

Introduction

After two decades of development experience that can be regarded by most standards to be extremely successful, and now entering another five-year phase with the inception of the Third Malaysia Plan, planners, policy-makers and administrators have found themselves faced with an even greater array of problems of managing the economic and social progress of the country. The basic underlying problem appears to be the need to achieve a great deal in a relatively short period of time. The New Economic Policy, and the Outline Perspective Plan which gives it substance provide the general framework within which programmes of development are identified in order to attain national goals.

In evaluating the implementation of the New Economic Policy, a host of subsidiary questions have arisen, which also are of critical significance: concentration of ownership of land, patterns of ownership of corporate assets, income and wealth distribution by individuals and ethnic groups, unemployment trends, problems of mobility and opportunity. A continuous monitoring of these problems is required in order to identify projects and device programmes, and in general to ensure the success of the New Economic Policy. At the present moment, however, this cannot be done in a manner which allows timely and critical analysis of the development projects and programmes. The data required exist, to a large extent, in disparate governmental departments, but retrieval and consolidation into a proper format would be time consuming and inefficient under present circumstances.