

ABSTRACT

This thesis analyses the achievements of agricultural development planning and projects implemented in Jamaica over the past three decades.

It is argued that the 'top-down' planning methodology and the lack of planner/farmer interaction has resulted in an inadequate conceptualization of the problem and a lack of 'fit' between plans and their environment.

The study adopts a holistic approach to project implementation and demonstrates the importance of macro-micro interactions in achieving project outcome. It begins with a macro-analysis of the Jamaican agricultural sector and moves to a micro analysis of the project and its environment. The study analyses the implementation of a credit project based on the conceptualization and assumptions of the planners and shows how the 'clash' between the two decision systems the decision system of the planners and the decision system of the farmer affect project achievements.

Furthermore, a strategy is suggested for the reconceptualisation of development planning methodology based on the need to achieve a high degree of fit between actors of the macro system (planners,

implementors) of the plan and micro system (farmers environment.) The emphasis is placed on the need for contextual analysis, dialogue with clientele and an iterative bottom-up process taking into account local resources and capabilities, institutions and stratification systems as well as developing appropriate institutions that can facilitate individual and community development.