited staff engages in multi-tasking. However, there is a lack of personnel to conduct the testing and counselling for thousands of persons in attempting to meet the targets set by the Global Fund.

The Global Fund does monitoring and there are reports made to UNAIDS, on a regular basis. Funding was due to run out in February 2010, but there was nothing in place to deal with financing after this, at the time of the conduct of the interview.

6.2.3 HEALTH PROMOTIONS UNIT

The purpose of the Health Promotions Unit is to allow persons to empower themselves by taking full responsibility for their health.

Health promotion activities are undertaken in schools and a several Programmes exist. A Wellness Programme has been started in some communities. An example of the success of programmes mounted by the Unit is in Woodford Hill, where residents previously could not get vegetables, but now they have a number of greenhouses in the community. Thus there is no longer a shortage of vegetables there. In Grand Bay there is the Healthy Heart Programme, and a Walking Programme as well as a Weight Watchers Programme in La Plaine. There are also quite a few prostate cancer programmes in communities. This has led to an increased awareness of persons knowing about their status as it relates to prostate cancer. All programmes offered are both preventative and supportive in nature.

However, some of the programmes offered by the Unit have had to be curtailed due to the lack of human resources. There is also a lack of financial resources to drive communication programmes as well as medicine distribution. Gaps in service provision include programmes for adolescents as well as lifestyle diseases in poorer communities.

There is an initiative to forge links with several Departments/Ministries such as the Department of Local Government, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Tourism. They have also extended the process of forging links to the community and have been targeting CBOs.

In Table 6.1 are listed the organisations discussed above and an assessment of the degree to which they have contributed to improving living conditions for the population. They are a mix of developmental, preventative, supportive and remedial organisations.

TABLE 6.1: HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT- ASSESSMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFICACY

NO.	NAME OF ORGANISATION	PRIMARY FOCUS	KEY ACTIONS FOR IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIVES FOR DOMINICANS	SCORE
1.	Ministry of Education, Human Resources Development, Sports and Youth Affairs	Developmental and Supportive	Has universal primary and secondary education with support mechanisms to ensure access such as a book rental programme as well as a school bus service.	3
2.	Education Trust Fund	Supportive	Assists parents who are experiencing difficulties in sending their children to school in the areas of textbooks, transportation and other school fees and charges; beneficiaries are determined based on means testing on an annual basis.	4
3.	Adult Education Division	Developmental and Remedial	Seeks to address literacy problems of adults within society.	3
4.	Documentation Centre and Library	Developmental	Provision of information and public records for the community, as well as library and internet access.	3.5
5.	Ministry of Health	Preventative, Supportive and Remedial	Is expected to provide primary and secondary health care services to the population. Limited assistance for tertiary health care services is also provided.	4
6.	HIV/AIDS Response Unit	Preventative and Supportive	Seeks to educate the population about safe sex practices through its preventative oriented initiatives in addition to response initiatives such as the supply of anti-retroviral drugs and nutrition related supplies.	4
7.	Health Promotions Unit	Preventative and Remedial	Undertakes health promotion activities which seek to empower persons to take full responsibility for their health.	4

In sum, the country has developed the institutional arrangements in Education and Health to ensure universal access to the population of Primary and Secondary Education and of primary health care facilities. There remain problems of illiteracy and poor performance in the education system especially among males, which is not uncharacteristic of other parts of the region. However, having been a laggard country in respect of education, the catch up process will require institutions that can help to pitch-fork large sections of the society to higher levels of performance in respect of educational achievement.

In respect of health, the issue is to avoid having the society succumb further to the patterns of food consumption based on imported foods, and to the more sedentary life styles associated with rapid urbanisation which have resulted in the increase in life style diseases elsewhere in the Region.

SECTION 7: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND WELFARE

As is the case elsewhere in the Commonwealth Caribbean, the active involvement of the Government in provisioning consistently for social welfare dates back to the implementation of the recommendations of the Moyne Commission Report in the post World War II years. Social welfare consisted largely of transfers by way of 'poor relief', and therefore was essentially of a supportive nature. In more recent times, greater emphasis has been placed on the empowerment of poorer people and on social development in helping people to achieve the wherewithal to keep themselves out of poverty. This shift in orientation has been reflected as well in the nature of CBOs and NGOs that have developed along the way. This section examines institutions that are focused on the more recent concerns as well as on the traditional social welfare issues.

7.1 DOMINICA SOCIAL INVESTMENT FUND (DSIF)

The organization has been in existence since 2003. Its primary purpose is to address problems of poverty, and in that regard its point of departure has been a poverty assessment exercise that was undertaken early in the first decade of the present century. It was established by an Act of Parliament. It was previously under the Ministry of Finance but is now located in the Ministry of Community Development. It began its operations actually in 2007 so it has been in operation for about 2 years. It was established under the present Government administration.

It is funded by the EU. The present Director was engaged for a mere seven months, at the time of the interview in 2009, and so is into his first year of operation as Chief Executive. The funding from the EU comes to an end at the end of October in 2009, and in that regard the Board is seeking funds to continue the Programme: otherwise it will have to close. It has been funded completely by the EU; actually there has been very little from the Government of Dominica itself except for the facilities it has provided and some support for the research process. It has provided no direct financing actually.

The current budget of the SIF is about Euro 4.4m. This was supposed to be spent over a three-year period but has had to be reduced to a period of two years six months. In terms of its personnel, there are two Civil Society Officers with a background in rural sociology there is a communications officer, a procurement officer, and someone who works in the area of public health and local government.

It has made a number of interventions across various communities in Dominica but one of the most outstanding examples of its work has been in respect of Boetica group where it has been involved in teaching people sewing, cake decorating and catering generally, and has also been involved in an agricultural enterprise which has led to the development of pig rearing, rabbit rearing, chicken rearing and the rearing of goats. Out of this initiative the people of Boetica have been supplying to supermarkets so that the project has been income-generating.

SIF has also turned its attention to the preservation of culture among youths. Many have not been involved in Trade, but in all forms of idleness and drug-running. In that regard SIF was encouraged a youth group to develop and become involved in a cultural activity and they have come up with a product which is recorded on CDs/DVDs; the SIF has also reported and encouraged young people to get involved in sports. Boetica is in the south-east of the island and SIF regards it as its main success story, having regard to the problems of the area.

It has also done some good work in Petit Soufriere where the oil industry is being resuscitated. It has attempted an intervention in Dubic, in trying to support and encourage fishermen in the area to get their act together. By and large, its projects can be divided into those which are community-based projects and those which deal with access to infrastructure, as for example access roads for farmers. Dubic is a community that poses a special problem. It is dependent-prone and it is difficult to get the people to take responsibility for themselves. Despite this SIF has been working with them and specifically with the recently installed president. The previous one was removed, and it can be said that the community is evolving, hopefully into something better.

There are a number of important projects that SIF has supported in the Caribbean. The vulnerable groups identified by the SIF generally include Women, Children at Risk, Youth at Risk, the Elderly, the Carib Community and the Disabled.

In its most recent initiative in Boetica it can be said that everyone in the community has been touched by the work of SIF. This community of Boetica is supposed to have poverty levels of 43 percent plus. Duvant, Brioche and Boetica were communities which were identified as poor even before the 1990s and required a programmed approach to poverty reduction.

In Boetica also there is a cassava project that is being promoted and it is expected that a tulum factory would be built. Tulum is a farine made from cassava. An important issue of course, is the issue of standards to be observed in production. The south-east of the

island has generally been poorer, with poverty levels as high as 45% and that has been responsible for large numbers of people migrating from the area and moving out of the community in general. Another programme mentioned by the SIF is the water programme in Capuchin which, too, might have a poverty level of over 50 percent.

But there is a new thrust that has come out of the initiatives in eco-tourism. The area abounds with interesting natural amenities. It is possible to conceive of nature-based resorts. There is also the produce that can be secured from the area, creating possibilities for young people to be employed in the hospitality industry, in eco-tourism. SIF is committed to supporting the thrust in eco-tourism.

In respect of the challenges faced, a number can be identified. For example, the elderly – there have been a few programmes for this vulnerable group, but it remains an area of focus.

There is a lack of technical officers to conduct the programme. There is a recognition that Dominica did not get this programme off to the best of starts as compared to SVG which has been much better organized and did much better with of the funds that came by way of the SIF. It should be recognized that Dominica faces more acute problems than SVG, in terms of the topography of the island and the cost of servicing the communities.

There are other agencies and organizations with which the SIF works including Bureau of Standards, IICA, CARDI. It has engaged as well with NGOs and CBOs, and its mandate really is to strengthen these organizations which work with the poor. It has succeeded in getting a number of NGOs to work together. It has done programmes for Drug Offenders and for children who have been abandoned. It has worked closely with the cadets and it sees itself as contributing to work done among the disadvantaged groups.

It has also worked with people in the fishing industry and has contributed substantially in that regard to the National Association of Fishermen. It has also promoted carpentry in a number of communities and generally it has made some impression across poorer communities. Boetica, however, is still regarded as its main success story along with its intervention in the Carib community. Indeed the Carib Community has progressed and it is now easier to work with the community.

In the short period of its existence, the Fund has been able to make some important interventions in the community development. Its personnel seem to have an excellent understanding of the functioning of the society, thus affording it a capacity to intervene in areas where its approaches can yield positive results.

7.2 BASIC NEEDS TRUST FUND PROGRAMME

The Fund which is resourced by the CDB, was established in 1979, following the Hurricane Dean. From the very beginning, its focus was on the upgrade of infrastructure in poorer communities and in the poorer countries of the region. This usually involved the improvement of living conditions in rural communities.

The first three phases of the BNTF were directed at hardcore infrastructure – water systems, schools, and roads. Dominica derived benefits from the arrangement. Central government could not cater for all infrastructural projects. Many of the roads which have attracted funding are feeder roads. Most of the roads projects being financed fall in this category.

Starting with BNTF 4, the focus shifted to poverty reduction. In this more people-centred approach, a participatory approach was incorporated in community assessments. There has also been a more bottom-up approach since then. Skills training and the empowerment of people became institutionalized in the programmes.

BNTF 5 is nearing completion and has been structured around the poverty reduction plan for the country. A number of vulnerable groups have been specifically targeted – persons with disabilities, organizations providing services to the vulnerable, the National Children’s Home, and sponsored training programmes for particular groups.

There are four Ministries of the Government that together with civil society organizations, constitute a Project Steering Committee to assess and approve projects for funding from the BNTF. There is a Project Manager, and a Liaison Officer working with the BNTF, and the latter is responsible for research all requests and for visiting all projects to make sure that expenditure conforms with expectations.

In the past, countries were expected to contribute 40 percent of the cost. Given the difficulties that have been experienced in recent times, the CDB has agreed to allow them to put in matching funds of up to 20 percent. Small projects are those that are under US\$35,000. Large projects are those over \$35,000, but there is an upper limit of \$500,000.

The CDB has to give its approval for expenditure on the projects on which the Committee agrees. The approval of the Cabinet is required also for large projects. Recently, the CDB has been able to improve its approval process such that a decision can be taken within a month. The approval process in past was much longer, and this would

frustrate the communities, and led to be the BNTF becoming associated with slow delivery.

Challenges:

- a) The limited number of consultants in Dominica working with BNTF – the consultants are key players in this process of design and supervision of projects.
- b) Contractors – the contractors have been shying away from what they see as excessive paper work, involved in complying with the requirements of reporting on projects for which they have been contracted;
- c) Performance Bonds – this is challenging to small contractors and it is difficult to bring them to the level where they can comply with requirements: attempts are being made through training programme to build capacity of the contractors in plan reading, cost controls;
- d) Information management – Challenge of getting the proper costing and additional information to put in the MIS: sometimes it takes them a long period of time to get information from various stakeholders prior to sending to the bank;
- e) Monitoring and evaluation – there is need for greater emphasis, staffing here is tight. With what they do in the office they need additional staff to do monitoring and evaluation on a continuous basis; and
- f) Lengthiness of the process.

There may be need to review the process to reduce the bureaucracy involved with administering smaller projects if programmes are to have some impact. The bureaucracy is getting more complicated with time.

The BNTF has worked closely with certain organisations in the more recent past, providing them with relevant assistance, namely:

- National Development Foundation of Dominica;
- Dominica Council for Aging;
- DADP;
- CALLS;
- Youth Division;
- Community Development;
- Women’s Bureau;
- Adult Education;
- Fisheries Cooperative; and
- Bayoil Cooperative.

The communities do welcome BNTF and believe there is great appreciation for the work of the BNTF. The Management of the BNTF would rank themselves at '4' in respect of the quality of delivery.

7.3 YOUTH DEPARTMENT

The goal of the Department is to provide service to young people to develop their potential. Programmes mounted by the Department are financed mainly by the Government and funding for specific projects is obtained from UNICEF, UNESCO, OAS and UNDP.

Programmes offered by the Department include an Education Programme, Leadership Training, a Summer Camp Programme as well as a Life Skills Programme. There are also programmes which offer non-formal skills and training as well as enterprise development training. The non-formal skills training programme targets unemployed and under-employed youth while the business enterprise development training programmes targets those youth who have the desire to start a business or already have an existing business. 4H programmes ensure the involvement of young people in agriculture and the provision of food for home consumption. Most of the young persons trained under 4H programmes now have their own farms and even employ other persons on these farms.

The Department is staffed by 1 Chief Youth Development Officer, 1 Deputy Chief Youth Development Officer, 2 Programme Coordinators, 1 Job Developer, 1 Inspector/Trainer, 7 Field Officers, 1 Senior Clerk, 1 Junior Clerk, 3 Administrative personnel and 1 Messenger. There are also several volunteers who work in the various programmes, depending on the programme. The Summer Programme in particular, funded by the Olympic Committee, targets degree and college students to volunteer their services and it encourages them to contribute to society. Stipends are also offered to volunteers in the case of the Life Skills Programme.

The Department target schools, in particular those with problems of violence, to ensure that students could be reoriented to arrive at a greater sense of direction and purpose as they prepare for adult life. A schools Based Leadership Programme was designed originally for all schools: however, it is being delivered only in some schools.

Gaps in service provision include marginalised youth and those youth "on the block". The Department feels that they need to reach such persons in a more tangible way. More work also needs to be done with teenaged mothers as its initiatives with such mothers

remain very limited. A hotline for youth and their parents is also needed to cater to issues such as suicide among youth, and violence among youth as well as reaching out to youth who are troubled, in one way or another.

Challenges to the work of the Department include distractions to youth posed by the drug culture. As such, strategies and programmes need to be reinvented to attract the attention of youth. New strategies include the offering of incentives, job placement as well as collaborative efforts of the Ministry of Labour and Employees Federation to ascertain labour market needs.

Those accessing the Programmes mounted by the Department are more likely to be female. There is also the development of a culture of young persons not wanting to work. This has been experienced first-hand when personnel have gone to communities with programmes and are told such.

Challenges internal to the organisation include financial and technical resource constraints. These result in the Department not be able to create the magnitude of impact that they should, being a Government Department. There is also the absence of a Strategic Plan, however this was being addressed which would allow the Department to be more focused. There is also the lack of a database on youth which would inform youth policy and programmes for youth development.

The Department of Youth collaborates with the Dominica Planned Parenthood Association, the Association for Disabled, the National Development Foundation, the OAS as well as financial institutions such as credit unions.

7.3.1 THE NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL

The National Youth Council was formed in 1970. It went into abeyance in the 1980s but was revived in the 1996. There are about 115 youth organisations, but many of them are not functioning. An organisation must have at least ten members ranging in age between 15 and 36 years of age to qualify for membership of the Council.

The Council promotes youth development, by assisting youth groups across the island. It receives quarterly subventions from the Government and raises funds through fundraising activities and from private sponsors. At the time of the interview, the quarterly subvention from the Government was \$12,000.

There is an Administrator Coordinator and an Administrative Assistant. All other positions in the Council are held by volunteers.

The Council provides the voice of young people, allowing them to be heard. It exercises a positive influence, in keeping many of them off the street. While it does not focus on poverty reduction per se, its work with young people contributes to this objective by empowering them in their communities and by encouraging them to take advantage of educational opportunity.

The majority of the groups consist of young ladies. In the view of the Executive of the Council, it is difficult to organise young people: they are not usually willing to become involved in organisations.

The Council works closely with the Department of Youth, but also with the Dominica Women's Council, the Youth Business Trust. It is involved with the CARICOM Youth Ambassador Programme.

The Council, with the help of the Commonwealth Youth Programme, has sponsored programmes in Entrepreneurship. The Dominica Youth Business Trust is programme of the Government and the Council actively promotes participation by its member organisations.

There are after school programmes through the Achievement Learning Centres or Resource Centres in many communities. There are many who have computers at home, so there is no need for centres to be equipped with computers.

The Council seeks to highlight the achievements of young people in Sport, Education and Entrepreneurship.

It is the view of the Executives of the Council that high unemployment and underemployment creates the conditions for young people to seek ways of earning quick money, and this has prompted many to enter the drug trade and get into gangs.

There are links to St. Vincent, Guadeloupe and St. Marten, with Dominica being both a supply source and a transshipment centre. There is a roaring trade taking place and few get arrested. The evidence of conspicuous consumption among young males who have no visible source of employment betrays the presence of the underground activity.

There is hidden prostitution among girls, and teenage pregnancy is one by-product of this. There are girls who, driven by poverty, seek to make money with the connivance of their mothers, by engaging in sexual favours to men; even girls below the age of consent may be involved.

The Council rates its work as '3' on a scale of 1 to 5.

7.4 THE PRISON

The existing facility was built in 1955 to accommodate 80 inmates. The present prison population (at the time of the interview) was 260. The efforts at rehabilitation have worked, but more can be done. There is need for physical expansion: new facilities were being constructed and this had provided an opportunity for training inmates in construction skills. The basic areas of training were carpentry, joinery, and welding. The prison offered other types of training in leather craft, tailoring, auto-body painting, mechanics, animal husbandry and farming.

There was nothing in place to deal with socio-psychological issues and in that regard, it was necessary for the authorities to seek assistance from experts outside of the Prison System. It had proven difficult to secure the services of relevant personnel in this area. The schools and the hospitals had been more successful than the Prison.

Recidivism has been a problem, mainly among short-term offenders. The longer term offenders seem to stay out possibly because they opt to pursue programmes that assist them in staying out of prison when they are released. Offenders are usually younger persons – 35 years and younger.

Thefts and burglaries have become more pronounced, but it was not felt that this was related to the state of the economy. There has been an escalation in drug offences, with cocaine becoming a problem in the society. However, there was little in place for drug abusers. There was a problem in the prison itself, in that although there were no gangs, marijuana has surfaced within the prison and as well cell phones. There was no evidence of homosexuality in the prison.

The Prison is not well equipped to treat with the problem of recidivism. It might have succeeded in the control function in locking inmates away from society for the time of their sentences, but it is limited in its capacity to engage in development and preventive work among the inmates, albeit fully understanding of the need to list in this direction

in prison administration, and in so far, as it seeks to prepare those who are willing to acquire useful skills while in prison.

7.5 CENTRE WHERE ADOLESCENTS LEARN TO LOVE AND SERVE (CALLS)

CALLS had been in operation for some 14 years at the time of the interview. The St. John's School was the base in its early foundation. The previous convent had been phased out and was used as the site for the CALLS.

Its programme is modelled after SERVOL in Trinidad and Tobago. In the early days, clients entered at age 17 years and above. The entry age has been reduced to age 16. The programme is of two year duration. Trainees pursue programmes relating to construction skills. The first three months are devoted to psychological issues, and the last three months are spent in a functioning business operation. In the light of the introduction of universal secondary education, there is some adjustment to be done in the programme.

In any event, the thrust of the programme is to help people to achieve their full potential at this point in time of their lives. Much of its funding comes from the Government. At least \$6,000 per month is required to run the organisation. Moreover, some of the benefactors that the agency has had, have not been forthcoming in recent times.

The Christian Brothers have been the prime benefactors, with the firm, Nassief, and the Government being the other contributors. Finance is critical to the operation of the organisation.

There is a full-time staff of 7 and 15 active volunteers. The programmes offered comprise of woodwork, cosmetology, and laundry services. CALLS works closely with the Agricultural Station. There is also a computer laboratory maintained by one of the Brothers and classes are offered in this field. Overall, trainees are prepared for the world of work by training, counselling and the orientation to employment that is provided. There is an intake every two years of about 20 trainees: there were 16 boys and 4 girls at the time of the interview.

Trainees would not have completed high school for a variety of reasons: some might have been subjected to physical and sexual abuse. CALLS provides a stable environment of caring adults. There has been some assistance from the Japanese Government, through the embassy in Trinidad. It is hoped that this can be used to create a culture of Scientific Agriculture.

The agency is seeking resources to expand the physical and human resources: including in the former is the matter of the water problem on the site. There is also the difficulty that some trainees face in their not having breakfast before coming to class. Again, it has been necessary to secure assistance from elsewhere to assist young people in need.

Attendance has tended to be at 100 percent, in spite of the fact that trainees have to come from as far away as Salisbury. Some of them are sponsored in respect of their needs for food and transport.

About three hundred trainees would have passed through the system since CALLS has been in operation, and at least half would have done so successfully. Young girls who have children have a chance of continuing their education.

They usually drop out of secondary school on becoming pregnant: the schools tend to discourage their returning to school. CALLS provides day care facilities for their children and babies. There is one trainee who had two children before entering CALLS. Trainees find a safe harbour in coming to CALLS.

Most of the parents hardly care whether their young people attend or not. On the other hand, those that do, face the challenge of ensuring enough for their children. There are mothers working at Ross University, on the Minimum Wage and have to provide \$10.00 per day per child. There are about 6 or 7 trainees that have to be sponsored. There are seldom any fathers in the picture. At the same time, the young people have to face peer pressure as well: why are you going to that drop-out place?

The organisation prides itself in filling an important gap in the social system. Many talk about alternative education but few are prepared to contribute effectively. Many of the trainees need basic education and assistance in getting up to the level that they would ordinarily attained. There is little skills training in the school system, and the quality of education leaves much to be desired in some schools.

With more resources, the institution would be able to accomplish far more. There is need a programme in outboard mechanics, and there is need for more resources in respect of this. CALLS is not equipped to handle any large influx. However, they are aware that those in the school system would like to 'deport' some of their students to CALLS.

The institution is qualified but does not have the capacity to treat with troubled teens. It has to be involved in teaching students and at the same time 'raising kids' most of whom are sexually active.

The institution has to treat with situations of boy-friends supporting girls while they are attending school. It is necessary to send the girls to Family Planning. CALLS has succeeded in getting some off drugs while they have been in attendance.

The problem is that their parents may also be on drugs. In 'rap sessions' and discussions, it all comes out. At CALLS, the young people hear of a different approach and orientation to life and to a range of areas: this creates conflicts for them. Boys see the need to protect their mothers from boyfriends. Only the Social Centre in Roseau has anything resembling what CALLS provides.

Now with universal secondary education, there are gaps that are not being addressed. Many young people fall between the cracks. They take almost all who come. When nothing works, they come to the school. On a scale of 1 to 5, they would rate themselves at 5.

CALLS works closely with Ministry of Agriculture and with DSIF. There is also a loose relationship with the Ministry of Education. The work of the organisation is well recognised in the country and in 2008, it won an award of the Dominica Academy of Arts and Sciences for its contribution to national life, and for excellence in service to the community generally and to youth development specifically.

7.6 YOUTH QUAKE

The organisation has been in existence since 1978. It is financed by grants. The National Children's Home of the UK was the source of support at one time, with two-thirds of the funding coming from this agency. In the more current period, the Government of Dominica has provided about 55 percent of the funding, with the rest coming from funding agencies and from its own fund-raising activities. Indeed, the Government has been involved as a provider of support since 1987.

The agency has a staff of six, four of whom are part-time. Three of the staff has had training in Social Work and the other three are benefiting from in-service training. The Board of Directors shapes policy for the organisation, and is selected at the Annual General Meeting. Membership is open to all citizens of Dominica. It seeks at all times, to observe the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Its clientele consists of 12 persons resident, as well as 35 children in its day programme and another 9 or ten persons who are in the outreach programme. The 12 residential clients are children facing crisis. They may have problems and may be resident in the

home for two to three years. The youngest to be admitted to the programme have been at ages 7 years and 8 years of age.

Youth Quake seeks to rehabilitate such persons who might be referred by the Welfare Department, the Police, Teachers, or their own parents, or members of the Community itself. There are however, some cases where the problem is with the parent and the young person has no where to go.

Given the children are under the age of 16, Youth Quake seeks to ensure that their education is dealt with and they attend the formal school setting. Youth Quake has a small farm where residents are taught some basic farming including animal husbandry - chickens, cows, and rabbits. They learn about the growing of ground provisions, pine apples and other fruit.

The output is used to feed them and to create a fund from the sale of supplies. However there is a stigma attached to the programme and the residents are known as 'Home Farmers'. There is no other skill training available through Youth Quake: the view is that there is need to avoid duplicating what is being done elsewhere, and the residents should go other institutions to acquire skills.

Youth Quake has had some successes with some of these young people. Some came illiterate and were taught to read and write. A trained Electrician is numbered among its past residents in addition to some who have been to the State College.

There have been more boys than girls who have been resident at Youth Quake. However, girls have posed an even greater challenge, when they have been resident. Most of them have suffered child abuse in some form or other. Girls may be sexually active: however, none has ever become pregnant while at Youth Quake.

With boys, the challenge has been in respect of drug abuse: a number of boys have been caught with marijuana. In the six month period before the interview, almost half of the boys have been referred by the Courts. They would have been sent to the State Prison if they were not admitted to Youth Quake. There is no prison for juveniles. Young people must be under the age sixteen to be accepted in Youth Quake.

The management of Youth Quake sees a worsening of conditions. The Juvenile Court used to meet once per month: it is now necessary for it to meet weekly. The youth are now far more aggressive than before. Conflicts among young men used to be settled with fisticuffs. All kinds of weapons are now employed.

The Drug problem is becoming more acute. One would be resident had to be turned away and sent to the Drug Rehabilitation Centre since he was a victim of cocaine abuse. Children are being exposed to drugs in the home and may be involved in sales on behalf of the parents. It is now widely accepted that children would sell on behalf of their parents.

The Day Participants may be kept by Youth Quake for supervision. The Outreach Programme targets mainly the parents, and is meant to assist those parents who see certain risks among their children.

Youth Quake collaborates with a number of agencies, including the National Children's Home, the Welfare Department (whose counsellors provide support to Youth Quake), as well as the Police and the school system, which assists in ensuring that residents can complete their education.

Sometimes when children are sent back to their parents, problems may arise. There are illiterate parents who cannot cope with managing troubled youth. Some children return to the Home within months. They have to be encouraged to remain in their own homes: otherwise they may have to be placed with foster parents.

The main challenges faced lie in:

- Financial limitations;
- The lack of expertise needed to deal with difficulties; and
- Lack of parental support.

No fees are charged of parents. In the case of many parents, once the children are placed in the institution, they never look back. The greatest level of progress is seen in the cases where parents are more supportive.

Youth Quake has worked well with the Ministry of Community Development. Moreover, the Prime Minister and his office seem to have a full appreciation of the challenge faced by Youth Quake. The organisation will require better facilities and more trained staff to cope with the emerging realities in Dominica. Its current resources are dwarfed by the enormity of the task and the scale of the problem.

7.7 WATERFRONT AND ALLIED WORKERS UNION (WAWU)

WAWU which established in 1964, currently represents 43 bargaining units in the economy. There was a name change in 1969 as a result of requests of other workers in other areas for representation. Its primary purpose is to provide services to workers with

respect to representation and collective bargaining including mobilisation and articulation of views. The mission of WAWU is:

To improve trade union effectiveness, strength and militancy.

There exists seven unions in Dominica; however there is no umbrella organisation. There was relative peace at the time of the interview but there are issues which could make the situation explosive if not properly managed.

The maximum term of any union executive is for a period three consecutive terms and persons desirous of serving must come from within the public service. The Union came about as a result of economic problems being experienced in the country at the time of its formation. They experienced three years with no growth in the economy and employers were laying off workers. The union through timely action was able to maintain employment levels within the private sector. The Union has a successful record of negotiating with employers.

There have been other periods of difficulty that required strong action by the Union. From 2003, there were negotiations with the Dominica Port Authority at the time, which has been renamed the Dominica Sea and Airport Authority. The union initiated strike action and the matter was sent to the Industrial Relations Tribunal. Workers on the Port such as stevedores were formerly unrepresented and not given contracts which meant that the continuity of their service would not be honoured. However, with the complete takeover by the Air and Sea Port Authority there has been some advancement in conditions. There have been great strides in the mode of operations as equipment was upgraded and modern systems introduced. There has also been improvements in the security of workers as well. In the public service there has been stagnation of wages and salaries. There has been an average increase of only about 3 to 3.5 percent.

The Union is financed through membership dues. However, they are seeking to obtain a subvention from the government like their regional neighbour countries such as Barbados, Antigua and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. The Government of Dominica has acknowledged the call for a subvention and has in principle agreed to the request. Staffs of the Union include 3 paid staff members, 1 staff member who receives a stipend and the Executive which comprises of 11 volunteers. As noted by the Union challenges facing them include high unemployment rates, crime and violence, drugs as well as HIV/AIDS. At the time of the interview, the Union believed that the unemployment rate was on average 29 percent, though according to official statistics it is recorded as 16

percent. Even though more women were entering and advancing in the labour market, unemployment was far worse for women compared to their male counterparts.

Gaps in service provision include education programmes for workers, training of workers in techniques and roles and responsibilities related to effecting change in the work environment as well as the education of persons in the operation and protocols associated with the CSME and the OECS Union.

WAWU undertakes collaborative work with the Caribbean Congress of Labour, International Transport Workers Federation, Postal Telegraph and Telephone International PTTI (CI), International Federation of Commercial Technical and Clerical Employees, International Union of Food and Allied Workers Association, Inter-American Regional Organization Workers and International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. A good relationship also exists with the Dominica Association of Teachers. The Union Executive considers itself a highly effective organisation in the representation of workers, and in ensuring the observance of worker rights and worker upgrading.

7.8 SOCIAL WELFARE DIVISION

The purpose of Organisation is to treat with the social needs of the indigent in society as well as individual and family care. Services provided by the Division include:

- Childcare Programme (which includes Foster Care);
- Child Abuse Prevention Unit;
- Adoption;
- Counselling;
- Elderly Home Care; and
- Public Assistance Programme.

The Counselling Service was originally designed as part of the Child Abuse Prevention Programme, but has been extended to maladjusted children. Aspects of assistance related to the Public Assistance Programme include:

- The provision of a monthly allowance to persons in need;
- Education;
- Coverage of medical expenses;
- Limited housing assistance; and
- Burial and disaster relief.

COUNTRY POVERTY ASSESSMENT

Dominica 2008/09

The monthly allowance per month for an adult is EC\$100 and EC\$85 for children. Per family, regardless of the number of persons, the allowance does not exceed EC\$250. The educational aspect of assistance includes the purchase of school books and uniforms, and transportation allowance. In terms of medical assistance, there is the purchase of medicines as well as the coverage of certain hospital fees such as scans. Persons who receive public assistance are exempt from hospital fees.

The Social Welfare Division supervises the work of institutions where elderly care is provided such as the Dominica Infirmary, the Grotto Home, the Home for the Aged in Portsmouth, and the Mahaut Senior Citizens Home which all receive subventions from the Government through the Division. Other social care NGOs to which the Division provides subventions include the DADP, REACH (Reaching Elderly Abandoned), Citizen Housebound, the Dominica Council on Aging and Life Goes On.

Under childcare services the following organisations receive subventions:

- Operation Youth Quake;
- Alpha Centre school for disabled children;
- Dominica Nursery Community;
- Dominica Save the Child Fund;
- House of Hope for severely handicapped children; and
- Summit Place of Safety being established in conjunction with National Children Home of England.

There are other support services are also provided by the Division. There are services for migrants, through remittances that are facilitated by the Division to families in Dominica. The Division also collects maintenance payments from fathers who do not want to go through the Court System. Also the Division assists mostly single parent mothers in making contact with the fathers of their children.

The Social Welfare Division services all of its clientele through its Roseau office as there are no district branches. Welfare Officers however, are travelling officers. Due to the lack of district branches with their own staff, officers are oftentimes overburdened resulting in instances of programmes suffering. There also tends to be a concentration on children services at the expense of other services.

Also public assistance is not supposed to be permanent and should be up for review annually. However, due to a lack of staff, efficient reviews of recipients is not undertaken which results in recipients taking advantage of the system as they are aware

of the fact that the assistance is not expected to be permanent, and that recipients may be graduated from the programme. Monitoring of recipients under public assistance is also to be undertaken by the Division, but due to a lack of personnel this is not done. There are allegedly instances where many children have become adults and may even have their own children, but continue to receive assistance. The filing system of the Division is not computerised, and records are still managed manually.

Gaps in the provision of services do exist within the Division. With regard to the elderly, there are no specific programmes for them apart from the Homes themselves. There is a Council on Ageing whose work covers the entire island. There is also REACH that caters to the elderly in areas such as Roseau and environs.

The Division is of the view that there is need for more attention to be paid to the persons with major disabilities as currently there is no institution within the Government to treat with them with the exception of House of Hope. There is also need for Juvenile Homes, as troubled juveniles tend to end up with hardened criminals in the prison system. At the time of the interview, there was a recent case of several juveniles being sent to the Courts. On the island, there is a major drug culture based on use and distribution of marijuana and cocaine. As such, the proposed Juvenile Home should be equipped to deal with drugs and related crimes.

There are instances of children who cannot read or write, and since the universalisation of the education system, there has been no evaluation of the system which needs to be addressed. The Division has no School Attendance Officers to monitor cases where children have not been attending school.

The Foster Care facility has been faced with the challenge of not being able to find adequate numbers of foster homes for foster children. At the time of the interview, there were 79 foster children and only 51 foster homes. There are also instances where families are not willing to accept foster children over a certain age.

Challenges of the Division itself which hamper their operation include the lack of adequate funding, lack of adequate personnel as well as support systems. The Division collaborates with several partners. These include the Court, the Ministry of Education through school, UNICEF, the National Children Home of England, the Dominican National Council of Women as well as the Police and Prison as there is a visiting Justices Committee that visits the prison monthly to look after the welfare of prisoners.

7.9 DOMINICA ASSOCIATION OF DISABLED PEOPLE

The DADP has been in operation for the past 27 years and serves as an advocacy group for persons with disabilities. Persons with all forms of disabilities are represented in the association. There were 100 members of the Association at the time of the interview.

Some physical changes have taken place to accommodate physically disabled persons. Some public buildings have had adjustments done, but this has not been legislated as yet. Dominica has become a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; however this has not been ratified.

The Association is in need of dormitory facilities and the Dominica Social Investment Fund was likely to provide this at the time of the interview. The Association is totally dependent on the public sector and the Government including the private sector. Funds are not normally readily available to the DADP and they have had to beg for everything.

The staffing of the Department consists of an Executive Director, who is visually impaired, an Office Assistant, who is able bodied as well as an Administrative assistant who is wheelchair bound. There are also volunteers who assist the organisation in the conduct of its work.

The Association has no established arrangement for children and others with impairment. A privately run school assists. Teachers have been trained but there has been nothing to tap their services in the system. The system is not geared to accommodate children with disabilities. A Survey was done 1990's proved that over 10% had some disability.

The biggest challenges being faced by the Unit are to become sustainable, to undertake projects that can generate income, for persons to become educated and find employment, to contribute to economic development of the country.

7.10 CARIB AFFAIRS UNIT

This Unit was established in the Office of the Prime Minister, and had been in operation for more than five years, at the time of the interview. It is supposed to address all the needs of the Community, and to ensure that the Central Government has a meaningful link to the Community.

There is a small staff of five persons. Their current work load consists mainly of the management of projects being implemented by the CDB and the Government of Dominica in the Carib Territory. In addition, the Unit is heavily involved in advocacy on behalf of the Carib Community and assists in facilitating linkages with other Ministries of the Government as well as with other First People's Organisations elsewhere in the world.

Most of the current projects were developed by the people themselves, and facilitated by the CDB. These include shared enterprise arrangements in terms of facilities and in production, eg cassava processing and joint marketing.

The Unit has facilitated the development of the area over the last few years. Community resource centres are being built to be used for training but also as emergency shelters in the event of natural disasters. There are secondary education facilities and a new school is being built. There are also pre-schools in the area.

A new health centre in the area ensures that the population has access to primary health care facilities in their immediate vicinity. The centre was partly funded by a religious organisation.

While educational and health facilities are accessible and there is a range of infrastructure already in place, there are some gaps in the services available to the community. One major challenge is access to a potable water supply in all the hamlets. A Water Enhancement Project is designed to enhance capacity within the Territory.

Craft work is vital to the community, and in that regard, the Larouman tree is used for much of their production. There is also the Gomunier tree that is used in building canoes. On both counts, there is need for considerable replanting in the interest of the community, given the heavy usage that is made of both.

Prospects:

There are many young people in the community who are brilliant. It is important for them to secure employment in the Territory and this can be by way of small businesses that can be developed. With the second phase of the airport expansion being undertaken, road traffic is likely to be diverted into the Territory, thus creating some opportunity for business.

Forty homes have been built in the Territory and forty more are to be built. This construction activity will provide some employment in the community. The homes are financed by the Government of Venezuela, and will be made available to Carib public

servants earning less than EC\$3000 per month. The Community is participating in the Housing Revolution on which the country has embarked.

Persistent Problems:

There remain some problems that the Unit has not been able to overcome. Agricultural production is conducted by individuals on their own account but land is held communally. This is posing a problem in respect of access that may be required for expanding output by those committed to farming.

The new housing system may not be as well received since the individual units do not accommodate for the culture of families and relatives living in close proximity. There are social ills that need to be addressed. Alcohol abuse is worrying and there are alarming cases of incest. There still exists subtle discrimination but generally, there is greater ease in inter-community relations, and thus greater mutual acceptance.

7.11 LEGAL AID DEPARTMENT

The organization has been in operation since 2001. It is a State organisation located in the Ministry of Legal Affairs.

Its work consists of assisting citizens with who need legal aid. Many of its clients are women who seem to need its help most. There have been many cases of divorces and abuses of women. The unit works very closely with the welfare department and the women's bureau and a number of its clients are referred from these organisations. The Legal Aid department may need to have an attorney from the private bar to represent the clients. The costs are borne by the state. The Legal Aid Department however, would not be able to secure legal counsel from abroad for any of its clients.

Where women have problems, the Unit may recommend counselling for its clients first and this is handled by the Women's Bureau. Many women in situations of abuse are ambivalent and would usually prefer not to have the man arrested in cases where they may need to have money for maintenance.

The view of the Agency is that one needs to protect the interest of the child and that usually means supporting the woman in cases of abuse or of divorce. There has been an occasion, however, where custody was won on behalf of the man. The caseload is increasing because the number of clients is increasing. Problems seem to be mounting with regard to the relationships between men and women. Many of these cases are of a civil nature, but there are a few cases of a criminal nature that come up before the

Department. The attorney within the department has done some representation on behalf of clients but considers herself to lack the experience necessary to make appearances in court.

Some of the reasons for the breakdown of family relations might be finance, or that one person or another feels the other is keeping him/her back, or infidelity followed by abuse. Men do not stomach very easily the idea of their women leaving them, even if they have good reason for doing so; if she is to leave it must be when the man is ready; cause or effect is not easily to be determined.

There are cases where the women are making more of the money in the household but the man maintains control and calls the shots. Few men have come to the Legal Aid Department for assistance. In order to secure legal aid there is a means test. While the department does not have a budget as such, it seeks to ensure that all who come before it are supported in one way or another. The legal aid is not entirely free. However, its fee structure is much below what is charged by private attorneys: a private attorney might charge \$700 as compared to the fee of \$50 by the Department. Yet, there are clients who are unable to pay the fee.

The department does indeed require clients to advance some of the fees for representation before a matter is initiated. The department would have preferred it if there was greater assistance from the Welfare Department. The Legal Aid Department has to operate within the confines of the legislation establishing it but very often what is required in settling a matter is a certain amount of flexibility for negotiation and reconciliation which perhaps might be more easily secured through a Family Court. It is felt that counselling is indeed very necessary.

There is need to revisit the whole operation of the legal aid department. Recently a woman had to secure the assistance of the Legal Aid Dept. in securing protection from her former companion/husband. Her entitlement to property had been compromised by her having financed the building of a home on the lands of her partner's family.

In addition to needing to have its post of Director filled, the department would have welcomed more staff, and also staff with more experience. There are a number of clients who are clearly unable to pay the fee required. There is a need for a Director of the Legal Aid Department and they should have more discretion in the way they intervene. The department would also benefit from the presence of a social worker. The Legal Aid Department would benefit tremendously if there were public education as to what the Legal Aid Department could provide to the public.

7.12 CHRISTIAN CHILDREN'S FUND

This organisation is part of an international NGO. Its Head Office is in Richmond in Virginia in the United States, and operates in 34 countries. It organises sponsorship for children in the developing countries. It does seek grants from other organisations like the Van Leer Foundation and from UNICEF, and has sourced funding from the National Bank of Dominica. The Council has not got funding from the Government of Dominica.

The organisation has its own brand. Its programme seeks to assist children and families in the areas of education and health. Its personnel goes to homes and engages in stimulation activities with babies, and trains other people to do this. Parents would approach the Christian Council for enrolling their children in the monthly sponsorship programme. Sponsors are allowed to see children who are being sponsored. Children may be allowed to come to the office to meet their sponsors. There are rules in respect of how they comport themselves.

Someone usually in a richer country would contribute to the programme. The pool of funds is collected in Richmond and distributed from there. The accounting is done at the regional and international office (the regional office is in Panama).

CCF decided that it would work with teachers in pre-schools also, since the pattern has been for persons to decide to establish a pre-school and to simply do this, whether or not they had had appropriate preparation for the task.

Its clientele is from birth to three years of age. An underlying principle is to apply a means test in respect of the children that are assisted. Most parents are unable to pay the fees at pre-schools. The Council pays part of the fees for pre-school children. It may also provide assistance to students at high school by way of text books and examination fees, as well as bus fares.

The Council works well with the Health Teams of the Ministry of Health and cooperates with the Schools. It also supplies technical assistance in respect of the use of buildings and in other respects.

The Council has been engaged in a major health initiative. It has sought to ensure that even in the poorest of communities, safe toilets are installed. In this regard, it has worked closely with the Environmental Health Department.

It has also been involved in Health Education. It has been engaged in teaching parents how to take care of food and in respect of good sanitation practices. In parenting sessions, it teaches sanitation, and disposal and seeks to cultivate a new orientation to safety. It assists parents who may need to take their children to get eye glasses. There are also those who need to get access to dentists to take care of teeth. Children with disabilities may be home bound and cannot access certain services.

The Council has assisted the House of Hope where there are resident children with extreme needs. The Council is also hoping to build or to use a building in the vicinity of the airport, to create an income generating activity especially with PWDs.

It assists also in home improvement, and in immunisation thrust based on its assessment of what is happening in the health system.

It assists also with youth programmes and helps to form youth groups through radio programmes where children and young people do their own radio programme. There are well functioning youth groups in Marigot and West Bay.

The Council has a network of offices across the country, including one in Portsmouth.

7.13 HOME FOR THE ELDERLY

The Home was started by the local Parish Priest in 1979 after Hurricane David. Its primary purpose is to provide care for elderly people with no relatives to take care of them. In 1987, St. Vincent de Paul took over its operations and ran it for a while. It lumbered along with limited support. In 1999, a new structure of management was put in place. With fund raising and with as much volunteer support that can be mustered, it has been able to survive.

The Home can accommodate 14 residents, and is meant to serve the east and north catchment areas of the island. The location is the property of the Government: it was previously the residence of the Magistrate for the area. Residents are placed in the Home for one of the following reasons:

- Relatives are abroad, having migrated;
- Death of the spouse results in the elderly person being alone;
- Lack of care: the decline in the role of the extended family has resulted in abandonment of family of origin.

COUNTRY POVERTY ASSESSMENT

Dominica 2008/09

At the time of the interview, there were 12 residents, four of whom were paying the full charge of \$450.00 per month. The other residents are maintained with the Pauper's Allowance that they receive from the Government, and from donations. Indeed, the Paupers' Allowance constitutes the main source of an income flow, at the time of the interview. The Home is also responsible for burial expenses of clients. Most would have been farmers and would have been self-employed, prior to the introduction of social security. They are fated to die in debt, since their means are inadequate to meet their current requirements and to treat with their burial.

The Government gives a small subvention to the Home (\$2500 per annum). This has remained unchanged for some time. There has been much talk at the official level, but very little by way financial support. The Social Security Agency provides some support also and there are private sector firms that contribute something to the running of the Home. Ross University provides support by way of the lunches for residents on four days per week. The Department of Agriculture sends produce from time to time. The Home could not survive without regular donations.

Since the Home is running at a loss, it has been necessary to turn away applicants who do not have the resources to pay the full charge.

There is one part-time nurse who serves as Manager. She has been hired to work three days per week. It is not possible to have her more regularly than that. There are three other part-time workers and with time-tabling, it is possible to have a caregiver on the premises at all times. However, a high premium is placed on clients being able to walk and assist themselves, but, over time they weaken and cease to be ambulatory.

Better care would require the services of a full-time nurse. There are people in the Home with bed sores, since it has not been possible to provide adequate attention to residents who are bed-bound. There were four such persons at the time of the interview. Besides the elderly, there have been residents who entered as children. They were severely disabled and were sent from Roseau.

There may be need to update legislation. The Government should have a lien on the property of clients. Relatives tend to surface immediately as clients die, to claim any property that they might leave. It has been difficult to secure commitment from enough volunteers. Indeed, most of the persons on the Board in recent times have been non-Dominicans.

Other challenges faced by the Home relate to the facilities that are available. It was not equipped as a Home, and is in need of retrofitting. There is need to provide for clients who are amputees. Ramps are needed in assisting them in getting around.

The Home collaborates with the agencies, Care of the Elderly and the Dominica Council on Ageing. The management rates themselves as first class in terms of service provision given the resources available to them. Better service would be possible with an expansion in staff and with more trained personnel.

7.14 DOMINICA COUNCIL ON AGEING

The Council was incorporated in 1987 as an umbrella organisation for fourteen agencies involved in the care of the Elderly. It has worked closely with HELPAGE and with UNDP, most recently in the development of a National Policy on Ageing. It also works closely with the Welfare Division of the Ministry responsible for Social Development and with the Dominica Council of Women.

The Council is an all volunteer organisation. It receives an annual subvention from the Government of \$15,000. There are other donors, but its resources are quite limited relative to the tasks it undertakes.

The overseas donors have become far more parsimonious in recent times, and seem to be attracted by challenges in other countries. Unfortunately, locals have not stepped in to fill the breach. At the time of the interview, there was only one paid member of staff.

The agency is engaged in advocacy and campaigns for the rights of older persons. Recently, it succeeded in having a representation of six older persons in holding discussions with the Cabinet of Dominica.

It runs workshops and training programmes for persons engaged in care of the elderly. It hosts events to bring older persons together. It provides assistance to other organisations involved in care of the elderly in the management of their accounts.

Most of the organisations serving the elderly are privately run with support from the Government. Perhaps the best run among all of them is the Home for the Aged in Roseau which is supported by the Diocese of Roseau.

There are about twenty centenarians in Dominica, and they reside mainly in the country-side. One of the challenges faced in the country is the abandonment of the elderly by their children. The high level of emigration has resulted in the denuding of the extended family structure.

There is legislation in place that requires that children take care of parents. This has been on the books for some time. However, there is no legislation related to ageing as such.

If there were the resources, the Council would devote attention to research on older persons in Dominica and would develop a field staff, which could treat with shut-ins.

7.15 HAITIANS FOR CHRIST PRAYER GROUP

The organisation is comprised mainly of Haitians. There are about 15 active members, but on occasion memberships could swell to over 50 persons. They attempt to meet weekly and to focus on problems of the community. Generally, conditions in Dominica are fair but there is some discrimination against the Haitians. This is evident in employment. Dominicans in construction earn \$50 to \$60 per day while the Haitians are paid \$40 per day. Most do not have work permits and no social security cards. Yet employers will subtract social security from their pay cheques. Haitians encounter many problems in having their status legalised for employment purposes.

They enter on an open ticket and would be allowed to stay three months by the Immigration Authorities but may not get an extension. Thus, they are usually targeting transfer to elsewhere, especially to Martinique.

Another area of discrimination is housing, Haitians are generally subjected to substandard conditions. Dominicans would rent them tool sheds and similar facilities as accommodation, usually with no running water, and no toilets. Sometimes there will be electricity. Such accommodation may cost \$80 to \$100 per person per month and up to eight people may need to be accommodated in such conditions.

Many Haitians congregate in the Portsmouth area including Woodford Hill and also in Roseau. The majority are honest and hard working and are comfortable contributing to the development of the country. There tend to be more men than women in the ratio 3:1. Men go into agriculture and construction, and women into care the occupations – tending to children and the elderly – and working as attendants in shops. Haitians are

also involved in agriculture on their own account. The women also buy and sell produce in the markets. Since Haitians have integrated themselves into the society, markets are opened every day except on Sunday. Haitians are of the view that they work harder than Dominicans.

7.16 RED CROSS

The Red Cross was established in 1958 as a branch of the British Red Cross. After independence of Dominica it became an organisation in its own right in 1983. Its focus is wide and includes:

- First Aid in Emergencies;
- Disaster Management and Risk Management; and
- Mass Casualty Response.

It collaborates with the private sector and with community groups across the country. Indeed, it adopted a community-based approach in 1999 which has allowed it to engage in risk management with a down-up methodology, which has been far more successful in treating with disaster in Dominica. The country is disaster prone: there are volcanoes, earthquake, and hurricanes, along with land slides, because of the nature of the terrain. There are at least eight active volcanoes on the island.

In 1998, there was a major earthquake and also in 2005, on which occasion there was the collapse of a church. The island is purported to have one of the highest levels of earthquake activity in the world. So high is the risk, from earthquakes and volcanoes, that it is not improbable that Roseau could be reduced to a similar fate as Plymouth in Montserrat. There is need to prepare for such an eventuality.

The Red Cross has had to be self-sustaining. It provides training in First Aid, and charges a fee for this, and mounts a number of projects of which generate income. There is need to maintain a number of projects to survive. The customary Tea Parties do not work in Dominica. So the organisation has had to be entrepreneurial in its approach. It rents chairs and tables for example. The Red Cross works with the French Red Cross which is showing more interest in the Caribbean. The Dominica Red Cross lobbies donors also for support. The assistance from the Government is marginal and makes little impact on its budget, given its miniscule subvention. The organisation would benefit from exemption from the VAT.

The Red Cross engages in mitigation projects in communities. It recognises that one cannot depend on the Government to do everything. Communities have to respond

when disaster strikes. Thus the Red Cross seeks to ensure that all communities have Disaster Management Committees and most do now have people trained in Disaster Management. There are now groups of persons trained and able to respond to emergency situations. Village Councils have also been an area for focusing training. The Red Cross makes a regular pitch to the public for support, in addition to its initiatives with the private sector. The organisation runs a thrift shop with Gifts that are got from such sources as cruise-ships.

There has been a decline in voluntarism in the society. The Red Cross used to be seen once as an organisation of women. It has since become an organisation of professionals. It has to compete with a number of organisation that are status related – ‘Optimists and Rotary’ being two of these. It is also competing with other service clubs and NGOs in seeking funding. At the same time, it needs to provide an attractive environment for its limited staff to want to stay and work for the organisation, including its field officers.

It works closely with the Offices of Disaster Managements, the Ministry of Community Development, the Ministry of Health, and the HIV/AIDS Committee. There are not many NGOs that provide services in Dominica. UNDP has not been a big player in terms of promotion of projects in Dominica.

Table 7.1 provides a listing of the organisations discussed above with a summary assessment of their efficacy in improving living conditions for the population. A number of them operate in the supportive mode, which can be expected of agencies that are social sector oriented. However, there are others that have a decided developmental component to their interventions and initiatives with their clientele. Critically, the Social Welfare Division and the Youth Department, while fully understanding of their roles in the society, are not well resourced to allow them to be star performers in their tasks. While there are NGOs and other special programmes that are outstanding, the enormity of the challenge of a society undergoing major economic and social change requires agencies in the public sector that are better equipped in terms of resources of personnel.

COUNTRY POVERTY ASSESSMENT

Dominica 2008/09

TABLE 7.1: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND WELFARE – ASSESSMENT OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFICACY

NO.	NAME OF ORGANISATION	PRIMARY FOCUS	KEY ACTIONS FOR IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIVES FOR GRENADIANS	SCORE
1.	Dominica Social Investment Fund	Developmental and Remedial	Its primary purpose is to address the problems associated with poverty through various interventions some of which are income generating in nature.	5
2.	Basic Needs Trust Fund	Developmental and Supportive	Undertakes programmes which alleviate the issues faced by poorer communities and vulnerable groups in Dominica.	4
3.	Youth Department	Developmental	Mounts programmes which assist young people in developing their full potential; offers education programmes, life skills programmes, leadership programmes and training in various areas.	4
4.	National Youth Council	Developmental	Promotes youth development, by assisting youth groups across the island.	3.5
5.	Prisons	Supportive	Seeks to offer inmates with training programmes in carpentry, joinery, welding, leather craft, tailoring, auto-body painting, mechanics, animal husbandry and farming which would assist inmates in obtaining legal employment when they leave the prison.	3
6.	CALLS	Developmental	Mounts programmes to assist persons in reaching their full developmental potential.	5
7	WAWU	Developmental, Supportive	Advocates for workers' rights , bargains for members, and seeks to upgrade them for improved participation in labour market	3.5
8.	Youth Quake	Developmental and Remedial	Offers rehabilitative opportunities for the vulnerable in society.	4
9.	Social Welfare Division	Developmental, Supportive and Remedial	Treats with the social needs of the indigent and vulnerable in society through its targeted programmes and grants.	3
10.	Dominica Association of Disabled People	Supportive	Advocates on behalf of persons with disabilities.	3.5
11.	Carib Affairs Unit	Developmental, Supportive, Remedial and Preventative	Facilitates development among the Carib Community and mediates support of agencies of Central Government in the treatment of the requirements of the Community	4
12.	Legal Aid	Supportive	Provides subsidised legal aid services pertaining to	3.5

COUNTRY POVERTY ASSESSMENT

Dominica 2008/09

NO.	NAME OF ORGANISATION	PRIMARY FOCUS	KEY ACTIONS FOR IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIVES FOR GRENADIANS	SCORE
			social issues.	
13.	Christian Children's Fund	Developmental, Supportive	Contributes to health and education of the population through its work with pre-schools and its immunisation.	4
14.	Home for the Elderly	Supportive	Provides care to elderly persons, however the home can only accommodate 14 residents.	3.5
15.	Dominica Council on Aging	Supportive	Advocates for agencies involved in the care of the elderly in Dominica.	3.5
16.	Haitians for Christ Prayer Group	Supportive	Provides source of succour and support to Haitian migrants in face of social and economic challenges in Dominica	3
17.	Red Cross	Preventative, Supportive	Sensitises the population in risk and disaster management; organises and mobilises support in times of disaster; and conducts work in the area of HIV/AIDS.	4

In sum, the country has a wide range of organisations engaged in social development and social welfare. However, the fall-out of drastic economic change has had repercussions on the social fabric of the society. The analysis suggests that the existing institutional structures may not be adequate to the task, even though there are some institutions that are first rate in the nature and quality of their interventions.

SECTION 8: OVERVIEW OF INSTITUTIONS IN A CHANGING ECONOMY AND SOCIETY

Dominica suffered wrenching structural adjustment to its economy in the first decade of 21st century. As a result of a poverty assessment exercise conducted early in the decade, there has been a response both at the official level and among civil society to the challenge posed to the society and the economy. However, the fall-out has continued.

There is evidence of social fall-out as evinced in the rapid rural-urban migration and the crowding of the population in low income settlements, the expansion of the drug culture, and emergence of problems of dysfunctional youth, of gangs, child abuse and the abandonment of the elderly. There is an infrastructure of Community Development Services, but these may be inadequate in the face of a rapidly expanding challenge. With the incorporation of some of the youth into the international narco-trafficking industry, an uphill task is faced in providing an effective institutional response.

Another emerging issue is the growth of an immigrant community. The entree of Haitians has added to the work-force, and also to some level of dynamism in the informal sector, and in agricultural production and the distribution of farm supplies. The integration of the community into the life of Dominica has not been formally addressed within the institutional structures of the state, and only marginally by the NGOs and CBOs in the society.

The country might have returned to growth, in part as a result of public sector driven infrastructure projects, but its basic economic structure is still in the throes of change to face an ever increasingly more competitive trade environment. The country seems to have had difficulty in developing the institutions capable of managing the transition to a more diversified agriculture, let alone mobilising the resources for the even more challenging task of diversifying the sectoral composition of output. The recent deep recession in the international economy has not made it easier, and has affected its tourism, which has been one of the few bright spots in recent years, in stimulating nature tourism as a new niche in the economy.

Meanwhile, a highly effective Fisheries Department has assisted fishers in a few of its coastal communities to improve their lot, but the sector is not at the stage where it can put the country on the map as a major exporter of fish. Moreover, the Department has not been able to secure complementary institutional support such that the exploitation of

the quarrying material can be conducted without serious compromise to the marine ecology and thus to the fish stocks of the country.

There have been some positives in respect of institutional development, that augur well in addressing some of the problems. There is evidence that local government has taken root and there is willingness to participate in decision-making at the local level. Surely, the Carib Council has been an effective advocate for the rights of the people of this community for equitable treatment of their needs and has assisted in creating some of the social infrastructure to support economic development within the community itself, starting with eco-tourism.

There has been a major effort by way of investment in human resource development. The universalisation of secondary education is complete, and there is assistance with transport and books and other supplies for children whose parents cannot afford, through the Education Trust Fund and such NGOs as the Christian Children's Fund. AID Bank ensures that students can access student loans for tertiary education, such that poverty need not be a barrier to further education.

There is an expanding infrastructure of facilities for adult education and of information and resource centres. In the context of the knowledge economy of the 21st century, there is a high premium on institutions that can help Dominica leap-frog in respect of the knowledge and information gap. It seems however, that the thirst for learning and thus the complementary demand for and use of such facilities might be lacking, and there is little in the institutional structure to stimulate that thirst.

In the critical area of the environment and vulnerability, some progress is being made, with a number of organisations becoming involved in disaster preparedness. Given its high vulnerability in the face of the probability of earthquakes, volcanic eruption, hurricanes, sea rise and slope subsidence, a high level of public education is an imperative.

In tackling poverty problems in the second decade of the 21st century, there will be need to revisit the existing institutional structures and to identify the gaps that remain either in their own specific responses or in their collective impact.

Table 8.1 attempts a first order summary of impacts on poverty of organisations operating in the economic and social systems of the country. This will need to be juxtaposed against the findings of the Survey of Living Conditions and the Participatory Assessment Exercise which are reported elsewhere in this study.

COUNTRY POVERTY ASSESSMENT

Dominica 2008/09

TABLE 8.1 INSTITUTIONAL INITIATIVES AND POVERTY

	Area/Activity	Main Characteristics	Institutional Initiatives	Impact on Poverty
INSTITUTIONAL INITIATIVES AND POVERTY	Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural production in Dominica dominated by bananas. • Country more dependent on banana exports for foreign exchange earnings, than the other two Windward Islands but a smaller producer than St. Lucia which is more diversified. • Infrastructure for non-banana agriculture incipient at best: challenge in securing relevant personnel, in the important fields – entomology, pest control, production and marketing. • Bay Oil Production impacted by disease. • Ministry of Agriculture lacking personnel for diversification in thrust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversification within Agriculture proposed by authorities over the years. • WIBDECO only recently re-branded to Winfresh to deal with non-banana export agriculture. • EU support for packing houses • Some short crop agriculture emerging • IMF support for pork production, floriculture and tree crop agriculture • Efforts made to invest in fishing, horticulture and in livestock • The Government has also targeted increased production of exotic flowers, essential oils, root crops, fruits and vegetables. • Extension services failing to respond to Bay Oil problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banana decline - Rural urban flight: formation or expansion of urban ghettos with dire implications – crime, drugs, violence • Homes locked up in the countryside: rural decline • Less employment for women on reaping and packing days in bananas, and less employment opportunities in the transfer to the urban environment in the absence of manufacturing and slow growth in tourism – in segmented labour market, women fare worse than men. • New labour inputs by way of Haitian workers and contract farmers seeking escape from poverty in Haiti • Diversifying agriculture too limited to compensate for the decline in banana production • Lands being idled with consequences for fertility and agricultural output later, and thus for incomes in agriculture
	Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has been emerging as eco-tourism and dive destination before international crisis. • Smaller establishments owned by locals • Decline in international economy hit niche very severely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively successful branding of island as Nature Isle, by Tourism Authorities • Eco-tourism thrust, with local initiatives mainly • Runway and airport expansion on the way • Night lighting in the offing at airport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closure of hotels bringing cuts in employment. • Decline in occupancy leading to reduced demand and linkage to other sectors.
	Fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some dynamic displayed in recent years • Fishers still largely day-fishers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Marigot Fisheries Complex was completed and successfully operationalised • A grant agreement is concluded with the Government of Japan for the construction of the Portsmouth Fisheries Complex costing US\$7.5 million. • A few vibrant cooperatives in fishing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some evidence of improvement in the fisheries sector. • A few younger fishers entering the sector, but most still day fishers. • Infrastructure constraints – icing, transport limit marketing and income potential.

COUNTRY POVERTY ASSESSMENT

Dominica 2008/09

Area/Activity	Main Characteristics	Institutional Initiatives	Impact on Poverty
Credit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AID Bank and Credit Unions important in Financial Sector • National Development Foundation was helpful in providing loans to low income groups or small scale sector in the past. • Hit by high delinquency. • No Grant Funds any longer. • Shrinking economy or slow growth in economy reduced numbers seeking business loans. • Involved in providing loans to people in employment and salaried income for home improvement, travel abroad, and purchase of home appliances. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AID Bank lends to SMEs to all economic sectors, as well as mortgages and student loans. • AID Bank has provided loan support for vegetable production in green houses, poultry production and cocoa and coffee production. • AID Bank has outreach programme to promote greater involvement of Dominicans in business. • Promotes youth in business • Revolving funding now • NDF placing greater emphasis on training and entrepreneurial development • Technical support and training for larger business – eg. total quality management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business sector segmented and Dominicans lack the networks to sustain entry and growth in some areas of the private sector. • Dominicans cannot compete with networks in oligopolistic market conditions • Locals despair of setting up and running SMEs • Low income borrowers, faced with difficulty, tempted to 'eat the capital' • NDF not able to lend to micro-enterprises and to small farmers in recent past, because of delinquency problem faced in the past. • NDF helpful in poverty reduction only through trickle down to the poor.
Credit Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historically credit unions more important than banks eg Roseau Credit Union 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperative Credit Union League working with credit unions to prepare for new regulatory dispensation • FSU coming into being 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive impact on Poverty Reduction generally • New regulations might constrain important source of credit to SMEs
Non-Financial Cooperatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most rural cooperatives struggling • Decline of rural economy has hurt rural cooperatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperative Department too understaffed to resuscitate sector • SIF not seeming to help cooperatives directly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absence of cooperative endeavours and civil society frameworks weaken capacity of rural communities in mobilising slender resources

COUNTRY POVERTY ASSESSMENT

Dominica 2008/09

Area/Activity	Main Characteristics	Institutional Initiatives	Impact on Poverty
HOUSING Development Funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dominica Social Investment Fund (DSIF) flexible in approach to community development • Time Bound Assistance for poverty reduction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund was established in 2004 to operationalise the government's programmes for social protection and poverty reduction • EU support for this fund to the tune of EC\$13.2 million 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfers were provided to children moving from primary to secondary schools • Persons pursuing higher education provided with further access to financing options • Tax reforms have allowed consumers to have more disposable income
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF) as part of CDB support for Poverty Reduction through community social and physical infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Along with the DSIF, forms the largest initiative towards social protection/ poverty reduction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides temporary employment, predominantly in construction. • Facilitates skills training for youth.
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AID Bank and Ministry of Housing important players in the sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AID Bank involved in the Shelter Development programme with funds supplied by Government of Venezuela; • \$11.7 was spent on provision of low-income housing- 97 units were to be constructed; • Ministry provides assistance to some poorer households including in urban areas, for repairs and regularisation on spontaneous settlements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided more access to housing for lower income households, and temporary employment in the construction sector. • Some housing planned and implemented for Carib Community, and consequential employment creation in construction phase. • Some upgrade of accommodation in low income districts.
Vulnerable Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christian Children's Fund important agency involved in Support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stimulation of babies and children in poorer communities • Assistance to children and families in respect of education and health • Conducts parenting lessons • Support for preparation of teachers in pre-schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assists a number of poorer persons and their children • Pays part of school fees for children of the poor
Youth Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Quake - Organisation to assist troubled youth • More boys than girls in institution • Social protection for children and youths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government provides of most of operational costs • Outreach programme in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeps youth out of negative subcultural groups • Problems dwarf Youth Quake • No fees charged of parents

COUNTRY POVERTY ASSESSMENT

Dominica 2008/09

Area/Activity		Main Characteristics	Institutional Initiatives	Impact on Poverty
	Protection of the Elderly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited number of homes for the aged, but not universal across communities, and not likely to adequate to the number of elderly in need of accommodation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home for the Elderly and other agencies provide accommodation to the elderly with no one to take care of them Dominica Council on Aging engaged in advocacy for the elderly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High emigration results in potential caregivers being abroad. Decline in real incomes poses problem for elderly. Notion of 'pauper allowance' suggests inadequacy of state funding for the elderly without non-contributory pensions
	Legal Aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal Aid Department works mainly with women subject to abuse A few criminal cases as well Requirement that Legal Aid Department operate within confines of legislation restricts flexibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal Aid Clinic being established 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legal aid is not free; clients required to make down-payment, means testing applied to applicants.
R e g i s t r a t i o n a r y	Environmental Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statutory responsibility for overview of environmental health Staff shortage, lack of essential equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring arm in respect of the delivery of environmental health and services. Court system burdened with criminal cases and unable to cope with environment infractions. Promotion of pre-cast, double vault units for pit latrines. Dominica Solid Waste Management has reach across the entire island and seeking to provide public education on waste management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuous improvement in environmental health. All communities have access to potable water supply, and to sanitation facilities although in some slum communities, there is need for public baths and public toilets to serve households. All communities have access to waste disposal. Infractions: derelict vehicles, air pollution, discharge of motor oil, littering on empty lots, noise, stock animals in settlements.
	Fisheries Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development and monitoring of Fisheries Resources Staff inadequate in number Fisheries Act not gazetted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training programme on socio-economic monitoring of fisheries Controlling risk of disaster to fisheries from quarrying and mountain collapse and landslides Code of practice being developed for conservation Attempt to get net fishers into pelagic fishing facing challenge Expansion of quarrying destructive of fisheries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of understanding of connection between behaviours and negative impact on the environment. Productivity of fisheries compromised by poor approach to environment. Most fisheries now offshore because of over exploitation of coastal fisheries

COUNTRY POVERTY ASSESSMENT

Dominica 2008/09