



# Population Ageing in the Caribbean

ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

# WHAT IS POPULATION AGEING

- ❑ Relative increase in the proportion of the older population that occurs primarily due to decline in birth rates.
  - ❑ a characteristic of an age distribution which is importantly affected by the trend of the birth rate as well as the trend of mortality
  
- ❑ Population ageing should be distinguished from individual ageing which is the absolute gain in individual life expectancy due to improvements in the quality of the environment and from medical advances among other factors.

# MEASUREMENT

- ❑ There are four main measures of population ageing,
  - ❑ the proportion of the population in the groups defined as young and or old;
  - ❑ the median age of the population
  - ❑ age dependency ratios and
  - ❑ the ageing index, or the aged-child ratio, which is the ratio of the number of elderly persons to the number of children in the population.

# MEASUREMENT CONT'D

- ❑ In relation to the proportions in the respective age groups, (the most commonly applied measurement) populations with 10 per cent or more 60 years old and over (UN) may be said to be old while populations with proportions under 5 per cent in this age group may be said to be young.

# DEMOGRAPHICS

- ❑ “Within the next five years, for the first time in human history, the number of adults aged 65 and over will outnumber children under the age of 5.”
- ❑ By 2050, these older adults will outnumber children under the age of 14.

( WHO )



# DEMOGRAPHICS

## □ GLOBAL

- UN estimates indicate that the current population over 65 years has doubled since 1980
- Between 2000 and 2050, the proportion of the world's population over 60 years will double from about 11% to 22%.
- The absolute number of people aged 60 years and over is expected to increase from 605 million to 2 billion over the same period



# DEMOGRAPHICS

## □ GLOBAL

□ The number of people aged 80 years will almost quadruple to 395 million between now and 2050.

□ Seventy-six percent of older persons are expected to live in developing countries

(WHO and UN)

# DEMOGRAPHICS CONT'D

## Caribbean

The main current demographic trends impacting on the ageing situation in the Caribbean relates to

- decreased fertility rates and proportions in the younger ages,
- increased life expectancy due to improved standards relative to health care,
- high out-migration rates among young adults and to a lesser extent return migration among those of retirement ages.



# STATUS

- ❑ The tempo of ageing in the Caribbean is expected to be extremely rapid because the region has experienced, on average, fairly rapid fertility declines,
- ❑ The UN has indicated that the populations of the Caribbean are expected to age more rapidly than those of Europe and North America (now in the third stage of the demographic transition), did, in the past (United Nations, 2005).



# STATUS CONT'D

- ❑ In 2000 most of the populations of the Caribbean had close to 10 percent of their populations above the age of 60 (were ageing)
- ❑ Notable exceptions were Haiti (not seen here), Guyana, Belize and Cayman Islands.
- ❑ Importantly, only the Cayman Islands had less than 5% of their population being 60+ years of age (relatively young population)

# STATUS CONT'D

Ageing Population and intercensal change, 1990, 2000 & 2010 Round of Censuses

Country	1990 Round	2000 Round	2010 Round	Intercensal Change (2000-2010 Round )	Intercensal Percentage Change (2000-2010 Round )
	% 60+	% 60+	% 60+		
Antigua and Barbuda	11.0	9.4			
The Bahamas <sup>1/</sup>	6.7	8.3	6.1	-3,573	-16.5
Barbados	15.3	15.3			
Belize <sup>1/</sup>	6.1	5.9	4.2	-630	-4.8
Dominica	11.8	13.4			
Grenada	10.7	12.2			
Guyana	5.9	6.2			
Jamaica	9.7	10.2	11.3	40,390	13.2
Montserrat	17.1	17.5			
St. Kitts and Nevis	12.6	10.2			
Saint Lucia	8.8	10.7	11.9	3,042	15.4
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	8.9	9.9			
Suriname	...	8.6	10.2	12,218	22.4
Trinidad and Tobago	8.7	10.0	13.4	51,199	28.8
Anguilla	9.1	7.5			
Bermuda <sup>1/</sup>	13.3	15.0	14.0	-354	-3.9
British Virgin Islands	7.8	7.8			
Cayman Islands	...	5.6	5.1	637	22.5
Turks and Caicos Islands	0.0	0			

## Notes

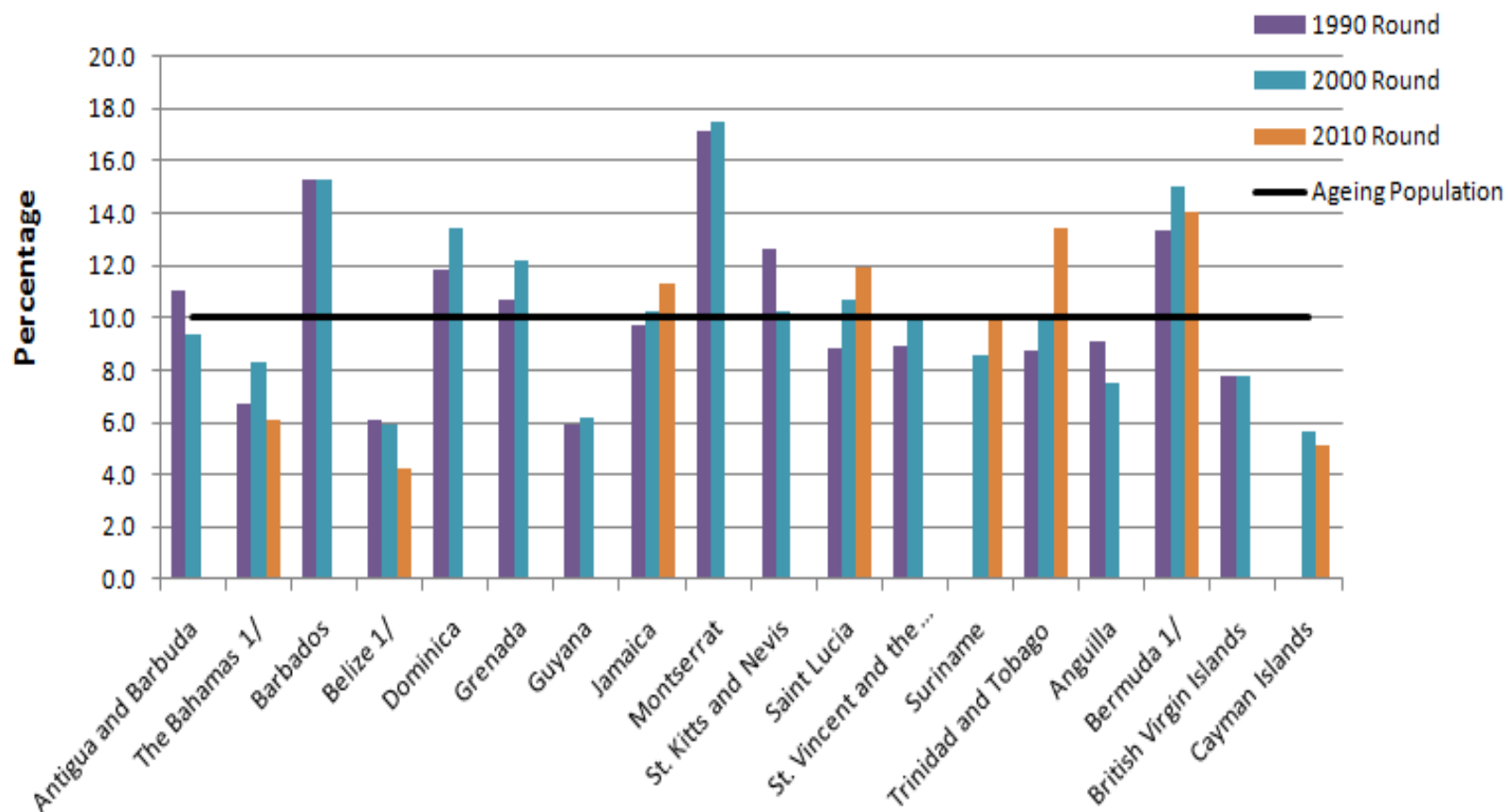
<sup>1/</sup> Refers to 65+ for 2010 Round of Census

Cayman Islands conducted their Census in 1999

Suriname conducted their Census in 2004

# STATUS CONT'D

Percentage of Persons 60 years and over , 1990; 2000 & 2010 Round of Censuses



# STATUS CONT'D

- ❑ Of the six countries that have population data available by age-group for the 2010 Round of Census, three countries recorded increases in the percentage of their populations above the age of 60 .
  - ❑ Trinidad & Tobago 8.6% in 2000 compared to 13.4 % in 2010
  - ❑ Saint Lucia 10.7% in 2000 compared to 11.9 % in 2010
  - ❑ Suriname 8.6% in 2000 compared to 10.2% in 2010

# STATUS CONT'D

- ❑ Of the countries that submitted data by age-group for the 2010 Round, two of them could be classified as having “*young*” populations.
  - ❑ Belize 4.2
  - ❑ Cayman Islands 5.1
  
- ❑ The Bahamas population which was approaching that of an ageing population between 1990-2000 appears to be now becoming younger decreasing from 8.3% in 2000 to 6.1% in 2010.

# CHALLENGES

- ❑ The Caribbean's ageing situation is expected, relative to developed countries, to be one characterized by low levels of socio-economic development such as
  - ❑ Poverty especially among women,
  - ❑ Decreased income with age coupled with greater cost of living
- ❑ Diminishing family support means more social and economic challenges
  - ❑ Lower fertility equates to fewer children that will be available to care for their parents both socially and economically,
  - ❑ Increased childlessness will ultimately lead to greater proportions of older persons who will not have children to support and care for them.



# CHALLENGES CONT'D

- ❑ Less than adequate public safety nets and poor social security,
- ❑ Ill-health including chronic diseases and disability
- ❑ Rapid increase in the “older-old”,
- ❑ Ageing of health care workers who are themselves become older,.
- ❑ Gender disparity





# OPPORTUNITIES

- ❑ Family stability as a significant percentage of older persons are Heads of Households
- ❑ “Younger-old” perform roles such as caregivers, providing emotional and social support



# THE WAY FORWARD

RESEARCH

POLICIES

PLANS AND PROGRAMMES

# THE WAY FORWARD CONT'D

## RESEARCH

Research into a number of areas is necessary such as

- impact of ageing on future labour force,
- living arrangements (who will care for the elderly???)
- Availability of services
- Promotion of Active ageing
- Gender Inequalities

# THE WAY FORWARD CONT'D

## □ POLICY RESPONSE

Ageing and development – Move away from Responses based on Care and Support to a developmental approach- as agents of development and change;

Among the developmental issues identified are – participation, work, poverty eradication, social protection, access to knowledge and training;

“Window of opportunity” that exists re the working age population re the benefits to investment and economic growth.

# THE WAY FORWARD CONT'D

## POLICY RESPONSE

- Advancing and enabling health and well-being into old ages;
- Enabling of supportive environments to ageing in the family, community and institutions ensuring access to care and social protection;
- Positive perception on ageing/social exclusion and poverty to be addressed;

# THE WAY FORWARD CONT'D

## PLANS AND PROGRAMMES

- Improved standards of living and poverty reduction
- Health and Social Care
- Income Security
- Support Networks



THANK YOU