

CARIBBEAN

COMMUNITY

SECRETARIAT

TWENTY -NINTH MEETING OF THE  
STANDING COMMITTEE OF  
CARIBBEAN STATISTICIANS

RESTRICTED

SCCS/2004/29/16

Hamilton, Bermuda  
22-24 November 2004

20 November 2004

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PROGRESS REPORT FOR PERIOD  
OCTOBER 2003 -2004

(Submitted by The Bahamas)

Please see attached Paper entitled **Progress Report for Period October 2003 -2004**.

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CENSUS AND SOCIAL STATISTICS SECTION

Census

The Population Projections based on the 2000 Census is still pending. It should be completed by the end of November 2004.

Monographs

A series of monographs originating from the 2000 census is presently being written by senior staff members from within the Department and officers from other agencies. Due to extenuating circumstances only two of the monographs have been written and published: Census 2000: An Overview and, The Challenges of Data Processing. The remainder of the monographs hopefully will be completed in 2005. They include:

Topics

Housing;  
Population Projection; Migration;  
The Disabled;  
Single Mothers: A Profile; Senior Citizens; Youth;

The Foreign Born Population; Family Membership; and Income

### **Social Statistics**

The Bahamas **In** Figures 2002 has been published, and 2003 is currently at the publishers. The new and improved Statistical Abstract of The Bahamas is still pending and should be available in early 2005.

### **BAHAMAS LIVING CONDITIONS SURVEY 2001**

A final version of the report has been completed and is presently at the printers. All chapters were critiqued by IDB consultants as well as an independent consultant. The writing of the chapters was a collaborative effort; four chapters were written by officers from the Department of Statistics. Officers from the Ministries of Health and Education wrote the chapters on Health and Education while lecturers from the College of The Bahamas wrote the chapter on Community Services and Social Programmes. The lead consultant for the project, Jaikishan Desai, produced the Expenditure chapter while the pivotal chapter, Poverty, was written by consultant Sudhanshu Handa.

The overriding finding of the study is that the poverty level in the Bahamas is lower than most countries while inequality is much greater. The poverty line was calculated at \$2,863 per person per annum. Nine percent of the population and 5% of the households fell below this line.

The publication should be available by year's end. Decisions have yet to be made regarding the electronic dissemination of the data. Follow-up to this first ever study will be influenced by the MECOVI and/or IDB regional proposals.

### **VITAL STATISTICS**

The 2001 Vital Statistics Report and the 1999-2001 Life- Table Report were published in July of this year. The 2001 Vital Statistics Report shows that live birth occurrences increased slightly over the 2000 figures. Both infant mortality and stillbirth rates have decreased in 2001. The Life Tables Report indicates that life expectancy for both males and females continues to increase. Females are expected to live 76.4 years, an increase of 1 year longer than in 1990. Males are expected to live 69.9 years, an increase of 1.6 years over the 1990 figures.

In order to produce more timely data, coding for 2003 vital events has taken priority over that of 2002. The Section got an addition to staff. With the added manpower it is expected that the work in the section will accelerate. Tables for registered live births 2003 have been produced. Coding for marriages and deaths 2003 is in progress.

A projected publishing time for the 2003 report is January/February 2005.

### **LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION UNIT**

#### **Labour Force**

The 2003 Labour Force and Household Income Report is completed and published. The preliminary results for 2004 Labour Force survey is available. The results show a slight increase in the labour force (1.4%). The unemployment rate decreased from 10.8% to 10.0%. The survey was conducted as customary during the month of May. The survey covered 3,500 households on New Providence, Grand Bahama, Abaco and Spanish Wells Eleuthera..

A final report should be available by the end of November 2004.

Plans are underway to convert to a semi-annual or quarterly survey beginning next year.

To assist the Department in achieving its goal, an infofilation capture system is being sought (TeleForm) as a means of eliminating most of the manual procedures involved in preparing the data for analysis. This new system will enable the Department to produce more timely statistical data. Plans are also underway to administer a new questionnaire so that more relevant data can be collected and new areas of interest investigated.

### **Labour Market**

A Labour Market Information Newsletter is published bi-annually. The latest publication was completed and disseminated in June. The Newsletter contains data on The National Insurance Board Short Term Benefits, results of National Standard Examination together with other data pertaining to the labour market.

The 2001 report on the 'Occupations and Salaries in the Hotel Industry' was released earlier this year. This report indicates that the average wage in the hotel industry during that period was \$322 per week. Data for the 2002 and 2003 reports are being processed. The Department is completing its third survey on 'Occupation'. This survey is being carried out in conjunction with the ILO/USDOL under the Caribbean Labour Market Information System (CLMIS) project. Coverage was restricted to New Providence and Grand Bahama, which account for approximately 85% of the business establishments. The fieldwork is completed with a response rate of 80%. The data are being edited and tabulated. A final report is expected by early 2005.

The Department is also participating in the regional Labour Market Information (LMI) Plan, which is also a part of the CLMIS project. The electronic questionnaires prepared by ILO and forwarded to countries for completion have been completed by us and returned to ILO. We are awaiting their feedback in order to finalize the required reports.

### **FOREIGN TRADE SECTION**

The Foreign Trade staff is presently reviewing the process of detailed editing with a view to computerizing the process thereby making it less time consuming and more efficient. The new process will be used on the 2004 data.. The resident consultant, Mrs Cynthia Baumgarten, is also involved in this exercise and giving much guidance. The section has been able to make considerable progress over the past seven (7) months in that we have finalized data for 2003 and are presently finalizing 2002. Data for 2004 have been captured up to June and 1st and 2nd Quarter reports will be run as soon as the data have been edited using the new process. A production schedule for the completion of 2004 data has been developed with 14th February 2005 set as the deadline; this deadline ensures that data is available for the National Accounts Section to produce preliminary GDP estimates in early 2005.

The Department early next year will look into the advantages, if any, to be gained by using the EUROTRACE software.

### **BUSINESS ESTABLISHMENT STATISTICS**

#### **2003 Survey**

The Business Establishment Section officially closed fieldwork for the 2003 survey round for New Providence on October 29, 2004. The survey was scheduled to close September 30th, but due to the low response rates the survey

was extended to October. The month of October was used to target large establishments, which did not respond to the survey along with those needed to bring their employment classes up to a fifty percent response rate. The Grand Bahama survey will be extended until the end of the year due to the ravages of two recent hurricanes. The response rates for Grand Bahama are anticipated to be very low this survey round. To date, only a few questionnaires have been received from the Grand Bahama office and they have been data entered.

Officers in New Providence are also involved in final edits, consistency checks clarification, and data entry .The response rate to date in New Providence is about thirty five percent for most of the surveys excluding the survey of industry that has a response rate of about fifty percent.

### **Business Registry**

Planning begun for the compilation of updated integrated business establishments register.

### **Census**

Consideration is being given to the conduct of a census of business establishments in 2006.

## **NATIONAL ACCOUNTS SECTION**

### **Current Projects:**

- 1 The National Accounts section is currently working on the current and constant price figures for 2003. Revisions to the series back to 1989 continue. Preliminary figures should be available by first week in February 2005 .During the past year the National Accounts section worked on an on-going project with an IMF/CARTAC Mission team to review and revise the National Accounts Series.
2. GDP estimates for 2004 should be completed by March 2005 pending the response to the Business Establishment surveys and the availability of data from other sources.
3. Research continues into the implementation of the Government and Rest of the World Accounts of the System of National Accounts 1993.

### **Future Projects:**

#### **Tourism Satellite Accounts**

The Department of Statistics began planning a joint project with Ministry of Tourism and the Central Bank of the Bahamas to develop the Tourism Satellite Accounts of the Bahamas Ministry of Tourism and Global Insights Ltd.. are spearheading this project.

This project will begin in late November this year. As the Department has no experience in this area, it is intended to seek, on a continuous basis, feed back from CARTAC. CARICOM Secretariat, Member States, etc. on methodology being used.

#### **Supply and Use Tables/Informal Economy**

During 2005, we hope to develop a methodology for the production of supply and use tables for the Bahamas. Work will also begin on the design of a methodology to measure the informal sector.

#### **Expanded Coverage**

During 2005, groundwork will begin on the system to provide coverage by Institutional Sectors with special emphasis on the Balance Sheet items and the inclusion of the Non-profit Institutions Serving Households.

## **Environmental Accounts**

We hope to develop these accounts starting with one industry and working it through the system, e.g. Fisheries, one of the areas where some data on stock and depletion is already available. Because of efforts noted previously, work in this area will not begin before 2006

## **Release Schedule**

The National Accounts estimates of the Bahamas will follow a regular, established and transparent schedule. Preliminary estimates for the current year will be available by March of the following year; provisional estimates by March the year after, and revised, a year later. The necessary notes to the tables will be attached. The National Accounts Section will endeavour not to change figures after the annual estimates have achieved revised estimates status. New important or significant source data revisions may be temporarily suppressed until a major revision takes place, for example in connection with the change of the benchmark or base year for constant price data or a major change in methodology.

## **CONSUMER PRICE INDEX**

Consumer Price Index statistics are available up to November 2004 for the island of New Providence and up to August 2004 for Grand Bahama and All Bahamas. Due to the recent hurricane damage, the Grand Bahama office has been unable to collect prices for the months of September and October 2004. However, attempts have been made to collect prices for November 2004.

The CPI Section is currently working on the 2003 Annual Review of Prices; much progress has been made with this series. Hence, the section anticipates the completion of the review shortly. Additionally, the section has prepared a flyer entitled, " Average Prices For Selected Items, New Providence: 1970 -2004". During the month of December, it is the intention of the section to advertised this flyer in the local media and distribute it to the business establishments who have contributed to the CPI section over the years.

The Quarterly Building Construction Materials Index for New Providence and Grand Bahama is available up to June 2004. September's quarterly index is currently being processed.

## **GIS REPORT**

The GIS Unit in collaboration with the Data Processing Section has begun preparing Census data to link Ortho-Image by Supervisory District and Enumeration District. An officer from that unit has been assigned to produce the necessary data (tables). To date 75% of the tables for the Supervisory Districts and 80% of these for the Enumeration Districts have been completed.

GIS Unit continued to assist Labour Force Section by producing maps for its annual survey. In addition GIS assisted students from The School of Nursing; The Urban Renewal Project; and The Ministry of Health.

## **Outstanding Needs**

### **Hardware**

Pentium 4 Processor at 2.80 HZ ( or higher) Memory 1 GB Ram 200 GB HDD

Monitor 23 inches (or larger) DVD Reader CDRW

100 MBPS Net Work Card

Hp Color Jet Laser Print (Print up to 11 xI

### **Software**

Arc View GIS 8.3 (of higher)

Microsoft Office Suite Professional 2000 Windows XP Professional UPS  
Anti Virus  
Internet Access

### **Training**

Training for staff in Software upgrade

### **DATA PROCESSING SECTION**

#### **Website Launched**

The Data Processing Unit launched the DOS Website on the Government W AN on April 29, 2004. The URL Address for the homepage is <http://www.bahamas.gov.bs/statistics>. In addition, twenty-eight senior officers have Email access using Lotus Notes and Internet access via the GW AN.

#### **Systems Analyst/Programmer (Data base )**

Terms of References are being developed for the above. The Systems Analyst will be responsible mainly for recommending a system that would satisfy the data collection, processing, dissemination and storage, etc. needs of the Department whilst the programmer will focus mainly on data base development.

#### **Network Upgrade**

Network infrastructure will be upgraded commencing November 2004.

The following Hardware/Software were purchased:

1. MS Internet Security
2. Norton Systems Works 2004
3. Roxio Easy Media Creator 7
4. Symantec Antivirus Corporate Edition 8.1 with 1 Yr. Maintenance Kit
5. HP Storage Works DLT VS 80 External Tape Drive
6. IBM 6400 Network-ready Line Printer

#### **Training**

One officer received initial training on Website maintenance and another participated in a three-day attachment with the Statistical Office of St. Lucia in October 2004.

### **ADMINISTRATION**

The Department of Statistics has a staff complement of eighty-three (83) permanent members, four temporary officers, three (3) officers on loan and one (1) part-time officer. Seventy-one (71) permanent, staff members, and three (3) officers-on-loan are stationed in the New Providence office and twelve (12) permanent, and one (1) part-time officer in the Grand Bahama office.

#### **Permanent and Pensionable Establishment**

1. Data Entry Operator
2. Filing Assistant

#### **Promotion**

One to Statistician III

**Transfers**

The Department recently suffered the loss of Mrs Carmen Gomez, Senior Deputy Director to the office of The Prime Minister . We have been advised, unofficially, that she will head the

"Planning Unit" to be institutionalized.

**In House Advisor**

As a follow-up to the current IMF/CART AC Mission, a technical consultant, Mrs Baumgarten, has been contracted from Statistics Canada for one year. She will be responsible mainly for recommending/implementing measures to improve the national accounts infrastructure to ensure sustainability.

**Attachments**

In order to improve the services offered to our customers, the Department arranged with the goodwill and subvention of the statistical offices of two Member States, attachments as follows:

**Use of Scanning Technology**

11th- 13th October 2004, St. Lucia

**Business Establishment Surveys**

1st- 19th November 2004, Trinidad

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