

CARIBBEAN STATISTICS DAY 2011



THE REGIONAL STATISTICS PROGRAMME *INTER-SCHOOL QUIZ COMPETITION 2011*

INFORMATION BOOKLET

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CARIBBEAN STATISTICS DAY 2011

The Regional Statistics Programme is pleased to announce the observance of *Caribbean Statistics Day* (which will be celebrated for the third time) with a week of activities starting on the *11th October 2011*.

While in the previous years Caribbean Statistics Day was celebrated on **15 October**, it was agreed by the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians (SCCS) that **Caribbean Statistics Day 2011** would be observed on **Friday, 14 October 2011**, being the last working day prior to October 15 which falls on a Saturday this year.

PURPOSE

The rationale for the observance of Statistics Day is to highlight statistics and its crucial role across a wide spectrum of activities - from daily decision-making faced by individuals, businesses, students etc. to planning, policy-making and analysis and research activities of governments, academia and other users. These activities recognise the important role of the media in educating and informing the population of a country.

THEME

The theme suggested for Caribbean Statistics Day follows that of the World Statistics Day is as follows:

“Recognising the Essential Role of Statistics in the Development of the Caribbean Community.”

OBJECTIVES

The objectives for the observance of Caribbean Statistics Day are to:

- (i) Facilitate the placement of statistics high on the development agenda in countries;
- (ii) Encourage and develop a culture of statistics among the population - respondents from households and businesses, users in the public and private sectors and in academic and other institutions, and schools and members of the media;
- (iii) Foster increased collaboration with national data producing statistical units in line ministries and other agencies and departments of governments;

- (iv) Sensitise and inform users, suppliers and producers on the importance of statistics in making informed policy decisions.

EXPECTED OUTPUTS

It is expected that the observance of Caribbean Statistics Day across the Region would lead to the following outputs:

- (i) Improved awareness of statistics at the national level and across the Region;
- (ii) The highlighting of information on and insights into the process of production of statistics;
- (iii) The promotion of the use of statistics in a wide variety of areas;
- (iv) Increased credibility in the statistics produced;
- (v) Establishment of new partnerships in the development of statistics;
- (vi) The receiving of investment of resources to reposition and restructure necessary statistical agencies.

It is anticipated that statistical agencies in Member States led by the National Statistical offices would engage in a number of activities including production of promotional/publicity materials; exposition of books, papers, articles, manuals and other materials; hosting of seminars, panel discussions; displays and presentations of online materials and related documents; interviews; video presentations and other related events.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES TO COMMEMORATE
CARIBBEAN STATISTICS DAY 2011

The Sixth CARICOM Advisory Group on Statistics (AGS) at its Meeting on 19-21 July 2010 had on its agenda the Commemoration of Caribbean Statistics Day. Some of the mechanisms that were recommended by the AGS to commemorate Caribbean Statistics Day are as follows:

- (i) The establishment of Planning Committees comprising key resource personnel of the National Statistical Systems of Member States to plan the way forward and enhance the dual commemoration. Preparation of a timetable with realistic deadlines for the execution of activities. Individuals on the planning committees should be allocated an area of responsibility for the execution of activities;
- (ii) There should be at least one common activity that will be executed by all countries. It was proposed that a speech by the Secretary-General of CARICOM be recorded and played by all countries when launching their activities;
- (iii) Financial provisions should be allocated in the budgets of the National Statistical Offices (NSOs) to cover the additional expenditure for the planned activities. Where possible NSOs should find mechanisms to observe Caribbean Statistics Day without any significant budgetary implications;
- (iv) At least two (2) current or updated publications should be made available for release on Caribbean Statistics Day;
- (v) A web page should be dedicated to Caribbean Statistics Day by all countries, where an official statistics website for countries are not available, a page can be created on the official government website;
- (vi) There should be video presentations on DEVINFO adaptations and on the National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) of the NSOs. All countries should prepare a brochure on their NSDS using Barbados' NSDS brochure as best practice. This will be done at both the National and

Regional Level. Barbados will share the copies of the NSDS brochures to all AGS Members;

- (vii) The printing of badges, t-shirts, cups, pens, pencils and bookmarks and a banner with the logos and theme for Caribbean Statistics Day;
- (viii) The involvement of additional resource persons/stakeholders i.e. the media, respected persons in society to assist and help to increase advocacy.
- (ix) Sharing of information on new or proposed programme for upcoming Statistics Day (Ensure programmes differ from year-to-year to gain the public's interest);
- (x) Statistics lectures on the role of statistics in socio-economic planning and policy formulation;
- (xi) Flyers and posters showing themed charts, line graphs to depict the trends in statistics on demographic, social and health issues, etc;
- (xii) The census activities should be incorporated into the statistics day celebration. This could include sensitising the community, schools, businesses etc. for those countries conducting enumeration in 2011 onwards, as well as an update on the progress of the dissemination of preliminary results for those countries that have already completed enumeration.
- (xiii) Where possible in terms of publicity, countries can organize seminars or workshops, and participate in/host special events;
- (xiv) Creating public awareness among the people of the respective countries, especially the younger generation through essay, jingle competitions, quiz for schools; and
- (xv) A Walk/Motorcade on Caribbean Statistics Day is another activity to be considered.

THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM) SECRETARIAT
REGIONAL STATISTICS PROGRAMME AND THE SUPPORT TO THE
DEVELOPMENT OF STATISTICS ACROSS THE REGION

1. OUR GOAL

To provide the Community with high-quality statistical products for decision-making and to monitor, guide and assess the impact of the development process.

2. OUR MISSION

The Mission of the Regional Statistics Programme is as follows:

“To develop a sustainable statistical infrastructure within the CARICOM Secretariat providing accurate, timely and reliable statistical information of a high quality and broad scope, facilitating analysis and dissemination of these data, promoting their use in effective and efficient decision making and simultaneously, fostering a similar enabling environment for statistical development among Member States of the Caribbean Community.”

4. OVERVIEW OF SERVICES PROVIDED

The Regional Statistics Programme delivers efficient and effective statistical services such as:

1. Provision of statistical information and advice of a statistical nature to users which include:
 - (i) Users of information within the Secretariat to support the work they undertake in servicing the integration process;
 - (ii) Users from the public and private sectors of countries within and outside of the region including planners in Government Departments, the business community and potential investors, trade officials, researchers over a wide cross-section of area including merchandise, trade, national accounts and population;
 - (iii) Regional and international organizations including collaborative developmental work on the collection of data or in statistical projects being implemented in member countries;
2. Provision of technical support to the harmonisation and improvement of the range and quality of statistics in collaboration or with funding received from International Development Partners such as:
 - (i) The European Union (Caribbean Integration Support Programme) under the Ninth European Development Fund (9th EDF) with a project result of Improved and Harmonised Economic Statistics Developed and Disseminated through three specific results areas:
 - (a) Improved and Harmonised Regional Statistical Infrastructure;
 - (b) Improved Statistical Programming, Production and Dissemination of Key Economic Statistics;
 - (c) Training Delivered and Economic Statistics Used to Monitor the Regional Integration Process.

3. Activities which focus on building capacity in Economic Statistics, specifically National Accounts, Merchandise Trade and International Trade in Services Statistics; Establishment of Help Desk to achieve these results include: ;
- June 2008 - the CARICOM Secretariat convened the CARICOM Statistics Meeting: *Strategising for the Improvement of Economic Statistics in the Region* to assess the impact of developmental work in Economic Statistics and to develop and formulate Preliminary Economic Statistics Action Plan- Barbados Action Plan;
 - 2009 - Undertaking of a Consultancy to facilitate the development and implementation of a framework of activities for the Improvement of the key Economic Statistics in the Region;
 - Convening of a Classifications training workshop also supported by UNSD and ILO and UNESCO;
 - Establishment of Technical Working Group in National Accounts, Short-term Indicators and Trade in Services Statistics;
 - Development of a National Accounts Integrated Questionnaire;
 - Refinement/development of the Action Plan in Economic Statistics;
 - Provision of Merchandise Trade Technical Assistance Consultancy - Eurotrace data processing, Implementing of the Data Submission Protocol;
 - 2009-Conduct of Eurotrace training workshop 2009 facilitated by Eurostat;
 - 2010-Conduct of Follow-up Workshop on Trade Data Processing- IT and Trade Statisticians;
 - Initial Work to address the issue of a Data Quality Framework Implementation building on approaches already in existence;
 - Commencement of Work in the area of Trade in Services and Investment Statistics building on past interventions mentioned earlier;
 - Training in National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) in collaboration with The Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (*PARIS21*);
 - Consultancy on Statistical Programming and review and refinement of RSWP and assistance with production of NSDS and National Annual Statistical Work Plans in accordance with the RSWP

Most of the above activities under the Caribbean Integration Support Programme (CISP) are now completed and follow-up work is currently in progress by the Regional Statistics Programme.

- (ii) The Inter-American Development Bank with three (3) projects:
 - (a) **Common Framework for Population Census in CARICOM**, jointly the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)- common questionnaire, methodologies and dissemination approach;
 - (b) **Common Framework for Statistics Production in CARICOM** focusing on the implementation of a common Regional Statistical Work Programme, preparation of model statistical legislation and establishing a framework for data storage, warehousing and archiving; and
 - (c) **Common Framework for a Literacy Survey in CARICOM** to provide a common framework to improve the measurement of literacy - its quality and relevance.

A fourth IDB-funded project on **Program to Enhance Dissemination of Trade Data in CARICOM Strengthening of the Regional Trade Information System (TradSys)** was completed in 2009.

- (iii) **The Government of Great Britain and Northern Ireland through the Department of International Development (DFID)** contributing to the Common Census Framework approach- including training in Census Organisation and Administration, Support to training in Demographic Analysis, Support to the Common questionnaire and methodologies meetings, Census Mapping/ Geographic Information System(GIS), Census Data processing, Census Data Dissemination;
- (iv) **The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)**- joint support with the IDB on the Common Census Framework Project, Support to the Region in Data Processing using CSPro editing programme, Meeting of Census experts to review the experiences of 2000 Round and identify lessons learnt to lessen the challenges of the 2010 Census Round;

- (v) **Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)** - Training in Demographic Analysis -multi-year training programme (completed in 2009);
- (vi) **World Bank Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building** (completed September 2009)- in Social/Gender and Environmental Statistics;
- (vii) **United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF)**- support to the Implementation of DevInfo data dissemination system;
- (viii) **The United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD)** - collaboration in Census implementation- workshop in mapping/GIS, training in CensusInfo for dissemination of Census data, support to attendance of participants at Census training workshops; Census Editing Workshop (forthcoming December 2010); Census Advocacy Events headed by the Director of the UNSD, Mr. Paul Cheung; facilitation of workshops in Social/Gender and Environmental Statistics; .
- (ix) The Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat) providing training opportunities in Luxembourg as well as the facilitation of regional workshops on Eurotrace Software Package for Merchandise Trade data processing.

5. APPROACH TO ACHIEVING RESULTS IN THE REGIONAL STATISTICS PROGRAMME

In order to accomplish its goals, the Regional Statistics Programme develops and coordinates activities and **promotes capacity building in collaboration with the development partners** listed in (2) above. It also undertakes this collaboration with organizations, institutions such as the University of the West Indies including SALISES, United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNECLAC), the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO). Among the key achievements to date of the Regional Statistics Programme are:

1. Focus on Compiling and Disseminating Statistics to support the development of the Integration process in a wide range of areas including Caribbean Specific

Indicators for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Statistics on International Trade in Services;

2. Production of a Regional Statistical Work Programme (RSWP) in collaboration with the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians (SCCS), approved by the Community Council in 2005;
3. a Resolution calling on Governments to invest in statistics as a priority passed by the Community Council in 2005;
4. Convening of a High Level Advocacy Forum in July 2009;
5. Capacity-building activities at the national level in a number of areas;
6. Establishing of Online Data Dissemination and Help-Desk facilities;

The Crux of the work at the regional level centres around the need for harmonisation particularly in the context of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME). Harmonisation is approached from several angles:

- a. The forum of the Standing Committee serves as a mechanism to try to discuss and agree to common frameworks;
- b. The CARICOM AGS that seeks to advance the decisions of the SCCS and make recommendations for statistical development in CARICOM;
- c. Regional training workshops- common approach- one on harmonisation of statistics which was held in 2002;
- d. Collection of metadata;
- e. Over the years efforts at achieving common approaches to the compilation of statistics such as Social/Gender Statistics- training workshops, National Accounts;
- f. DevInfo - data and Meta data and the capacity to coordinate statistics at the national level from line agencies - SDMX compliance;

- g. Establishment of a Quality Framework which would include the assessment of compliance;
- h. Developmental work on relatively new areas of Statistics - International Trade in Services, Information Communication Technology, Energy, Food Security;
- i. Enabling a strategic approach to the development of statistics with the preparation of NSDS.

6. RESULTS TO BE ACHIEVED ARE THE FOLLOWING:

- a. Comprehensive and harmonised systems of statistics developed in member countries and at the regional systems at the Secretariat;
- b. Statistical capacity in Member States and at the Secretariat strengthened and sustained;
- c. High quality statistics and indicators with metadata produced and disseminated in accordance with international standards;
- d. Framework for assessing quality/compliance with international/regional methodologies/standards;
- e. The profile and culture of statistics in the region improved and a strategic approach enabled - (through Advocacy and development of National Strategies for the Development of Statistics);
- f. Common Framework for Population Census in CARICOM is one project that we were able to initiate way back in 2003 with the IDB/joint funding with UNFPA as well as separate contribution by DFID;
- g. Use of technology- Eurotrace - Windows -based trade data processing, A number of facilities for disseminating data or providing resources to assist data producers primarily which we have engaged in over the years and which are now bearing fruits.

The activities of the above are well under way to achieve these results.

THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF CARIBBEAN STATISTICIANS (SCCS)

The Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians acting within the framework of the Treaty establishing the Caribbean Community was established in 1974, in accordance with Resolution No. 54/74/4 of the Fourth Meeting of the Common Market Council of Ministers and subject to the general supervision of Council:

"To foster increased recognition of the importance of adequate statistical services to the countries of the Region; to widen the scope and coverage of statistical data collection; and to improve the quality, comparability and timeliness of statistics produced." (Terms of Reference SCCS)

Over the years the **Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians (SCCS)** has been the main mechanism through which statisticians of the Region have sought to equalize and harmonise the pattern of statistical development across the Region.

It has been the vehicle through which heads of statistical offices, faced with limited resources have been able to share their experiences and best practices, facilitate South-South co-operation and establish relationships with international and regional organizations that led to the endorsement of key statistical capacity-building projects such as the joint United Nations Statistics Division/CARICOM Project on Strengthening Capacity in the Compilation of Social/Gender and Environmental Statistics; the Caribbean Integration Support Programme funded by the European Commission under the Ninth European Development Fund and the Multi-Programme of training in Demographic Analysis funded by the Caribbean Development Bank.

THE ADVISORY GROUP ON STATISTICS (AGS)

The Region has also seen the development of statistical advisory group(s) **as sub-groups of the SCCS** that have targeted the development of specific areas of statistics such as Social/Gender and Environmental Statistics, the rolling out of a Regional Statistical Work Programme particularly in the context of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy, Statistical Research Seminars and the insertion of PARIS21 within the regional statistical activities which led to the High-Level Advocacy Forum and other advocacy events.

The Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians (SCCS) approved the Terms of Reference contained herein, at its **Thirty-Second Meeting in 2007** in Paramaribo, Suriname therefore establishing the Advisory Group on Statistics.

The Advisory Group on Statistics now has before it the task of enabling the implementation of the **Regional Statistical Work Programme** as well as consideration of any needed reform of the SCCS as a forum for statistical development.

COMMON REGIONAL STATISTICAL WORK PROGRAMME

In 2005, the Community Council of Ministers of CARICOM approved a three-year Regional Statistical Work Programme (RSWP) and passed a Resolution calling on Governments of the Region to strengthen statistical capacity through increasing investment in Statistics as a priority in the Region. The objectives of the RSWP are to focus on the statistical needs to establish, monitor and evaluate the CSME and also to make available statistical information for decision-making, to keep pace with the changing socio-economic and global environmental changes, as well as technological advances.

The achievement of this objective would contribute immensely towards the harmonisation of statistics. The implementation of the RSWP requires actions at the national level to produce relevant statistics for the diagnosis and design of

national policies. Similarly, actions at the regional level are also essential to facilitate the development of harmonized national statistical systems and to build regional databases comprising comparable data sets.

The background to the RSWP and to the call for Governments to invest resources in statistics was a Paper presented by the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat to the Resumed Session of the Eighth Meeting of the Community Council held in Nassau, The Bahamas on 7 July 2001. The presentation in Nassau also highlighted the thrust of the Secretariat's Work Programme that centred on the need for more intensive efforts to harmonise statistics in the Region given the establishment of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME). The Community Council in its decisions noted the information required on the status and role of statistics in the Region and also noted the developmental work being executed in statistics. The Community Council also mandated the Caribbean Community Secretariat in collaboration with the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians (SCCS), to prepare in its Work Programme **a 3-year plan for the improvement of the quality and range of statistics available to the Region.**

Around the same time as the presentation to Council in 2001, the SCCS in reaction to a presentation on the CSME and the implications for statistics, expressed concerns relative to increased demands that would be faced by statistical agencies.

The development of a **Draft Regional Statistical Work Programme (RSWP)** was therefore placed on the agenda of the **28th Meeting of the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians (SCCS)** held in Providenciales, Turks and Caicos Islands during 3-5 November 2003.

It was decided at the SCCS Meeting that further discussions were required on the paper that was presented as a result of which the Secretariat commenced the Internet-based forum to refine the programme. **The discussions identified six (6) themes that reflected core issues requiring statistics and indicators to guide and assist the formulation of policies and decision-making in the Region.**

These themes were:

- (i) **Economy, Finance and Investment;**
- (ii) **Population, Demographics and Social and Living Conditions;**
- (iii) **Environment;**
- (iv) **Information and Communication Technology (ICT);**
- (v) **Public Relations and Data Dissemination;**
- (vi) **Statistical Coordination.**

Each theme comprised programme areas such as tourism, international trade in services, investment flows, and population and migration statistics.

After further refinement the Regional Statistical Work Programme that was prepared by the CARICOM Secretariat and the SCCS were presented to Council in 2005 and was approved.

STATISTICAL DATABASES

The Regional Statistics Programme maintains databases in the following broad areas:

- Trade
- Environment
- Social Statistics (eg. Population, Vital Statistics, Power and Decision Making)
- Economic Statistics (eg. National Accounts, Balance of Payments, External Debt)

The data are mainly in Microsoft Excel spread sheets and extend as far back as 1970 for some datasets.

Users have the ability to download the entire series at their convenience and manipulate the tables to suit their data needs. This can be done through our CARICOM Website at www.caricomstats.org

It is the intention of the Statistics Programme to concentrate on this area of its work programme and to expand the datasets currently available eventually making all the databases it maintains available to all users and producers of statistics.

STATISTICAL PUBLICATIONS

In addition to the databases maintained, the Programme also produces a number of statistical reports. These reports are disseminated in PDF format and require the use of the Adobe Acrobat Reader. Some of these reports/publications are as follows:

- **Balance of Payments**
- **CARICOM's Trade in Selected Agricultural Commodities**
- **External Public Debt**
- **Selected Economic Indicators**
- **Caricom's Intra Regional Trade Volumes I & II**
- **Women and Men in Caricom Member States: 1980, 1990 and 2000 Population and Housing Census**
- **Trade in Services**
- **National Accounts Digest**
- **CSME Profile- A Selection of Various Statistical Indicators**

THE REGIONAL STATISTICS PROGRAMME ONLINE FACILITIES

The Regional Statistics Programme also maintains several online facilities. These are as follows:

- TRADSYS Online
- CARICOMInfo 2.0
- EUROTRACE Software
- The Statistics Online HelpDesk

TRADSYS Online

TradSys Online is a facility that allows users to access the Regional Trade Information System, via the Internet. Development of this facility was funded by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). The Regional Trade Information System includes detailed commodity level data submitted to the Secretariat by CARICOM Member States.

Based on the user needs, the facility can be used to generate summary and detailed information on CARICOM/Member States trade (imports, domestic exports, re-exports and total exports) with selected trading partners (e.g. USA, Canada etc) , trading blocs (EU, NAFTA etc) or geographic area. Some of the reports that can be generated include:

- CARICOM's Imports, Exports and Balance of Trade with Partners by Country for Period
- CARICOM's Trade with Partners by Country for Period
- CARICOM's Intra-Regional Imports for the latest 5 years;
- Intra-Regional Trade Balance by Country for the latest 5 years
- CARICOM's /Member State top 10 trading partners etc

The facility also provides information on the classifications systems, the methodology; explanatory notes etc, used to compile the data. A Help function is also included to provide assistance to users.

This facility can be accessed at www.caricomstats.org.

EUROTRACE Software

EUROTRACE is a software application used by countries to manage their merchandise trade data. The Eurotrace software package is composed of three independent applications:- **the Eurotrace Database Management System (DBMS), the Eurotrace Editor and Comext Standalone.**

The **Eurotrace DBMS application** enables countries to create the database structure, to load the dictionaries and to define the validation rules. Once the database has been created, the DBMS can be used to load and validate the data. The detected errors can be corrected using the error correction wizard.

The **Eurotrace Editor**: the Editor can be used to visualise and correct data/errors. It can also be used to key in 'new records' and

The **Comext Standalone** enables users to query the database (DBMS) and to produce reports.

Most CARICOM Member States are using this software application to compile and disseminate their Merchandise Trade Statistics.

CARICOMINFO 2.0

CARICOMInfo is an adaptation of DevInfo which is a database system endorsed by the United Nations Development Group for monitoring human development. It is a tool for organizing, storing and presenting data in a uniform way to facilitate data sharing at the country level across government departments, UN agencies and development partners.

The Database consists of indicators, time periods, geographic areas, subpopulations, units, sources and data values. It provides access to indicators organized by sectors, goals, themes and other data management schemes. The software is user-friendly, free and backed by 24-hour support. The software application is integrated with Microsoft Office for easy presentation of data in tables, graphs and thematic maps.

Various countries and organisations in the Caribbean have developed DevInfo adaptations. These are Jamaica (JamStats; desktop version: 2003 and 2005 and online version: 2008), Saint Lucia (HelenInfo; since 2007), Dominica (NatureIsleInfo; 2008), Barbados (pilot version BimInfo; 2008), Trinidad and Tobago (cTTInfo; 2009), Guyana (GuyD_Info; 2009), St. Vincent and the Grenadines (Vin-Info; 2009), Suriname (ABSInfo; 2010), Grenada (SpiceIsleInfo; 2010); Haiti (HaitiInfo; 2003); The CARICOM Secretariat launched its web version (CARICOMInfo; 2009) and The OECS Secretariat with the help of the CARICOM Secretariat launched OECSInfo in 2009.

During the November 2007 Meeting of the Regional CARICOM Census Committee, the participants endorsed DevInfo as the leading data dissemination platform for the upcoming round of censuses - 2010-2011. It therefore gives "bold" opportunities for further roll-out of the software. DevInfo was presented at the Thirty-Fourth Meeting of the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians (34th SCCS) in October 2009 where the Meeting was asked to consider a Regional Template for the DevInfo adaptations in the CARICOM Region.

The need for a regional template arose out of the recognition that the harmonization of the DevInfo adaptations would lessen the workload (data re-entry) into regional worksheets that are required to combine the data for each adaptation. Work is currently in progress in this area and the CARICOM Secretariat has prepared the Draft Guidelines for the Development of a Regional

DevInfo Template with the main aim of producing standardized DevInfo databases which can be harmonised at the Regional level.

THE STATISTICS ONLINE HELPDESK

The CARICOM Statistics Online Help Desk was established to assist the National Statistics Offices (NSO) and other Organizations in Member States that are engaged in the production and dissemination of statistics.

Some key functions of the Statistics Help Desk:

1. To enhance the output resources used by producers and end users thereby enabling them to improve the quality and range of statistics.
2. To provide information on a range of basic concepts used in statistics regionally and internationally so as to guide the process of interpreting statistics through the use of manuals, guidelines, classifications and other relevant documentation.
3. To facilitate discussions among producers and end users of statistics within CARICOM regarding statistical areas of interest.
4. To facilitate widespread networking and improve information and knowledge-sharing of statistics in key areas including user best practices and other Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).
5. To provide links to other useful websites including knowledge-based websites.

Ultimately, the helpdesk will provide the decision-makers of CARICOM with the information necessary to monitor and guide the progress in the establishment and the strengthening of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy.

The Statistics Helpdesk Service is supported by:

(a) Question and Answer (Q&A) – This is an Electronic Centralised Registration System where users can post a question using an online form.

(b) Web-based Discussion Forums where stakeholders can follow and participate in various statistics related topics.

(c) A Documentary Service with a repository of relevant documents and manuals such as common regional guidelines for the production and dissemination of all statistics.

(d) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

(e) Technical support and information on basic statistical methods and Trade Information System used in the region.

THE 2010 ROUND OF POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS IN CARICOM

What is a population and housing census?

A modern population and housing census is the process of collecting, compiling, analyzing, and publishing demographic, socio-economic, and other data pertaining to **all** persons in a country and the national housing stock and its characteristics at a specified time. A census is a form of national stocktaking. Since the census is a **complete count** of the population and living quarters, it provides detailed benchmark data on the size of the population, age structure, educational attainment, economic activity, migration (internal / international) disability, housing, and household amenities as well as other major socio-economic characteristics. In recent censuses a few Caribbean countries have also asked questions on the environment, information and communication technologies (ICT) and crime since these are becoming very popular topics in their countries.

In CARICOM the data from the 2010 Round of Censuses will help government to allocate funds each year in order to improve services to the communities, some of which are:

- Schools/Colleges
- Hospitals/Clinics
- Police Stations/Fire Stations
- Job training centers
- Housing
- Senior centers
- Roads, bridges, drainage, tunnels and other-public works projects
- Emergency services
- Supply of Electricity
- Water supply
- Agriculture/ farms
- Transportation

Seven (7) countries, four (4) CARICOM Member States (i.e. Bahamas, Barbados, Belize and Saint Lucia) and three Associate Member States (Bermuda, British Virgin Islands and Cayman Islands) are conducting their 2010 Round of Censuses in 2010.

Why take a census?

Most countries in the Caribbean conduct censuses every ten (10) years (in some cases countries may take a census every five (5) years). Changes in the social fabric of a country may take place over a decade. These changes include fluctuating rates of population growth, changes in employment and unemployment, and changes in the annual births and death, immigration and emigration, and internal migration. All of these changes affect the demand for services including hospitals and health clinics, schools and classrooms, basketball courts and other recreational facilities, and infrastructure (including water, electricity, and transportation systems). A Census provides the data to permit us to evaluate those changes. These Census data are useful both to the public and private sectors, including government policy makers, private industry, the media, academia, researchers, labour organizations, small and large businesses, and the general public.

Why do you have to provide correct information to the enumerator?

It is very important to provide correct and accurate information to the enumerator. The information the census provides allows central and local government authorities and many other organisations to target their resources more effectively and to plan housing, education, health and transport services for years to come.

How do you take a census?

The term “census” generally means counting a country’s population as well as recording their characteristics as a snapshot in time. Statistical offices must complete several distinct and inter-related operations before presenting a picture of the population.

First, the country’s statistical office must draw up strategic and detailed operational plans outlining information to be collected, how to record it, and how to present, process the data and analyze the findings. After determining the sequence of tasks, then statistical offices organize the field data collection, under careful supervision and with extensive quality control. (Enumeration is the most crucial step in the census process; then offices edit, tabulate and disseminate the data - but without proper enumeration, the other functions will not be effective.)

The statistical office divides the country into small areas called Enumeration Districts (EDs) (which may comprise 60-100 households /families), and then assigns an enumerator to each ED. The enumerators must ensure that they fully understand the collection procedures. They must know what questions they are to ask and how to record the answers quickly and correctly on the questionnaires. If the enumeration is of high quality, then the final published tabulations and analysis will also be of good quality and maximized for informed policy decision making.

A field supervisor coordinates the activities of several enumerators, monitoring their work and resolving any problems arising during the fieldwork. The supervisor also acts as the link between enumerators and the Census Office. At the Census Office, staff check and code the completed questionnaires, and prepare them for data capture and subsequent electronic data processing.

Who provides the census information?

Ideally, the census enumerates every individual in the household directly, but this is not always possible. Therefore, responsible adults of the family can act as proxy respondents to provide the information about other persons in that household, if these adults know the required answers.

SELECTED STATISTICAL CONCEPTS

1. What is Social Statistics?

Social Statistics is the use of statistical measurements to study human behaviour in a social environment or on the various social aspects of our day to day existence. Social data include population -its size and characteristics, number of births and deaths, migration, health outcomes and facilities, marriages and divorces, number of schools and education levels of a given population, among others. Social data are usually used to obtain a picture of the quality of life of people, such as their access to basic resources which include clean water, schools and health facilities.

Social Data are also used to keep track of increases or decreases in the population of a country or even an administrative region. Population size is determined by three basic factors; these are Births, Deaths and Migration. Keeping accurate records of these can go a long way in measuring movements within the population, in the absence of surveys, etc. It is mandatory that countries do a Population Census every 10 years, but in the period between censuses; it is the births, deaths and migration records that are used to make population estimates.

Apart from Population censuses, Surveys can also be used to collect data in the areas of poverty, children and youth, education, health, etc. Unlike a census, a survey captures data from a sample of the total population. The sample size will differ depending on the size of the population.

Social data helps the authorities in making decisions such as where to build a school, hospital or a water treatment plant. For example, if the population of a certain village has been increasing gradually over a certain period, and there are large numbers of children between the ages of 5 and 12, the Government can use this as a justification for building a primary school in the village. Similarly the use of social statistics can also influence a decision on the construction of a hospital in terms of deciding on the location, the number of hospital beds, the number of personnel, etc. The information needed to make these decisions would not have

been available without some form of collection of social statistics. Social data are critical in the formulating health or education policies; in efforts to reduce poverty, the spread of HIV/AIDS and crime; and in other issues which affect societies.

2. Concepts in Poverty

1. Relative Poverty

Relative poverty measures the extent to which a household's financial resources falls below an average income threshold for the economy of the country.

2. Absolute Poverty

Absolute poverty measures the number of people living below a certain income threshold or the number of households unable to afford certain basic goods and services.

Poverty Measurements

Indices:

The following indices are to be measured through Poverty studies.

1. Proportion of population below \$1 per day (PPP)
2. Poverty gap ratio (incidence x depth of poverty)
3. Share of poorest quintile in national consumption
4. Prevalence of underweight children (under five years of age)
5. Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption (indigent)

Proportion of population below \$1 per day (PPP)

Measurement of number of persons who earns less than a \$1 per day divided by the targeted population, times 100.

Poverty line:

Measures the monetary value of the minimum food and non-food items that should be obtained by a household to fulfill its basic needs,

Poverty Gap:

The poverty gap measures the aggregate disparity in the incomes of the poor compared to the poverty line. It represents the amount needed to raise the income of all poor individuals to the level of the poverty line, as a proportion of the poverty line.

Indigence line: delineates the proportion of population below the minimum level of dietary consumption. This is the level below, which there is an inability of a household to satisfy basic food needs, based on estimates of food requirements.

Share of Poorest quintile in National Consumption

The quintiles of a distribution (household expenditure) divide households into fifths. The highest quintile of a distribution refers to the highest (richest) 20% of households and the lowest quintile refers to the lowest (poorest) 20% households.

Prevalence of underweight children (under five years of age)

Underweight:

"Underweight" or low weight for age is a measure of child's weight for age in relation to the median value of a standard reference population.

Stunted

"Stunted" or Low height for age relates the child's height to her/his age in reference to the median value of a standard reference population.

Wasted

"Wasted" measures the child's weight according to height in relation to the median value of a standard reference population.

Prevalence of underweight children (< 5 yrs. of age)

Number of underweight girls (boys) aged less than five years old, divided by the total number of girls (boys) in that age group, times 10,000

3. What is a Gender Issue?

Women's and men's different roles in society and their relationships have an effect on the societal policies and plans. Women and men also have different needs and different access to and control over resources. They face different constraints in responding to economic change and are affected by policies and plans in different ways. Examples:

- Women and men do not participate equally in decision-making
- Women do most of the unpaid work, men do most of the paid work.

4. What is the difference between "sex" and "gender"?

The difference between "sex" and "gender" is explicitly explained in the following manner.

Sex - this is the biological difference between women and men.

- Differences are fixed, unchangeable
- Differences do not change over time and between cultures

Gender - is the social relationship between women and men

- Differences between women and men are shaped through the history of social relations
- Differences may be changed
- Women's and men's roles change over time and between cultures

5. What is the difference between the term "incidence" and "prevalence"?

- Incidence - Number of cases reported in a particular year
- Prevalence - Cumulative total of cases reported for over a period of time