

Een aanzet tot integrale ontwikkeling



BEZIEN VANUIT HET PERSPECTIEF VAN HET
CARIBISCHE DEEL VAN HET KONINKRIJK

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Zilveren
Regeringsjubileum
2005


UNIVERSITY OF THE
NETHERLANDS ANTILLES

INTRODUCTION

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On the 25th of November 2005 the *Comité Zilveren Jubileum* in cooperation with the University of the Netherlands Antilles, organized a conference about integral development of the Netherlands Antilles: *Conferentie Integrale Ontwikkeling; een aanzet tot integrale ontwikkeling gezien vanuit het Caribisch deel van het Koninkrijk*. The conference was meant to celebrate the 25th year of the reign of Her Majesty Queen Beatrix and this book presents the results of the conference.

The opening statement of the conference referred to a similar exercise in 1976 and mentioned the *Werkgroep Integrale Ontwikkeling*. It was stated that too little has happened with the results of this former conference. Another remark was that for the last couple of years issues were singled out and that by doing so the interrelationship between issues was neglected. The conclusion was that it was about time to have a conference on integral development of the Netherlands Antilles.

There is no universal formula for integral development of a nation. This implies that the Netherlands Antilles should develop and adopt a tailor-made program. In other words, the Netherlands Antilles must not copy others or follow the fashion of the day, because this will result in failure. According to prof. Roeland in 't Veld, there is only one universal principle: Nations must prevent tyranny by putting checks and balances into place. Good Governance is an essential part of these checks and balances.

The central question is: what is integral development? According to George Curiel MA, integral development is sustainable development. The Millennium Development Goals for Small Island States provide a frame for integral development. At first glance the Netherlands Antilles - based on certain indicators - seem to do well. But if one takes a closer look it becomes apparent that there is a considerable inequality in the distribution of income and that as a consequence certain groups in the Netherlands Antilles are excluded from development. This exclusion means poverty.

Jeannette Juliet-Pablo is preoccupied about the fact that the Netherlands Antilles never developed a structural and integral government policy for fighting poverty and that this issue only recently has been put on the agenda. She recommends scientific research that includes participation of the poor.

According to dr. Goretti Narain, President of the University of the Netherlands Antilles, integral development is about the well being of citizens. Prof. Cees Maris adds that all citizens are responsible for the proliferation of the human rights and that this is not the sole responsibility of the government.

Dr. Emsley Tromp president of the Central Bank of the Netherlands Antilles, cautions that the current national debt of the Netherlands Antilles is a threat for the integral development of the islands. The problem is of such magnitude that the government of the Netherlands must be included in the solution.

Economic development is an important aspect of integral development and the fight against poverty (according to mr. John Jacobs), but they are not synonymous. Lloyd Narain warns against the mistake to only focus on economic development. This will not automatically lead to integral development.

The level of education and poverty are related, emphasizes drs. Sharine Corenelia-Isabela. The educational system in the Netherlands Antilles has a low performance. This is one of the major causes of poverty in the Netherlands Antilles. According to ir. Herman George there is also a direct relationship between health care and poverty. A parallel with education can be seen. A low performance of the health care systems also contributes to poverty in the Netherlands Antilles. The poor are almost excluded from proper health care.

Alex Möllen MBA explains that there are many initiatives for fighting poverty but there is no coordination and synchronization between the different groups. He plies for a better coordination between the government, the NGO's, the private sector and the Civil Society.

Drs. Stanley Inderson – like ir. Dito Abbad - highlights the role of the media. Freedom of the press includes responsibility and at the moment the press does not provide professional information. The media should play an important role in the education of the youth especially. Currently the media is 'deviance-amplifier'.

Politicians are not listening properly to the constituency. Ir. Dito Abbad observes that political parties show autistic behaviour. According to Sarah Wescot-Williams, a political leader of St. Maarten, public leadership is becoming more and more partner leadership, as it is said that elected officials have only as much power as the community will allow.

The rule of law is an important condition for integral development. However law and regulations are not enough. The President of the Court of the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba mr. ing. Luis de Lannoy, plies for a strong and independent court as part of a system of checks and balances.

Citizens should be educated to be part of a democratic society. Democracy is an important condition for integral development. Good Public Governance fighting corruption and bureaucracy is another important condition for integral development because Good Governance has a positive effect on the investment climate.

Drs. Stanley Inderson ascertains that crime is a major problem in the Netherlands Antilles and that the current system has failed in the fight against crime. The system must be changed by implementing 'evidence based policy' and 'what works policy'.

The future of the Netherlands Antilles is the responsibility of the citizens of the islands. It is very important to make the necessary constitutional adjustments realizing the 'Status Autonomous' of Curaçao and the constitutional constructions of each of the other islands of the Netherlands Antilles and clarify the relationships within the Dutch Kingdom.

The government policy and the capacity to develop policy should improve by strengthening the public sector. The policy should state measurable targets. NGO's should be strengthened and they should work together to implement government policy. The implementation of policies should be evaluated by periodically monitoring the targets and if needed by adjusting the policy.

We, the people of the Netherlands Antilles, must do what we must do, according to ir. Herman George. We must reflect in action. There is no time for analyzing only. The University of the Netherlands Antilles must play a key role in the reflection part. There is a great need for research; not only quantitative, but also qualitative research, especially in the behavioral sciences. Although the University of the Netherlands Antilles has an important role to fulfill, paradoxically the university is underutilized. The theme of the research program of the University of the Netherlands Antilles should be 'Sustainable development of the Netherlands Antilles'. This regardless of the constitutional development of the Netherlands Antilles.

Let us hope that after ten years or so when there might be a similar conference, the participants will not have to conclude again that not much happened in ten years.



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