

## Looking Back at Statistics2013

### INTRODUCTION

Activities to commemorate Statistics2013 continued into the latter part of the year, with the aim of promoting the use of statistics, in-keeping with the theme “*Statistics in Everyday Life, Let us Educate and Appreciate*”. Statistics was showcased through various means. The climax of the celebration was undertaken in the week of 14th October 2013—which was designated Caribbean Statistics Week. The Regional Statistics Programme commemorated this week with the usual inter-school quiz competitions and the judging of an essay competition which was a new activity.

Prior to Caribbean Statistics Week, there were a number of seminars at the CARICOM Secretariat Headquarters in Guyana such as one on the trade performance in CARICOM, which acted as a catalyst for reporting in the local media in Guyana, and which garnered the interest of other persons outside of the Secretariat. The foregoing seminar and other activities to commemorate Statistics2013, are discussed in this Special Edition of the Newsletter.

### TRADE PERFORMANCE SINCE INTEGRATION— Major Developments in the Production and Dissemination of Trade Statistics

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) celebrated

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### HISTORY, IMPORTANCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE STATISTICS IN THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM) - by Project Director, Regional Statistics (Summary of Article)

*“... Trade is after all the ‘bread and butter’ of the Common Market and it is vital for proper understanding of the working and development of the Common Market that accurate and up-to-date place between Member Countries...”* - Sir Alister Mc Intyre in the report—*A Digest of Trade Statistics of Caribbean Community Member States*, September 1976.

The above quotation provides the backdrop to the historical context and importance of trade statistics in CARICOM. The need for trade statistics has its basis in the efforts at economic integration in its different forms with the key objective being to improve intra-CARICOM trade flows.

One of the earliest efforts aimed at economic integration of the Commonwealth Caribbean countries was the Caribbean Free Trade Area (CARIFTA) which was established in 1968 with 11 countries. CARIFTA was therefore the early context for the compilation of trade data since specifically, CARIFTA was intended to encourage

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its Fortieth Anniversary as a regional integration group in the year 2013. July 4<sup>th</sup> 1973 marked the establishment of the Caribbean Community and Common Market predicated upon economic integration, functional cooperation and foreign policy coordination. A critical element of the objectives of the Community is the expansion of intra-regional trade intra-regionally and with third states.

Changes in the global environment that have occurred during the past forty years, would have had some measure of impact on the performance of the integration movement including trade performance. Some of these factors include the removal of the preferential arrangements for our sugar and banana exports with the European Union (EU); the advent of the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and its impact on the setting of the prices of oil and related minerals; the debt crisis of the 1980s and more recently the global financial and economic crisis of the period close to 2008, and specifically the impact in EU and the United States of America (USA). Fundamentally, the region sought to deepen its integration process through the agreement to establish the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) as a mechanism for the small countries of the Community to stimulate growth and development amidst external and internal challenges. In what follows, a summary of CARICOM's total trade performance since 1973 is presented.

For the period 1973 to 2011, the value of our *total exports* moved from US\$ 1.0 billion to US\$18.8 billion at the end of this period, representing an average annual growth of 8.0 percent. Evidently for the period of the international debt crisis during the 1980s, there was a fall in the value of exports. Another significant decline occurred in 2009 with the global financial and economic crisis.

For the period 2002 to 2008 the annual average growth rate of exports was 26.8 percent, while for the period 2008-2009 it was negative 46.1 percent. Intra-regional trade was the second highest with 17.2 percent, followed by exports to the

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balanced development of the Region including:

- Diversifying trade – expanding the variety of goods and services available for trade;

The first digest of trade statistics of Member States of CARICOM, was produced in 1976 and represented efforts by the Secretariat to produce “estimates of the flow and pattern of intra-CARICOM” trade. It covered the time period 1960 to 1970.

The Caribbean Community and Common Market came into effect in April 1973 in Georgetown, Guyana, starting with Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. The Accord which was agreed to in April 1973 contained the draft treaty which is now known as the Treaty of Chaguaramas. By 2002 the membership stood at fifteen with the last Member State to join being Haiti. One of the key objectives of the Community was economic integration of the Member States by the establishment of the Common Market. The objective on economic integration included the following objective in part:

*“...strengthening coordination and regulation of the economic and trade relations among Members in order to promote their accelerated, harmonious and balanced development...”*

In 1974 the Common Market Council that came into being under the Treaty in 1973, in turn established the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians (SCCS) with the goal:

*“...to foster increased recognition of the importance of statistical services to the countries of the region; to widen the scope and coverage of statistical data collection; and to improve the quality, comparability and timeliness of statistics produced...”*

The collection of trade data continued on an annual basis during the period of the 80's from Member States, in order to fulfill the requirements of compiling a regional trade report.

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EU, 15.1 percent.

With the establishment of the CARICOM Single Market (CSM) in 2006, CARICOM's total exports expanded from US\$17.8 Billion in 2006 to US\$18.8 Billion in 2011 at an average annual growth rate of 1.0 percent.

Total imports also increased with the launch of the CSM, from US\$18.0 billion in 2006 to US\$ 24.3 billion in 2011 at an average annual growth rate of 6.2 percent.

The period 1973 to 2005 saw an annual average growth rate in imports of 7.9 percent. Similarly the effect of the global financial and economic crisis was reflected in an average annual growth rate from 2008 to 2009 of negative 25.9 percent.

Since the launch of the CSM, the deficit for the period moved from US\$0.2 billion in 2006 to US\$5.6 billion in 2011 or an average of US\$3.7 billion for this period. For the period 1973 to 2005 the deficit moved from US\$0.5 billion to US\$4.0 billion over these years or an average of US\$1.9 billion. For the entire period 1973 to 2011 the proportion of intra-regional exports to total exports averaged 14.8 percent and grew at an annual average growth rate of 8.8 percent.

**Mineral Fuels, Lubricants and related materials** were the top commodities exported to the intra-regional market. The average intra-regional exports of this commodity stood at US\$0.5 Billion for the entire period, representing 48.8 percent of total intra-regional exports. **Food** was the second highest commodity exported in the intra-regional market, accounting on average for 15.6 percent of intra-regional exports for the entire period. **Manufactured Goods** was next with an average of 11.6 percent for the entire period (1973—2011).

For the CSM period 2006-2011, the same three commodities were also the highest and in that same order. Intra-regional exports of Mineral Fuels, Lubricants and related materials stood on average of US\$1.7 billion for the period 2006-2011. Food and Manufactured Goods were 12.3 percent and 7.7 per-

cent of intraregional exports respectively.

**Trinidad and Tobago** accounted for over 95 percent of the exports of the top commodity exported in 1973 to 2011 and also in 2006 to 2011.

In general, intra-regional trade performance has been positive with fairly good growth (22.8%) in the early period (1973-1981) of the integration movement and with the share of intra-regional to total trade increasing and remaining fairly stable on average despite the external shocks. There was also fairly good growth in intra-regional trade in the period from 2002 to 2008 of 24.8% total intra-regional exports to total exports being 16.1%. which included part of the CSM period.

Intra-regional exports to total exports moved from on average from 9.0% in the period 1973-1981 to 15.6% in the period 1983-2005.

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**Summary of the Article—HISTORY, IMPORTANCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF TRADE STATISTICS IN THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM) Continued.**

There were many interventions made in meetings including at the highest level of the Community on the need to develop and improve trade statistics in order to enable improvement in the availability of trade statistics for the monitoring of the economic integration process.

The full paper is available upon request.

### **FOCUS ON THE YOUTHS! PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS ESSAY COMPETITION.**

As part of the celebration to commemorate Statistics 2013 essay competitions were held for Primary and Secondary schools throughout Georgetown / Guyana in September 2013. The main objective of these competitions was to stimulate interest in Statistics among young people through the nurturing of creative talents, providing a platform for them to compete with their peers.



*First Place Winner of the Essay Competition for the Secondary Division Receiving her Prize from Ambassador Robert Kopecky—Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Guyana, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and for the Dutch Overseas Countries and Territories*



*First Place Winner of the Essay Competition for the Primary Division Receiving her Prize from Ambassador Colin Granderson.*

The Competition was open to students at both the Primary and Secondary levels. Selected schools were able to compete in only one of the categories—Primary or Secondary. They were allowed to submit two entries from the list of topics below:

- I could not believe the effect that statistics has on our world today;
- Statistics is important in our everyday life;
- Now I know why statistics is so useful to me in everyday life;
- Why statistics are important to me;
- The important role of statistics in the

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development of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME);

- Why I want to be a Statistician;
- Statistics, a key element in the development of Youth; and
- Write a short story where the main character uses statistics (the mean, mode or median) to make an important decision.

Points were awarded for content, organisation, originality and creativity, grammar / spelling and the overall reach. Essays were expected to include at least three main points, developed in a sound, analytical and cohesive manner. It was judged by members of the Regional Statistics Programme.

In the Primary category, the first and second places were awarded to St. Angela's Primary while the third place was awarded to St. Margaret's Primary. In the Secondary category, the first place went to North Georgetown Multilateral while the second place went to Charlestown Secondary.

A Certificate of Participation was awarded to all entrants. The winners were announced during the first week of October 2013 and were presented with their prizes on Caribbean Statistics Day.

### **Caribbean Statistics Week Celebration— The Inter-school Statistics and Mathematics Quiz for Primary and Secondary Schools.**

The Regional Statistics Programme in collaboration with the Guyana Bureau of Statistics (GBS) hosted the "Fourth Annual Inter-School Quiz Competition" for Primary and Secondary Schools in Guyana during the period 8<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> October 2013, an activity in observance of both Caribbean Statistics Day and International Year of Statistics. Funding for this activity was provided by the European Union through its 10th European Development Fund (10th EDF).

In keeping with the regional theme for Statistics2013, "Statistics in Everyday Life, Let us Educate an Appreciate, questions for the quiz competition were derived from the Mathematics and Basic

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*Brickdam Secondary School team, 1st Place Winners of the Secondary division of Inter-School Quiz Competition receiving their prizes from Ambassador Robert Kopecký, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Guyana, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and for the Dutch Overseas Countries and Territories*



*Winfer Gardens Primary School team, 1st Place Winners of the Primary division of Inter-School Quiz Competition receiving their prizes from Ambassador Colin Granderson, Assistant Secretary General, CARICOM Secretariat*

Statistics Syllabuses of the Primary and Secondary Schools in Guyana. In addition, there were general questions related to the field of Statistics and the work of the Regional Statistics Programme. Eight primary and eight secondary schools participated in the competition.

The final round of the competition to determine the overall winners in the respective categories took place on Caribbean Statistics Day—15th October 2013.

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The winning schools were presented with their awards and prizes by Ambassador Robert Kopecký, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Guyana, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and for the Dutch Overseas Countries and Territories and Ambassador Colin Granderson, Assistant Secretary General, Foreign Policy and Community Relations (FCR), CARICOM Secretariat. The winning schools were as follows:-

### Secondary Category

- Brickdam Secondary School
- St. Stanislaus College
- Central High School

### Primary Category

- Winfer Gardens
- West Ruimveldt Primary
- North Georgetown Primary School

The competition was a success and served as the highlight for the Statistics week. This competition is also held on an annual basis.

## Logo and Motto Competition for the Caribbean Association of Professional Statisticians (CAPS).



*The Winning Logo for CAPS*

One of the high points of the activities to commemorate Statistics2013 was the launch of the Caribbean Association of Professional Statisticians (CAPS). The background to the CAPS was the *High Level Advocacy Forum on Statistics: the Urgency of Statistics and the Global crisis – Enabling*

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*The Winning Motto for CAPS*

*Development in the Caribbean Community* which was convened by the CARICOM Secretariat on July 30, 2009 at Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. This meeting was held in collaboration with the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS 21) and was also supported by the European Union (EU) under the Ninth European Development Fund (EDF).

The objectives of the Forum were to:

- *Gain* a greater profile for statistics and its crucial role in understanding the magnitude and effect of the global crisis and its impact on the region;
- *Advocate* for increased and urgent support to the development of statistics in the Community;
- *Engender* improvement in the production of statistics in the national statistical systems in CARICOM; and
- *Enable* the creation of greater linkages between policy and statistics and increased use by policy-makers and other users.

Among the recommendations from this Forum was one that was made in the keynote address, delivered by Professor Chukwudum Uche who at that time was at the Department of Sociology, Psychology and Social Work University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica. Professor Uche emphasised the important role in decision making and implementation of the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians (SCCS) and the Regional Census Coordinating Committee (RCCC), the two existing statistical committees that deal with official statistics in CARICOM.

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He recommended that these two committees should “...initiate the formation of a Regional Professional Association, the Caribbean Statistical Society for the further development of the discipline in the Region.”

This and other recommendations emanating from the forum were placed on the agenda of the CARICOM Advisory Group on Statistics (AGS) and the SCCS meetings.

At the Fifth and Sixth Meetings of the CARICOM Advisory Group on Statistics, held in October 2009 in Saint Lucia and July 2010 in Barbados, respectively, the recommendations of the HLF were placed on the agenda, including the meeting of the

The establishment of a Professional Association of Statisticians of the Region, was placed on the agenda for discussion at the Seventh AGS in November, 2010 in Dominica. The Member State of Suriname was tasked with the responsibility of preparing a paper on “A Professional Association of Statisticians for CARICOM” with the aim of advancing the formation of this body. This paper considered the reasons why CARICOM needs a Professional Association of Statisticians and the way forward for implementation in the Region.

At the Thirty-Sixth SCCS Meeting held in Belize in October 2011, the formation of a Professional Association of Statisticians in the Caribbean was supported. It was agreed that the name of the Association would be Caribbean Association of Professional Statisticians (CAPS).

At the National Level winning entries for the Motto Competition were submitted to the Secretariat by Barbados, Dominica, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. Winners for the Logo Competition were submitted by Barbados, Dominica, Jamaica, Montserrat, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

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Mr. Roydenn Silcott from the country of Montserrat for the Logo competition and Mr. Jason Reynolds from the Member State of Dominica for the motto competition.

Prizes were funded by the European Union (EU) Visibility Support Budget as well as the AGS and comprised of tablets and trophies, as well as airfares and accommodation for attendance at the Thirty-Eighth Meeting of the SCCS held in St. Kitts and Nevis, for the winners to uplift their prizes.

### STATISTICS IN EVERYDAY LIFE ADVANCING STATISTICS IN THE REGION— The Cayman Islands Approach.

Activities continued to commemorate continued, there were continual efforts to focus on the youths, given the limited knowledge of the use and impact of statistics to most persons. Therefore promoting statistics in everyday life was critical and was the first topic on the agenda of the 38th SCCS Meeting held in October 2013 in St. Kitts and Nevis. The following represents a summary.

A presentation was made by the representative of the Cayman Islands under the topic Statistics in Everyday Life. This presentation and the ensuing discussions were undertaken under the topic, *Commemoration of International Year of Statistics2013 – Approaches and Impact across the Region*, with primary focus on:

- Public Awareness of the Power and Impact of Statistics on Society;
- Promoting and Nurturing of Statistics as a Profession Especially Among the Youth;
- Probability and Statistics - Promoting Creativity and Development as a Science; and
- Recommendations for Sustaining the Process

The presentation was entitled, “*Raising Public Awareness on the Impact of Statistics on Society: Cayman Islands*”, and was presented by the Di

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rector of the Economic and Statistics office. She explained that, the approach to promoting the use and impact of statics in the Cayman Islands commenced with the following goals:

- Highlight the fundamental importance of official statistics for the national and global development agenda;
- Educate the public on the critical role of high-quality official statistical information in analysis and informed policy decision-making;
- Generate trust of the public in the integrity of official statistical systems and confidence in statistics;
- Stimulate support and respect from all stakeholders for all statistical activities and resources particularly the fundamental values and principles that govern statistical work through legal and institutional frameworks.

Two strategies were adopted which were a general strategy which was geared towards the general public and a targeted strategy which focused on students, the business sector, public authorities and data producers. For each group a specific platform was used in the process.

For the general public mass media advertisement was used which took the form of brochures and the recently restructured website. Among the many activities for students were: an annual statistic outreach programme, field visits, summer internships. There was also a “KYStats 4 Everyday Life” campaign. There was also partnership with the Chamber of Commerce to aid the Business Sector as well as the formation of a National Statistical Coordination

