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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Trust and invigilation: The practical functions of time-fixed development plans, Colombia 1958–1970

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Argument
Development planning was a form of interventionist social knowledge widely used in the mid-twentieth century. Planning was employed with different aims, and the adoption of concrete techniques and procedures was highly sensitive to each country's institutional context. This article studies the life trajectory of Colombia's Ten-year Plan, an internationally celebrated attempt to design economic development on a large scale in what actors characterized as a politically "democratic" and economically "liberal" setting. Based on the Colombian case, I argue that a central function of planning in developing countries was to build trust, on behalf of local stakeholders and international donors, in the state's capacity to credibly use public resources and foreign aid to achieve its development aims. In turn, planning also allowed outsiders to invigilate the actions taken by states on the economy, and to make them accountable for their commitments. I examine the media of persuasion used in the build-up to, and the publicization and revision of the Ten-year Plan, to account for the shift from the macro scale of comprehensive plans to the smaller-scale development interventions observed in the 1960s. This case shows that the malleability of planning procedures was key for the enduring resilience of the planning system.

Keywords: Development planning; media of trust; Colombia; technical experts; planning manuals

1. Introduction

In December 1961, the Colombian government presented its first development plan. The Ten-year Plan (*Plan Decenal*) was the result of the cooperation between the National Planning Department (NPD) and the UN Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA), building on a decade of technical assistance in development planning from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD). Using the latest techniques in economic programming, the plan set the financial requirements and the actions needed to set the Colombian economy upon a path of self-sustained growth and to raise the low standards of living of its population in less than a decade. It epitomized the mid-twentieth century aspiration that whole economies could be engineered through technical forms of interventionist social knowledge. Hailed by experts in international institutions as an exemplary case of rational planning for other developing countries, the Ten-year Plan helped to promote Colombia as a "showcase" in development assistance (Karl, 2018). Like many other time-fixed development programs, this one failed to live up to its grandiose

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expectations. Nevertheless, the financial resources and knowledge about economic development that it mobilized for over a decade make it worth studying as a tool of interventionist knowledge.[1]

This article follows the full lifespan of Colombia's Ten-year Plan—from its inception in the late 1950s to the disenchantment with large-scale comprehensive planning and the shift toward smaller-scale interventions by the end of the 1960s. In doing so, it studies the many functions that development planning performed in the domains of public investment decisions and foreign aid negotiations, analyzing how the choice and adaptation of concrete planning techniques and procedures were negotiated on the ground by the plurality of actors that converged in planning offices during the 1960s.[2] I argue that planning tools like the Ten-year Plan operated in practice not so much as instruments of resource allocation but rather as media of persuasion. The case analyzed in this paper illustrates that an important epistemic function of this type of plans was to build trust in the state's commitment to making rational use of scarce financial resources in order to achieve its developmental aims. The creditworthiness of the state in developing countries and the public acceptance of its interventions in the economy both rested on the credibility of that commitment. In the eyes of international lenders and local stakeholders, time-fixed development plans, and more generally development planning, rendered that commitment more credible by making the state accountable for its proposed actions.

Development plans were both tools for action and actionable tools. What allowed them to work in practice as media to persuade different sets of decision-makers was the malleability of planning techniques. As Mary Morgan argues in her contribution to this special issue about Nigeria's first five-year development plan, actors and institutions pragmatically embraced the methods and procedures that were most amenable to their local institutional context. Planning departments in developing countries had access in the 1950s to an array of technical devices, ranging from the use of capital/output ratios to calculate macroeconomic projections (Boianovsky 2018) to the employment of input-output tables to analyze sectoral interdependencies (Aujac 2004; Ahkabbar et al. 2011). By the late 1960s, partly due to the diffusion of planning at a global scale, the toolkit had expanded to include macro-econometric models (Valadkhani 2004, 269–271; for Colombia, see Vanek 1967) and microeconomic techniques of project evaluation (Little and Mirrless 1990, 358–360). These quantitative techniques were used, to a greater or lesser extent, at different stages of the planning process in the Colombian case.

By producing standardized, unambiguous, and impersonal numerical metrics that allowed outsiders to monitor and evaluate government promises against the performance of the national economy and its component parts, or the social return of concrete investment projects, this assembly of techniques functioned as technologies of trust (Porter 1995). The figures contained in development plans made the actions taken by governments to promote economic development in principle accountable to relevant stakeholders, particularly private businessmen and international lending agencies, who generally mistrusted the ability of states to effectively intervene in economic affairs. By reducing economic decision-making to "rules of calculation" scrutable by legitimized bodies of expertise in external organizations, development plans also served as instruments of invigilation and control for powerful outsiders (Porter 1995, 115; Power 770). However, as the case analyzed here demonstrates, the employment of impersonal calculation techniques to plan development did not automatically render states' commitments more credible or accountable.

[1]The main target of the plan was to attain an annual growth rate of 3.5% in Colombia's per capita gross domestic product (GDP) between 1962 and 1972. The observed average annual growth rate of the Colombian economy over that decade (2.74%) was far below that target, particularly during the first five-year period (1.72%) that followed the presentation of the plan (World Bank, 2025). Despite this performance, the plan mobilized over 2.45 billion US dollars in loans by aid agencies to the Colombian government throughout the period. For the distribution of the loans approved by agency, see Table 1 below.

[2]The list of published, archival, and oral sources consulted for reconstructing the early history of development planning in Colombia can be found at the end of this paper.

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Table 1. Value of approved loans by agency (US dollars, current), 1961-1970

	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1961-1970
AID	20	90	26	66	65	17	100	87	85	72	773
Ex-Im Bank	54	3	3	22	3	3	26	4	21	10	186
IADB	12	36	25	8	27	27	37	100	103	49	496
IBRD	42	50	74	45	42	42	25	106	60	109	718
IDA	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20
Other	0	0	9	21	28	28	38	68	14	54	311
Total	148	179	136	162	117	117	217	365	283	294	2452

Sources: The data for 1961–68 were taken from NPD (1969b, 32). The data for 1969–1970 were extracted from Espinosa Valderrama (1970, 319–320). The aggregate data for 1961-1970 is expressed in 1961 US dollar values. IADB refers to the Inter-American Development Bank and IDA to the International Development Association, which belongs the World Bank Group.

The correlative trust-building and surveillance functions of development plans were reinforced and sustained by the international web of economic experts that backed planning efforts in developing countries during the post-war period, as also evidenced in Dekker's account of the Dutch economist Jan Tinbergen's experience advising the Turkish State Planning Organization (Dekker 2022, 519–520). The involvement of foreign advisers at the Colombian NPD——first from ECLA and then from the Harvard Development Advisory Service (DAS)——and above all the incorporation of young technical experts in the planning office, did more to reassure international lenders like the World Bank and the US Agency for International Development (AID) about the creditworthiness of the Colombian state than the accuracy of the figures contained in the Ten-Year Plan. This finding suggests that the trust commanded by the knowledge infrastructures that produced and used the numbers——the people and the institutions——mattered more than the trust in the impersonal techniques and procedures employed, questioning the extent to which the latter can be disentangled from the former.

Development plans, as tools of social interventionist knowledge, are complex objects of historical study, not only because this term covers a wide arrange of procedures and practices, but also because their concrete uses and functions are highly sensitive to context. As Van den Bogaard (1999) argued in her analysis of the social embeddedness of the Central Planning Bureau's macroeconometric model in the Netherlands, planning techniques cannot be disentangled from the local political cultures and institutional arrangements within which they are adopted and used.

Technical procedures for planning economic development can be used to promote a variety of different objectives. Fixed-time development plans have been used to keep socialist revolutions under control, as in Cuba (Yaffe 2009) and Hungary (Kemenes 1981), to consolidate the institutional infrastructure for a liberal economic order, like in Israel (Krampf 2010), or to build up economies in the image of post-colonial multi-ethnic states (Serra 2015; Young 2018; Iandolo 2022). From a comparative perspective, Colombia's Ten-year Plan provides an interesting case study because it was constructed, publicized and revised while the country was going through a process of re-democratization that arguably shaped the direction of this process. After five years of military rule, Colombia's return to democracy was marked in 1958 by a power sharing agreement between the traditional Conservative and Liberal parties, known as the National Front. Based on the principles of presidential alternation and parity in all branches of government, the National Front intended to end a decade of inter-partisan violence motivated, among a complex set of additional factors, by the struggle to control the state bureaucracy (Hartlyn 1988). This pathway to democratization induced an in-built preference in the political system for stability and consensus-building (Kline 1980, 79), which privileged technocratic arrangements of policymaking.

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Comparable to the post-war reconstruction projects that gave way in Western Europe to "managed" forms of democracy, where technically qualified bureaucracies assumed a central role in social coordination (Conway 2020, 64), the adoption of planning methods and procedures in Colombia intended to make the dual transition to a developed economy and a political democracy manageable.

Development planning in Colombia was also justified in terms of rather economically liberal aims. With the Ten-Year Plan, the NPD attempted to clearly delimit the spheres of action for both government and markets in the development of the Colombian economy. The NPD took to heart Jan Tinbergen's warning that "development policy" should not displace "the powerful force of private initiative" (Tinbergen 1958, 3).[3] An indicative approach to planning grounded on cooperation and consultation with private actors, like that associated with the General Plan Commission in post-war France (c.f. Cazes 1990, 610–11; Desrosières 1999, 37), was recurrently invoked by Colombian planners as a preferrable to command and control as form of engagement with the productive sectors of the economy. The Ten-Year Plan reduced the scope of direct government action in the economy to planning investments in the economy's "physical" and "social" infrastructural sectors: transportation, communications, and energy, on the one hand, and health, education, and housing, on the other. However, this emphasis on public infrastructure as the focus of state intervention also reflected how development planning widened the scope of economic knowledge, as the use of macroeconomic programming and project evaluation techniques made traditionally non-economic sectors the object of economic analysis. Even in these non-economic infrastructural physical and social fields, state interventions were not generally trusted, particularly among the international agencies that funded large-scale projects in these sectors. The elaboration of development plans with a fixed-time horizon therefore served to persuade both internal and external decision-makers that the state could credibly and sustainably make a rational use of revenues and foreign aid, both of which were dear, to sustainably finance investments in infrastructural sectors that were considered key for long-term development.

The section that follows this introduction describes how knowledge about development planning circulated in the 1950s to planning bureaus like the NPD, packaged in handbooks for government officials produced by experts in international institutions. The build-up to the Ten-year Plan, and its official presentation to donors, are then analyzed to show how different aspects of the plan served to build trust in the Colombian state on behalf of domestic stakeholders (Section 3) and international lenders (Section 4). Section 5 examines the revisions to which the Ten-year Plan was subjected to persuade political decision-makers to pursue concrete investment programs and projects. Despite the shift away from the macro-scale characteristic of time-fixed development plans, the planning system remained resilient. It also became more effective in the policy arena, as technical experts gained saliency vis à vis technical tools in the planning process.

2. The ABC of development planning: The IBRD and ECLA's handbooks

Development planning was from the onset in the field of applied sciences, at the intersection between economic theory, statistical economics, and policymaking. Its aspirational object of intervention was the national economy as a whole. In practice, however, planners worked with scattered information about the production and consumption of goods and services across economic sectors, collected either directly or indirectly by the state. Designing development plans presupposed knowing how to theoretically account for the relationships between the whole economy and its parts and how to statistically measure economic activity at different levels of disaggregation. Because development plans were tools designed for government action, planners

[3]In its report to Congress in 1963, the NPD argued that planning in a democratic context "is directed not necessarily towards expanding the orbit of action for public power, but to strengthen its efficacy; not to restrict the scope of activities for private enterprise, but to improve the conditions for its performance" (DAP 1963, iix).

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also needed to determine how to scale down general economic programs into concrete policies and projects.

The institutional arrangements of the post-WWII development era made possible the crystallization of this applied field of interventionist knowledge by facilitating the convergence of academic economists, international institutions, and planning offices. Multilateral organizations commissioned experts in the 1950s to design replicable methodological guidelines about development planning for government officials. In 1955, the World Bank hired the Dutch economist Jean Tinbergen to prepare a manual on "development policy," a neologism of the post-war period. Informed by his experience directing the Dutch Central Planning Bureau, as well as his advisory roles in Egypt and India, Tinbergen wrote *The Design of Development* (1958), an influential methodological handbook on development planning (Dekker 2021, 290). A few years before the appearance of Tinbergen's book, the ECLA had published its own introductory manual on the use of programming techniques to plan development (Secretaría de la Cepal 1955). Both handbooks exemplify, in their timing, how the formation of applied methodologies to plan development coincided with the appearance of the seminal theoretical contributions in the field (Nurkse 1952; Lewis 1954; Hirschman 1958).

The handbooks commissioned by the IBRD and ECLA were closely followed in the design of Colombia's development plan. Paraphrasing Tinbergen's text, one Colombian planner argued that programming methods allowed technical experts to offer decision-makers "a bird's-eye view of the future pattern of development of the country, and to show the possible and most desirable development of the national product and its components."[4] This "synoptic" view of the economy, as if seen from an aerial perspective (Scott 1998, 11), was an essential characteristic of this form of interventionist knowledge. The methodological challenge for planners was to determine how to derive concrete policy recommendations from synthetic representations of the economy as a whole.

Because economic data were available to government officials at different levels of aggregation, Tinbergen's manual presented development planning as a staged process that progressed from the *macro* level of the national economy to the *micro* level of projects. At each stage of the process, different quantitative techniques—capital coefficients, input-output tables, cost-benefit analyses—allowed planners to walk down this ladder while striving for the consistency of the plan. This approach rested on a specific conception of policymaking that allowed experts to translate social objectives into "policy targets" and to determine, with some degree of precision, the most effective "policy instrument" for achieving them (Dekker 2021, 138–39). The first stage consisted in conducting a global, or macroeconomic, analysis to determine feasible output targets. "Capital coefficients" were used to estimate the additional investment and foreign exchange requirements of alternative growth scenarios, under the assumption that there was a stable statistical relationship between total output and capital formation.[5] Taking output growth targets as given parameters, the second stage consisted in determining, for each economic sector, growth targets and investment programs. Ideally, sectoral interdependencies ought to be considered by using input-output tables to account for the inter-sectoral demand for factors and intermediate products. The last stage involved subjecting concrete investment projects to cost-benefit analyses

[4]Jorge Méndez, memorandum, c. January 1960, box 2, folder 22, folios 387–408, Antecedents DNP; quoting Tinbergen (1958, 9).

[5]It was common among development economists at the time to consider the capital/output ratio as a stable statistical parameter with a value around 3, meaning that to achieve an additional unit in output growth, capital investments must grow three times as fast. Theoretically, the stability of capital/output ratios was traditionally explained by alluding to the so-called Harrod-Domar growth model, according to which the rate of economic expansion is limited by the savings rate, which in equilibrium equals the rate of investment. While there is no textual evidence in Harrod or Domar's writings that either of them arrived at this conclusion (c.f. Boianovsky 2018, 484–489), in practice the (assumed) statistical stability of capital/output coefficients provided planners with a convenient heuristic for relating changes in output to the investment requirements of development plans.

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to identify those that made the best use of available resources to achieve the plan's targets (Tinbergen 1958, 11–23).

Notwithstanding the explicit reference by local planners to Tinbergen's book, the most direct influence for the elaboration of Colombia's first development plan came from experts from United Nations agencies. The ECLA's programming techniques found their first application in a series of country-studies, one of which resulted from the Commission's first visit to Colombia in 1954 (Secretaría de la Cepal 1957). The study on Colombia was the first systematic use of the country's national accounts to detail the performance of the economy and estimate the financial requirements of alternative growth scenarios. The ECLA's programming techniques paid closer attention than Tinbergen's manual to the effects that the projected evolution of the country's terms of trade had on its ability to import foreign capital goods, and thereby on its growth potential (Secretaría de la Cepal 1957, 46–55). The study served to pin down with statistical evidence the ECLA's observation that a country's access to hard currency was the limiting constraint to the rate at which its economy could grow. In the context of falling terms-of-trade for Latin American economies of the second half of the 1950s, the ECLA's economists found a solution to the "liquidity problem upon which development hinged" in the careful planning of scarce foreign exchange resources (Fajardo 2022, 49).

The ECLA's handbook was the basic referent for the technical assistance missions the Commission sent across Latin America in late 1950s to train and assist the personnel of planning offices in the elaboration of development plans. In May 1959, A team of six experts from the ECLA and the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) landed in Colombia. While half of the group stayed in the country for only four months, the rest spent one full year assisting the local staff in the elaboration of the macroeconomic projections for the Colombian plan.[6] The ECLA-FAO mission did not leave a paper trail about their work in Colombia, at least not that I have been able to locate. However, the lecture notes of one of the ECLA's leading economists, Jorge Ahumada, on the *Theory and Programming of Economic Development* (1967 [1958]) provide an indirect hint to the mission's approach to development planning in the country.[7]

Two methodological elements from Ahumada's lecture on planning techniques are observable in what became Colombia's Ten-year Plan: the emphasis on global, or macroeconomic, planning (Tinbergen's "first stage") over sectoral planning and project appraisal, and the normative assumption about the neutrality of programming techniques. According to Ahumada, planners must first consider the global aspects of the plan, in order to determine the effects that resource reallocation across sectors had on the stability of the economic system. By considering the role of both aggregate demand and sectoral interdependencies in economic growth, Ahumada argued, global programming would allow technical experts to prevent decision-makers from following development strategies in which "exaggerated emphasis given to one sector produced bottlenecks in the rest" (Ahumada 1967 [1958], 45). The ECLA's programming techniques favored growth paths known in the contemporary development literature as *balanced*, where economic activity across sectors increased in tandem. *Unbalanced* growth paths were deemed unstable because different rates of growth between sectors produced bottlenecks that raised prices above the marginal cost of production and skewed income distribution[8]. The main objective of global programming, Ahumada concluded, was to determine the "highest rate of per capita income growth" that is "compatible with stability" (Ahumada 1967 [1958], 40, 47). As I will show in the next section, this aim was consistent with the Colombian government's desire to reconcile development with fiscal and monetary prudence.

The elaboration of the Ten-year Plan was also informed by the ECLA's contention that its planning techniques were normatively neutral. The ECLA's position as a UN advisory body with

[6]Jorge Franco, report to the president, 16 July 1960, box 3, folder 23, folio 448, Serie Antecedentes, AGN.
[7]In 1960, the ECLA organized a short course on programming techniques for public officers at the NPD.
[8]This view was consistent with ECLA's "structuralist" analysis about the cause of inflation (Fajardo 2022, 48).

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jurisdiction over a politically diverse group of countries helps to explain this emphasis on the apolitical nature of the techniques it urged governments in the region to adopt. Ahumada argued in his lecture notes that planning was normatively "neutral" because it was agnostic about ultimate ends: "one could plan for liberty or servitude, for richness or misery, for culture or ignorance, for free enterprise or for the centralization of economic decisions" (Ahumada 1967[1958], 36). As a "procedure for action," he continued, "efficacy," not "ethics," is the appropriate yardstick for evaluating development plans. Programming was characterized as a "technique for selecting means and ends in conformity to a norm." Because ends were already pre-determined by "the constellation of dominant social forces," planners took them as given and the only thing they could do was to show decision-makers the extent to which these socially given ends were in conflict. Ahumada's distinction between *what* planning aimed to achieve, which for him was the outcome of existing social relations of power, and *how* it ought to achieve it, a question, in his view, of a purely technical nature, had practical consequences over the positionality of experts in the planning process. The ECLA's handbook associated the neutrality of planning techniques with the impartiality of technical experts when it stated that their role was limited to representing "with objective impartiality different alternatives, what they required and their possible effects" (Secretaría de la Cepal 1955, 19).[9] While the ECLA's normative neutrality assumption contributed to standardizing the techniques and procedures that governments adopted in the elaboration of their development plans, the functions these plans performed in practice were sensitive to each country's own institutional context, as illustrated by the Colombian case, to which I now turn.

3. The build-up to the Ten-year Plan: Reconciling development, democratization, and austerity

In his official presentation of the Ten-year Plan in December 1961, the Colombian President Alberto Lleras Camargo hailed the document as an example of "democratic planning." (Lleras Camargo 1962, xvi-xvii) At a moment when governments across the ideological spectrum were embracing planning methods for rationalizing economic activity, said the President, a qualification was needed in order to distinguish programs made for "democratic societies" from those designed by "planners who used the police" (Lleras Camargo 1962, xix). Contrasting Colombia's first development plan to China's second five-year plan, Mao's Great Leap Forward, he argued that the Ten-year Plan was, unlike the latter, an exercise of democratic planning because it only reflected what "Colombians can do, if they want to." (Lleras Camargo 1962, xix).

Colombia's development plan was presented through a series of official documents that performed different rhetorical functions according to the government's intended audience. One of these functions was to gain the trust of the local business sector, on whose compliance the state depended for collecting the raw data and feedback from private decision makers it needed in the build-up to the Ten-year plan. The cooperation between public and private actors in the elaboration of the plan served to reinforce, rather than disrupt, the preexisting practices of consultation and concertation that sustained Colombia's "mixed economy" (Offner 2019, 17).

The construction of Colombia's first development plan should be understood against the belief held by contemporary political actors that development and democratization went hand in hand. Raising the standards of living was at the center of the substantive understanding of democracy

[9]The contention that the analysis of means/matters-of-fact could be methodologically disentangled from the deliberations about ends/values was not exclusive to the ECLA or the field of development economics. This contention also underpinned more generally the distinction between positive and normative economics in Milton Friedman's (1953) influential methodological essay, published shortly before the ECLA's manual, but the idea can be traced back to John Stuart Mill's distinction between economics as a science and an art. In both cases, the distinctions were made to justify the epistemic superiority of value-free economic analysis for practical policy purposes, a position that was questioned by some contemporaries like Gunner Myrdal (c.f. Cherrier 2009).

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that Latin American political leaders, like Lleras Camargo, mobilized in Inter-American platforms in the late 1950s. If the political and civil rights gained with the overturn of dictators across the region were not conducive to the satisfaction of basic needs, it was considered that those rights were at risk of being devoid of substantive meaning for a significant proportion of the population (Krepp, 2018, 102–104). While this link between democratization and raising living standards was generally accepted, there was less consensus about whether and to what extent this meant increased state intervention in the economy.

The position of the Colombian government about this issue tended toward the liberal end of the spectrum. By subjecting government spending to planning, Lleras Camargo attempted to show that states in democratic societies were able to overcome the "improvisation" and "profligacy" that had, in his view, characterized the military regime (Lleras Camargo 1962, xvii). He acknowledged in his first address as president that raising living standards required some intervention by the state, but judged that it was essential first to develop administrative capacities to "forecast and organize public investments" (Lleras Camargo 1960, 67). The Colombian approach to reconciling development and democratization was not based on increasing its scope of action, but rather on making the state an accountable administrator of public resources.

This goal of rationalizing public administration helps to explain why setting a planning apparatus was one of the first initiatives of the National Front coalition, which governed the country for sixteen years (1958–1974). The NPD was created in November 1958 as an administrative department to provide technical support to the National Council of Planning and Economic Policy (later renamed National Council of Economic and Social Policy, NCESP), together with a decision-making body that included representatives of both public and the private sectors.[10] Planning bodies played a double role, at least in theory, in Colombia's democratic transition. On the one hand, the institutionalization of planning procedures guaranteed some degree of inter-governmental continuity in the state's long-term development strategy, as well as a mechanism to make government actions accountable to the private decision-makers. On the other hand, the conformation of an independent planning council (the NCESP), supported by the research conducted in a technical body (the NPD), gave legitimacy to long-term planning as a state (as opposed to partisan) development strategy.

In the early years of the National Front, the government's commitment to a strict policy of fiscal austerity imposed limits on what could be achieved through development planning. Maintaining the balance between revenues and expenditures was among the conditions of the stabilization package agreed with the IMF to address the balance of payments crisis triggered by a sharp decline in the international prices of coffee, Colombia's main export commodity and source of foreign exchange. The government's access to foreign credit rested on the compliance of this condition, at least formally. Adopting the slogan "austerity and development," the president heralded his administration's commitment to growth *and* fiscal sustainability (Alberto Lleras Camargo, in Vélez García 1963, 29–33). Democratic planning, in a context of fiscal austerity, implied first and foremost rationalizing government finances through the adoption of adequate procedures for budgeting and prioritizing public investments. The subjection of public investments to an overall plan worked as a signal of fiscal responsibility to both taxpayers and international donors.

The elaboration of the Four-Year Plan of Public Investments (*Plan Cuatrienal de Inversiones Públicas*), the first official document produced at the NPD, required the introduction of new budgeting procedures across public agencies. The government issued a decree that institutionalized the distinction between operational and investment expenditures, and the requirement to specify in detail the resources needed to achieve clearly defined physical targets (Presidente de la República Colombia 1960, Articles 3 and 4). These new accounting procedures allowed the NPD to conduct a survey asking ministers and decentralized bodies to submit data about their current

[10]Representatives from the government, the central bank and the coffee grower's federation had a seat in the NCESP.

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incomes and expenditures, as well as the investment projects envisioned for the following four years. The NPD then analyzed this information by considering the functional complementarity both between private and public investment and between different projects to produce the government's investment program for the following four years (CONPEP 1960, 42–45). In practice, planning public investments was therefore more than an exercise in accounting and forecasting. It required reconsidering both the ways in which the objectives and activities of different bodies within the state apparatus overlapped with each other and the boundaries between the spheres of action of state and private actors.

The Four-Year plan served to reassure domestic audiences that the state would not use planning to encroach on the domain of private initiative. It projected an increase in public investments of 78% in the 1961–1964 period (from around 1,107 to 1,966 million Colombian pesos) funded by public savings (as opposed to deficit spending), in consistency with the government's austerity and development platform. This monumental effort depended mainly on tapping new sources of revenue domestically, but the plan also projected acquiring no less than 550 million pesos (70 million US dollars) in foreign credit per year (CONPEP 1960, 49, 55). Raising these funds among international lenders would be one of the aims of the Ten-year Plan, as I will show in the next section. While the projected growth of public investments implied an effective expansion of the government component in national income accounts, the sectoral decomposition of the plan showed that the increase of state action would concentrate on physical infrastructure, namely in the energy, transport, and telecommunications sectors, and to a lesser extent in the so-called "social and cultural services" sector, which included education, health, and housing (CONPEP 1960, 61–62). By contrast, the public investment plan assigned an almost negligible role to the state in *productive sectors*, particularly in manufacturing. The scope of state action in productive activities was restricted to the formulation of economic policy, closing the door for direct state intervention (CONPEP 1960, 41).

Instead, development planning made up part of the wider process of constituting a mixed economy. Acknowledging the sphere of action of private actors in the economy was both a pragmatic decision and a validation of existing traditions of consultation with business sectors in policymaking. To begin with, the high informational requirements of development planning exceeded the government's capacity to collect and produce statistics. To estimate figures at a sectoral level of disaggregation, the NPD depended on business associations and firms' own statistical records and, when these were unavailable, on the informed guesses of businesspeople.[11] Furthermore, in an economy in which, according to the NPD's estimates, public expenditures accounted for less than 7% of gross national income in 1959 (CONPEP 1960, 10), attaining the targets set in the development plan depended largely on the understanding and voluntary cooperation of private actors. Monetary and foreign exchange policymaking had been functioning on the basis of established practices of government consultation with business associations organized along sectoral interests since the 1930s (Caballero Argáez 2016, 153–78). Similarly, planning experts knew that both the elaboration and the implementation of the plan rested on their compliance.

Establishing working relationships with business sectors was crucial to securing their trust in and commitment with the plan's targets. Therefore, the planning department approached business associations before formally submitting the Ten-year Plan for discussion in Congress.[12] By involving business associations in the plan's elaboration, the NPD sought to nurture a "national mystique around our long-term investment projects," as its director put it in his address in the

[11]The description of how the NPD collected statistics to build input-output tables illustrates this. See: José Vicente Malo, "Algunas aclaraciones acerca de la metodología empleada en la elaboración del cuadro insumo-producto 1965," n.d., box 60, no. 48, Serie Centro Documentación, AGN.

[12]"Comunicado de prensa," 9 October 1961, box 59, folder 20, folios 20-27, Serie Centro Documentación, AGN.

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annual meeting of FENALCO, the national traders' association.[13] This mystique was cemented by personal networks, as the planning department was directed between 1960 and 1965 by men with previous experience in business associations. Although the NPD also organized roundtables with labor organizations to explain the content and scope of the Ten-year Plan,[14] the cooperation with business associations was closer and more frequent.

Some contemporaries raised pertinent questions about the contention that planning development was contributing to deepen democratization. Given its theoretical assumptions, the plan mobilized an idea of development that prioritized capital formation over the satisfaction of needs and the elevation of living standards. Using war-like rhetoric, the Ten-Year plan framed citizens' compliance in terms of intergenerational "sacrifices." Blaming Colombian's low propensity to save for the country's economic backwardness, it exhorted citizens to sacrifice present consumption for the "wellbeing of future generations" (CONPEP 1962, 126). In a critical tone, a former division chief lamented that citizens had not been fully acquainted with what those sacrifices entailed because an environment of "extreme reservation" impregnated the work of the planning council (Consuegra 1960, 56). A democratic approach to planning, in his view, demanded instead more "consultation and dialogue with the community." The plan also exhibited a bias for capital accumulation, the distributional implications of which had not been accounted for by the planners. Not only did the plan allocate the lion's share of public investments to the infrastructure, energy, and industry sectors, but actual "social" investments in housing, education and health grew less than projected between 1959 and 1964.[15] The then-senator Carlos Lleras Restrepo voiced his concerns about the implications this bias against social expenditures had on the plan's democratizing aspirations. He complained that the document did not specify how to guarantee a "higher participation of the poorer classes in national income," or address the persistent problem of income inequality (quoted in Consuegra 1960, 37). While the elaboration of the development plan contributed to the constitution of a mixed economy by reinforcing existing corporatist practices of prior consultation and concertation with business associations in economic policymaking, its alleged democratic credentials were not unambiguously accepted.

4. Selling the Ten-year Plan: Creditworthiness and foreign aid

The Ten-year Plan was also a rhetorical device carefully directed at audiences of international development donors. The triumph of the Cuban revolutionaries in January 1959 effectively made Latin America part of the Cold War battleground. This shifting geopolitical context opened a window of opportunity for Latin American governments' longstanding demands for increased development aid to the region (Parker 2016, 120; Helleiner 2014, 29). In August 1961, the Charter of the Alliance for Progress was signed in Punta del Este, Uruguay, with the backing of US President Kennedy's administration. Development planning was a key technology in the international economic relations that the Alliance brought about, as national development plans became the basic referent for aid negotiations between donor agencies and recipients. Not only were these plans a formal precondition for access to US development aid (c.f. Anon. 1961), but they came to mediate aid negotiations with other major donors like the IBRD and other OECD countries. In the 1960s, Colombia was among the largest recipients of foreign aid in Latin America (Organization of American States 1973, 112), and arguably the country whose access to these credit lines was the most consistent throughout the decade (Taffet 2007, 149). Colombia's

[13]Edgar Gutiérrez, intervention at the 17th Annual Conference of FENALCO, 27 May 1961, box 58, folder 17, No. 309, Serie Centro Documentación, AGN.

[14]n.a. "Participación de la población en el proceso de desarrollo", n.d. (c. 1962), box 60, no. 35, folio 201, Serie Centro Documentación, AGN.

[15]Stanley Nicholson, "Comparison of Planned and Actual Sectoral Allocations of Public Investment for 1962-65: Preliminary Results," 17 April 1967, box 3, folder 30, folios 192-201, Serie Cooperación Técnica Internacional-Grupo Harvard, AGN.

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Ten-year Plan, the first in the region submitted for the consideration of foreign lenders, contributed to building donors' trust in the country's creditworthiness.

Development plans worked as convenient instruments for quantifying, monitoring, and evaluating aid recipients' creditworthiness. Figuring out how to determine whether a country was worthy of receiving aid, either in the form of grants or subsidized loans, was not a settled issue among donors from the very onset of development lending. Alacevich (2016, 632–634) has shown that economists working at the IBRD found the employment of standard banking measures of creditworthiness, such as debt-service ratios, faulty for the allocation of development loans, even if this remained the dominant practice in the institution throughout the 1950s. One alternative was to consider the capacity of governments to make productive use of foreign aid, given that this could improve their ability to finance their debts in the future. From the perspective of major donors in the 1960s, like US AID, development plans provided a tool to transparently assess their clients' creditworthiness in this second sense.

To begin with, ten-year plans provided donors with the basic information they needed to quantify the optimal amount of aid-giving according to each country's starting conditions and developmental aims. For example, economists in the Office of Program Coordination of AID used the sectoral and global growth targets set in the plans as parameters to estimate aid recipient countries' foreign resource needs for development. The theoretical rationale behind these estimates was what became known as the "double gap model." This model was used to show that foreign aid played a central role in the transition from external-resource dependence to self-sustained growth by closing the gaps between savings and investments (the "savings" gap) and exports and imports (the "balance of payments" gap) that slowed growth in developing economies (Chenery and Strout 1966, 682–69). Empirically, the largest of these two gaps effectively became an estimate "of foreign resource requirements consistent with the overall and sectoral rates of growth" set in development plans, as the economist Jaroslav Vanek argued in his study on Colombia, conducted under the auspices of the AID (Vanek 1967, 107).

Furthermore, development plans provided donors with a relatively standardized instrument for monitoring the employment of foreign aid *after* the funds were disbursed. The targets set in development plans became yardsticks for assessing aid recipients' performance according to their *own* measures of attainment. In the language of the lead economist of the AID's Office of Program Coordination, Hollis Chenery, donors used the gap between the plan's targets and observed performance as an indicator of their client's "self-help" efforts (AID Program Coordination Staff 1965, 9–11). Not only did development plans offer a measure of the quantum and allocation of foreign aid needed to attain concrete growth targets under clearly specified parameters, but they also determined the actions that governments must take to guarantee that the employment of foreign aid was consistent with the global objectives of the plan. On these grounds, the development plan became both the reference for evaluating loan applications, and the object of expert evaluation itself, as I will show below.

The association of development planning with creditworthiness meant that governments had incentives to use multi-year plans as instruments of persuasion to convince international lenders about their foreign aid needs. This rhetorical function of planning is evident in the immediate antecedent to Colombia's Ten-year Plan, *Economic Development and Social Welfare* (1960), a mid-term revision of the government's economic platform written by the staff at the NPD and ECLA-FAO advisers. The English version of this document was purposely prepared for the president's visit to the US Congress in April 1960.[16] It contained the key message that the Ten-year Plan would echo one year later: The Colombian economy had the potential to achieve in the next five years an annual growth rate of 5.0%—"the highest that is compatible with stability"[17] —but

[16]Jorge Franco, "Annual report of activities at the NPD", 16 July 1960, box 3, folder 23, folios 414-513, Serie Antecedentes e Informe de Actividades, AGN.

[17]"Economic Development and Social Welfare," 1960, box 58, folder 15, No. 318, Serie Centro Documentación, AGN.

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this would require an unprecedented increase in external lending. Even in the favorable scenario of non-declining coffee prices and a confident expansion of "minor exports" (i.e. exports other than coffee and fossil fuels), to achieve its maximum growth potential Colombia required, according to this document, "no less than 100 [US] million per year in foreign credit, at least until 1965."[18] The underlying diagnosis was that the *balance of payments gap* dominated the *savings gap* as the binding constraint for Colombia's economic development. No amount of domestic consumption sacrificed in the present to accumulate capital would make up for the quantum of hard currency needed to sustain economic growth in the future.

To reinforce the message that the figure of 100 US million per year in aid represented an adequate estimate of Colombia's foreign resource needs to achieve self-sustained growth, the Ten-year Plan also considered the financial requirements under the hypothetical scenario in which the economy grew 1% faster each year.[19] The selection of this alternative scenario was completely arbitrary, but it served to establish trust in the numbers contained in the Ten-year Plan. Under the hypothetical scenario, the NPD argued, the Colombian economy would remain highly dependent on foreign aid by the end of the decade, needing approximately 90 US million in aid per year by 1967–1970. Conversely, under the Ten-year Plan, the country's foreign resource needs descended to 40 US million by that quadrennium (from 138 US million per year in 1962–1964) (CONPEP 1962, 86–92, 95, 98). On average, the foreign resource needs of the Ten-year Plan still amounted to 100 US million per year, but this figure was now presented as the *minimum* amount necessary to achieve Colombia's optimal growth potential.

The Ten-year Plan was effectively an exercise in global programming. As the document descended from the *macro* to the *micro* scale, it became less precise about the specific requirements of the plan, which foreshadowed the difficulties in its implementation. While most of the two-volume document was dedicated to establishing sectoral and sub-sectoral growth targets, sectoral planning was given a secondary role. Reportedly because the data were scarce and time was pressing, the plan did not include the more detailed sectoral studies produced by ECLA-FAO advisors (CONPEP 1962, 4). Little emphasis, if any, was given to individual projects, despite the fact that a specialized unit had been created in the NPD to conduct cost-benefit evaluations for project loan applications.[20] This primacy of the macro scale in the Ten-year Plan certainly had to do with the methodological preferences of planners (i.e. ECLA-FAO advisors), but also with its use as an instrument to persuade donors about Colombia's worthiness as a recipient of development aid.

The early presentation of the Ten-year Plan to international lenders elevated Colombia as a showcase of development assistance. In January 1962, Colombia submitted the Ten-year Plan for the consideration of the ad-hoc committee of experts set by the Alliance to evaluate the development plans. A temporary mission from the IBRD also visited Colombia from January to March 1962 to prepare a review of the Ten-year Plan. Both the Alliance's ad-hoc committee and the IBRD mission published generally favorable reports, enhancing Colombia's creditworthiness as a recipient of development aid. Highlighting the rapid elaboration of a ten-year development plan and the government's effort to organize a "permanent planning system that could invigilate and coordinate its implementation," the ad-hoc committee exhorted the international community to meet the foreign exchange requirements of the plan.[21] Shortly after publishing its report, the

[18]"Economic Development and Social Welfare," 1960, box 58, folder 15, No. 318, Serie Centro Documentación, AGN, 13–20.

[19]The official Ten-year Plan recalibrated its growth target from 5% to 5.6%, in consistency with the 3.5% per capita annual growth rate target set in the charter of the Alliance for Progress.

[20]Edgar Gutiérrez memorandum to counsellor of the NCESP, box 3, folder 23, folios 454-458, Serie Antecedentes, AGN.

[21]Comité de los Nueve Alianza para el Progreso, "Evaluación del Programa General de Desarrollo Económico y Social de Colombia: informe presentado al Gobierno de Colombia por el Comité Ad Hoc," 19 July 1962, box 59, folder 39, Serie Centro de Documentación, AGN, 6.

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IBRD spearheaded a "Consultative Group" that summoned Western donors to coordinate long-term international capital assistance for the Colombian plan.[22]

The environment of trust built among donors around the Colombian plan was remarkable considering the disparity of the estimates about the foreign resource needs hidden in the bulky reports presented by the ad-hoc committee and the IBRD mission. Both evaluations agreed that the foreign credit requirements of the Ten-year Plan had been significantly underestimated in the document presented by the government. According to the IBRD mission, "net external financing for the public sector would average 25 percent higher than that projected in the General Plan," (IBRD 1962, 3), while the Ad-Hoc committee's report indicated that at least 30 million US dollars more per year (30% over the NPD's estimate) were needed to finance the Colombian plan.[23]

The difference between these estimates was not due to fundamental disagreements about the overall methodological approach of the plan, which both evaluations appeared to have taken onboard. Rather, it resulted from the assumptions made in the estimation of these projections, particularly regarding the balance-of-payments. The IBRD mission considered that the export targets were "unduly optimistic" (IBRD 1962, 4), while the Ad-Hoc committee stressed that the import of inputs and capital goods estimates were grossly undervalued.[24] The presumed underestimation of the projected balance-of-payments gap was not considered large enough to imperil the feasibility of the overall plan, but it prompted the expert missions to make compensatory recommendations about domestic economic policy. The Ad-Hoc Committee advised deepening import substitution policies, while the IBRD mission called for exercising "self-discipline" in the use of scarce foreign financial resources (IBRD 1962, 73).

Why did such large disparities generate a general atmosphere of trust in the Ten-year Plan among donors? One possible explanation lies in the entanglement between the assessment of countries' creditworthiness and the geopolitical context. The Colombian government's alignment with the United States in strategic diplomacy issues, for example by playing a leading role in the expulsion of Cuba from the Inter-American system (Harmer 2019, 132), might have played an indirect role in the relatively lenient evaluation of its development plan by the ad-hoc Committee and the World Bank, but there is no evidence in the sources suggesting a direct interference in the expert evaluations. This interpretation also obscures the degree of agency that the language of development planning gave recipient governments to frame and pursue their interests in aid negotiations with foreign lenders. Instead, I would like to suggest an alternative explanation that has to do with the very nature of the type of knowledge involved.

Development planning was considered a dynamic process that did not conclude with the preparation of the plan. The ECLA's Ahumada compared the development plan to the route map that explorers draw before visiting an unknown region, which needs periodical revision as the expedition progresses (Ahumada 1967, 50). Hence, trust in the plan was not commanded by the exactness of the numbers contained in it, but by the knowledge infrastructure, the institutions and the actors that sustained its elaboration, its revision, and ultimately its implementation. It was this trust in the establishment of a planning apparatus capable of adapting the plan to a changing economic environment that underpinned the endorsement of the Ten-year Plan by external evaluators in a relatively favorable geopolitical context.

[22]The meeting included representatives from the IMF, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank and thirteen lender countries, including Belgium, Luxembourg, Canada, Denmark, France, West Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. See "Reunión del Grupo Consultivo sobre Colombia," January 1963, box 61, no. 52, Serie Centro Documentación, AGN.

[23]Comité de los Nueve Alianza para el Progreso, "Evaluación del Programa General de Desarrollo Económico y Social de Colombia: informe presentado al Gobierno de Colombia por el Comité Ad Hoc," 19 July 1962, box 59, folder 39, Serie Centro de Documentación, AGN, 129.

[24]Comité de los Nueve Alianza para el Progreso, "Evaluación del Programa General de Desarrollo Económico y Social de Colombia: informe presentado al Gobierno de Colombia por el Comité Ad Hoc," 19 July 1962, box 59, folder 39, Serie Centro de Documentación, AGN, 105.

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5. The resilience of planning: Leaving behind the "top-down" approach of the Ten-year Plan

Shortly after the Ten-year Plan was officially presented to international donors, it was sidelined by Lleras Camargo's successor in government, Guillermo León Valencia. The two permanent counsellors of the NCESP resigned in protest to raise public awareness that the future of planning in the country was hanging by a thread (Anon. 1962, 27). In the years that followed the departure of the ECLA-FAO mission from the NPD, the "fate" of development planning was left "to the vacillations of the president," according to an early assessment of the institutional evolution of planning in Colombia written by an insider (Perry 1973, 28, 34). However, the planning system remained resilient. Not only did the planning institutions overcome the crisis, but by the end of the decade the political relevance of planning experts reached an apex. A fundamental shift in the procedure for planning development made this possible. A local planner described this shift as the rejection of the "top-down" methodology of the Ten-year Plan in favor of a "bottom-up" approach (Cano Motta 1968, 62), embodied in the development plan the NPD presented to Congress in 1969. This new plan was framed, not as the point of departure, but as the "ratification" of successfully implemented projects and sectoral programs (NPD 1969a, 2). This section traces the critical revision to which the Ten-year Plan was subjected within the NPD to examine how the malleability of planning methods played an important part in the resilience of the planning system.

The earliest challenges to the original Ten-year Plan came from within the local expert community. In parallel to the publication of the government's official development plan, a group of reputed economists, which included the former New Dealer Lauchlin Currie and Colombia's first PhD in Economics Jorge Ruiz Lara, launched *Operation Colombia,* an alternative program that prioritized a more focused, less comprehensive, development strategy. The Ten-year Plan was accused by Currie (1966, 127) of suffering from the sort of "capital fundamentalism" that pervaded the hype for economic planning in the post-war period.[25] In an indirect reference to the ECLA-FAO mission and the local experts who participated in the elaboration of the Ten-year Plan, Currie was particularly critical of the propensity of "quantitative economists" to equate higher rates of growth in national income with improvements in welfare. By prioritizing capital accumulation over social desiderata, like the alleviation of "human misery and suffering," Currie argued, the plan betrayed its allegedly democratizing credentials (Currie 1965, 25). The empirical rigor of the plan also came under scrutiny in the quantitative analysis for *Operation Colombia* written by Ruiz Lara, who criticized the unreliability of the national account figures used to estimate the plan's growth projections and resource requirements, as well as the lack of transparency about the methodology employed in the calculations.[26] The open dissensus about the pertinence and reliability of the Ten-year Plan voiced by prominent figures in the local economics profession, like Currie and Ruiz Lara, is not sufficient to explain why it was sidelined by the new government, which displayed a disregard for economic planning in general (*Operación Colombia* was not considered either as an alternative). But it revealed an early awareness among the local expert community about the need to revise the official plan, not only in terms of its projections, but in terms of the procedure through which it reached its action recommendations.

The Ten-year Plan became even more vulnerable to criticism when it was left without stakeholders to defend it within planning bodies. The departure of the ECLA-FAO advisors from the NPD and the resignation of the permanent counsellors to the NCESP left a space that was filled by a new set of actors, who brought with them a different understanding of what planning meant in practice. In 1963, the Colombian government reached an agreement with the Ford Foundation and the Harvard Development Advisory Service (DAS) for a long-term mission aimed

[25]For a broader critique of "capital fundamentalism" in post-war development economics see Sen 1983.

[26]Jorge Ruiz Lara, "Aspectos cuantitativos de la Operación Colombia", November 1963, box 1, folder 13, folios 191-323, Dirección General, AGN.

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at building local capacities through on-the-job training.[27] Unlike the ECLA-FAO advisory team, the Harvard DAS mission did not commit *a priori* to a textbook methodology of development planning. Being a quasi-consultancy firm, with one foot in academia and the other in the advisory services sector, the Harvard DAS's main focus was policy-oriented knowledge nurtured by a decade of firsthand experience working with governments in four continents.[28] Its director, Gustav Papanek, characterized development planning as a "process" that "begins with analysis of the long-range or structural problems of an economy and ends with the implementation of specific projects, programs, and policies" (Papanek 1968, vii). Global programming was not given a primary role in the planning process. In fact, Harvard DAS advisors were as unimpressed as Ruiz Lara was with the underlying data and methodology of the Ten-year Plan.

As new actors gained ground in the NPD, the central components of the Ten-year Plan were subjected to critical revision, which illustrates more generally that, as tools for action, development plans were not as sturdy as their creators had intended them to be. By itself, the Colombian plan was not sufficiently robust to remain immutable when the knowledge infrastructure that supported it changed. For instance, when Ruiz Lara was appointed in 1964 as director of the division at the NPD that oversaw global programming, the department rapidly moved away from the type of macroeconomic calculations which formed the basis of the Ten-year Plan.[29] Based on his own econometric estimations for *Operation Colombia*, he prepared a revised plan for 1965–1968, which, according to the Harvard DAS advisers, still placed "too much emphasis on numbers and too little focus on actions related systematically to a program."[30] The malleability of planning techniques became an object of reflection for planners. The director of the Harvard DAS mission, Richard Mallon, wrote in a summary report to the Ford Foundation that "sophisticated research techniques" should not be used in countries without a tradition of career civil service and where there was a "shortage" of "technical talent."[31] The fate of the Ten-year Plan revealed the limits to the transferability of *sophisticated* techniques designed for government action (i.e., the ECLA's programming techniques) into institutional settings where technical experts had not secured a position of authority.

The critical revision of the Ten-year Plan gave way to the adoption of planning procedures that placed experts, as opposed to impersonal technical tools, at the center of the process. In a retrospective assessment of the Ten-year Plan, the NPD acknowledged that this document never "managed to become a thoroughly guiding handbook for government action" (NPD 1969a, 7). Given its focus on macroeconomic programming, the Ten-year Plan offered decision-makers characterizations of growth scenarios, with their respective investment and foreign exchange requirements, but no concrete policy guidelines. Instead of progressing from the macro level of the economy to the more micro levels of sectoral programs and individual projects, as the 1950s handbooks prescribed, the planning process began to be understood in practice as a dynamic loop. The NPD used a circular flow diagram (See Fig. 1) to represent *ex-post* the procedure followed by the department, which the planners argued differed from the *ex-ante* procedures found in planning manuals like Tinbergen's. Plans (in plural), at different scales of aggregation, were constantly tested, monitored, and revised. Particular emphasis was given to the phase of "promotion and coordination," which bridged the gap between designing action plans and implementing them. Rather than specifying resource requirements under alternative growth

[27]In September 1963, Ford's board of trustees approved a grant of $494,000 payable to Harvard university for two-and-a-half years to provide "Training assistance in economic development planning in Colombia." This mission formally remained in the country until 1976, but the peak of its activities was between 1963 and 1970 (Grant No. 63-547, Reel 4660, RAC).

[28]Harvard University, "Development Advisory Service," pamphlet, n.d. Reel 4661, RAC.

[29]Ruiz Lara´s appointment as head of division illustrated a wider change in the composition of the domestic staff of the planning department, which began to hire academically trained economists who had obtained their degrees abroad. This transformation accelerated in the second half of the 1960s.

[30]DAS, "Report Mid-September 1963- January 1962," 30 January 1964, R4461, RAC.

[31]R. D. Mallon, "Reappraisal of the Role of the Harvard Development Advisory Service in Latin America," Reel 4661, RAC.

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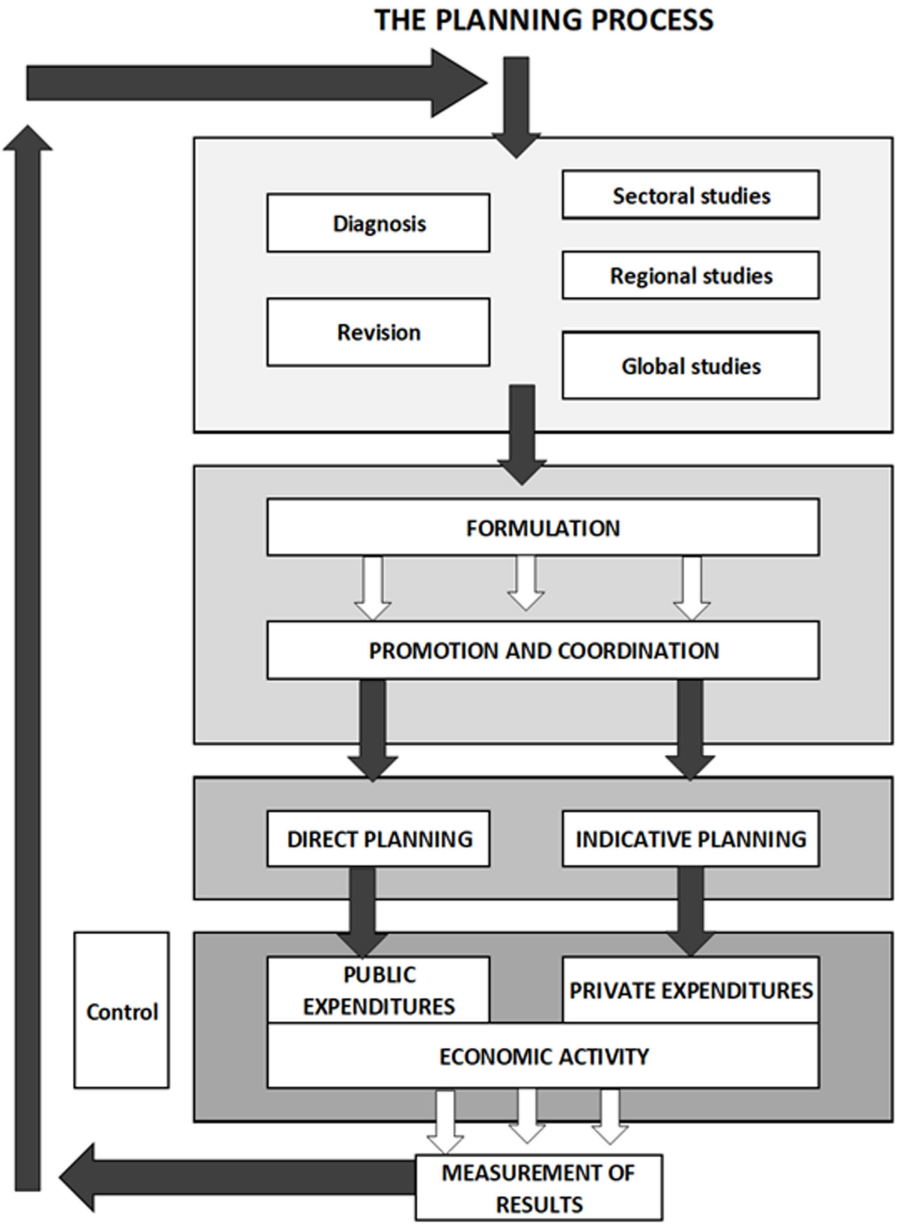


Figure 1. The Planning Process
Source: Reconstruction by the author based on the *ex-post* diagrammation of the planning process by the NPD (1969a, 105).

scenarios, experts in the NPD assumed the role of framing the "ordinary decisions" of public and private actors alike through active exercises of persuasion (NPD 1969a, 9).

Persuading local decision-makers to act required a mediation tool that differed in form and substance from that designed to engage with foreign lenders (the Ten-year Plan). For that purpose, the NPD began to produce technical documents—remembered by actors for the green sheets in which they were typed—to inform the deliberations at the NCESP and, more generally, at the "plethora of councils and boards" (NPD 1969a, 9) where development policies were formulated,

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promoted, and coordinated during the third National Front administration (1966–1970).[32] Council members were required to notify the planning department of the issue to be discussed at least one week ahead of the meeting. The NPD then prepared a "green sheet" document with its technical concept on that particular issue and pre-circulated it to all board members. While each of these documents targeted one policy issue at a time, they followed a standardized format. As described in an internal memorandum, green sheet documents must begin by synthetically stating their main conclusions and policy recommendations, prioritizing those elements that are "susceptible to serve as the basis for decision-making."[33] This would be followed by a detailed and rigorous analysis of the problem, including an exposition of the methodology used, the relevant historical antecedents, and the list of bibliographical references that informed the study. Because these documents were designed to persuade non-specialized decision-makers, experts were encouraged to avoid technical jargon, or to make their arguments in "*Cristiano* [vernacular language]" as the department's director wrote to the head of the agricultural unit.[34] By institutionalizing shared practices for formulating and communicating problem diagnoses and policy recommendations, the rules for elaborating the "green-sheet documents" encouraged the professionalization of the planning department.

Not only did the green sheet document come to embody what was meant by bottom-up planning, it also contributed to asserting the presence of planning experts in policymaking settings. Like the Ten-year Plan, this tool of persuasion was personally endorsed by the head of state. Its power to act on decision-makers was set in motion by a practice that the president himself enforced within consultative bodies. As documented in multiple testimonies,[35] the president made clear to his Ministers that each proposal emerging from the NCESP must first be discussed on the basis of the technical documents prepared by the NPD. At the beginning of every session, the president asked the expert who led the preparation of the document to read aloud, word by word, his assessment of the subject. Ministers had strong incentives to read the document beforehand because they did not want to appear unprepared in front of the president or their colleagues. The green technical documents produced at the NPD were not legally binding, but they came to frame how council members deliberated and reached decisions on aid requests, public investment projects, and broad policy guidelines. Over five hundred green sheet documents were discussed at the NCESP between 1967 and 1970.[36] Colombia's second development plan was nothing more than the aggregation of the projects and programs under implementation approved at that council.

6. Conclusion

This paper showed that a central function that development plans with fixed time horizons performed for states was to cultivate relationships of trust with domestic stakeholders and foreign donors. States were not trusted administrators of resources in developing countries, let alone in

[32]For each policy area, one council: that was how the "structure of decision-making" worked during these years, according to the head of the NPD's agricultural unit at the time (Roberto Junguito, oral interview by Andrés M. Guiot-Isaac, 9 September 2020). These councils typically included stakeholders in the public and the private sector.

[33]Antonio Barrera (Head of Infrastructure unit), memorandum to Edgar Gutiérrez, "Formato de los documentos de planeación," 16 May 1969, box 1, folder 5, folios 1-3, Serie Memorando Oficial Despachado, AGN.

[34]Jorge Ruiz Lara, memorandum to Roberto Junguito, "Documentos del sector agropecuario," 22 September 1970, box 1, folder 3, folio 83, Serie Memorando Oficial Despachado, AGN.

[35]See for example Perry and López Giraldo (2019, 51–53) and Junguito (2018, 343–47). These written testimonies were corroborated in my interviews with other division chiefs who participated in the Council at the time (Edgar Reveiz, oral interview by Andrés M. Guiot-Isaac, 9 January 2019, and with Antonio Urdinola, oral interview by Andrés M. Guiot-Isaac, 28 January 2021).

[36]Calculations made by the author based on a systematic analysis of the green sheet documents available in the online repository of the NPD (last consulted on 11 November 2021): https://colaboracion.dnp.gov.co/CDT/portalDNP/CONPES/2011-02-22.

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places with strong liberal traditions of policymaking like Colombia. As this country's Ten-year Plan showcased, planning techniques allowed states to translate broad developmental aims into quantifiable targets, and to reliably specify the resources they needed to achieve them. They also enabled states to credibly delimit the scope of their interventions and to secure the cooperation of private actors and international lenders. In practice, development plans thus served as tools of persuasion that states could use——and did use——to raise funds and to form alliances. Because states had to sustain stakeholders' trust in the plan's targets and projections over time, development plans also subjected states to their scrutiny. Indeed, these plans functioned like other technologies of calculation, which provide procedures by which actors (and organizations) "can be judged" as much as they "can judge themselves" (Porter 1994, 402). Once development plans became public knowledge, non-state actors could use them to make the state accountable for its commitments. Unlike *government* economic programs, development plans were long-term *state* endeavors, and as such, it was the credibility of states as prudent administrators of resources, not of the ruling individuals or parties, that came under public scrutiny. The various functions that time-fixed development plans performed in practice help us understand why this tool of interventionist knowledge was widely used in the mid-twentieth century, but also why states stopped producing them when it became clear by the late 1960s that their targets were, almost universally, unachievable.

The Ten-year Plan was Colombia's first and only development plan with a long-term horizon. After it, every new administration has produced its own development plan, sketching the socioeconomic goals and the roadmap to be pursued in each presidential term. The scale of intervention of development plans also changed. Long gone are the days in which the totality of national economic activity could be expected to be subjected to allegedly neutral, impersonal, planning methods. But this shift away from the macro scale of comprehensive plans did not mark the end of development planning. As the revision of the Ten-year Plan illustrated, it was rather a sign of its resilience as an "infrastructure for policymaking" (Halsmayer 2017, 161). Planning procedures proved malleable enough to adapt to major shifts in the actors involved, and to respond to new external demands. The institutional endurance of Colombia's planning system, and its ability to accommodate different techniques and procedures, echoes the findings of Zoé Evrard's study in this special issue about the resilience of planning in Belgium in spite of major policy shifts. If anything, the abandonment of the "top-down" approach, characteristic of time-fixed development plans, in favor of smaller-scale development interventions, strengthened the political standing of Colombia's planning apparatus. An ironic outcome of the case analyzed here was that planning was most effective in the policy arena when technical tools lost centrality, while technical experts themselves gained visibility and saliency in the planning process. The planning system remained resilient precisely by becoming less impersonal and by resorting to the judicative and communicative faculties of the actors behind the plan.

Competing interests. the author declares none.

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