

## **ESTABLISHMENT OF BERMUDA'S SIMDG COMMITTEE**

Bermuda's participation in the United Nations Statistical Division (UNSD) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat statistical programme began May 5, 2004. Our participation is designed to strengthen capacity in the area of social/gender statistics and indicators in the CARICOM region. At that time, two representatives from CARICOM, Dr. Philomen Harrison (Programme Manager) and Mr. Sylvan Roberts (Senior Project Officer – Statistics) made a joint presentation at a stakeholders' meeting on social/gender statistics and indicators held at the Fairmont Southampton Hotel. Thirty-eight stakeholders were invited of which thirty-one actually attended (see annex 1). They comprised persons from the private sector, non-profit organizations and the public sector. Inviting both producers and users of statistics was essential to ensure a broad cross section of stakeholders. A summary of the presentations is itemised below:

### **Summary**

- ◆ Overview of CARICOM Programme
- ◆ Use of Indicators in Policy and Management Decisions
- ◆ Millennium Development Goals
- ◆ Terms of Reference Social Indicators & Millennium Development Goals

At the conclusion of the presentation the following concerns were raised:

- ◆ Timeliness of data
- ◆ Relevancy of data
- ◆ Analysis of data
- ◆ Accessibility of data
- ◆ Inclusion of environmental statistics
- ◆ Political/domestic influence
- ◆ Cabinet support for initiative
- ◆ Independence of Department of Statistics for analysis

Before the meeting was adjourned, participants were invited to submit their names and organizations, if they were interested in serving on the Social/Gender Indicators Millennium Development Goals (SIMDG) Committee. A total of 15 persons volunteered. It was recommended, however, that the full endorsement and support of the Government be obtained prior to moving forward with this initiative.

## **Government Support of Initiative**

On June 21, 2004 Mrs. Valerie Robinson-James, Chief Statistician, prepared a Cabinet Memorandum inviting Cabinet to:

- ◆ Approve the participation of Bermuda in the UNSD and CARICOM statistical initiative to strengthen capacities in the areas of social/gender statistics on a more sustained basis in the CARICOM region; and,
- ◆ Provide ministerial support for the formulation of a SIMDG Committee and the implementation of its objectives.

On July 27, 2004 Cabinet's approval was granted. The Department of Statistics, under the leadership of the Chief Statistician, is steering the committee, to ensure that the objectives are attained. The Department is also the liaison between the CARICOM Statistics Division and the SIMDG Committee.

## **SIMDG – MEETING NO. 1**

Bermuda held its inaugural quarterly SIMDG Committee meeting on August 18, 2004 at the Department of Statistics under the chair of the Chief Statistician. Fifteen members were in attendance. The details of the meeting are outlined below:

### **A. Information Package**

Participants were provided with the following items:

- ◆ Agenda
- ◆ Contact list of SIMDG Committee members
- ◆ The CARICOM/UNSD PROJECT Vision Statement (see annex 2)
  - Description
  - Goal
  - Projects
  - Values of SIMDG Committee
  - Duties and Responsibilities of Committee Members
  - The Role of the Department of Statistics
- ◆ Group 1 and Group 2 Indicators for the CARICOM Programme on Strengthening Capacity in the Compilation of Social/Gender and Environment Statistics and Indicators in the Caribbean Region
- ◆ List of CARICOM table titles
- ◆ Sample table format – Table 1.4.1

## **B. Overview of CARICOM Programme**

The Chairperson gave an overview of the CARICOM Initiative, SIMDG and reported that Cabinet support had been given for the initiative. She presented the Vision Statement and the long-term desired results of CARICOM/USND PROJECT.

## **C. Selected Social Gender/Indicators**

Mrs. Melinda Williams, Social Statistician, reviewed the two groups of indicators for the CARICOM programme on strengthening capacity in social/gender and environmental statistics. She highlighted the similarities and differences between Group 1 indicators and Group 2 indicators.

## **D. CARICOM Tables**

The Social Statistician distributed a list of CARICOM table titles and informed the committee that initially countries have been asked to provide data, where possible, for 1998 to 2002. She emphasized the importance of reviewing the information pages and note sheets before completing the tables and cautioned committee members about the similarities of some of the symbols. Mrs. Williams also pointed out that Bermuda is considered one hundred percent urban. She informed the SIMDG Committee that CARICOM'S submission deadline was October 2004.

During the meeting, questions were asked about the following:

- ◆ Human and financial resources required to complete the questionnaires in other member states
- ◆ Duration of SIMDG Committee
- ◆ Explanation of the reference period 1998 to 2002

At the conclusion of the meeting, it was agreed that the Department of Statistics will seek guidance from CARICOM regarding these questions.

## **SIMDG – MEETING NO. 2**

The second SIMDG Committee meeting was held on November 16, 2004 at the Department of Statistics under the chair of the Social Statistician. Nine committee members were in attendance. Prior to the meeting, members received a copy of the agenda and copies of the completed questionnaires for review. At the beginning of the meeting, the chairperson provided CARICOM'S response to the questions that arose at the first meeting. Members were invited to provide feedback on the completed questionnaires and were briefed about the outstanding questionnaires.

Committee members were asked also to give feedback and suggestions for the topics highlighted below:

### **A. Successes of UNSD/CARICOM Project**

1. This new initiative has enabled the Department of Statistics to strengthen relationships with stakeholders (see annex 3). In September 2004 individual meetings were held with

persons who were responsible for completing their Ministry's or Department's tables. During these meetings, the tables that were relevant to each stakeholder were reviewed and stakeholders were encouraged to ask questions. These meetings were beneficial as they provided opportunities for primary stakeholders and the Department of Statistics to have a better understanding of data collection systems in other Ministries. After each meeting, the Department of Statistics liaised with CARICOM for clarification about any issues that remained unresolved.

2. This project has enabled the Bermuda SIMDG Committee to identify the opportunities to:
  - ◆ determine level of data collection
  - ◆ expand data collection systems
  - ◆ strengthen data collection systems
  - ◆ clarify concepts
  - ◆ standardize data collection systems
  - ◆ integrate information locally
  - ◆ provide baseline data and make comparisons regionally
  - ◆ improve relationship with stakeholders
  - ◆ create and develop programmes based on data
  - ◆ liaise with other agencies and sensitize them to the value of statistics

## **B. Challenges of UNSD/CARICOM Project**

Many stakeholders embarked on a painstaking process to complete the social/gender statistics tables by the Department of Statistics' deadline October 22, 2004. This deadline was one week earlier than CARICOM'S deadline in order to facilitate a review period before submitting the tables to CARICOM at the end of the month. This process was not unlike peeling an onion. On November 8, 2004 the Department of Statistics sent the following tables to CARICOM:

- ◆ Population and Family
- ◆ Education
- ◆ Health Other
- ◆ Economy
- ◆ Communication

Presently, the Department is continuing to work with the key stakeholders on completing the outstanding questionnaires.

### ***1. Stakeholders' Challenges***

- ◆ Completing questionnaires is time consuming
- ◆ Delays accessing data
- ◆ Converting Bermuda's 1968 International Standard Classification of Occupation Coding (ISCO) System to ISCO 1988
- ◆ Avoiding confidentiality issues
- ◆ Retrieving historical data
- ◆ Table format may not be consistent with what is available in Bermuda

## **2. Department of Statistics' Challenges**

- ◆ Re-typing work that was submitted as WORD documents
- ◆ Retrieving data that is reliable and consistent
- ◆ Completing information pages for stakeholders
- ◆ Communicating difficulties with some stakeholders
- ◆ Delays receiving completed tables from stakeholders
- ◆ Delays receiving feedback from CARICOM

### **C. Proposed Improvements for CARICOM Tables**

- ◆ Insert formulae that would copy and paste the name of the member state in each table
- ◆ Insert formulae to calculate rates, subtotals and totals
- ◆ Pre-format tables for decimal places
- ◆ Pre-format tables to include commas for four-digit numbers
- ◆ Pre-format tables for right justification of data and sources
- ◆ Pre-format information page for text wrap
- ◆ Change table layout for gender information
- ◆ Use distinct symbols
- ◆ Check that table titles correspond with row and column headings
- ◆ Review table formats that exists regionally rather than develop a new system e.g. Pan American Health Organization

### **D. Questions Arising from Tables**

- ◆ Table 1.25 (Health HIV/AIDS) What is the definition of an orphaned child?
- ◆ Table 1.3 (Economy) What are the income categories?
- ◆ Table 1.6 (Education) How to calculate the progression rate?

### **E. Methods of Data Dissemination**

- ◆ Partner with mass media and encourage journalists to write articles on different topics
- ◆ Develop newsletters or flyers for the public
- ◆ Produce technical papers for the Government and Ministries
- ◆ Develop a fact book
- ◆ Create social/gender statistics database for schools
- ◆ Provide schools with worksheets based on social/gender statistics

### **F. Methods of Stimulating Interest**

- ◆ Discuss social/gender statistics on radio and television talk shows
- ◆ Publicize factual tips via the media
- ◆ Utilize free government advertisement spots
- ◆ Encourage teachers to develop plays based on social/gender statistics topics
- ◆ Sensitize churches, local clubs and other community organizations of the importance of incorporating statistics into their competitions
- ◆ Develop specific fact sheets for social organizations.
- ◆ Provide data by parish

## **G. The Way Forward**

- ◆ Review data and decide what can be disseminated regularly to the public
- ◆ Arrange meetings for specific stakeholders based on relevant topics

## **Conclusion**

The Bermuda SIMDG Committee meets on a quarterly basis. After completion of the CARICOM tables, the committee will embark upon the projects stated in the Vision Statement incorporating the above-mentioned suggestions.

## **Appendix**

**ANNEX 1**  
**LIST OF ATTENDEES**  
**SOCIAL/GENDER INDICATORS & MILLENIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS**  
**Information Meeting – May 6<sup>th</sup> 2004**

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Post</b>	<b>Post Holder</b>
CARICOM	Programme Manager – Statistics	Dr. Philomen Harrison
CARICOM	Senior Project Officer – Statistics	Mr. Sylvan Roberts
Department of Statistics	Chief Statistician	Ms. Valerie Robinson-James
Department of Statistics	Social and Demographic Statistician	Ms. Melinda Williams
Department of Statistics	Statistical Officer I	Mr. Vincent Williams-Savery
Ministry of Finance	Asst. Financial Secretary for Economic and Finance	Mr. Anthony Manders
Ministry of Finance	Economic Advisor	Mr. Hassan Durham
Central Policy Unit	Policy Analyst	Ms. Kimberley McKeown
Department of Planning	Director of Planning	Mr. Rudolph Hollis
Financial Assistance	Director	Ms. Dianna Taylor
Child & Family Services	Director	Mr. Alfred Maybury
Ministry of Education & Development	Policy Analyst	Dr. Judith Bartley
Ministry of Health	Chief Medical Officer	Dr. John Cann
Ministry of Health	Nurse Epidemiologist	Ms. Lise Outerbridge
Bermuda Hospital Board	Director of Clinical Records Dept.	Ms. Kay Ekstrom
Bermuda Hospital Board	Statistical Analyst	Ms. Cyrlene Wilson
Registry General	Asst. Registrar General	Ms. Thelma Trott
Department of Social Insurance	Director	Ms. Karen Daniels
The Pension Commission	Chief Executive Officer	Mr. Peter Sousa

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Post</b>	<b>Post Holder</b>
Commission for Unity and Racial Equality	Survey Officer	Ms. Darnell Harvey
National Drug Commission	Research Officer	Dr. Ken Douglas
National Drug Commission	Research Officer	Dr. Ken Douglas
Ministry of the Environment	Environmental Officer (Eden Project)	Ms. Patricia Begeman
The Bermuda Police Service	Operational Policing	Sgt. Darrin Simons
Parliamentary Registry	Asst. Parliamentary Registrar	Mr. Kenneth Scott
Department of Labour & Training	Acting Director	Mr. Glen Fubler
Department of Conservational Services	Director	Mr. Jack Ward
Bermuda College	Coordinator Institutional Research & Mathematics Lecturer	Ms. Pamela Maxwell-Clarke
Supportive Therapy for Aids Persons & Their Relatives	Executive Director - STAR	Ms. Carolyn Armstrong
The Coalition for the Protection of Children	Executive Director	Ms. Sheelagh Cooper
The Family Learning Centre	Executive Director	Ms. Martha Dismont
Age Concern	Director	Ms. Claudette Fleming

## ANNEX 2



Bermuda Government  
*Department of Statistics*

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# CARICOM/UNSD PROJECT

## Vision Statement

### **Description:**

The CARICOM/UNSD project is a programme designed to strengthen capacity in the compilation of Social/Gender and Environment Statistics and Indicators in the CARICOM Region in support of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals by the Year 2015.

The desired results of this programme will be to:

- harmonize the production of Social/Gender and Environment Statistics across member state countries;
- provide for the sustainability of social indicators to inform policy formulation and improve social conditions; and,
- encourage greater collaboration and cooperation between key stakeholders and the Department of Statistics for data collection and dissemination of social indicators.

### **Goal:**

Update CARICOM questionnaires with social and gender statistics for the five-year period 1998 – 2002, by October 2004.

### **Projects:**

1. Review with stakeholders their existing business processes and data collection systems, and identify gaps in areas of social statistics by August 2005.
2. Design and implement a data collection system for the gathering of new social statistics in compliance with the CARICOM requirements by December 2005.
3. Identify supplementary social indicators relevant to social conditions in Bermuda and expand data collection systems to incorporate this data by August 2005.
4. Prepare brief analytical reports of social indicators by March 2006 highlighting major trends in social conditions.
5. Share reports with the Government initially to stimulate thought and for implementing suitable programmes to address social issues, with subsequent dissemination (i.e. through media, workshops, seminars, briefings, etc.) to the general public



### **Values of SIMDG Committee**

1. Attend meetings on time and limit duration of meetings to one hour.
2. Members commit to be partners in all projects.
3. Members actively participate in meeting discussions.
4. Members respect the input of fellow committee members.
5. No one voice overbears the voices of others during discussion.
6. Members honor stipulated deadlines for submission of information.

### **Duties and Responsibilities of Committee Members**

- Attend all meetings or send a representative.
- Assist with the annual revision of the list of indicators and address new areas of concern.
- Assist in establishing standard definitions and methodologies for social indicators.
- Collect the necessary data for respective sector.
- Participate in training sessions, workshops and meetings held by CARICOM.
- Provide recommendations based on the findings for inclusion in annual publication.

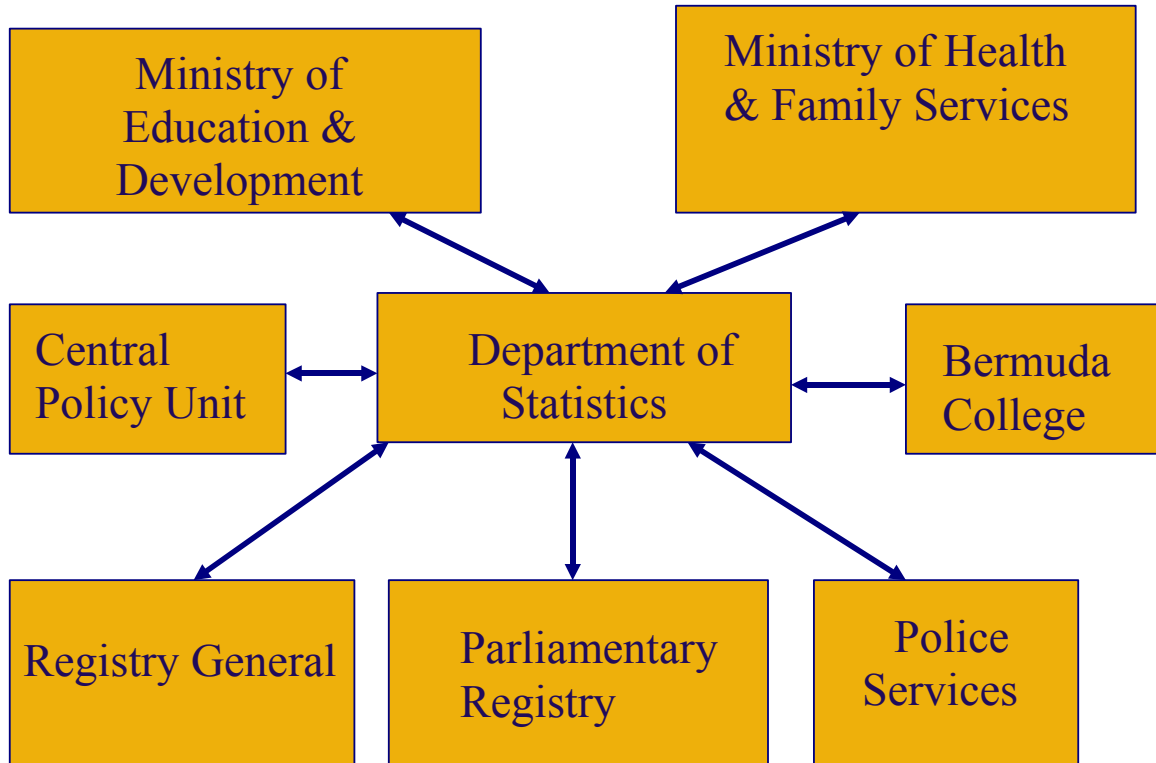
### **The Role of the Department of Statistics**

1. Arrange quarterly SIMDG meetings by informing committee members in advance of date, time and venue.
2. Steer the individual projects such that the goal of the programme is achieved within stipulated timeframe.
3. Provide statistical expertise to stakeholders for setting up or expanding data collection systems to gather new social data.
4. Monitor the timely update of CARICOM questionnaires by stakeholders and assist where necessary.
5. Be the reservoir for the depositing of all social/gender statistics and indicators.
6. Liaise with CARICOM – Statistics Division for technical guidance and instruction.

**August 18, 2004**

ANNEX 3

**Primary Stakeholders**



**Secondary Stakeholders**

