

Country Report – Jamaica

29th Meeting of the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians

Bermuda, November 2004

Country Report – Jamaica
29th Meeting of the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians
Bermuda, November 2004

INTRODUCTION

There are a number of topics that are being discussed in Jamaica at this time – Ivan and its after effect on the economy, the elections in the USA and what is going to happen to us and last, but surely not least, the change in leadership of the Jamaica Labour Party.

Ivan visited us on September 11 through 12 and has left his mark. Some areas of the country suffered more physical damage than others. The damage and losses are estimated at J\$36 billion. Our Minister of Finance has indicated that notwithstanding, fiscal targets should still be met. The utility companies did well in restoring their services after the hurricane. Prices soared after the storm and the effect will be seen in the CPI. There are scarcities of vegetables and ground provisions.

The modernisation programme includes funding for the improvement in the overall technology platform of the Institute. A part of this programme includes the development of relational databases that will facilitate the improved delivery of statistics. The consultant has been contracted to design the database management system.

ECONOMIC STATISTICS

- SNA 1993

Since September 2002, The Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN) entered into a three-year cooperation project with Statistics Sweden to support the modernization of the national accounts. This project has four components:

- Compilation of GDP in line with the 1993 SNA
- Construction of a supply and use table
- Compilation of institutional accounts
- Compilation of tourism satellite accounts

Two years of the project have been completed and the following activities are currently in progress:

- Conversion of output to basic prices
- Making changes to the treatment and coverage of taxes on production and imports
- Recording of secondary and ancillary activities to conform with the 1993 SNA
- The preliminary format for the supply and use tables have been completed
- The capture and classification of data for the derivation of input structures for the supply and use tables.

During August the first mission dealing with the Tourism Satellite Accounts (TSA) took place. This mission dealt mainly with a review of data sources as well as identifying gaps in the data and ways of filling these gaps. Meetings were also held with stakeholders

concerning their needs and inputs into the TSA. Work is now currently taking place on the development of an establishment survey to capture additional data for the TSA.

- Source Statistics

Associated with the conversion to the SNA 1993 model, the SIDA project includes the improvement to some source statistics, such as:

- The Business Register
Assistance was being provided to improve and expand the Business Register database.
- The compilation of the Producer Price and Volume Indices
Preliminary work is being done to establish the price and volume index for the mining and manufacturing sectors.
- The compilation of Trade Indices
Work has started on the preparation of the indices for 2002 in accordance with the new methodology provided by the SIDA

- Merchandise Trade

Summery data is being published 2 months in arrears and the detailed report has been prepared up to March 2004. An interim measure is being put in place to provide a “patch” to the existing systems in order that details may be provided from the FISCAL electronic database.

2003 details trade has not yet been provided to CARICOM as the unit cost tables for each month has not yet been completed.

- Trade in Services

Trade in Services are being collected by various agencies- BOJ, JAMPRO and STATIN. Technical support and additional staff are required for the implementation of this programme. It is being scheduled for full review as part of our 2004/05 programme of work.

- CPI

The household expenditure survey went into the field in June 2004. It is being conducted in 8 small surveys during the period June2004 to January 2005. The rebased CPI is expected to be launched in July 2006.

- JIC

The Jamaica Industrial Classification, which is under review (75% complete), is scheduled to be completed and forwarded to the printers by April 2005. This project has been delayed due to change in emphasis in order to satisfy the project requirements of the CLMIS.

SOCIAL & ENVIRONMENTAL STATISTICS

- Labour Statistics

Jamaica participated in the CLMIS project and the outcomes have been

- a. JSOC review – a complete review of major group 5, Service Occupations including the outline job descriptions has been done. Work was also started on

- major group 2 - the professional group. A plan of action has been developed for future work. The support of the stakeholders in the review process was greatly appreciated.
- b. Labour Force Survey – the survey instrument was revised to take account of user needs, particularly in the area of “underemployment” and the reformatting of the instrument to allow for data capture by scanning. More work is to be done on the revision of the instrument.
 - c. The signing of the joint agreement with ILO and the other 3 countries, Barbados, Trinidad and Jamaica, to make the JSOC classifications available through a web-based medium.

- Employment & Earnings

Response to requests for data continues to be low and delayed. Strategies are being developed to hold focus group discussions with data providers in the New Year to improve response rate and timeliness

- MDG Report & Social Statistics

Data on the Economy, population and families, and work have been forwarded to CARICOM. The other information has been requested from the relevant Ministries and Agencies.

The draft MDG country report has been prepared and submitted to the Minister of Finance who expressed some concerns. The document is still being reviewed prior to being submitted again.

- Environmental Statistics

The environment data that were collected as part of the 2002 SLC survey are being analysed for the preparation of the report “households and the environment”. During next year the focus will be placed on a “water theme” and all related data will be collected. It is also expected that another attempt will be made to obtain information on environment protection expenditure.

Sonia M. Jackson
Statistical Institute of Jamaica
November 9, 2004.