
Paper

BEYOND THE PLAN

Building In-House Capacity to Plan, Design and Implement Urban and Territorial Transformations, Case of 'Castries Vision 2030'

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Abstract

This paper showcases the importance of 'in-house' planning and 'rapid planning' to reverse 'planning inertia', steward new leadership as well as to boost local planning capacities to address planning challenges in a strategic and actionable way and to overcoming the deficiencies of the traditional static blueprint 'master-planning'.

Keywords

In-house Planning, Capacity-development, Rapid Planning, Community Visioning

1. Introduction

We start on the premise that 'in-house' drafting of urban policy and planning within a short span of time (months, rather than years) is to be preferred over the conventional wholesale outsourcing to private consultancy, especially for small-island states like Saint Lucia, situated in the Southern Caribbean region. It relates to anecdotal evidence that 80% of the knowledge of a city (or any other territory for the matter) is born by its residing communities, with external advisers or consultants only needed to unlock, broaden, deepen and process that community-based knowledge into a visionary and actionable plan. There is not much theory to backup this premise, but we will share what we found and what we find useful as planning practitioners. We are indeed aware of the need for mutual benefit between the theory and praxis of planning, despite the very contextual character of urban and territorial planning. This in-house/rapid planning approach was recently tested in Castries, Saint Lucia's capital city; thanks to all the stakeholders and individuals who voluntarily contributed to a new people-centred Shared Vision for Castries. The visioning exercise was executed within a compressed timeline of only 4 months and a very constraint budget-frame.

The authors of this article were both highly involved in the drafting of the Castries Vision 2030, in their respective roles as external adviser and domestic chair of the planning team. This paper is also their testament from the practitioners' experience with in-house and rapid planning as means to address the pressing challenges related to depopulation of the core-city, informal housing, urban crime, environmental degradation, traffic congestion and last but not least imminent, the eminent threats triggered by climate change. While the content and output of the plan is worth sharing, the emphasis in this contribution will be on the planning process and concerns related to insufficient and ineffective planning capacities necessary to ensure a stepwise implementation of a Shared Vision that will prepare Castries for its Golden Jubilee as the capital of independent Saint Lucia, in 2029.

2. Castries as a typical Caribbean capital city

With 60,000 inhabitants within the city-region, 20,000 in the core-city and only around 4,000 residents left in the original downtown grid-city, Castries is small in numbers, yet by far the largest city on the island – see Figures 1a/b/c.

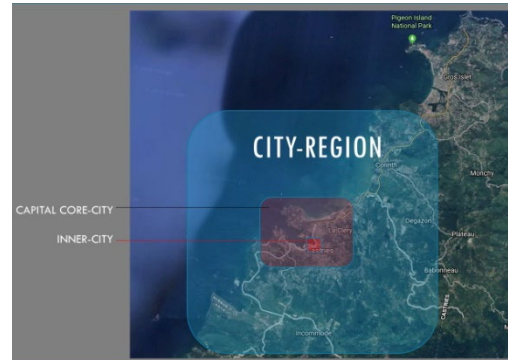


Figure 1a: Saint Lucia Urban Structure

Figure 1b: Castries planning area

Less than 10km to the north of Castries is the fisherman’s town of Gros-Islet, famous for its weekly street-party every Friday. That village, which was highly frequented by Saint Lucian Nobel laureate Derek Walcott, is well-known for its postcard image of Pigeon island. With the passage of time, Gros Islet was gradually developed by the construction of extensive luxury housing and vast tourism estates. An area comprising a large new marina and a shopping mall was eventually built between Gros-Islet and Castries. That area known as Rodney Bay, developed into the most popular tourism settlement within the north of the island, albeit without a clear urban plan. It resulted not only in undermining the economic basis and residential attractiveness of the nearby capital Castries, but also generated a car-dependent traffic volume which hurts the economy, environment and the well-being of the people, especially those within the core-city of Castries where the streets are choked with cars and mini-buses on a daily basis– see Figures 2a/b.



Figure 2a: Mini-buses stationed most of the day in the downtown area, often idling to keep them cool

Figure 2b: Mini-buses encroaching the city-park

These are just some of the reasons why Castries is in fact decaying. Climate change also adds a whole new level of threat, with Castries at risk of devastating floods from both tropical river streams, a rising sea as well as more frequent and severe hurricanes with storm surges up to four (4) meters -see Figure 3.



Figure 3: Flood risks for Castries City-region. Left: river flooding risk; Right: sea flooding risks 1m & 4m (storm surge)ⁱ

At the more human scale, residents and visitors of Castries complain that the city is no longer attractive to live, study, shop or just stroll around. The wharf that once harboured banana ships is now mainly a container and imported car terminal which in turn generates a lot of traffic and pollution, while the adjacent cruise-ship harbour receives thousands of tourists on a daily basis during the peak cruise season, yet those visitors hardly spend any money off the ship nor in the city, while infrastructural costs and air pollution are disproportionately high in Castries-see Figure 4.



Figure 4: Cargo-port (right) and Cruise-berthsⁱⁱ

Yet, Castries remains a dormant beauty blessed by a unique natural harbour and hemmed in by tropical green hills, with ready access to some fine beaches -see Figure 5.



Figure 5a: Castries natural harbour surrounded by hills and beachesⁱⁱⁱ

Despite significant loss of cultural and architectural heritage due to reckless modernization, Castries will always remain the home of Saint Lucia's two Nobel laureates, author Honourable Derek Walcott and economist Sir Arthur Lewis, as well as the home of some typical Caribbean architecture – see Figures 6a/b.



Figure 6a: Restored Derek Walcott house^{iv}



Figure 6b: Brazil street in downtown Castries^v

3. The need for a new vision

The problems are not new, but they have only worsened since the Government of Saint Lucia (GoSL) endorsed the very first National Vision Plan (NVP) for the island, since independence in 1979. The National Vision Plan was an ambitious and costly project which took several years of preparation and was entirely outsourced, albeit with involvement of some domestic architects and planners (there are very few qualified urban planners and designers in St Lucia). The coffee-table book in landscape A3-format, with great photos, graphics and maps, was ready by 2008 and finally approved by the government in 2009 – see Figure 7a/b.



Figure 7a: Cover of National Vision Plan 2008 **Figure 7b: Branding proposal Castries**

The Vision was conceived through the lens of a Miami based consultancy, specialized in tourism and place-marketing. The Plan aimed at boosting Saint Lucia's attractiveness to foreign tourists and tourism related investments whilst maximising the regional share of the growing cruise tourism-market. However, the financial earthquake that devastated Wall Street in 2008, followed by a worldwide financial tsunami, undermined the optimism and appetite to invest in Saint Lucia's Plan and the accompanying bold vision to boost the island's capital city. A lack of political stewardship and professional capacity to readapt the plan and focus public investments towards the same eventually buried the 2008 NVP under a thick layer of dust. Meanwhile the negative trends only got worse and Castries made it onto a chart with Caribbean cruise-ports to avoid; rife of crime and nothing really to see (unless you decide to pay a lot to be driven or sailed to more picturesque places on the island, such as the sulphur springs or majestic Pitons in Soufriere.)

In 2018, 10 years after the conception of the NVP, Prime-minister Alan Chastanet, a well-respected multi-hotel owner and former tourism minister (during the creation of the NVP), decided that it was time to dust off the old vision. Instead of tasking the spatial planning ministry with the review, he endowed the review of the Castries chapter of the NVP to his ministry of Finance, stewarded by the Permanent Secretary of the Department of Finance. - This proved to have been a thoughtful initiative as all ministries have some level of direct dependence or at least a working relationship with the Department of Finance. Stewardship by the - Ministry of Physical Planning would have likely been perceived as 'sectorial' and more detached from the economy and overall national finance/budget cycle. This particular component will be subsequently revisited later on in this paper.

The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the UN's building agency which was already operating in Saint Lucia where they assisted with the construction of a segment of a new hospital as well as other critical infrastructures, developed a proposal to help an in-house review of the 2008 plan. The proposal including the designing and setting up a new institutional mechanism to plan and implement the updated plan. However, only the review portion of that proposal was approved, while it was agreed that the implementation mechanism would form part of a follow up stage. Meanwhile UNOPS was also tasked to help with the establishment of a new National Integrated Planning and Programme Unit / NIPP Unit (within the Finance Department), of which co-author Haward Wells was appointed as the director.

4. The planning approach

Principal author Frank D'hondt was contracted as leading planning expert, later complemented by Washington-based urban planner Adriana Navarro Sertich and backed up by the local UNOPS-team led by Christopher Roberts and Fabian Felix. Haward Wells originally worked as an architect at the planning department, it was therefore a logical choice that he was also appointed as chairman of the Castries Planning Team which composed of representatives from relevant ministerial departments. This five (5) member strong core-team was the engine of the planning project and was guided and supported by the Ms Cointha Thomas Permanent Secretary (PS) of the Department of Finance who chaired the Steering Committee (SC) and principal liaison officer to the Prime-minister (PM) on the Visioning exercise – see Figures 8a/b.



Figure 8a: Planning-team meeting in Planning-room



Figure 8b: Discussion with the Prime-minister (standing)

While staffing and resources were being finalized for the abovementioned structures, the lead-expert of the team had already undertaken a preliminary review of the NVP 2008 and drafted a first review note which in summary dismissed the old vision as a document which did not pass- the test of sustainable development as defined by the SDGs, the Climate Accord and the New Urban Agenda. Therefore, with the consent of the Steering Committee, this initial review resulted in a courageous decision to develop a more sustainable and shared vision that would replace, rather than dust off the old 2008 vision for Castries. This illustrates the importance of using the current body of planning knowledge to quickly but critically assess existing policies and plans before simply updating them. It is also important

to stress the fundamental difference between developing a shared vision and a masterplan, which we will further elaborate at the end.

With the project timeline fixed from the inception of the exercise delivery of the final document was scheduled for three months after the start of work. With very limited financial and human resources at hand, an ambitious yet realistic planning approach was required for a success realisation of this exercise. A first critical step was to secure a fixed location (a situation room) where the planning team met and worked, put up maps, created and put up “to-do lists” and invited stakeholders for interactive talks. The space was also the venue for several focus group meetings. It was also at this very same location that two months into the planning works, a critical five-hour long, hands-on meeting, took place between the core team, the Permanent Secretary of the Department of Finance and the Prime Minister of Saint Lucia – see Figure 8b. This proved to have been critical for the ultimate delivery of a final draft-Vision which was eventually endorsed by the country’s cabinet of ministers. This indicated the importance of;

- i) a dedicated planning room;
- ii) an open engagement with the political leadership needed to steward the implementation of the vision.

The second critical step in the planning process was to properly staff and capacitate both the extended Planning Team and the Steering Committee, as the principal authors of the new vision. While the entire operation was initiated and stewarded by the island-government, it was essential to seek and obtain commitment and active involvement by the Mayor’s Office. A Mayor is not a very powerful position in Saint Lucia but luckily this Mayor, Mr. Peterson Francis wants to expand the role of the City Council in the redevelopment of the city, thus making him a potentially strong partner for the Prime-Minister as it regards the redevelopment of Castries, and if possible, making him the public face to promote and pursue the Shared Vision.

The third step was to have identified all essential stakeholders and the organization of focus group meetings round clusters of topics that were related to the redevelopment of Castries. In a relatively short space of time, five focus group meetings were held in the ‘situation room’, followed by a plenary gathering of all focus groups (at an executive level), which was dubbed the first Castries Urban Forum. Thanks to the relentless efforts of the planning team and the addition of new staff to the NIPP unit, the Forum was able to whites the successfully gathering of approximately seventy key stakeholders which included the port authority, Saint Lucia chamber of commerce, vendors association representative, the Saint Lucia National Trust, etc.– see Figure 9.



Figure 9: First Castries Urban Forum

The CUF was co-chaired by the Finance Ministry and the Mayor's Office. The CUF successfully adopted a joint declaration which was prepared by the planning team; – to advocate a people-centred and participatory Shared Vision that is more bottom up than top down. Whilst the time-frame and resources did not all allow for a full-scale participatory planning process with ample access to all residents of Castries and beyond, the CUF at least provided the basis for a multi-stakeholder visioning process. At the CUF, after a briefing, all stakeholders at the gathering engaged in cross-sectoral discussions that elaborated their ideas for a better Castries, based on collective memory-mapping and basic joint-fact finding ; a visioning technique that's well tested all over the world (see e.g. UN-HABITAT, 2012).

Once a draft-report was consolidated, the CUF was reconvened to take stock of the Vision and to have reflected on the -outcome document.

The overall approach to planning was based on the 'Theory of Change' and 'Result Based Management' methodologies. In that sense the Vision is part of a broader strategy to gradually step up the knowledge, instruments, capacities and resources for a participatory strategic planning approach that will result in direct outputs (the Vision report), outcomes (transformational projects implemented) and impacts (a more sustainable land-use and mobility).

As was previously mentioned, an initial expert-review was presented to the Steering Committee, which spurred the final decision to refocus on a new vision rather than having to dust off the old vision. This initial review gradually developed into a more comprehensive review of the NVP, which was in turn informed by the enveloping vision. The final review report was presented as an annex to the new vision, with the request to overwrite the old vision -with the new vision, except for the planning components that were considered as complementary to and compliant with the new vision. Figure 11 is a graphic illustration of what was rejected from the old vision and components that were re-endorsed in that vision.

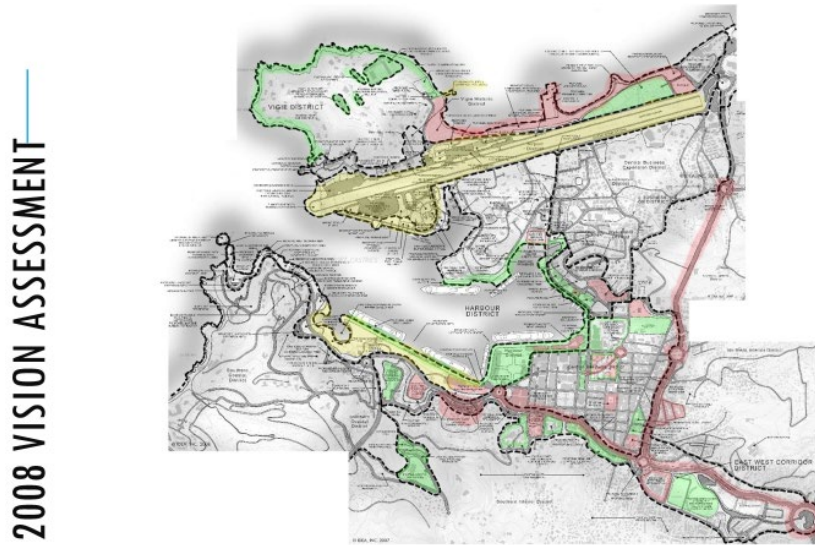


Figure 11: Colour coded review of the Castries spatial outline 2008 (denounced interventions are red-coloured)

From the inception, a draft-content structure of the final report was presented to and approved by the SC as the general guide for the compressed planning works which was to be delivered within that three month period. The initial idea to produce a magazine-styled report did not materialize, however, the final report largely followed the initial content-structure. This assured that the writing-process maintained traction and remained focused. Figure 12 shows the cover of the report which illustrates a more people-centred approach by framing cycling youth around the Derek Walcott square, in downtown Castries.

Lacking the resources for proper imagery, a passionate staff member from the Department of Finance captured drone images of the core-city with his personal equipment, in addition to photos and video's at ground level. Video-recordings were also done of all-important meetings including the presentations of the draft-vision document. This type of material will prove its value in follow up stages of the vision.

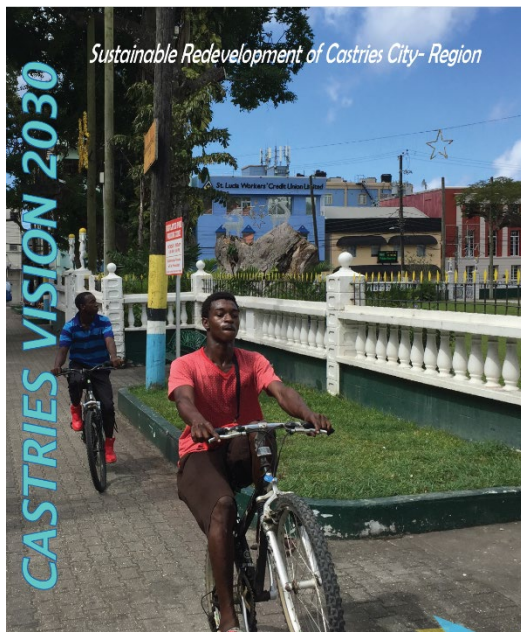


Figure 12: Cover of Castries Vision 2030 report

Finally, a cabinet-note was drafted as per official protocol reflecting the Cabinet of Ministers' wise cabinet-decision to have endorsed the new Castries Vision 2030. The note also included instructions regarding the next steps, as well as some critical conditions beyond the vision plan, such as the need to reform the current planning system, the need for new planning and financial instruments and the need for capacity building as well as institutional innovation.

5. The planning content

The planning report follows a classic sequence of 'past-present-future'. After establishing the planning approach and having introduced the SDGs and NUA as guiding policy frameworks, a chapter was dedicated to the rich history of Castries as a natural harbour, colonized by the French and the British and consequently resulted in a French grid-city surrounded by British military fortresses. This chapter also included the outcomes of the collective memory mapping of all stakeholders involved in the visioning exercise, with a collection of their shared places and the events that constituted their sense of place in Castries and its surroundings. Prominent and mostly elderly people were quoted from their opinions on what should be preserved or restored. There was lots of strong emphasis placed on the lost common and public spaces such as the river, the beaches, the parks and the squares.

The present situation of Castries City-region was captured in a long chapter which attempted to identify some baseline-indicators for what needed to be changed or improved within the new vision document. Given the fact that data were not readily available and that time was limited, planning team members were tasked with the collection of all existing data which was also complemented by the use of relevant expert-analysis. This was essential for evidence-based planning as well as for future monitoring and evaluation purposes. Overall, this chapter on the State of Castries City-region provided convincing arguments necessary for a radical change of gears and the advocacy of 'business as unusual'. At the end of this chapter, a combined SWOT-analysis was presented based on the inputs of the different Focus Groups which was the basis for the definition of three SWOT-strategies which can be interpreted as the following planning or development scenarios;

- i) the risky 'offensive strategy'- to bet on tourism as the engine of redevelopment, versus the 'defensive strategy' - to focus all energies on climate resilience;
- ii) an in-between 'transformational strategy' -to focus on urban renewal and a more liveable city for its residents

– see Figure 15. These scenarios proved to have been very helpful in the justification of a series of proposed interventions aimed at the implementation of the Shared Vision.

CASTRIES – SWOT STRATEGIES		
	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
OPPORTUNITIES	Offensive <i>Cruise City: make Castries more attractive for visitors and cruise- and convention tourism in particular - Rodney Bay as leisure benchmark</i>	Transformative <i>Capital Pride City: make Castries vibrant and resilient capital city for St Lucia citizens, with focus on heritage-based urban innovation</i>
THREATS	Defensive <i>Resilient City: make Castries more resilient and heritage friendly, with focus on restoring its cultural and architectural heritage</i>	Survival <i>Ghost City: what will happen without action</i>

Figure 15: SWOT-Strategies/Vision-Scenario's for Castries 2030

This Shared Vision has been outlined in the next chapter, and it was based on the vision statements resulting from the Focus Groups and the Castries Urban Forum. An integrated vision statement was derived from ten thematic vision statements. That new statement aligned with the SDGs, the Climate Accord, the NUA and the International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning (IG-UTP) (UN-HABITAT, 2018 & 2018) – see Figures 16a/b.

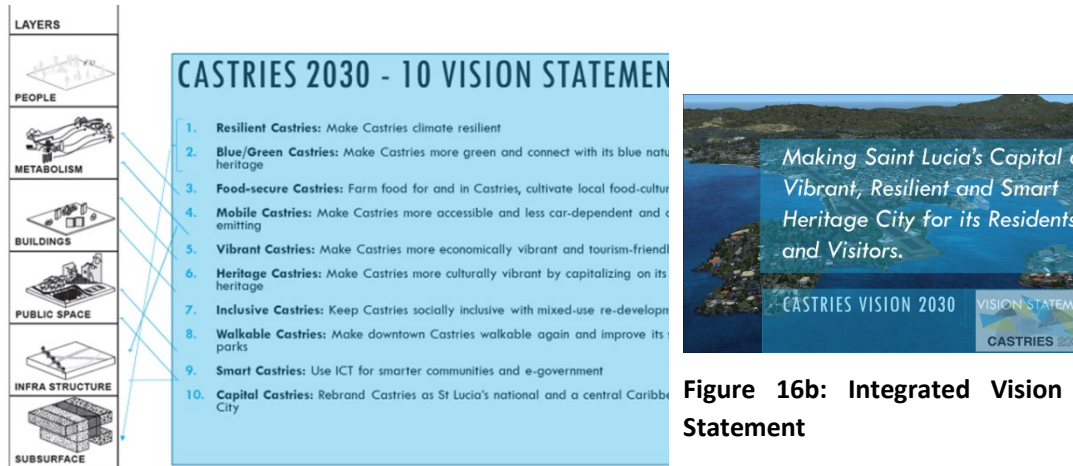


Figure 16a: Thematic Vision Statements

Figure 16b: Integrated Vision Statement

The Shared Vision also included schematic spatial outlines of both the City-region and its Core-city, which was further detailed in the next chapter entitled 'Area-based development'.

Nine strategic focus areas were selected and detailed in terms of development perspectives and desirable spatial interventions – see Figure 17a. This provided a roadmap for a stepwise implementation of the Shared Vision along with ten Transformational Projects, including the necessary regional and international benchmarks for compliance – see Figure 17b.

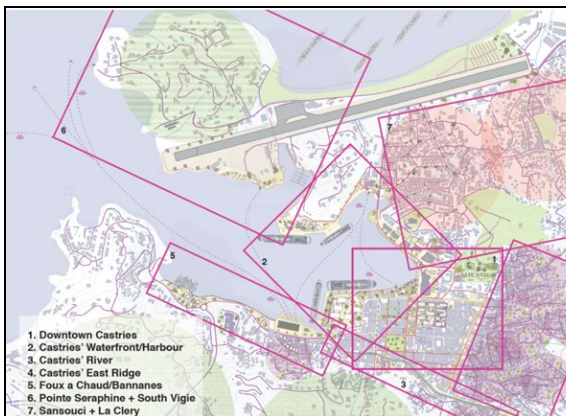


Figure 17a: Area-based development outline and focus-areas

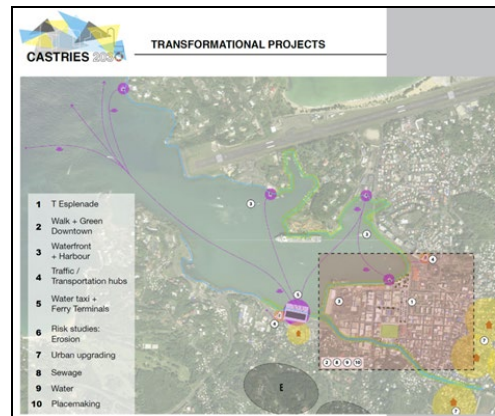


Figure 17b: Overview of Transformational Projects

A final chapter was dedicated to the implementation process of the Shared Vision and it is important to note that this was a glaring omission in the 2008 Vision document. This implementation process includes seven critical parameters necessary for the successful implementation of the vision. Also included was the design, establishment and management

of a specific implementation mechanism such as a Castries Development Agency – see Figure 18.



Figure 18: Critical conditions to implement the Castries Vision 2030

6. The executive decision

The draft-report was presented to the entire Cabinet of Ministers by the leading urban expert, backed by other members of the core-team. Whilst the Prime Minister was initially sceptical about the Vision during previous meetings, on this instance, he was instrumental in selling the contents of the vision to other sceptical members of his cabinet. The previously mentioned five-hour long meeting with the island's leader, along with the subsequent reviews to the document after that meeting, greatly aided the way the Cabinet received the final presentation of the vision. The Government of Saint Lucia finally endorsed the Shared Vision as a good basis for further public consultation and as a document that will aid the preparation of a gradual implementation of the Vision, along the line of the proposed transformational projects.

7. The next steps

Immediate next steps include the publication of the Shared Vision and the organization of a larger public consultation drive to rally broader support and to gather more ideas for the actual implementation of the Vision. This consultation process could be best stewarded by the Mayor's Office, however, the Government must also mobilize its efforts island-wide in order to harness additional ideas for the strengthening of the capital city function of Castries.

A crucial next step is to obtain cost-estimates for the Transformational projects and to suggest the financing mechanisms, (both internal and external) for the execution of those projects. Those mechanisms should also incorporate the informal support pledges already received from the World Bank and the Caribbean Development Bank representatives, after having received presentations of the Shared Vision in Castries. Finally, the implementation

mechanism needs to be thoroughly established and made operational at the soonest so as to maintain the positive momentum currently exists around the Castries Vision 2030. As a result of the successful planning approach for Castries, the PS also advocates a similar approach for other cities and territories within Saint Lucia, which will ultimately lead to the gradual revision of the entire 2008 National Vision Plan.

8. Lessons learned

The first lesson learnt was that the planning process design really matters and that it must be well tailored to the local context, the local planning culture and the local planning capacities. A second lesson was that pre-set timeframes and limited budgets for delivering planning products (as was the case for the Castries vision) is not necessarily compromising the quality of those planning products, provided that in-house and local 'agents of change' can be mobilized and empowered.

A third lesson learned was that investing time and trust in political leadership (both at central and local level) can pay dividends when it comes to buying into the planning process. Without the stewardship of both the PM and the Mayor, the planning project would have probably been a more traditional technocratic piece of work. However, the downside to this approach is that a number of planning issues risk being 'over-politicised' as part of the political bargain and can consequently undermine the sustainability factor of the vision. In the case of the Castries Vision, there were indeed a number of 'contentious' issues that to date remain unsolved and may consequently result in the government pursuing developments that are contrary to the Shared Vision.

In this instance a remedy is to at least increase the transparency of decision making, as it also remains a democratic right to make the wrong decisions. Having considered the short-project duration and the low-budget for the execution of a that vision as well as the realisation of a strategic plan for an entire city-region; it is safe to say that such an approach cannot truly be a bottom-up undertaking, nor a an exercise of full participation. . We therefore admit that this was a mistake in the initial process design, however, we must t also acknowledge the unintended change of scope, as the initial exercise comprised only the review of the old vision and not the development of an entirely new vision.

Local planning-process innovations such as the Castries Urban Forum and the open-door planning room guaranteed way more stakeholder consultation relative to the 2008 vision exercise. The final lesson learnt was that all stakeholders involved in this planning project agreed, (whether from Castries or other parts of Saint Lucia) that this in-house/in-sourced multi-stakeholder planning approach worked much better than the outsourced master-planning approach that was applied in the old but binding, 2008 National Vision Plan. The approach even inspired the Finance PS to consider future proposals for the replication of this approach for other areas of the island.

This approach has also inspired the Caribbean Development Bank to extend an invitation to members of the planning team for their participation and presentation of this vision at the next Caribbean Urban Forum, which will be an excellent opportunity to share this invaluable experience with peers within the wider Caribbean region. UNOPS is well placed to link the Castries experience with its similar experience in Willemstad (Curaçao), where the organization supported community and expert-based Visioning workshops that lead to a

roadmap for the localising the New Urban Agenda through an Urban Transformation policy. – see Figure 19. Peer-learning and city to city cooperation are also essential instruments to be incorporated into the planning process design and budget.



Figure 19: Cover of Curaçao Urban Transformation report co-produced by the Curaçao Ministry of Planning, UNOPS and ISOCARP

This brings us to the larger debate about in-house versus outsourcing of strategic planning projects. As was previously mentioned, there appears to be limited material to support the theory on this issue, at least not in the spatial planning domain. Most of the professional and academic discussion is focused on technically related outsourcing from public to private entities. More on this is elaborated in D'hondt's contribution to ISOCARP Review 15 – 'Beyond the Plan: Building In-House Capacity To Plan, Design And Implement Urban And Territorial Interventions – Learning From Practices From West To East' (ISOCARP, 2019). Outsourcing is generally well understood, while the difference between insourcing and in-house might need some clarification.

In our view, in-house is simply performing a planning activity by contractual staff members of the planning authority or institution, e.g. a national, regional or local planning department, eventually with the help of other departments within the same mother organisation, e.g. the national, regional or local government, or its administration. In-sourcing however, could be considered as a variant of in-house with the help of external experts, whether from private or related public sector. The main difference between out- and in-sourcing is that out-sourced planning tasks are typically executed by a planning consultancy with the bulk of the work done outside of the planning authority, while in-sourcing typically involves planning experts that help to execute the bulk of the work inside the planning authority. Planning actors can apply both in-house/out-house options but a line is drawn between wholesale outsourcing on the one hand and partial outsourcing on the other hand.

In the case of the latter, planning actors execute more than approximately half of the planning work in-house, complemented by in-sourcing and/or out-sourcing – often labelled as the hybrid model. In general, there are two main questions to be answered at the start of a planning activity, namely;

- i) whether to opt for the 'in-house', the 'outsourced' or the hybrid model?
- ii) whether the needs and specific activities for outsource and/or insource should be defined in case of the hybrid option?

Lessons learned from Saint Lucia (and Curaçao) experiences is that these Small-Island States simply do not have the resources to develop all the capacities and skills needed for in-house planning. The resulting dependency on outsourced plans and designs is often more harmful than helpful. Temporary in-sourcing of experts through agencies such as the UN or the World Bank is certainly a smarter way to complement in-house capacities, however, too often the gains are of a temporary nature. Hence, a more sustainable in-house/in-sourcing capacity development pathway could be explored by looking at capacity support mechanisms at the regional level for the Caribbean, or more practically according to the various language preferences of the region (primarily English, French, Spanish, Dutch and/or Papiamentu) – e.g. a Caribbean Urban and Territorial Planning Institute can be established under CARICOM and can comprise different language branches.

9. Conclusion and recommendations

Our cities and territories need good planning and management to thrive while keeping our planet healthy. Planned urbanisation and territorial development provides an avenue for sustainable social and economic development. In 'Leading Change- Delivering the New Urban Agenda through Urban and Territorial Planning', international planning experts strongly advocate to engage in urban and territorial planning processes that are strategic and participatory, with plans that are simple, clear and rapid (SALGA/UN-HABITAT, 2018). However, the high rate of urban growth far outpaces the capacity of many governments and other institutions to plan and manage this growth in a sustainable, effective and efficient manner. In the slipstream of the New Urban Agenda, many scholars have already pointed to the dangerous gap between planning expectations and planning capacities, both in numbers and quality. In her key-note speech at the 52nd ISOCARP world congress in Durban, Vanessa Watson, planning professor at Cape Town University said: "Planning is located as a central implementing tool in the Agenda but is it an approach to planning which can achieve these very high expectations?" (WATSON, 2016). Governments, education providers as well as the planning community will need to step up and scale up efforts to boost the planning capacities needed for basic in-house planning and well stewarded in/outsourcing, not only to advance more sustainable territorial development but as well as to prevent a looming discredit of the planning discipline as not being able to deliver on its promises as expressed by SDG11, the NUA and the IGUTP.

The IGUTP includes a recommendation to: "Design a human resource development strategy to strengthen local capacities, to be supported by other spheres of government, as appropriate; Reinforce institutional and human capacity development at the local level in the areas of planning, design, management and monitoring, through training, exchanges of experience and expertise, knowledge transfers and organisational reviews."

In the handbook to apply the IGUTP (UN-Habitat, 2018), 'planning capacity needs' are considered as essential capacities and skills to meet the planning challenges of a certain territory, while the 'planning capacity aspirations' also look beyond these current needs and towards desirable planning capacities to aspire more ambitious goals on medium and long term. In both cases, capacity development needs to be planned and implemented; this is best referred to as 'Capacity Planning'.

Typically, 'capacity building' often means training. Certainly, this is a major component of Capacity building, however, if decision makers, managers, professionals and technicians are

to operate at full capacity, they need more than just their own capabilities. They need a conducive and supportive institutional and organisational environment. Therefore, capacity building must embrace the following three basic aspects:

- i) human resource development;
- ii) organisational development; and
- iii) institutional development^{vi}.

Should we look beyond the confines of traditional professional boundaries and state institutions, beyond attempts to micro-manage land-use and the discredited top-down technocratic master plans; then we can discern a new set of skills for planning and managing urban and territorial development which comprises the following: i) Analytical and cognitive skills; ii) Communication, negotiation and inclusion skills; iii) Strategic action skills; iv) Management skills; and v) Monitoring and learning skills^{vii}.

Equipped with these understandings and tools, a re-thinking of planning capacity support for quality in-house planning is at stake to implement the commitments made through the New Urban Agenda, including: “We will promote the strengthening of the capacity of national, subnational and local governments, including local government associations, as appropriate, to work with women and girls, children and youth, older persons and persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and local communities, and those in vulnerable situations, as well as with civil society, academia and research institutions in shaping organisational and institutional governance processes, enabling them to participate effectively in decision-making about urban and territorial development.”

This will need a parallel two-track approaches which should entail the following:

- i) governmental planning capacity development support to local authorities, to central level authorities and agencies in addition to existing governmental capacity providers; and
- ii) non-governmental planning capacity development support: legal and planning advice and support for individuals, communities, civil society organisations, business community. This includes planning education and research, as well planning advocacy and awareness (media).

To that this end we advocate territorial platforms (at regional, national and even transnational levels) for capacity planning and development that will provide the institutional support mechanism to address the growing capacity and human capital deficit to implement the Sustainable Development and New Urban Agenda's. These platforms should address both governmental and non-governmental capacity needs and aspirations, as an intermediate agent between national and local governments on one hand, and civil society, the business community and communities on the other hand; while interacting with and seeking occasional support from both the international community and the education and research sectors.

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ⁱ Source: UNOPS/CHARIM

ⁱⁱ Source: <https://www.cruisemapper.com/ports/castrics-port-461>

ⁱⁱⁱ Source: https://marinas.com/view/harbor/lxteeq_Castrics_Harbor_Castrics_St_Lucia

^{iv} Source: <http://www.cityofcastrics.org>

^v Source: https://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/map/google_map_Castrics.htm

^{vi} See for more in HAGUE et al., 'Making Planning Work – A guide to approaches and skills', Practical Action, 2006

^{vii} Ibidem