

PROGRESS REPORT AND PROPOSED WORK PLAN STATISTICS UNIT, ST. KITTS AND NEVIS NOVEMBER 2004

INTRODUCTION

This report reviews the work program of the Statistical Unit, a division in the Planning Unit of the Ministry of Finance, Development and Planning, St. Kitts and Nevis. It covers the period November 2003 to October 2004. Additionally the report provides a summary of activities scheduled for 2005. Pooling of funds for the entire Planning Department has created some difficulties for Statistics, since the monies allocated for Statistics are now used for all divisions. The unit remains constrained by its size, space and financial resources.

STAFFING AND STRUCTURE

There are fifteen (15) positions within the Statistical Unit. At present there are 15 persons employed in the Unit. Of these, 11 are appointed to established positions, two have not been appointed to any position while the remaining two are temporary workers employed until the end of the year. A statistician was recruited during the middle of the year but her sojourn at the office was short-lived. To date we still have not been able to obtain and retain a statistician despite the request that the person must not necessarily have studied statistics. The senior statistician who had retired in 2003 was hired for several months to assist in compiling the business register.

Meetings/Training/Workshops and Seminars

During the period under review, several officers were able to attend several meetings and workshops. Staff members benefited from the following:

2004

Mar 9-19	Balance of Payments Methodology Workshop, one officer
May-Aug	Module 1 Certificate in Basic Statistics, one officer
Aug 6	MECOVI Inception Meeting, OECS
Sep 21-23	Workshop on achieving MDGs in the Caribbean.
Sep 20-24	CARTAC Eurotrace Training, two officers
Oct 16th	Meeting of Directors of Statistics, ECCB
Oct 17-19 th	ILO conference – Caribbean Labour Market Information

In general, the training obtained was beneficial to the officers and the unit. However, there is need for greater training opportunities for the staff at the lower levels.

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

The new CPI was launched on St. Kitts on October 15th 2001. The new basket is used to derive the CPI on a monthly basis. Plans are being made to undertake a new Household Income and expenditure survey. The ECCB is quite keen on having a new round of survey for the OECS countries. However, the issue of whether or not offices will pursue the yearlong survey or quarterly surveys still has to be ironed out.

NATIONAL ACCOUNTS and Balance of Payments

These continue to be compiled on schedule with some assistance from the Central Bank. Basic tables are compiled on GDP activity in current and constant prices, expenditure on the GDP in current prices and National Accounts Aggregates. With financial support from CARTAC, through the contracting of Ms. Marshall efforts are ongoing to implement some components of SNA93. In this regard the consultant made some follow up visits to the Federation in July of this year and during the period November 1st-5th 2004.th. The National Accounts questionnaires which were redesigned to encompass the more detailed information is now being used and may be adopted by the other OECS member countries. A comprehensive Business Register was prepared, notwithstanding some set back arising from the loss of data during merging of the files, and which is being remedied, we should be able to obtain the core goods and services to be used in the SUT. We anticipate that by year end the first set of SUT tables would be completed.

TOURISM

In 2002 I indicated that a new system for the processing and management of the tourism information was introduced in 2001. (Management Information System for Tourism, MIST) The expectation was that this new system would not only speed up data input and with a greater level of accuracy but would also offer other options which will facilitate the accessing of additional information. Unfortunately, this expectation was never realized. The non production of tourism statistics from mid 2002 finally forced a decision to give back the responsibility of tourism statistics to the statistics division. Statistics began processing the 2004 information in April of this year, using the MIST program. The process has been slow and problematic in the initial stages but currently May 2004 is being processed. The information for half year 2002 and 2003 is still to be processed by the department. In the interim, we continue to use the figures obtained from National Security for that period. There are a number of limitations as the data is

not provided in a way that could be more beneficial to Statistics and this shortcoming has seriously limited the office ability to make mid year estimates in a number of instances.

EXTERNAL TRADE

At present, external trade statistics are available up to October 2004. The 2003 trade data as well as the first three quarters have been sent to CARICOM. We were able to satisfy all queries for trade data during the review period. As the volume of merchandise trade continues to increase, a problem of capacity of the existing machines to store the data has become a serious issue. Meanwhile the unit continues to keypunch the trade data using Eurotrace since the Customs Department still has not been fully computerized to facilitate the use of ASYCUDA at all ports of entry. Two staff members were able to benefit from training in the use of the new version of Eurotrace in St. Lucia earlier this year.

DEMOGRAPHY & OTHER SOCIAL AND GENDER STATISTICS

The Unit continued to collect and compile demographic information. (This is published in a Demography Digest every two years. This digest carries information on mortality, population growth, fertility rates, deaths, births etc. Data on marriages and divorce are also contained within this publication.) The latest Demography Digest was published early this year.

The Unit also through the assistance of CARICOM set up a Social Indicators Millennium Development Goals Committee. The primary objective is to strengthen the statistical offices capability to collect, compile, analyze, and disseminate reliable timely and relevant social and gender statistics on a sustained basis. At the same time ensuring that there is continuous evaluation of the achievements of the MDGs. This required a large amount of data, some of which was unavailable, but it pointed more than ever for the need for better and more expansive data collection systems to be put in place and an investment of resources if we are to effectively monitor development indicators.

SURVEYS

A Labour Force Survey was undertaken during the period under review. The information has been processed however we have not been able to make the estimates at a national level because of the absence of benchmark data for Nevis.

POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS

All the tables have been prepared for St. Kitts and the data is provided upon request. However, we still have to complete the post-scan of the Nevis data. Upon completion of that phase we would then be able to prepare the tables for Nevis and for the entire Federation.

PUBLICATIONS

- The Annual Digest of Statistics 2002
- The Statistical Review 2003.

It must be pointed out, that despite the fact that a lot of the data has not been published in a hard format, most of the data we collect are quite current. This is often distributed via diskettes or via the Internet to persons requesting the information.

For the most part, the data for the special edition of education statistics have been collected and we anticipate that the publication should be completed by the end of the year. A volume of Census data for St. Kitts has been prepared and should be out shortly. The Environmental digest is still to be published.

The Division's AIM is to provide timely, accurate and reliable information to Policy Makers, the Private sector and the General Public.

	Activities	Key Clients/Providers	Output	Time Frame	Key Clients/Users
1	Labour Force Survey	Households	Labour Force Report	End of 2 nd Quarter	Economic Division
	collect data	Private Sector			Department of Labour
	process data	Public Sector			General Public
	edit information				Private Sector
	produce tables				International Organiz.
					Other Agencies
2	Trade Statistics	Customs	External Trade Report		
	collect entries		(Annual)		Economics Division
	check and edit				Ministry of Trade
	batch and punch		Monthly Trade Report	End of the following	Business Sector
	produce tables for			Month	General Public
	Publication				Local, Regional and
			External Trade report	End of the following	international Organizations
			(Quarterly)	Quarter	
3	National and Fiscal	Inland Revenue	National Accounts	September 2004	Economics Division
	Accounts	Social Security	and Fiscal Accounts	To April 2005	Ministry of Finance
	collect information	Corporations and	Reports		Private Sector
	compile data for	Business Establishments			
	Publication	Treasury			General Public
	Compile SUT				Local, Regional and
					International Organizations.
4	Balance of Payments	Business Places	BOP Report	February - July	Economics Division
	collect information	Corporations			Ministry of Finance

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	compile data	Investors			Private Sector
					Local, Regional and
					International Organizations.
5	Digest of Statistics	Line Ministries	Digest of Statistics	March to September	Economics Division
	collect data	Government Departments			
	prepare tables for				Ministry of Finance
	Publication	Corporations			Private Sector
		Private Sector			Local, Regional and
					International Organiz.
6	Statistical Review	Line Ministries	Statistical Review	March to June	Economics Division
	collect data	Government Departments			Ministry of Finance
	prepare tables for				
	Publication	Corporations			Private Sector
		Private Sector			International Organiz.
7	Industrial Survey	Manufacturing Sector	In House Information	Quarterly	Economics Division
	collect information				OECS
	compile information				ECCB
8	Demography	Hospitals	Demography and	July to October	Health Department
	Population	Health Statistician	Population Digest		Ministry of Health
	collect data				Public and Private Sector
	calculate, compile data				Local, regional and
	for publication	Health Center			International Agencies
		Registrar			(e.g.UNICEF,PAHO,UNDP)
9	Consumer Price Index	Business Sector	Retail Price Index	Monthly	Labour Department
	collect prices				Economics Division
	Calculate and compile				Public & Private Sector
	tables for publication				Institutions

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					IMF,ECCB,CARICOM
					World Bank
10	Statistics in Brief	Line Ministries	Statistical Brochure	January	Government Ministries
		Government Departments			Country Delegations
		Private Sector			Tourism Department
11	Population and Housing		Clean data set & frame	January to March	Line Ministries and
	Census	Households	for future use		departments
		Business establishments	Tabulated data relating		Private sector
		Government departments	to demographic		Local, regional and
			characteristics and		international agencies
			and housing conditions		
			Population Estimate		
			Administrative Report		
12	Training				
	Session on:				
	Basic Statistics	Members of Staff	Better understanding	July to December	Members of Staff
	Personal Development	Persons from the Private	and appreciation among		
	Interpersonal skills	and Public Sector	staff for data produced		
	Time Management				
	Certificate in Statistics	Univ. of Tech, Jamaica	increase in accuracy of		
	Spreadsheets, Database	Members of Staff	data produced		
	Word Processing		greater self esteem		

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13	Household Expenditure	Households		To be determined	Line Ministries
	Survey	Business Establishments			Ministry of Finance
		Government Departments			Private Sector
		Trade Unions			General Public
					Local, regional and
					International organizations
					Students

*Statistics Division
November 16, 2004*