

**THIRTY-FOURTH MEETING OF
THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF
CARIBBEAN STATISTICIANS**

SCCS/2009/34/11

Gros Islet, Saint Lucia

26-28 October 2009

25 October 2009

DEVELOPMENT WORK ON THE MEASUREMENT OF LITERACY IN THE REGION

The CARICOM Secretariat wishes to inform the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians (SCCS) that it has recently received a draft agreement under the Regional Public Goods Award from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) to formalise the terms of a grant for a non-reimbursable technical cooperation amounting to the sum of six hundred and fifty thousand United States dollars (US\$650,000), which is to finance the contracting of consulting services and procurement of goods necessary for the execution of a technical cooperation programme on a Common Framework for a Literacy Survey.

The general objective of the Programme is the creation of a Common Regional Framework for a Literacy Survey, in the CARICOM Region. The framework will contain common survey instruments, training manuals and related materials required for conducting a literacy survey and producing harmonised literacy statistics. The goal is to support informed policy making to meet the Education for All (EFA) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), as well as supporting the integration process that is part of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME).

In order to achieve the above-mentioned objective, the Program will finance the implementation of the following components:

Component 1: Establishment of a Common Framework Involving a Regional Approach for Conducting the Literacy Assessment Methodology

As an initial step in the preparation of this framework, a consultant with expertise and knowledge in the application of the literacy assessment methodology used in the International Survey of Reading Skills (ISRS) and Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Program (LAMP) approaches will be contracted to review the details of the methodology and the options to apply it on a regional basis. Two regional workshops, targeting national statistical offices staff will be organised that will allow member countries to work on the required outputs and technical issues. The national statistical offices will collaborate closely with their respective Ministries of Education (MOE). It is expected that as part of the framework, the following results will be produced: common instruments, sampling framework, timelines for execution, plan and format for data analysis and subsequent publication/dissemination, as well as guidelines for the use of the data for policy making and the collaboration with the Ministries of Education. The Programme will finance technical assistance to support the countries in the development of these documents as well as the consensus creating workshops.

Component 2: Development and Adaptation of Literacy Assessment Instruments, Such as Survey Instruments (questionnaires) and Training Manuals as Part of the Common Framework.

Besides the actual questionnaires for the survey, the Programme will also support technical assistance to the countries for the development of a training manual for the interviewers to be used during future survey execution and other related instruments. To this end, two regional workshops will be organised. The manual will speak to the instruments to be used; training frequency and efforts required; quality assurance mechanisms to be used during data collection and subsequent data validation.

Component 3: Development of National Implementation Plans

This component will provide technical assistance to the member countries both during and in-between the workshops to develop a template for the national implementation plans. The template will include the required financial resources (budget), timelines, number of interviewers required, definition of sample, resources required for subsequent data analysis, a social marketing effort to inform the general public, and a sustainability component, and close collaboration with other ministries, most importantly MOE. It is expected that the plans will speak to at least planning and execution of two surveys to allow monitoring of improvements in literacy over time. Considerable efforts and time have to be dedicated to inform the population about the survey. The national plan will also include the implementation of a field test to establish the psychometric and measurement property of the survey instrument and to confirm key aspects of survey cost and quality.

ACTION TO BE TAKEN

The **Meeting** is **invited** to:

- **note** the approval of the RPG submission on the Common Literacy Framework and the receipt of the Draft Agreement by the Secretariat.
