



Internship Report

Contents

- Introduction page 1
- Internship assignment page 2
- History matters! page 3
- Problems that occurred during the internship page 7
- Learning goals page 7
- Critical reflection of the tasks performed page 7
- Conclusion page 10

Introduction

During the research seminar *Wealth and Poverty in the Americas*, my interest for economy was rekindled (after initially studying economics at Utrecht University). Questions that intrigue me in this regard are: *why are some regions poor, while others are wealthy? And, how can this be solved? And, Should this inequality be solved in the first place? and: are there long term spill-overs or trade-offs resulting from institutional changes?* These questions were not only at the heart of the research seminar, but very soon also at the heart of my own interests. After writing the paper for the research seminar, testing the hypothesis ‘*that best-solution’ policy measures [those only aimed at economic growth] generate unwanted side effect, mediocre results, and stimulate inequality and poverty increasing ‘trade-offs’, when applied to Latin America’*, I knew I wanted to ideally find an internship organisation occupied with development economics. This to allow me to approach the questions stated above from a practical angle (in addition to the academic angle provided by the MA-programme).

The first thing that came to mind was the strategic “scenario-department” of Dutch Royal Shell. Connecting long term institutional development to economic development and integrating this relationship with long term investment decisions in (mostly) developing regions and countries, seemed to be an ideal start to a career in a socially relevant field closely related to the topics already mentioned. After some phone calls with (former) employees of Shell, I realised this plan was too ambitious, and as a result I started looking in the public sector. After some digging on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, I found a vacancy at the *Centre for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries (CBI)*. CBI’s mission is “as an expert in export to contribute to poverty reduction and trade-led, sustainable economic development in developing countries. CBI aims to do so by measurably increasing exports from these countries to the EU/EFTA through the augmentation of the entire export value chain.”¹ In other words, by helping SME’s (and business support organisations) to increase their exports to Europe, SME’s production capacity (and ideally productivity) will grow, which will result in more jobs, in turn leading to poverty alleviation and economic growth and development (for a more extensive description of CBI, see the internship work plan).

This reasoning is however intuitive, in reality the causal relation between supporting SME’s to export, and macro-level sustainable economic growth is nearly impossible to prove because of a large variety of contextual variables and externalities (this topic is addressed further later on in this document, and in my thesis). In addition, the causal relation between CBI’s export coaching programmes, and outcomes on “lower” levels (figure 1) has not (yet) been proven adequately. Finally, the possibility that CBI’s programmes result in negative trade-offs for unsupported SME’s is not thoroughly evaluated. (these issues are further addressed in section 2 and 3 of this document, and in my thesis).

¹ Internal document, *CBI profile text*.

That aside, after further researching CBI, it became clear that this organisation's area of operations is very much in line with my interests and ambitions. It approached macro-level economic inequality from a micro-level practical angle, making it a perfect place to find out whether my academic desk research (and knowledge) was of any use in a "real-world" setting.

The Internship Assignment

The internship assignment as described in the work plan initially consisted of the "completion" of CBI's export coaching programme (ECP) "home textiles and home decorations" (HD/HT). Forty companies from fourteen countries participated in this ECP which ran for the duration of approximately five years. These five years were divided into four phases: 1. value chain selection; 2. value chain analysis and business plan development; 3. implementation; 4. audit and evaluation. My assignment was to deliver phase 4 of the programme. This meant gathering all the required data to evaluate the programme (the overview of the data is attached to this document). Initially I planned to integrate this assignment with my thesis, using the data to make an academic analysis/evaluation of the results. Investigating differences in outcomes of the ECP between countries from an institutional perspective. However, some obstacles, both at CBI, and at Utrecht University forced me to alter this approach.

Obstacles at CBI

At CBI, it turned out that the required data were scattered among various archival systems (hard drive, paper archive, and online archive). Furthermore, the data were contrasting between these systems. Furthermore, CBI works with consultants (external experts) to implement its programmes. These experts were also responsible for supplying CBI with all the data from "their" companies. Due to some internal problems, experts switched companies between them during the programme. However, the data of periods overlapping these transfers also contrasted between experts. In short, the data needed to complete and evaluate the programme (results which in turn determine whether CBI is funded by the Ministry for this ECP) were unusable in their "raw" form. As a result I decided (in agreement with the programme manager of home textiles and home decorations) to make an overview of all the data (for all companies for the duration of five years) available in all CBI's archival systems (this overview is attached to this document). These data varied from export turnover, to acquired business contacts, and from quality scores (in 13 clusters) to the number of employees. All in all, I checked literally thousands of figures, numbers and data, cross-referenced them, and consulted the external experts and the programme manager on their validity and trust-worthiness. This process took almost five months to complete. Although some data are still questionable, on the whole, the result is both acceptable and important for CBI in view of its budget and justification of the use of public money.

This process had both benefits and drawbacks. By diving into the history of the HD/HT programme, I got a real good sense of the operational characteristics of a CBI, ECP. Furthermore I experienced first-hand the importance of an accurate monitoring and evaluation system. Also, I came to understand that the data I wanted to use for my thesis were of such a bad quality and (sometimes) questionable origin that I had to treat them with great care to be able to get something useful out of them in my analysis (this process is addressed at length in my thesis). The downside of this long process was mainly that a lot of time was consumed by contacting the responsible experts, and digging through dossiers and un-transparent archival systems. Progress during such an assignment is slow, and sometimes results are frustrating. For example when experts claim they have sent particular documents, while in reality they haven't, or when some data are being altered at the last moment (more than a year after the last programme activity and the companies' "final" audit) by the expert without any explanation or justification.



Obstacles at Utrecht University

From the side of Utrecht University the main obstacle was the questionable historical component of the analysis resulting from the internship product. Rightly so the question was asked: *what is historical about analysing contemporary data and explaining their results from an institutional perspective (although institutions develop over long periods of time)?* This question implicates a more general question: *does history matter in the field of development economics? Or even, Does history matter at all, when addressing contemporary problems?*

History matters!

It is my strong belief that (academic) history should try its best to be a relevant addition and discipline in addressing contemporary problems and issues.² This relevance however, cannot be attributed on a shallow, direct level. History cannot contribute by looking at similarities between historical events and contemporary developments to interpret, or even forecast outcomes of the latter. For example by predicting a “new” Cold War as a result of Russia’s actions in Ukraine. Or by “prescribing” solutions to contemporary problems based on historical events and outcomes, of which the “Washington Consensus” is an infamous example.

History’s contribution to address contemporary problems and issues has to be both more subtle and more indirect. Long term data-analysis can be used to detect trends, for example in economic growth and inequality.³ More importantly however, history should serve as a laboratory to test and scrutinise contemporary policy decisions. Policies, institutional constellations, their trajectories, and interaction with events (like disasters, war, or economic “golden ages” or crises) and social structures should be tested in (by the historian controlled) historical cases which are defined in both time and space. This way history can contribute to economic decision-making. For example, last week the Minister of Economic Affairs, Henk Kamp, said that technological progress is the main driver of economic growth.⁴ Hence the Dutch Government should invest heavily in innovation. One might then ask, is the Minister right? From a purely economic perspective, maybe he is (technological development can cause a rise in productivity and thus economic growth). The historian however can nuance such statements and prove the relation between technological innovation and economic growth is not as straightforward as the minister’s statement implies. First the historian might ask why so many countries are still unable to produce sustainable economic growth in a world where technology is (relatively) freely accessible? When then answering this question the historian has a broad range of instruments to his disposal. He can for example point at long term institutional constraints and conditions (labour market, property rights, educational level, (non)technical sectors that thrive/fail in a country), at the importance of social structures, and at the risk of contingencies, which might all endanger the linear (ideal) results and consequences of policy measures as proposed by Minister Kamp. As an example the historian could point at the “second Industrial Revolution” explaining that Germany was able to successfully adopt new technologies *and* incorporate them in its economy, while China was not. He can also point at the remarkable economic growth of the Asian Tigers (which was based on a different model than that of the Western industrialised countries) and by doing so he can question current policies primarily based on pure economic analysis and generic economic models.

The historian in other words can make clear that there is no such thing as an ideal development path leading to economic growth. Thus instead of directly linking the past to the present by using experiences and knowledge of the first to interpret and predict the latter dictating “best-practice” solutions and predicting outcomes, history should nuance, contextualise and question the reasoning

² In the field of development economics there is a growing belief history is an important discipline to enhance economists insights. For Example: Michael Woolcock, et al (2010) and Nathan Nunn (2009).

³ For example the work of Angus Maddison, and Jeffrey Williamson.

⁴ 'Technologie kan einde maken aan matige groei', www.nu.nl (05-06-2014)

and (economic) models on which contemporary policy decisions are based. History in other words functions within another paradigm than economic theory. Consequently history should not dictate policy decisions, it should place underlying rationales and reasoning in perspective, using the past as a laboratory to show there is no “one truth”, no one way to success or development.

Consequences for the internship

It is my ambition to use my history study (and this MA-programme in particular) in my work. This means the above mentioned argument has had consequences for my internship. Initially I was hired as intern for team Latin-America. In that capacity I worked on the internship assignment described above. However, as stated before, the more I learned about the structure of CBI’s export coaching programmes and the indicators used to evaluate the results of these programmes, the more I realised that my background as an historian might contribute to removing some (already mentioned) bottlenecks and weaknesses in CBI’s operations and rationale.

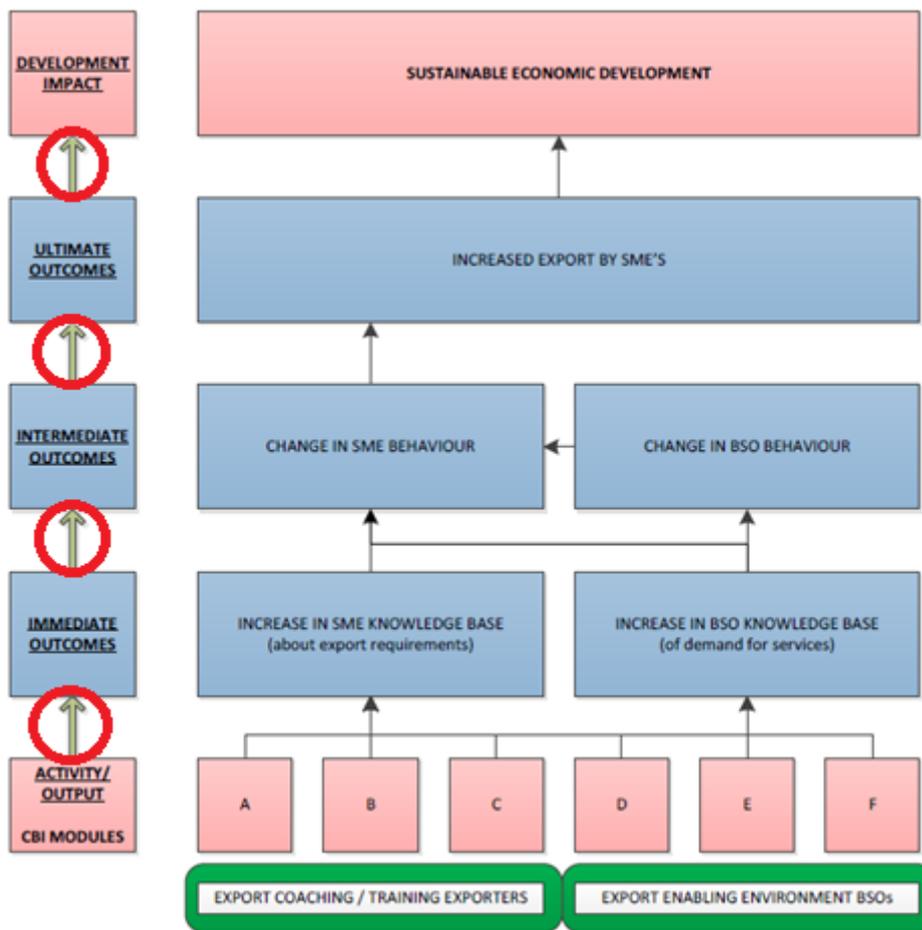
At this moment, CBI is developing a new monitoring and evaluation instrument (called *PRIME - Pioneering Real-time Impact Monitoring and Evaluation in small and medium enterprises*). PRIME has to enable CBI to prove ECP’s attribution to outcomes on all levels (immediate, intermediate and ultimate). Furthermore, the instrument should ideally (at least partially) prove that ECP interventions contribute to sustainable economic growth and poverty alleviation on a macro-level (impact level). The conceptual model of attribution is displayed in figure 1. It is exactly the intuitive reasoning presented in figure 1 that offers an opportunity for the historian to prove his worth. The figure implies a model that apparently works regardless of sector or country. Also the model doesn’t account for possible negative effects of ECP’s (trade-offs, price increases, inequality, etc.). When taking into account that CBI’s export coaching programmes basically offer the same modules and trainings regardless of the country or sector they are aimed at, the “weaknesses” of CBI’s ECP evaluations become apparent.⁵ Even when there is attention for unique country characteristics (for example in the business case of a programme), this attention is merely descriptive with no analysis of how (much) these characteristics actually might benefit or hinder programme results. Furthermore, when a module within a programme is aimed at strengthening institutions and improving the enabling environment, well-known “best-solutions” are integrated in the programme. Regardless of specific contexts like long term social structures, or (informal) institutions. Often offering a one-size-fits-all solution, mainly aimed at gender, removing trade/export restrictions, and implementing CSR.

The arrows highlighted by the red circles in figure 1, are instances where institutional constraints and opportunities might largely influence the ECP’s outcomes and impact, which the model assumes to be generic regardless of context. By showing the influence and the causal relationship between these contexts and CBI’s activities, an historian can make an indispensable contribution to CBI’s programmes and activities, and potentially the entire rationale underlying them. Furthermore, following the school of the “new institutional economics”⁶, the red circled arrows in figure 1 represent (possible) “bad institutions” in the developing countries where CBI is active. Just acknowledging that institutions matter and as a consequence trying to replace these bad institutions with better ones (as is the modus operandi of the “Washington consensus” and (most) of its legacy, probably doesn’t work, and/or might have disastrous unintended results. To make the transition from *acknowledgement* to the actual *implementation* of the statement that “institutions matter”, an historian might prove of great importance.

⁵ Sönke Buschmann and Joep Vonk, *Review and Summary of CBI evaluations 2003-2009* (Triodos Facet, 2009).

⁶ Douglas C. North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance* (Cambridge 1990)

Figure 1. Rationale of CBI's mission, impact levels of an ECP⁷



The reason for this is that institutions (red circled arrows) develop over a long period of time and are (most probably) the result of some social power struggle.⁸ As such they represent an equilibrium of the social structure of a country/region. This also means they are not necessarily the most efficient institutions perceivable (often the opposite). Development policy on the other hand proposes best-solution efficient institutions (which emanate from the econometrists methodology and paradigm) to promote sustainable economic growth and poverty alleviation. These best-solutions however might be so adverse to the social equilibrium that they will probably yield unintended policy results. In the “best case” scenario effect and results of policies are less significant/big than expected. In the worst case scenario they might stimulate social disruption (inequality)/revolution/civil war. History is thus important to investigate the social equilibrium and the struggle underlying this equilibrium so policy results don't yield disastrous unintended effects.⁹ Instead, policies might be adjusted/suited to the social equilibrium of a country. Making them not the most efficient solutions in an economic model paradigm, but rather making them suited to the region where they are implemented, making sure policy-effects are controllable and more predictable.

Or as World Bank researcher, Michael Woolcock frames it: “Rather than a firm path, which only has to be ‘found’ and its course and contours ‘mapped’, historians [should] view history—the past—more as a flowing river of fluid and swirling potential, with many eddies and back currents in it. Only partially

⁷ PRIME, *Programme Overview 2014*.

⁸ Sheilagh Ogilvie, ‘Whatever Is, Is Right’? Economic Institutions in Pre-Industrial Europe’, *The Economic History Review* 60:4 (November 2007) 662-665.

⁹ North (1990)



knowable at best, it is something moving at deceptively different speeds in various courses of its travel, with many undercurrents which can be hard to see and to estimate their power. A policy intervention, therefore, is like pouring a chemical or a dye into this flowing stream. It joins, diffuses, gets diluted and may or may not change the colour of the water in the intended fashion. In this sense, policymakers need to be more realistic about the way in which their policies will mix into the flow of a society's history and not simply imagine they will achieve the 'laboratory' results they wish for them. At the moment the flow of history in a developing society is too often regarded as 'the problem', as something which needs to be changed or transformed by the application of development policies. More intelligent and realistic policies would start from the premise that the receiving society and its historical momentum are much more powerful and important than the applied policies, and the latter only really have a chance to succeed if they can work with the flow and the momentum of the society's history to encourage the desired kinds of selective adaptations."¹⁰

Taking all this into account, the development of CBI's new monitoring and evaluation tool provided a unique opportunity to contribute to CBI's operations on a "meta-level" (see next section on PRIME). After various meetings with the programme manager R&D, responsible for the coordination of PRIME (which is developed in cooperation with LEI and Erasmus University) and the team coordinator of team Latin America, we agreed that I could dedicate 1,5 days per week to PRIME.

PRIME

PRIME's main research question is to measure: *What works for whom under what conditions and why?*¹¹ The development of PRIME is at a stage where the PRIME researchers have proposed a series of indicators to CBI which they want CBI to measure and deliver in order to evaluate the impact of ECP's on all outcome levels and on regular (ideally yearly) intervals. This resulted in a twofold task for me. Firstly I cross-referenced the indicators the researchers suggested with the indicators CBI already measures. Also I researched how newly suggested indicators might be integrated in existing evaluation templates of CBI. Secondly, I was invited to think along about the rationale behind all the suggested indicators, this to determine their urgency for the end-result (mainly) CBI has in mind. I also thought along about the research methodology to actually collect sufficient data on these indicators. Both the decision which indicators to measure, and the methodology to carry out these measurements potentially have significant consequences for the management and execution of CBI's ECP's, and thus CBI's entire modus of operation. It might affect for example the selection of SME's, the content of trainings and even sectors and (to some extent) countries in which CBI will be active in the future (dependent on the availability of selected indicators, or "fish" in Woolcock's institutional "river").

As part of the R&D team I (on the background) played a mediating role between the researchers and CBI's programme managers who eventually have to implement the new indicators in their programmes and evaluations. Thus besides the experience in research in a practical environment, I also acquired some experience in "change management", making working on PRIME a very rewarding and instructive experience. Finally, my experiences with PRIME greatly influenced my thesis. Allowing me to even further value (both positive and negative) my dataset, and triggering me to think about the "ideal" way/methodology to evaluate the outcomes and impact of private sector development programmes in general, and CBI's export coaching programmes in particular. Especially the latter might be a useful contribution to the field of impact evaluation of private sector development programmes (this is further explained in my thesis)

¹⁰ Woolcock, et al. 'How and Why Does History Matter for Development Policy?', *Policy Research Working Paper 5425* (The World Bank Development Research Group Poverty and Inequality Team 2010) 20-21.

¹¹ *Case Study Selection PRIME 2014*.



Problems that occurred during the internship

During the first two months of the internship it proved difficult to collect tasks that had any relation to the MA-programme. I mainly performed practical tasks. I co-organised an export coaching training (EXPRO) in the Hague for 125 participants from 15 countries. Furthermore I organised a buyers mission for 9 European timber importers to 13 Bolivian exporters. After these first two months things picked up and I got engaged in some very interesting projects like PRIME, also I was asked to write a report on how to strengthen the tourism industry in Suriname from the perspective of the private sector (the report and further explanation is attached to this document as part of the internship assignment).

Besides lacking some substantial tasks during the introductory stages of the internship I haven't encountered any real problems. Besides maybe that at times it was difficult to stay attached to university and thesis-writing when working 36 hours a week for an organisation for which my graduation from university is not the main concern.

Learning Goals

In my internship work plan I defined the following learning goals (very briefly summarised here)

- **Orientation:** Implement historical knowledge while addressing contemporary problems and issues.
- **Professional knowledge and skills:** pro-actively gather tasks that suit my interests and ambitions
- **Academic skills:** further develop research skills and organisational skills

All in all I think I have achieved all learning goals formulated beforehand. All three goals have been implicitly addressed in this text already and are linked to tasks performed in table 1 in the next section. PRIME and the Suriname tourism research report are closely related to **orientation** and **professional knowledge and skills**. Both in terms of *content*, for example when formulating incentives for the Surinamese Government to actively promote its tourism sector. And in terms of *methodology*, for example when analysing and suggesting improvements to the methodology of the PRIME research, based on methodologies used in comparative history, or when emphasising the importance of context and causation.

Organising the EXPRO and Bolivian buyers mission are more related to **academic skills**. Although PRIME and the Suriname report greatly added to my research skills. The buyers mission which I more or less organised by myself (from the side of CBI), was very instructive in regards to planning, solving last minute problems, and communication between various cultures (and expectations).

A "sub skill/learning goal" which proved hard to achieve was bringing ideas of different people together and formulating bigger ideas out of individual ideas. I think the main constrain in this regards was my position as intern. Probably such a task is better suited to the management positions in the organisation.

Reflection of tasks performed

The main tasks I performed were:

- Co-organising of the tourism EXPRO (February 2014)
- Communications/promotional activities Latin America programmes (February – July 2014)



- Tourism trade fair in Berlin, ITB (March 2014)
- Completion home textiles home decorations programme/internship assignment (March – June 2014)
- Organisation of CBI's timber buyers mission to Bolivia (May 2014)
- Report tourism Suriname (May – July 2014)
- Co-Researching possibilities for CBI-trust fund for SME's in Myanmar (June 2014)
- PRIME (June – July 2014)

EXPRO

The EXPRO is an export coaching training module of an ECP for (ideally the manager of) SME's participating in the ECP. I co-organised the tourism EXPRO in The Hague, for 125 participants from 15 countries. I dropped in during my first day at CBI. The main preparations were already finished. Participants were invited, contact with the hotel was established, and templates for letters (invitations, visas, etc.) were also ready for use. My responsibility was communications with the participants, solving visa problems with embassies, and communications with the hotel. Due to some internal problems, capacity at CBI was low, so time pressure was quite high when I entered the project. In this regard co-organising the EXPRO contributed to my organisational skills. On the other hand, I realised that this kind of organisational work isn't the challenge I'm looking for in my career.

Communications/promotional activities Latin America programmes

During the internship I have continuously written news articles, Facebook updates, and website items for various programmes in the Latin America department. I had already quite some (professional) experience with communications work, making this task suited to my skills. Writing the articles involved reading programme documents and interviewing various shareholders of the programme. Getting involved in communications activities proved to be a good way to fully integrate into the organisation. On the other hand, I didn't learn anything particularly new, other than the ins-and-outs of some programmes executed by CBI.

Tourism trade fair (ITB)

After the EXPRO, most participants visited the ITB tourism fair in Berlin (biggest tourism fair in the world). On behalf of CBI I went to ITB as well to assist the CBI consultants present in Berlin. My tasks were mainly to make sure meetings started on time and to receive (international) guests at the CBI stand, also I functioned as first contact to all people (both corporate and tourists) interested in CBI. The ITB was mainly a networking experience, which was very useful because I had no previous experience in (professional) networking. It also provided me with many insights into the tourism sector, which I used later on during my internship when writing the report on tourism in Suriname.

Completion home textiles and home decorations programme

For a substantive description of the internship assignment see section 2 and the internship product. During the assignment I learned a lot about data collection, quality standards required to use these data for evaluation, and the importance to formulate adequate indicators to measure and evaluate private sector development programmes.

Organisation of CBI's timber mission to Bolivia

I was the sole responsible (from CBI) for organising the timber buyers mission to Bolivia. I did work together though with an external consultant and with a Bolivian business support organisation (BSO). I sent invitations to over 1000 timber importers from all over Europe, and maintained contact with the importers selected (by the consultant) for the mission. I made the planning for the whole week, which consisted of 70 individual meetings in 3 Bolivian cities. I was also responsible for the evaluation of the mission (evaluation survey and news article). The consultant wrote the mission report (because he joined the mission), and coordinated the mission on the ground. The BSO was responsible for contact with the Bolivian companies. The last week before the mission, the programme manager of the timber

programme was not at CBI, which meant I had to make independent decisions related to the budget and schedules. In combination with the EXPRO, this buyers mission definitely added to my organisational skills and experience to running a project (more or less) independently.

Report tourism Suriname

After returning from the ITB, the programme manager for tourism in Latin America approached me to write a report on how to develop the tourism industry in Suriname from the perspective of the private sector. During 2013 public private partnership (PPP) efforts in the tourism sector failed, resulting in a stand still for the countries' entire tourism sector. CBI's tourism programme includes more than half of the Tour operator sector in Suriname (including sector organisation VESTOR, and hotel sector organisation SHA – Suriname's Hotel Association). From this perspective I performed a comparative study between Suriname and its regional successful competitors (mainly Costa Rica and Belize). Later I also incorporated Guatemala, Guyana, Peru, and Ecuador in the analysis. My goal was to come up with both incentives for the government to invest in tourism (which the private sector might use when lobbying the government) and to come up with (low-budget) practices in marketing, product development, and sector-cooperation to develop the tourism sector without public support. To do this, I've read many policy documents from various countries, I compared operational and quality standards, and I studied organisational structures of the tourism sectors in competing countries. During the process of writing the document I had regular meetings with the responsible programme manager to brainstorm and to decide which paths we wanted to pursue further.

This assignment added to my research skills in general and to my ability to translate academic research into tangible advice in particular. This means I sometimes had to make choices which are absent in purely academic research. Furthermore, in depth historical knowledge of institutional and social structures in Suriname added to the usability and realism of the report (much in line with the argument in section 2). For example the inequality between coast and inland areas, and the disadvantaged position of indigenous people in Suriname are very important when developing tourism activities which have (ideally) no "leakage" out of the country, alleviate poverty, and still have a good chance to be realised. The report with an introduction is attached to this document as part of the internship product.

Co-Researching possibilities for CBI-trust fund for SME's

Access to finance is one of the major problems of and for SME's in developing countries to develop and grow. Because of this, CBI started a pilot to integrate this problem into its programmes. Because CBI's mandate doesn't allow for subsidies and money transfers to SME's, this proves to be a difficult problem to address with CBI's instruments. Together with my fellow intern of the Latin American team, I did desk research of ten (development) banks and their financial products. The initial plan at CBI was to make SME's and European importers to invest money into a trust fund which would then be used as collateral to lend money. In addition, CBI would vouch for money that would be borrowed by SME's through the trust fund. Two main problems of this approach were that (at least to the opinion of me and my colleague) such an activity is outside of CBI's mandate, and that the additionality (which is a precondition for all private sector development programmes executed by Dutch government agencies) of such an activity is questionable at best, because many private sector organisations offer similar products on the financial markets.

CBI has started a pilot is with an NGO called FAST – Financial Alliance for Sustainable Trade, which offers both financial trainings (preparing SME's to enter the financial markets) and acts as a broker between SME's and development banks (organising fairs, literally bringing SME's and banks together).¹²

¹² The website of FAST, <http://www.fastinternational.org/>



PRIME

PRIME is already discussed earlier in this document.

Table 1. overview of (main) tasks performed and their relation to learning goals¹³ and MA-programme

Task	Period	Learning Goals	Relation MA-programme
EXPRO	February	Academic skills	none
Communications L-A	February - July	Orientation	English writing skills
ITB	March	Academic skills	no
Completion HT/HD	February - June	Orientation, Academic skills,	Archival work/data analysis
Buyers mission	May	Academic skills	none
Tourism Suriname	May - June	Orientation, Professional knowledge, Academic skills	Comparative study, insights in institutional constraints to economic development
Trust Fund	June	Orientation, Professional knowledge, Academic skills	Comparative study, insights in institutional constraints to economic development
PRIME	June - July	Orientation, Professional knowledge, Academic skills	Data analysis, research methodology, insights in economic development

Conclusion

After five (out of a total of six) months, I am very satisfied by the way the internship has developed and the tasks and opportunities it provided for me. Initially during the first two months, tasks mainly had a practical and organisational character. In hindsight these first two months were ideal to learn the organisation, its activities, and the possible contributions I could make to both. After this introductory period, tasks shifted more and more to research and analysis. Two skills I enjoy exploring, and that are very suited to my skills and ambitions. Especially working on PRIME was a rewarding experience. Both because the programme manager R&D gave me a lot of room to explore and pitch my own ideas, and because it turned out to be a working field very much suited to my skills and ambitions. Consequently M&E is a career path worth pursuing after graduation.

Finally I would like to thank Nico for his role as supervisor. Jan-Willem for giving me the chance to work for R&D and for his genuine interest in my ideas, concerns and suggestions. Finally I would like to thank Catrijn and Janneke for their collegiality and friendship.

¹³ For a more specified overview of these learning goals, see the internship work plan p.7