



***Sustainable Livelihoods: Towards the  
Identification of a Caribbean Definition  
COTE 2011***

# Objectives

- To put the SL debate within a Caribbean Context
- To build theory applicable to Caribbean Economies
- To develop a working definition of SL

# Order of Presentation

- A summary of the Caribbean Reality,
- Reflections on the SL concept internationally,
- Caribbean Contributions,
- Conclusion.

# *An overview of Caribbean Economies*

- Best (1973)
  - *The Caribbean economies were initially plantation economies and society;*
  - *Constitutes a subordinate system;*
  - *Politically the system lacks community support;*
  - *Economically it is an appendage of a metropolitan economy;*
  - *No internal dynamic for accumulation, technological change and taste formation.*
  - *Socially stratification based on metropolitan criteria: metropolitan values & attributes ranked higher than those locally;*
  - *Imported population from different spheres and at different times, segments of race, religion and culture emerge side by side.*

- Best and Levitt historical stages in the economic development of the Caribbean:
  - the garrison economy (before the sugar plantation)
  - pure plantation economy (sugar and slavery), and
  - plantation economy modified (sugar and free labour with domestic agriculture),
  - and plantation economy further modified (organized labour with industrialization).
    - The plantation economy is as organized as a total institution based on a hinterland economy that developed one sector. It is virtually a closed economy with respect to other activities. Each plantation has a resident workforce, resources are concentrated on the direct production of a staple and few linkages are created. A few backward linkages are created within the hinterland and limited forward linkages Best and Levitt (2009)

- St. Cyr (1991): distinguishing features of the Caribbean are cultural.
- Beckford (1972): within these plantation systems there are distortions in the use of available resources and this has resulted in the impoverishment of the society

Poverty Indicators for Selected Caribbean Countries						
<i>Country</i>	<i>Year CPA conducted</i>	<i>% of pop. below Poverty Line</i>	<i>% of pop. below Indigence Line</i>	<i>Poverty Gap</i>	<i>FGT P2 Severity</i>	<i>Gini Coefficient</i>
Antigua & Barbuda	2005/06	18.3	2.7	na	na	na
Barbados	1997	13.9	-	na	na	0.39
Belize	2009	25.5	15.8	11	5	0.42
Grenada	2007/08	37.7	2.4	10.13	4.03	0.37
Dominica	2008/09	28.8	3.1	8.9	4	0.44
Guyana	1999	35	19	12.4	na	na
Jamaica*	2009	16.5	na	na	na	0.38
St. Kitts & Nevis	2007/08	30.5	1	2.5	0.9	na
St. Lucia	2005/06	28.8	1.6	9	4.1	0.42
SVG	2007/08	30.2	2.9	7.5	3	0.40
TnT <sup>13/10/2011</sup>	2005	16.7	8.3	na	na	<sup>7</sup> na

# Unemployment, (RATES) % 2000-2009

Country	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<i>Bahamas</i>	...	6.9	9.1	10.8	10.2	10.2	7.6	7.9	8.7	14.2
<i>Barbados</i>	9.2	9.9	10.3	11.0	9.8	9.1	8.7	7.4	8.1	10.0
<i>Belize</i>	11.1	9.1	10.0	12.9	11.6	11.0	9.4	8.5	8.2	13.1
<i>Jamaica</i>	15.5	15.0	14.2	11.4	11.7	11.3	10.3	9.8	10.6	11.4
<i>Suriname</i>	14.0	14.0	10.0	7.0	8.4	11.2	12.1	...	...	...
<i>TnT</i> 13/10/2011	12.2	10.8	10.4	10.5	8.4	8.0	6.2	5.6	4.6	5.3



# Definition: Livelihood and Sustainable Livelihood

- First introduced by the Brundtland Commission on Environment and Development
  - *“an approach to maintain or enhance resource productivity, secure ownership of and access to assets, resources and income-earning activities as well as to ensure adequate stocks and flows of food and cash to meet basic needs. It was a reflection of the growing recognition that food security was not merely a problem of agricultural productivity but was a problem of poverty in all its multi faceted dimensions”*

- The 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) initiated the first expansion in the context of Agenda 21
  - *Agenda 21 stated that SL could serve as an integrating factor that allows policies to address development, sustainable resource management and poverty eradication simultaneously*

- As such, many authors have contributed to the definition(s) which has evolved today.
- The most basic, well known and widely accepted was developed by Chambers and Conway 1992
  - *“A livelihood in its simplest sense is a means of gaining a living. A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living; a livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, and provide SL opportunities for the next generation; and which contributes net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels and in the short and long-term.”*

- For them capabilities, equity and sustainability are combined in the concept of SL.
- A livelihood begins its formation once the reality is determined
- It can also be at hierarchal levels within the household –
- In their structure of the household, a livelihood had four categories: people, activities, assets and gains and outputs
- Of these four, the most complex is the portfolio of tangible and intangible assets. These are separated into stores and resources as tangible and claims and access as intangible

- Modified versions of this have been adopted, based on interpretation.
  - *Some use it to describe a tool;*
  - *a framework is used as a checklist of issues and a way of structuring analysis;*
  - *some treat it as an operational objective and see their mission as improving the sustainability of livelihoods;*
  - *a set of principles that can be applied in almost any situation;*
  - *a call for specific SL projects or SL programs;*
  - *as an approach to development, combining various of the elements above.*

# Contributing Authors

- Carney's (1998)
- Ashley and Carney (1999)
- Scoones, (1998)
- Farrington et al, (1999)
- Soussan et al (2003)
- Ellis (2000)
- Radoki, (2002)
- Messer and Townsley (2003)
- Wallman (1984)
- Singh and Titi (1994)
- Krantz (2001)
- Carswell et al. (1997)

- Scoones (1998) retracted to *Chambers and Conway (1992) definition* to develop the needed clarity.
- A Livelihood is based on linking concerns over work and employment, with poverty reduction and broader issues of adequacy, security, well-being and capability, sustainability based on the resilience of livelihoods and the natural resource base on which, in part, they depend.
- For him, the definition could be disaggregated into different sub-components.
  - *Creation of working days,*
  - *Poverty reduction,*
  - *Well-being and capabilities,*
  - *Livelihood Adaptation,*
  - *Vulnerability and Natural Resource Base Sustainability*

# Caribbean Contribution to Sustainable Livelihoods

- *“Earlier, we argued that inherent in the plantation system is the tendency toward monopolization of land by plantation owners as a device **to deprive the majority of people access to an independent livelihood** and therefore to ensure the plantation of labour supplies.” Beckford (1972)*



# CANARI

- Uses it in conjunction with poverty alleviation, conservation: marine protected areas, coral reefs, extractive livelihoods, coastal living and managing partnership.
  - Their work on livelihoods has been divided into Forest and Livelihoods; and Coastal and Marine Governance and livelihoods. However, there is no explicit definition for the term.

# THE TRUST FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS

- A pragmatic approach for alleviating poverty and natural resource degradation locally and internationally.
- For them desired livelihood outcomes will include:
  - *“increased human capital (skills, knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, labour ability and good health), better social capital (relationships of trust and reciprocity, groups, and networks), improved physical capital (basic infrastructure), more financial capital, improved natural capital (forests, water, land, fish, energy resources and minerals), reduced vulnerability and improved food security.”*

# SEDU

- Pantin et al 2004 used Singh and Lawrence (1999) definition as their starting point:
  - a livelihood being the “*combination of assets, activities and entitlements which enable people to make a living.*”
- They saw SL it as a micro level synonym for sustainable development.
- They were looking at the critique to sustainable development and thought that the analysis needed to be disaggregated to highlight the human impact of development.
- They were of the view that SL shifts the focus from aggregate economic output to people.

- **CEHI** CEHI focuses on Environmental Health of the Caribbean Region.
- Their work is based on the provision of clean and clear water, watershed management, use of chemicals, waste management, enhancing resilience, flooding and costal clean up.
- They focus on enhancing capabilities, but **no explicit definition** has been stated.
- **CERMES**: utilizes the definition and approach of DFID (1999).
- **UN ECLAC**: ECLAC as well uses DFID 1999 definition and methodology.

# Conclusion

- Starting point of Pantin et al (2004): a synonym for Sustainable Development.
  - bring development to the level of the individual.
- Bring Caribbean Reality Forward; poverty, conservation and management of natural resources and governance.
- Caribbean Theory: Best and Levitt, Beckford, Lewis and other Development Practitioners
  - giving particular attention to culture St Cyr (1991)
- Test the framework through index and indicators



Thank You!