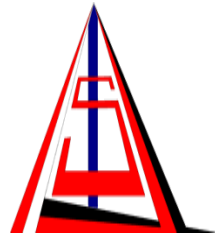


The Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians
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Country Report - Jamaica



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Country Report - Jamaica

This Report covers the Work Programme of the Institute for the period 2008/2009 and the projection for the year 2010/2011.

Economy

The impact of the world financial issues has begun to take serious effect on the Jamaican economy. Revenue collections have been significantly reduced. There has been a salary freeze for public sector employees and more recently the Prime Minister has begun to talk about reducing the size of the Public Sector for the next budget cycle.

Two of the three bauxite plants have ceased operations, remittance flows have been reduced and the prospects for a “bright” tourist season are not very good. The result of the slowing down of the economy has resulted in a scarcity of foreign exchange. The GDP report for the second quarter of 2009 showed a decline of 0.5% and represented the fourth quarter of a continuous decline.

Statistical Work Programme

Jamaica provided support to St. Kitts & Nevis through CARTAC with the development of their national income. The Tourism Satellite Account 2007 was launched in March this year.

The Supply and Use table for calendar year 2000 has been completed and work has started on preparing the SUT for 2007. Demand has been made for us to have the 2000 SUT converted to an Input-Output table. The support of the World Bank has been sought to have this exercise done.

The preparations for the Housing and Population Census 2011 have focused on getting the maps up to date and testing the concepts used in questionnaire. A full pilot of all systems is scheduled for April 2010. The current financial status raises the question as to the ability of funding being available for the census operations. Notwithstanding a comprehensive budget will be ready before year end.

Work has started on developing a Producer Price Index for agricultural products. Price data are being sourced from the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands. Price collection continues and it is expected that the index will be released next year.

Support Systems

JIC 2005 – the internal stakeholders have been trained. The training of external stakeholders is also ongoing, the training of the Tax Administration staff is yet to be completed.

Ja. Standard Occupational Classification (JSOC) – internal stakeholder group is to be revitalised and work has started on the revision of the classification. 77% of Major Group 2 has been completed and writing workshops are to be scheduled.

Business Register – the Register has been moved into the DMS and the contents are being converted to the new classification. A new report, the Business Analysis Report, based on the information in the Register is being prepared.

A ***Needs Assessment Survey*** has been conducted within the Ministries of Government. The findings revealed that (a) there were concerns pertaining to data quality and timeliness; (b) training was required in order to use the available data more efficiently; and (c) the electronic medium is the preferred format for receiving data. A similar survey is to be done with the private sector.

Institutional Strengthening & Viability

The financial year 2009/10 has presented a number of challenges for the Institution. The budgetary allocation for the fiscal year April 09 to March 10 is insufficient to cover the current level of operations. A Board and management retreat examined the operations with a view to determine those areas that could possibly be removed, but based on the findings of the Need Assessment Survey it seemed that there was not much to be achieved by removing any of the existing programmes. It was also noted that with the proposed borrowing from the IMF, it is expected that Jamaica would be expected to subscribe to the SDDS which requires more products and stringer timeliness.

The implementation of the data management system (DMS) was one of the main foci of the Institution during the past 22 months. The system was designed and developed for five of the six core statistical functions, viz. trade, media clippings, the establishment register and the survey system. The design for the national accounts system is currently being done. Once completed, efforts will be made to have it implemented as part of the DMS.

SAS software is the statistical package that is being used in the DMS for manipulating the data and doing sample selections. The software was acquired and the staff trained in its use.

The implementation of the quality management system was restarted in earnest. The decision has been taken to delay the application for certification consequent upon the financial constraints being experienced. The internal audit system will continue however to ensure that the checks and balances are in place to ensure continual improvement. The reviews of the core processes by the process owners will also continue.

As a pre-cursor to the institutional restructuring, all the job descriptions for the current and proposed new posts have to be submitted to the Ministry. The process has begun and should be completed within six months.

Statistics Week 2009 was held during the week of October 13 through 16. There were several discussions on radio and television. The report on findings of the HES 2004-2005 was launched on Tuesday October 13. On Wednesday, there was the magazine supplement in the Jamaica Observer and on Thursday there was an open day at the Office. The Students' Handbooks on Geography, Economic and Sociology were launched as part of the Open Day activities. Copies of the publications were given to 15 schools that had assisted with their preparation.

The website has been upgraded and registered at a new domain: www.statinja.gov.jm launched. The website has a new look with more details.

National Statistics System

Financial support is being received from UNDP, in the amount of US\$690, 000 over a three year period to assist with the development of the NSS. It will fund the contract of three consultant statisticians and a project manager, as well a public education programme.

An application was also made to the World Bank's Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building for support. Preliminary approval has been granted.

STATISTICS COMPILATION & DISSEMINATION SUMMARY

AREA OF STATISTICS	DATA PRODUCTION (Tables etc.)	DATA DISSEMINATED	DATA GAPS & CHALLENGES	COMMENTS, RESOURCES REQUIRED & TECHNOLOGY USED
ECONOMICS STATISTICS				
National Accounts - ¼ ly GDP - Annual GDP - NIP - TSA - SUT	Yes Yes Yes Yes Yes	June 2009 December 2008 December 2008 December 2008 Calendar year 2000	Low and late responses from establishments. There is high demand for the input-output tables. The World Bank has offered to provide T.A..	Technical assistance needed to review ¼ly GDP Estimate in accordance with SNA 1993 TSA for 2007 released and the NIP for 2008 includes Tourism contribution There is the demand for the Input-Output tables. Quarterly GDP is now being produced in constant & current prices since Dec.2008.
Merchandise Trade -Trade statistics -Trade indices	Yes No	Monthly Bulletin – June 2009 in September 09	Detailed trade data available up to 2005. Work. There are still issues with the detailed trade data.	Support being provided by CARTAC in the development of trade indices
CPI - monthly	Yes	September 2009 in October 09	Two additional indices, the upper income and the national index are being developed	Support is being provided through CARTAC
PPI – Manufacturing & Mining	Yes	Monthly – July 2009 in September 09	Low and late responses from the establishments	

AREA OF STATISTICS	DATA PRODUCTION (Tables etc.)	DATA DISSEMINATED	DATA GAPS & CHALLENGES	COMMENTS, RESOURCES REQUIRED & TECHNOLOGY USED
Production – Volume & Value	Yes	December 2008 in March 09	Low and late responses from the private sector	
Employment & Earnings	Yes	Annually – December 2008 in March 09	Low and late responses from establishments.	
Balance of Payments	June 2009	September 09		Released by BOJ
SOCIAL STATISTICS				
Labour Force	Yes	Quarterly – April 2009 July 2009	Expanded sample frame to provide Parish data. Data collection completed August 15.	Delays in the filed work
JSLC 2008			Data are being prepared for submission to the PIOJ. Data collection was later than usual due to the finance.	
JSLC 2009			Data collection in progress	
Demography	Yes	Annually - 2008	Only Departure Cards are now accessible form PICA.	Discussion continues with PICA to resolve the problem
Vital Statistics		Partially – 2005/2006	The mortality data sets are not adequately coded and there appears to be duplications	Draft Manual on standards & definitions prepared by an external consultant was presented at a workshop on Oct.14- 15.
Agri-Census 2007			Final Report has been prepared for the Ministry of Agriculture	
Ad Hoc Surveys				
Inflation Expectation 2009	Yes	Yes		BOJ funded project – 3 surveys done for the year
Crime Victimization Survey 2009	Yes	Yes	Data collection completed	Externally funded project. Administrative report being prepared

AREA OF STATISTICS	DATA PRODUCTION (Tables etc.)	DATA DISSEMINATED	DATA GAPS & CHALLENGES	COMMENTS, RESOURCES REQUIRED & TECHNOLOGY USED
Reproductive Health Survey			Data collection has been completed. Analysis and Reports are being prepared.	NFPB funded project. Project period extended due to delays with data collection. Reports to completed by December 2009
ENVIRONMENT				
- Environment Statistics 2007 -Household environment survey	Yes	Yes	Turn around time of review was slow and comments were inadequate Report delayed. Publication date revised to November 2009	Completed - changed from being a State of the Environment as the support of NEPA was not received This survey was done as part of the Agri-census. The report is being prepared