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**THE ROLE OF DEVELOPMENT PLANNING IN EMERGING NATIONS  
A CASE STUDY OF THE REPUBLIC OF PANAMA**

by

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The decision making process, in varying degrees, is a natural function of man. Many kinds of decision processes are available to the individual or the society. Planning is itself a decision process which generally involves a rational process, which looks to the future, and when possible, makes choices so as to arrange present and future actions to place him at some level which is perceived as more desirable. When dealing with a society composed of people with differing economic, social, political and cultural backgrounds and expectations, the planning process becomes a complex and many-sided phenomenon. As a consequence the planning profession involves a variety of knowledge and techniques to deal with the requirements of society. This study deals with one aspect of the planning process--development planning for emerging nations.

#### Purpose for Study

The author's interest in planning for developing nations was stimulated by four years of residence in the Panama Canal Zone and a desire to practice in the Republic of Panama as a professional planner. The brief exposure to the planning development of an emerging nation provoked independent study in this area as a supplement