



# Stats News & Views

Facts, Figures and Updates from the Statistics Section of the Caribbean Community Secretariat

June, 2007

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## Main Events

### Seminar on Population Dynamics

The Statistics Sub-programme convened a seminar on *Population Dynamics: The Approaching Demographic Transition and its Economic and Social Implications for the Community - How can Governments Respond?* This seminar arose out of the completion of Chapter One - Population- for the publication on men and women in the Caribbean, which is currently on our website.

The Seminar was largely exploratory with no attempt to put forward any firm recommendations with regards to policy based on the fact that substantive research, analysis and additional data would be required. The data were submitted by Member States to the Secretariat under an ongoing capacity-building programme in Social/Gender Statistics. The objectives of the Seminar were:

- To disseminate data on the theme, *Populations, Households and Families*, from the publication compiled by the Secretariat's Statistics Sub-Programme on **Women and Men in the Caribbean Community, Facts and Figures 1998-2005**;
- To sensitise the staff, of the Secretariat, on the early signals of the approaching demographic transition, in the Community;
- To highlight and to stimulate discussions on preliminary implications and possible policy responses, inclusive of the gender dimension of the phenomenon of an ageing population.

The main findings from the data were:

- For CARICOM, approximately one in 10 persons was

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## Main Events

### Ninth (9th) Meeting Of The Advisory Group on Social/ Gender and Environmental Statistics.

The Ninth Meeting of the Advisory Group on Social, Gender and Environmental Statistics (9th AGM) took place in Roseau, Dominica during the period 4 – 6 July 2007. A summary of the main outcomes and recommendations are presented below:-

- i. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) expressed its interest in collaborating with the Secretariat in order to obtain data on child protection and child labour.
- ii. Three countries reported on activities aimed at improving coordination in the compilation of Social/ Gender and environmental indicators. These activities included:-
  - In Dominica, training received in concepts and definitions was passed on to staff members of the various line ministries and other organisations. A work plan was created in the area of social statistics and a database was also created for the police to collect crime statistics by sex and age, etc.
  - In Saint Lucia, the Central Statistical Office and line ministries collaborated to streamline the DevInfo software for the dissemination of social statistics. There was on-going collaboration with the police to institutionalise a new instrument to collect solid crime data.
  - In Suriname, members of staff were trained in the use of the DevInfo Software

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## Main Events

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60 years old and over with the proportion 80+ being 17 percent of persons 60+. This compared with the global figures of one in 9 persons being 60+ and 13 percent of the 60+ persons being 80+.

- Women outlived men at the older ages for almost all countries of the region;
- There were differences in the country experience of the Demographic Transition with Barbados, Bermuda, Montserrat and Trinidad and Tobago showing signs of ageing populations, with Belize and Guyana exhibiting youthful populations.

It was indicated that most of the countries of the Region are experiencing Stage Two of the Demographic Transition, depicted by decreasing fertility; a lower proportion of children under 15 and an increasing proportion of the working age population (15-64 years). Further, it was explained that this stage is referred to as the “**demographic window of opportunity**” or the “**demographic dividend**”. In this phase, a country can benefit from enabling the employment of the working age population and from increasing productive investment, since the dependency levels (those outside the age range 15-64) are low. The working age population can be productively employed increasing economic growth and the standard of living.

Arising out of the discussions, preliminary policy implications were highlighted in the area of migration, health, employment and issues related to the retirement age. Health concerns included policy responses with regards to the burden of lifestyle diseases such as hypertension that may overshadow HIV/AIDS among the older age groups. With respect to the raising of the retirement age of persons, it was noted that there is need to find a balance between enabling the employment of such older persons who can still make meaningful contributions to the productive sector as well as ensuring that the younger persons are also gainfully employed.

The gender dimension identified the increasing participation of women in formal employment as a contributory factor to declining fertility rates. Reference was also made to the escalating HIV/AIDS pandemic among females, increased mortality caused by injuries and the emergence of lifestyle diseases, and a shift from non-communicable to communicable diseases, as a main cause of death.

## Main Events

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The meeting slated some general areas for harmonisation that included population, union status, literacy and the reference period in relation to work. Among the lessons learnt from using DevInfo in the Region is the need for countries to take ownership of the implementation process.

Other areas where harmonisation was needed included crime, poverty and education. Member States expressed their appreciation at being able to review the final draft of the Social/Gender publication being prepared by the Secretariat before its dissemination.

The Secretariat reported on work being done on the preparation of User Manuals on Statistics. Funding was received from UNIFEM/ CIDA for the preparation of the user manuals.

Some Member States requested technical assistance or other related assistance in the conduct of poverty surveys, Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaire (CWIQ) survey and Living Condition Surveys, etc.

### Recommendations

- Consideration should be given to ways of assisting policy makers and other users in guiding the data collection process for Caribbean Specific MDG indicators where:-
  - Indicators may not be measurable or
  - may already be collected in a form not recognisable by the users.
- It was recommended that a copy of documentation on concepts and definitions prepared by Dominica for the Line Ministries be circulated to the other Member States for their benefit.
- The DevInfo software would be useful for the dissemination of the data included in the Social/Gender publication.
- The Secretariat requested that Member States and Associate Members, highlight Strategic Approaches relative to the use of DevInfo.

## Past Events and Outcomes

### **Training in the use of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Software for Statistical Analysis and Data Management, CARICOM Secretariat, 7 - 11th May 2007**

In January 2007 the Statistics Sub-programme acquired the latest version of the SPSS software through funding received from CARICOM Capacity Development Programme (CCDP). The software was installed on the general server for use by all staff members of the Secretariat.

Following this acquisition, the Sub-programme organised training in the use of the SPSS software that included members of staff from Statistics and various other programmes. The training objectives included exposing participants to:-

- The various methods and techniques of the SPSS software;
- Inputting, transforming, processing and manipulating data;
- Generating tabulated reports, charts and distribution plots; trends, descriptive statistics and complex statistical analyses.

It was explained that this software would be very useful in examining data at the micro level such as censuses and survey data.

### **Installation and Training in the use of the Software for National Accounts Processing (SNAP), CARICOM Secretariat, 23 - 30 May 2007**

In March 2006, during the United Nations Statistical Commission Meeting in New York, the CARICOM Secretariat and the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) initiated discussions on possible collaboration between the two organisations relative to the joint collection of national accounts data from Member States and Associate Members of CARICOM, through the administration of a single United Nations National Accounts Questionnaire (NAQ). In May 2007, the Secretariat and UNSD signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which, inter alia, extended UNSD's collaboration to provide the Secretariat with technical support in processing, capturing and validating the data through its dedicated software on National Accounts statistics.

## Past Events and Outcomes

This technical assistance mission was completed during the period 21<sup>st</sup> to 30th May, 2007. The first two days of this mission was spent installing the SNAP software on laptop computers in order to facilitate the training over the following six days. The format of this training included an outline of the work flow for the production of national accounts statistics in which the UNSD facilitator highlighted areas where SNAP would be useful in enabling efficient processing, validation and dissemination of the data. The training continued with a data entry exercise using the (SNAP) software and later focused on the validation module which is of primary importance in validating both the data entry and the quality of the data supplied by Member States.

On the final day of the workshop, all the participants were trained in the production of various outputs from the SNAP software including publications and questionnaires outlines. This training will enable the Secretariat to collect and disseminate timely and high quality National Accounts data and also reduce the burden of Member States having to supply similar datasets to both organisations.

It is proposed that the participants will, in the ensuing months, prepare a SNAP user manual which would be used as a reference volume or for future in-house training.

### **Training Sessions in the DevInfo software, University of Guyana**

Over the period March to July 2007, the CARICOM Secretariat Statistics Sub-programme assisted in several training sessions in the use of the latest version of the DevInfo Software, version 5.0 released in May 2006. The training sessions were organized by the United Nations Children Education Fund (UNICEF) and the Bureau of Statistics in Guyana. Participants included United Nations personnel as well as personnel from various government agencies in Guyana. The objective of these training sessions was to sensitize the participants as to how the DevInfo database management system can be used to organize and present data on social development indicators. The intent of the training sessions was to facilitate the production and dissemination of social indicators particularly the MDG indicators in a timely and efficient manner for decision making purposes.

The training was conducted by facilitators from CARICOM Secretariat, the United Nations Children

## Past Events and Outcomes

Education Fund for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNICEF-LAC) and UNICEF-Haiti, the Guyana Bureau of Statistics, who trained participants in the use and administration of the DevInfo technology. As such there were separate training sessions for the User Interface Module and the Administrator Module.

Currently, plans are being formulated for similar training sessions in the rest of the CARICOM Member States.

## Questions and Answers

In this issue we provide a **succinct** explanation of some of the concepts arising out of the article on Population Dynamics. More precise definitions can be provided upon request.

**Population Dynamics** - Changes in population size and structure due to fertility, mortality and migration or the analysis of population size and structure in these terms.

**Ageing Population** – This is the process by which older persons become a proportionally larger share of the total population, with the population said to be ageing when the proportion of persons under 15 years is less than 25 percent. This is only one approach of measuring the aging population.

**Youthful populations** – refers to countries in which the proportion of persons under 15 years is 35 percent or more.

**Dependency Ratio** – The ratio of the number of persons in a given “dependent” age group of interest to the number in a different age group considered to contain those persons providing support to those dependent.

**Demographic transition-** refers to a change from high birth and death rates to low birth and death rates which may be due to numerous factors.

**Demographic transition theory**—This theory posits three stages in the evolution of a population experiencing the demographic transition: (1) pre-industrial characterized by high birth and death rates and low growth ; (2) early industrial characterized by high birth rates , low death rates and high growth ; and (3) mature industrial, characterized by low birth and death rates and low population growth.

## Questions and Answers

**The Crude Birth Rate (CBR)-** is the simplest and most common measure of natality. It is defined as the number of births in a year per 1000 midyear population.

**The Crude Death Rate (CDR)** is the simplest and most common measure of mortality. It is defined as the number of deaths in a year per 1000 of the midyear population.

**The Age Specific Birth Rate (ASBR)-** is defined as the number of live births to women of a specified age group per 1000 women in that age group. The age range usually used is 15-49 which are recognised as the child bearing years.

**The Total Fertility Rate (TFR)** - is the average number of children that would be born alive to a hypothetical cohort of women if, throughout their reproductive years, the Age Specific Birth Rates for the specified year remained unchanged (UN definition).

**The Replacement Rate** - is the rate at which the population, more specifically women, replace themselves. A TFR of 2.04 to 2.10 is said to be the rate at which women will replace themselves in a generation.

**Life Expectancy** - is the expected number of years to be lived, on average, by a particular population at a particular time.

**Rate of Natural Increase** - The result of subtracting the crude death rate from the crude birth rate.

## Publications

Forthcoming publications:

- 📖 *Balance of Payments of CARICOM Member States: 1998-2004;*
- 📖 *Selected Economic Indicators 2002-2004.*
- 📖 *CARICOM's Trade in Services: 2000-2005*
- 📖 *Women and Men in CARICOM Member States; Work & Economy and Health*

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