



OPENING REMARKS
BY THE PROJECT DIRECTOR, REGIONAL STATISTICS
Dr. PHILOMEN HARRISON ON BEHALF OF THE CARICOM SECRETARIAT

ON THE OCCASION OF THE
THIRD HIGH LEVEL ADVOCACY FORUM ON STATISTICS
GOVERNMENT TRADE CENTRE, ST.GEORGE'S, GRENADA
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The years 2016-2018 reflect significant milestones for statistical development in the Caribbean Community. In July 2016, the Thirty-Seventh Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government (HGC) of the Caribbean Community endorsed the Action Plan for Statistics in the Caribbean. The Action Plan was born out of the need seen by the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians (SCCS) for support by Governments to the strengthening of the national statistical systems, particularly in the face of the avalanche of statistical requirements of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, that require the production of 230 plus indicators.

In July 2017, the SCCS decided to take another step forward and sought and obtained the endorsement of the Thirty-Eighth Meeting of the HGC to prepare a CARICOM Regional Strategy for the Development of Statistics (RSDS). The RSDS was prepared by the SCCS with funding support that provided technical assistance from, the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the Twenty-First Century (PARIS21).

The Heads of Government at their Thirty-Ninth Regular Meeting in July 2018 in Jamaica, recognised the strategic role of strengthening and improving the availability of statistics for evidence-based decision-making and endorsed the framework of a Regional Strategy for the Development of Statistics (RSDS). The Leaders also agreed to the development of a comprehensive Implementation Plan for the RSDS, a Resource Mobilisation Strategy, a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and a Communication and Advocacy Strategy and encouraged Member States and the CARICOM Secretariat to allocate the necessary human resource capacity at the national and regional levels, to adequately implement the Strategy.

To date there is a Draft Communication Plan for the RSDS and the Implementation Plan has been prepared and approved by the SCCS.

This Third High Level Forum on Statistics that is being hosted by the Right Honourable Prime Minister and the people of Grenada is a watershed moment in its thrust to build on the momentum of the high-level endorsements given to statistics.

The CARICOM RSDS is central to the advancement of the regional integration process through making available harmonised, intra-regional statistics to guide and monitor its progress. Statistics is a key element in building resilience in the Community, as reflected in the theme of this morning's activity- ***Investing in Statistics to Build Resilience and to Achieve Sustainable Economic Growth and Development in the Caribbean Community.***

The Right Honourable Prime Minister of Grenada, who has been a true champion for the role of statistics, and the statisticians of CARICOM must be applauded for their continued efforts including through this High-Level Forum, to improve the lives of the people of our Community

The CARICOM Secretariat, supports the strides that are being undertaken in statistics advancement, since they can result in a more resilient and prosperous Community for all our people.

I thank you.

