



# STATISTICAL CAPACITY BUILDING FOR THE PRODUCTION OF KEY STATISTICS IN THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY





The CARICOM Secretariat Regional Statistics programme undertakes statistical capacity building activities in member countries to enhance the availability and quality of key statistics. These statistics are submitted to the Secretariat and compiled into regional databases for internal users in the directorates/other programme areas of the Secretariat or for external users such as businessmen, policy-makers, international organizations, researchers and students. Some of the key areas of statistics are identified below:

## POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS

In the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the **Regional Census Support Strategy** being coordinated by the CARICOM Secretariat and monitored by the Regional Census Coordinating Committee (RCCC) has assisted countries in the conduct of their censuses for the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Census, including the provision of training and technical assistance. The rationale behind the use of a regionally coordinated approach to Census taking in the Region is to enable methodological uniformity and comparability in the Census data collected across countries. Harmonisation of the methodologies is of critical importance to the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) and the entire integration process in order to have a common platform for monitoring and evaluating developments across countries. The 2010 Regional Census Strategy has received funds from a number of partners to initiate activities including:

- A project jointly funded by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), under the approach of the Common Census Framework Project to develop Common Core Questions for the Region; Common Methodologies and Compatibility of Dissemination Tools.



- The Department of International Development (The Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland acting through DFID) has provided funds to support activities under the Common Census Framework. Areas of support included preparation of census mapping; conduct of training workshops and census data processing technical assistance.
- The United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) has also supported the 2010 Round of Censuses through the conduct of a Regional Workshops as follows: In 2007 on Census Management and Training - Mapping and Geographic Information Systems; 2010 on Census Data Processing focusing on Data Editing and in 2009 together with UNICEF training in CensusInfo data dissemination software.
- UNFPA has funded training workshops and provided technical assistance on Census Data Processing and supported a Meeting of Census Experts to discuss Experiences of the 2000 Round as it can provide lessons learned/best practices for the 2010 Round (Recommended by the RCCC).
- The European Union (EU) under the Ninth European Development Fund has also provided support to enable the participation of countries in regional training activities such as in Mapping and Census Data Processing.

While the CARICOM Secretariat in collaboration with other agencies is providing support for the conduct of a harmonized approach to Census-taking in the Region and helping countries in need, the responsibility for executing and financing the Census exercise is that of Member States/Associate Members. Sixteen countries undertook their Census enumeration activity in 2010 and 2011.

## MERCHANDISE TRADE

With funding received from the IDB and the EU, substantial work was undertaken to improve this area of statistics. This work included the development of a Data Submission Protocol and a regional online trade database; the upgrading and expansion of the trade processing systems in Members States; and the provision of training to a number of persons in the use and management of the new trade systems. Improving the timeliness of data submission to the Secretariat was also addressed. Countries are required to submit their annual datasets to the Secretariat by April of the following year and their quarterly data within two months following the end of the respective quarters. CARICOM's Total Trade with Principal Trading Partners and the Rest of the World which can be disaggregated by: Member States' Total Trade; Extra- Regional imports/Exports; Intra-Regional Imports/Exports; Imports by Principal Sources; Exports by Principal Destinations; Imports/Exports by Standard Industrial Trade Classification (SITC) Sections.



## NATIONAL ACCOUNTS

A major initiative, part of a more comprehensive action plan to improve and harmonise the production of **National Accounts** estimates in the region, sought to address the issue of inadequate basic source data. There were two principal activities, one of which focused on the development and strengthening of survey data capabilities at the National Statistics Offices (NSOs) through improvement in the establishment and maintenance of Business Establishment Registers, while the other, conducted concurrently with the first, targeted both the actual survey data and data from administrative and other sources. At the regional level, the Secretariat collects and compiles annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) data by industry and by expenditure components from Member States and Associate Members, through the administration of a common questionnaire as part of a joint collaborative process with the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) from Member States and Associate Members.

## INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN SERVICES

Over the years several initiatives were undertaken with respect to the development of statistics on International Trade in Services statistics in the Region, in collaboration with Regional and International Organisations. Among the activities undertaken included the conduct of regional workshops on international trade in services statistics; the provision of direct in-country technical support and training for the compilation of services statistics; the production of two trade in services publications, the review and preparation of data collection instruments/survey questionnaires and the development of Common Guidelines to provide Member States with adequate guidance for the collection, compilation and dissemination of Services statistics. Data for trade in services are compiled and disseminated in accordance with the services classification of the 1993 Fifth Edition of the Balance of Payments Manual of the International Monetary Fund (BPM5) and its detailed extension, the Extended Balance of Payments Services (EBOPS) Classification as described in the Manual on Statistics of International Trade in Services (MSITS). These include data on imports, exports and balance of trade by broad areas comprising Transportation, Travel, Commercial Services and Government Services as well as details such as Air and Sea transport, Business and Personal Travel, Communication, Construction and Insurance Services.





## OTHER AREAS OF ECONOMIC STATISTICS (incl. short term indicators)



Other areas of economic statistics collected and compiled by the Secretariat include Balance of Payments statistics, Central Government Operations, External Public Debt, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows, Consumer Price Indices and inflation rates, Financial statistics and Tourism statistics. These data are sourced from Central Banks, Ministries of Finance, National Statistical Offices and regional organisations (NSOs). Recognising the importance of foreign direct investment in the Region, a project was designed to improve the collection of these statistics. This activity was conducted together with the above-mentioned project on International Trade in Services. Work is expected to continue in this area in order to

obtain the attributes required for investment data, that is, type of investment, source/destination and sector where it is being applied in the host country.

## SOCIAL STATISTICS

There are a number of capacity building initiatives that have been undertaken in the area of Social Statistics. These include Regional Workshops on **Social/Gender Statistics** held in various Member countries during the period 2009-2011. The workshops were aimed at enabling the compilation of harmonized and high quality Social/Gender statistics. Activities included reviewing core Social/Gender Statistics and Indicators submitted by countries, as well as the methodologies used in the production and compilation of such statistics. Additionally, identifying existing data and meta-data gaps, challenges in filling these gaps and methods to address the same and to improve the submission of data were critical components of these workshops. In 2008, there was a Workshop on Basic Statistics in the areas of Fertility and Mortality Statistics. Staff from Statistics Offices and Civil Registry/Health departments participated. This workshop was a follow-up to the Workshop on Strengthening Capacity in Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems in CARICOM Member States in 2005. Also of importance are initiatives that were undertaken to enable the identification of Caribbean Specific Millennium Development Goals Indicators.

Main sources of Social Statistics are: Population and Housing Censuses, Regular and Ad Hoc Surveys, Administrative Sources such as Civil Registry and Vital Statistics Systems, various line ministries (Health, Education) and other organizations/agencies (e.g. International Labour Organisation (ILO). Main themes for which indicators are being compiled are: Labour Force, Education, Health, Population, Households and Families, Poverty, Migration/Free Movement, Crime, Child Monitoring and Protection, Youth, Elderly, Decision making, Vital statistics, Culture.

## ENVIRONMENT STATISTICS

Environment Statistics and Indicators are compiled on twelve indicator themes which are: Population and Households, Tourism, Environmental Health, Natural Disasters, Energy and Minerals, Land Use and Agriculture, Coastal and Marine Resources, Biodiversity, Forest, Air, Waste and Water. The indicators are disseminated in the CARICOM Environment in Figures publications. The third regional publication is currently being produced. Regional workshops have been organised comprising officers from statistical offices and environmental agencies to develop this area of statistics and to build capacity within countries through the production of national environmental compendia. In addition some Member States and Associate Members have established an inter-agency collaboration at the national level in this area of statistics comprising the relevant stakeholders that can provide the missing data and corresponding metadata on environmental statistics.

## INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES STATISTICS (ICT)

The Secretariat recently concluded a capacity building initiative under this area that sought to determine Caribbean Specific Information Communication Technologies (CSICT) statistics and indicators based on a review and evaluation of indicators produced under several themes including poverty alleviation, social inclusion, information literacy, health, and security. The initiative also produced an action plan highlighting proposed timelines for consideration of a quality framework relative to the area of ICT. The main sources for collecting and compiling data on ICT are the Population and Housing Censuses, Labour Force Surveys; surveys conducted by telecommunication companies and Surveys of Living Conditions (SLC). These sources allow for the compilation of ICT information such as Number of telephones (both land line and cellular); televisions; radios; computers (laptops, desktops) owned by all household members and at the individual level, the number of individuals with a working mobile phone and access to the internet in the last 12 months. Work is also being put in place on measuring the Economic Contribution of ICT to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Trade and Employment.



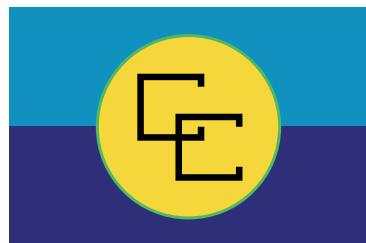


## DEVELOPMENT OF A COMMON FRAMEWORK FOR LITERACY MEASUREMENT

Funded by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), this initiative is designed to establish a common framework involving a regional approach for conducting the literacy assessment and the development of literacy assessment instruments. It will provide technical assistance to countries for the development of national implementation plans for the conduct of literacy assessments, based on the agreed common framework. Representatives from the National Statistical Offices and the Ministries of Education in Member States (MS) are expected to participate fully at a number of technical training workshops designed to ensure their involvement in the technical issues in the development of the survey documents, the implementation plans and other related survey materials.

## OTHER AREAS OF CAPACITY BUILDING – INFRASTRUCTURAL SUPPORT

The European Union under the Ninth European Development Fund provided significant support to strengthen capacity in key areas of statistics in the Community and the enabling infrastructure to support the production of statistics. Key areas of statistics that were supported included: Merchandise Trade, National Accounts, Statistics on International Trade in Services, Social, Environment and Information Communication Technologies Statistics. Support was also provided on the organization of databases and to establish a web-based mechanism for the submission of the data to the Secretariat. Other areas of capacity-building funded by the EU included training in sampling, in leadership and management skills, training in collaboration with PARIS21 on National Strategies for the Development of Statistics, the 2010 Census Round and in the conduct of a High Level Forum on Statistics.



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