



SUPPORT FOR SOUND LAND USE PLANNING IN SURINAME

Lessons Learned in Comparable Countries

CHRISTINE TOPPIN-ALLAHAR

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Focus

- The project involved identifying useful best practices and lessons learned of sound LUP in countries similar to Suriname
- The TOR makes specific reference to LUP in French Guyane and Guyana
- As part of France, French Guyane has human, material & financial resources for LUP available to it that are not similar to Suriname
- Although Suriname is a big country, administratively it has more in common with the Caribbean SIDS
- Hence, we have focused on the experience of other CARICOM countries, especially Guyana

History of LUP in the Region

- Legislation for LUP to be carried out by a CHPA was 1st introduced in Trinidad & Tobago in 1938
- Aimed at remedying bad living conditions during the great depression & focus was slum clearance/better housing
- This model was “exported” to all the British West Indian islands, Belize & Guyana
- These laws provided for the preparation of LUP for designated areas & the control of land development in those areas
- It was replaced in Trinidad & Tobago & Barbados by modern LUP laws in the 1960s & in the OECS countries in the 1990s
- This old law is still in force in Guyana

Track Record of LUP

- LUP has been described as an activity that has been marginalised in the Caribbean
- Few countries have met the legal obligation to produce national, regional LUPs or urban plans
- Those who have done so (e.g. Trinidad & Tobago NPDP 1984) have failed to comply with the legal obligation to review & revise the LUP periodically
- In the OECS where UNCHS & other donors helped prepare LUPs in the 1990s, these are not in use
- Planners have failed to deliver relevant & timely LUPs
- Development control takes place on an ad hoc basis
- Only Barbados has prepared and “rolled over” its LUP and actually uses it to guide development

Why has LUP worked in Barbados?

- The LUP legislation enacted 1966 has been repeatedly amended (1968, 1981, 1983 & 1998) & kept relatively up-to-date
- The legislation binds the State (applies to development by the Government)
- The national LUP initially produced 1973 has been revised from time to time (last 2003) & kept relevant
- The LUP agency exercises its development control & enforcement powers effectively
- There is a culture of compliance in the society
- There is a high level of political support for LUP (the TCPDO is in the PM's Office)

LUP in Guyana

- LUP law (TC&P Act) was introduced in 1946
- It enables but does not compel the CHPA to prepare three types of LUPs
 - regional schemes
 - town planning schemes
 - supplementary schemes (for parts of regions)
- The law actually applies only to 5 municipalities in Guyana
- Town Plans were produced for Georgetown (1951), New Amsterdam (1969); Bartica (1986); Linden (1987); & Anna Regina (1998)
- No regional LUPs were ever produced by the CHPA
- CHPA exercises development control over a wider area

LUP in Guyana (2)

- The power to prepare LUP for areas other than the municipalities was transferred to the Guyana Lands & Surveys Commission (GLSC) in 1999
- Like ROGB, the GLSC is responsible for all unallocated State Lands; its other traditional role is control of land surveys
- The GLSC's capability to undertake LUP is in its infancy
- During the period when GLSC was headed by a LU Planner, the GLSC produced a Regional LUP for Berbice (Region 6)
- Under the EU-funded Guyana Development of LUP Project, the GLSC has produced a National Land Use Plan (2013) with technical assistance from a firm of UK Consultants
- The UK Consultants were embedded in the GLSC LUP Unit in order to transfer skills to local counterparts

Lessons Learned

- ✓ LUP is generally a secondary task of an agency with another important mandate (housing or devel. control)
- ✓ Failure to share LUP functions with local governments has led to a lack of hierarchy of plans
- ✓ Public participation mechanisms are weak – “top down” planning is the norm – no public ownership of plans
- ✓ Legal tools for LUP implementation (land acquisition & development control) are weak – no legal conx to PSIP
- ✓ This lack of continuity after plan formulation stage leads to abandonment of LUPs – they are just books
- ✓ Technical assistance yields only short term results, unless LUP skills are transferred to local counterparts
- ✓ Lack of political support for LUP is a major problem

Applying Lessons Learnt to Suriname

- LUP functions should be placed in an agency/agencies where there are synergies with other functions
- Personnel responsible for preparation of LUPs should be dedicated to this task (not have competing responsibilities)
- All LUPs in hierarchy need not be prepared by same agency
- The legal framework for LUP must be clear, strong & kept up-to-date
- If technical assistance is granted for consultants to prepare LUPs, there should be a skills transfer to local counterparts
- Public participation in the LUP process is key to community ownership of/compliance with LUPs
- Public sector investment must conform to LUPs and be subject to same controls as private sector investments
- Political support for LUP is essential