

THIRTY-EIGHTH MEETING OF  
THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF  
CARIBBEAN STATISTICIANS (SCCS)

SCCS/2013/38/12

Frigate Bay, St. Kitts and Nevis

28-30 October 2013

28 October 2013

---

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE TWELFTH  
AND THIRTEEN MEETINGS OF THE CARICOM ADVISORY GROUP ON  
STATISTICS (AGS) FOR THE CONSIDERTATION OF THE THIRTY-EIGHTH  
MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF CARIBBEAN STATISTICIANS  
(SCCS)

B.1. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REGIONAL STATISTICAL WORK  
PROGRAMME (RSWP) – ADVANCING THE PROCESS

THE ADVISORY GROUP ON STATISTICS (AGS):

(A) BERMUDA's PRESENTATION - RSWP Implementation - Advancing the  
Process

**Noted** the presentation made by Bermuda on, "RSWP Implementation - Advancing the Process" which addressed the status of Implementation of the RSWP by the Bermuda Department of Statistics through the following key issues:

- (i) The presentations made by Bermuda and Jamaica at the Thirty-Seventh Meeting of the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians (SCCS) which was held in Grenada in 2012;

- (ii) An Outline of Steps taken by the Bermuda Department of Statistics to implement the RSWP;
- (iii) The approach to gaining buy-in and support for the RSWP; and
- (iv) The immediate next steps proposed.

**Emphasised** that the RSWP was for the entire National Statistical System (NSS);

**Also emphasised** the importance of linking the RSWP and the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) initiatives;

**Also noted** that Bermuda launched its NSDS in September, 2013 and it was to be an opportunity to administer a questionnaire to the Ministries Departments and Agencies (MDAs) to obtain information on the following:

- a listing of the statistics produced by the MDAs;
- the frequency of the statistics being produced; and
- the degree of alignment of these statistics with international standards and best practices, etc.

**Further noted** that The Bahamas had shared the updated RSWP with senior management and made a presentation on the same to determine the way forward relative to implementation of the RSWP;

**Expressed** the view that the RSWP should not be seen as a regional-national divide but that the RSWP should be seen as the overarching framework to the national work programmes;

**Emphasised** that statistics are guided by policies that would determine the level of priority relative to the statistics to be produced in the Region by the Member States;

**Also emphasised** that elements of the RSWP at a more detailed level may not be relevant in terms of the absence of the phenomenon in specific countries but that this does not mean that the RSWP as a broad framework is not relevant;

**Noted** that the Member State of Belize had adopted the RSWP in their National Work Programme but that there were challenges in getting the MDAs on board;

**Also noted** the challenges experienced by The Bahamas with respect to forming committees to oversee the RSWP implementation process and the inclusion of the NSS in the process.

**Further noted** that both Belize and The Bahamas requested feedback on what can be done to bring the MDAs on board in the NSS;

**Recognised** that the process of having an integrated NSS could be a long-term process;

**Also recognised** that the RSWP addressed issues such as capacity of countries and the limitations that were posed to the full implementation of the RSWP;

## **(B) SURINAME'S PRESENTATION**

**Noted** the presentation made by Suriname which highlighted, the funding/budgeting process, the formulation of a Strategy, development of a Plan of Action with timelines for the implementation of the RSWP as follows:

**Budget Processing Phase- the importance of the budget preparation process in Suriname, which included:**

- The time of commencement of the Budgeting Process;
- *The assumptions for the budgeting process, Points of Departure, Imposed Budget Spending limits, Report on Previous year's Budget Spending and the alignment of Budget Spending with the Development Plan and the impact particularly on Women and Men, Boys and Girls;*
- that the Assumptions consider *the desired percentage of the Budget Deficit to GDP and desired Economic Growth;*

**Formulation of a Strategy, development of a Plan of Action and timelines for the implementation of the RSWP which included:**

- a Gap analysis (comparison of current output with output proposed in the RSWP using the Data Availability Matrix), and
- a Mapping exercise (mapping national priorities to regional priorities), or vice versa

The importance of the inclusion of the NSS to the RSWP implementation process and the linkages between the RSWP and the NSDS were also emphasised.

**(C) CARICOM SECRETARIAT - PREPARATION OF AN RSWP IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE**

**Noted** the presentation made by the CARICOM Secretariat on the "Preparation of an RSWP Implementation Guide" based on the decision of the Thirty-Seventh SCCS Meeting;

**Also noted** the core issues which were to be highlighted in the Implementation Guide which along with the Draft Implementation Guide is found in **Attachment I**;

**Recommended** the following relative to advancing the implementation process of the RSWP:

- (i) The need for countries to take **ownership** of the implementation of the RSWP;
- (ii) that countries should take **small steps to consistently and methodically** lay the foundation for the RSWP implementation process in terms of gradually bringing the MDAs on board to enable inclusion of the NSS;
- (iii) the best practice of the NSO of Trinidad and Tobago with respect to **convening periodic (at least quarterly) meetings of groups of MDAs in specific Domains/Themes** which can provide inputs/suggestions; goodwill; expectations by stakeholders on service delivery by the NSO; building of synergies and enabling the MDAs to gain a greater understanding of the work of the NSO;
- (iv) The need for **building new and/or continuing existing relationships** by including other data producers in the implementation process;
- (v) **Comparing the RSWP to the Work Programmes of the National Statistical Offices (NSOs)** in order to identify the gaps and prioritise the areas of work;
- (vi) Countries should address the issue of **financing** and how to prepare for economic challenges. Reference was made to Suriname's presentation on **"The importance of budget preparation to the process"**;

- (vii) Countries should conduct **self-examinations of the current processes** of their offices relative to streamlining of the operations of the NSOs to enable greater efficiency without necessarily having to increase resources.
- (viii) The development of a new **self-assessment questionnaire** which should focus on the **National Statistical System (NSS)** given that the current RSWP questionnaire in the main, does not address the NSS but the NSO. In this regard, the need for knowledge of the NSS and their current capacity was emphasised.
- (ix) Relative to the assessments to be incorporated in the RSWP tools, such as Tool for Assessing Statistical Capacity (TASC) of the US Census Bureau and the Data Availability Matrix of Suriname (as a good practice) can be considered.
- (x) That consideration should be given to **peer review** in the assessments of the NSO and NSS;
- (xi) The need for re-engineering such as the upgrading of technology was viewed as another mechanism of gaining efficiency in the operations of the NSOs;
- (xii) The use of frameworks such as the Model Statistics Bill, the Data Management framework for data sharing would be useful in commencing the addressing of the challenges of managing the NSS such as enabling the legal authority of the NSO within the NSS;
- (xiii) The presentation made by Anguilla on *Setting Standards – Managing Data Quality* at the Regional Statistical Seminar series can be used as the background to conduct an assessment of the NSS.

- (xiv) The development of the **Formal Attachment Programme** which is currently being addressed by the CARICOM Secretariat and which incorporates the Domains of the RSWP should support RSWP implementation;
- (xv) Advancing the development of the **Implementation Guide** to support the implementation process in countries and the inclusion of the **NSDS** with respect to the contextual issues should assist in RSWP implementation.
- (xvi) The development of a **Road Map** which is critical to the implementation process in the context of the **NSDS** is also to be incorporated in the Implementation Guide;
- (xvii) The **existing mechanisms and frameworks** such as the Core Social/Gender Themes/Statistics and the Caribbean Specific MDGs (CSMDGs) Indicators; the High Frequency indicators/Minimum Data Set, the Environmental Themes and Indicators, the Caribbean Specific Information and Communication Technologies (CSICTs) indicators that are already achievements of the RSWP Implementation;
- (xviii) There should be a **Monitoring and Evaluation Framework**, which was already on the agenda of the AGS and which would serve to monitor progress with RSWP implementation;
- (xix) The process of enhancing the implementation of the RSWP requires elements of **research and risk-assessment and risk-taking** relative to the review of existing processes and development of new processes;

## **B.2. THE HIGH FREQUENCY INDICATORS (HFI) AND CARICOM MINIMUM DATA SET (MDS)**

### **THE ADVISORY GROUP ON STATISTICS (AGS):**

**Noted** the presentation made by the CARICOM Secretariat on the comparison of the High Frequency Indicators (HFI) and the CARICOM Minimum Data Set (MDS) and the status of countries in the production of these indicators;

**Also noted** that thirteen (13) countries have submitted the information requested on the HFI and MDS to the CARICOM Secretariat;

**Recommended** the following with respect to the HFI:

- (i) Identification of the indicators of the HFI which are to be produced by countries as core indicators as per the Matrix in **Attachment II**.
- (ii) the conduct of a seminar on the Labour Force Survey including country practices on sampling and estimation, as they pertain to the derivation of annual labour market indicators from surveys that are held quarterly or less than quarterly. This should be attended by Directors of Statistics, Labour Force Survey Experts and Sampling Experts.
- (iii) There is need to document the metadata of the HFI and other core MDS indicators;
- (iv) Countries should share their metadata on the revised HFI/ MDS indicators with the CARICOM Secretariat which would undertake a comparison of the same and disseminate to countries, in keeping with the objective of harmonisation.
- (v) The proposed **formal attachment programme** for the CARICOM Region should be used to provide support to countries to assist with the production of the HFI /MDS indicators.



- (vi) A final review of the matrix of HFI/MDS indicators should be undertaken by all countries to verify the availability of the indicators.

### **B.3. CONSIDERATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES AND MANUALS/GUIDELINES TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF ECONOMIC STATISTICS**

#### **THE ADVISORY GROUP ON STATISTICS (AGS):**

**Noted** the presentation made by the CARICOM Secretariat on the Integrated Questionnaire, Sectoral Questionnaires, and the Statistical Business Register (SBR) Manual;

**Recalled** that the development of an integrated questionnaire for the Region was one of the outputs of the Ninth European Development Fund (EDF) in the area of National Accounts/Short Term Economic Indicators;

**Also recalled** the work of the Technical Working Group (TWG), funded under the Ninth EDF and established in the areas of National Accounts and Trade in Services that sought to advance the development of the preliminary integrated questionnaire as well as to commence work on the sectoral questionnaires;

**Also noted** the following:

- (i) The integrated questionnaire which was developed by the TWG was distributed to countries for feedback. The feedback received from countries was incorporated into the integrated questionnaire. Generally, concerns were expressed about the length of the questionnaire and efforts were made by the CARICOM Secretariat to shorten the questionnaire. The integrated questionnaire targets the collection of information on an annual basis only;

- (ii) Twelve sectoral questionnaires were produced by the TWG. These were being reviewed and it was the view that there should be one generic questionnaire for the long form, one short form and a fewer number of sectoral questionnaires. The sectoral questionnaires are also for collection of information on an annual basis;
- (iii) The work of the TWG included the development of a **Statistical Business Register (SBR) Manual** for the Region which was developed by the Member State of Trinidad and Tobago. The draft SBR Manual was distributed to countries for feedback and the comments received from countries were incorporated into the SBR which is being revised by the CARICOM Secretariat,
- (iv) The presentation on the SBR Manual was made by the CARICOM Secretariat at a workshop/seminar on the 2008 SNA implementation in Jamaica in February 2013. Jamaica also made a presentation at the same seminar on actually demonstrating their SBR and the actual processes involved.

**Highlighted** the importance of the integrated and sectoral questionnaires and the SBR Manual relative to the achievement of harmonisation of statistics in the Region and their usefulness in the implementation of the 2008 SNA and the implementation of the RSWP;

**Further noted** the following:

- (i) The Member State of Belize is in the process of redesigning their Economic Statistics Questionnaire and is using an adaptation of the integrated questionnaire. A pilot survey is to be conducted, in this regard. It was requested that Belize share their experience with countries relative to the piloting of the questionnaire at the Thirty-Eighth SCCS Meeting;
- (ii) The Bahamas is currently revising their questionnaires in the context of the 2008 SNA implementation and the integrated questionnaire. The Bahamas is

considering applying the integrated questionnaire every 3-5 years and a shorter questionnaire in the intervening years;

- (iii) Bermuda indicated that all of the elements that are included in the integrated questionnaire are captured using two (2) separate questionnaires;
- (iv) The Member State of Trinidad and Tobago will compare their questionnaire to that of the integrated questionnaire in order to determine what elements are missing and to make efforts to incorporate the same.

**Noted** that the integrated questionnaire attempts to compile information on International Trade in Services;

**Also noted** that the preliminary SBR Manual was currently being used by countries even though it is still being developed by the CARICOM Secretariat;

**Recommended** the following:

- (i) That countries consider the role of the integrated questionnaire in the Region in the context of the development of National Accounts and Economic Statistics;
- (ii) That allowance for pre-coding be included in the integrated questionnaire;
- (iii) That countries should work in close collaboration with their Central Banks relative to the development of statistics on International Trade in Services due to the central role of the NSOs in this process;
- (iv) The need for an integrated questionnaire to be applied across the Region. Countries are urged to compare the integrated questionnaire to that of their national questionnaires in order to determine what elements could be adopted;
- (v) That countries consider the sectoral questionnaires which were developed by the TWG and how to treat with the same;
- (vi) That countries consider the possibility of:

- Implementing the integrated questionnaire every 3-5 years while applying a shortened version in the intervening years;
  - Use of the long and short questionnaires, dispatching the long questionnaire to the larger businesses/establishments and applying the shortened questionnaire to the smaller businesses.
- (vii) That the CARICOM Secretariat communicate with the TWG relative to the consideration of a **shortened Integrated questionnaire** that can be used in the Region;
- (viii) That countries continue to review the draft SBR Manual in order to improve the same and submit feedback to the CARICOM Secretariat.

**B.4. DRAFT ATTACHMENT PROGRAMME TO ADVANCE ALL AREAS OF STATISTICS IN THE REGION – SOUTH-SOUTH CO-OPERATION THE ADVISORY GROUP ON STATISTICS (AGS):**

**Noted** the presentation made by the CARICOM Secretariat on the development of a Formal Attachment Programme for the Region;

**Recalled** that the development of a formal attachment programme and areas of support for countries was one of the outputs of the Ninth EDF; The attachment programme was focused in this regard in the area of National Accounts/Short Term Economic Indicators;

**Emphasised** the following:

- The importance of the formalisation of an Attachment Programme in the region relative to operationalising the Regional Statistical Work Programme (RSWP);

- The usefulness of the Attachment Programme which will aid in building capacity relative to harmonisation and development of statistics in the Region;

**Also noted** that the format of the attachment programme for the Region was revised in accordance with the domains of the updated RSWP;

**Further Noted** that work is to be undertaken by the CARICOM Secretariat in advancing the preparation of a Concept Note on the Attachment Programme in collaboration with the Technical Services Action Unit (TASU) programme area of the Secretariat;

**Recommended** the following with respect the development of the formal attachment programme for the Region:

- (i) That the CARICOM Secretariat resend the revised Attachment Programme to all countries for completion and resubmission;
- (ii) That the CARICOM Secretariat make available the attachment programme with the country submissions before the Fourteenth AGS meeting;
- (iii) The **conduct of train-the-trainers workshops/sessions** in order to train experts from NSOs in the relevant fields on the approach to be taken with respect to the delivery of training on specific themes as set out in the attachment programme;
- (iv) CARICOM Secretariat should contact CARTAC and other agencies relative to the concept note that is being developed and on the funding of the Attachment Programme;

- (v) That there should be a **formal launch** to introduce the attachment programme for the CARICOM Region in order to sensitise the various Ministers and other stakeholders about this undertaking;
- (vi) That a committee comprising of Directors of Statistics of Belize, Barbados and Jamaica assess the qualifications/requirements needed to become a statistician in the Region and report to the Fourteenth Meeting of the AGS.

**B.5. STATUS OF THE 2010 ROUND OF POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUS-DATA PROCESSING, ANALYSIS AND DISSEMINATION [TO BE PRESENTED AT THE TWENTY-THIRD MEETING OF THE REGIONAL CENSUS COORDINATING COMMITTEE (RCCC)]**

**THE ADVISORY GROUP ON STATISTICS (AGS):**

**Noted** the presentations made by the CARICOM Secretariat and Trinidad and Tobago on this Agenda item;

**Also noted** the status, updates and challenges presented by countries present at the Twelfth AGS meeting on the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Census;

**Further noted** the attempts made by the CARICOM Secretariat in trying to obtain funds for Census data analysis;

**Noted** that the CARICOM Secretariat has written a proposal which has been submitted to the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) relative to support for census data analysis and dissemination;

**Also noted** that the CARICOM Secretariat has received data files from some of the countries that have completed the cleaning of their census data;

**Further noted** that the Belize Census data set is being used as a pilot relative to the dissemination of Census data using the CensusInfo dissemination software;

**Noted** that one of the **major challenges** for the Member State of Belize **was the request for access to the census microdata** from the line Ministries and this was dealt with through creating a microdata lab, establishing a policy on the release of microdata and developing a Memorandum of Understanding;

**Further noted** that Belize shared its microdata policy with the Twelfth Meeting of the AGS;

**Recommended** the following:

- (i) That countries review the Microdata policy/MOU which was developed by Belize and make efforts to incorporate the same into their work programmes;
- (ii) That countries examine best practices from agencies such as Statistics Canada relative to the work that should be put in place in the region on the establishment of microdata labs and the establishment of a policy committee to monitor and control the access to microdata;
- (iii) That countries consider the establishment of microdata labs and the terms and conditions of access to the same;
- (iv) That the CARICOM Secretariat considers the recent developments with respect to access to microdata in the Region and include this as an Agenda item for the next SCCS meeting. Reference was also made to the Position on Access to Microdata which was adopted by the Thirty-Fifth SCCS Meeting in Dominica;

- (v) That the information that was obtained from the Statistics Canada training as it pertained to access to microdata be shared with all countries.
- (vi) There is need for the establishment of a “**Revisions Policy**” which would allow for ease with respect to the conditions for revising data already disseminated.

## **B.6. STRENGTHENING OF SOCIAL/GENDER AND ENVIRONMENT STATISTICS**

### **THE ADVISORY GROUP (AGS):**

**Noted** the presentations made by the CARICOM Secretariat, Suriname and Dominica on this Agenda item;

**Also noted** the following:

### **SOCIAL/GENDER AND ENVIRONMENT STATISTICS**

- (i) That there are existing data gaps with respect to the submission of Caribbean Specific Millennium Development Goals (CSMDGs) Indicators by countries as presented by the CARICOM Secretariat;
- (ii) That there were significant improvements with respect to the submission of data on the CSMDGs Indicators by some countries to the CARICOM Secretariat;
- (iii) That the CARICOM Secretariat was to resend the CSMDGs matrix to countries for review and completion by the 19<sup>th</sup> July 2013;
- (iv) A Third Regional publication on Environment Statistics is in the process of being released by the CARICOM Secretariat. The Member States of Suriname, Belize,



Dominica and Associate Member Bermuda have also produced reports in the area of Environment Statistics;

## **DOMINICA's PRESENTATION**

**Also commended** the presentation made by Dominica on the development and progress on Social Indicators and Environment Statistics. The following issues were highlighted:

- Active Inter-agency collaboration in collecting and sustaining the collection/compilation of Social Indicators and Environment Statistics. Dominica has since 2003 an SIMDG National Committee. Some of the objectives of this committee are - To complete social indicators and the MDG Programme, document definitions and methodologies, encourage government departments to collect data for social indicators, and monitor the collection and institutionalisation of data requests for the SIMDGs. In addition, a joint agency committee for social indicators and environment statistics and a biodiversity committee were established.
- Suggestions on revising some CSMDG indicators -Indicators of the CSMDGs that are not measurable and suggested proxy/substitute indicators in this regard;
- Existing Data gaps in above mentioned indicators;
- Sources of data to fill the data gaps;
- Suggestions on improvement to enable the measurement of data;
- Suggestions in terms of filling the data gaps.

Some of the suggested revisions of CSMDG indicators were:

**Goal 2, indicator 15-** Proportion of students in Secondary schools in 5<sup>th</sup> Form enrolled in Science and Technical subjects by sex. Suggested to collect data on those who sit the examination, because teachers may not recommend students to write CXC and this can overstate the number of children who are enrolled.

**Goal 3, indicator 31-** Proportion of women in Decision making Occupations- There is need of a definition for decision making and the request of a list of decision making occupations.

**Goal 8, indicator** Proportion of population with access to affordable essential approved drugs- A list with affordable/approved drugs can be obtained from the Ministry of Health, but there is a need for a definition of the term essential.

- (i) The Member State of Dominica will produce for the first time a report on “**Violence against Women**”. This will be done in collaboration with the Women’s Affairs Bureau.
- (ii) A publication on the CSMDG’s indicators will also be produced as well as the Fifth compendium on the Environment

## **SURINAME’S PRESENTATION**

**Commended** Suriname on the initiatives undertaken post the UNSD-CARICOM project with respect to enhanced inter-agency collaboration between the UN organisations, other stakeholders and the GBS. A matrix was presented by the Member State of Suriname illustrating the various Programme Coordinating Groups (PCGs) that were established which are responsible for the various areas of work. Particular attention was given to the Programme Coordinating Group Data.

**Recommended** the following:

- (i) Suriname's example on the formation of the various Programme Coordinating Groups (PCGs) be used as best practice in the Region;
- (ii) Linkages/correlation to the RSWP be done to show those organisations or participating bodies providing support to the various themes/areas of the RSWP;
- (iii) The **recommendations in (i) and (ii)above** be closely examined to determine what aspects can be taken to the next SCCS;
- (iv) That the CARICOM Secretariat examines the proposals contained in the presentation made by Dominica to revise some of the CSMDGs indicators. This will be done in comparison with the full complement of the CSMDGs;
- (v) Countries consider compiling metadata on the CSMDGs, if they have not yet commenced this process. The CARICOM Secretariat indicated that work was done on the CSMDGs metadata compilation and this information will be sent to countries. The importance of documenting the metadata was emphasised given its critical role in the process of achieving harmonization in the Region.
- (vi) Countries compare their metadata to that of the CARICOM Secretariat and document and submit any differences to the CARICOM Secretariat. It was highlighted that the metadata documentation by the Secretariat was done in keeping with international recommendations and the national submissions from countries.

**Agreed** that the paper presented by Dominica will be presented at the Thirty-Eighth SCCS Meeting.

## **B.7. INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON PROGRAMME (ICP) 2011 ROUND – STATUS REPORT BY COUNTRIES**

### **THE ADVISORY GROUP ON STATISTICS (AGS):**

#### **A. GENERAL COMMENTS/FEEDBACK ON PRESENTATION**

**Noted** the presentations made by the CARICOM Secretariat and Trinidad and Tobago on this Agenda item;

**Recalled** that the ICP was launched at a Meeting in Barbados in 2010, back-to-back with an RCCC Meeting;

**Also noted** that the deadline for the submission of data was June 2013;

**Further noted** that all countries have submitted the preliminary data on Prices and National Accounts as required;

**Noted** that updates were received by some countries on the submission of their ICP National Accounts and Prices data.

#### **B. CHALLENGES/WEAKNESSES OF PROCESS:**

**Further noted** that the **coordination and organisation of the ICP was not of the highest quality in terms of its execution in CARICOM;**

**Noted** that limited or in some cases no feedback was received from UNECLAC on the submission of the ICP - National Accounts and Price data;

**Also noted** that **insufficient attention was paid to the National Accounts component** in the implementation of the ICP in CARICOM;

**Further noted** the area of National Accounts by Expenditure, Basic Headings was a very weak area for countries of the region with the exception of Jamaica;

**Noted** that some countries experienced difficulties in receiving the required financial assistance that was requested from ECLAC to facilitate the data collection process;

### **C. BENEFITS/STRENGTHS**

**Highlighted** that based on the preliminary feedback received on the Prices data which were submitted by CARICOM countries that the data were said to be of a very high quality;

**Also highlighted** the strengths of the ICP including the following:

- The ability to make country comparisons;
- Presentation of data to policy-makers to make appropriate policy decisions such as examining the prices, taxes and tariffs of items across countries;
- Improving the quality of the CPI data and the estimation of GDP by expenditure;
- Improving the specifications and metadata in the CPI which can lead to better data collection

### **D. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVING THE PROCESS**

**Recommended** the following:

- (i) That the World Bank/Global Office or the responsible coordinating agency involve in the next ICP round, the CARICOM Secretariat/Experts in the Region relative to them having a greater coordinating and technical role in the conduct of the ICP process in CARICOM. If these experts were allowed to play a greater

role in the ICP process during the current round, this would imply less dependence by the Region on experts from outside in the coordination and execution of the technical work in the next round;

- (ii) Related to the point (i) above, a Training of trainers programme for experts in the region should be undertaken prior to the next round of ICP in order to enable a sound understanding of the entire process by these experts. This would further reinforce capacity within the region relative to ICP coordination and execution.
- (iii) There is need to strengthen capacity in the area of National accounts, in particular the expenditure of the GDP up to the Basic Headings. And the Private Final Consumption Expenditure which is often estimated as a residual. This will enable better estimation of the Basic Headings in the net ICP round.
- (iv) It is recommended that there be a change in the organisational structure and administration in the conduct of the ICP in the CARICOM region with specific roles in the administering and technical conduct of the ICP residing in CARICOM
- (v) That the CARICOM Region should commence preparations for the next ICP round. In this regard, the following preparations were recommended to be undertaken:
  - the **establishment of an ICP unit** in their various departments prior to the start of the conduct of the next ICP round;
  - that there should be more timely access by the region to the Global list of items for which prices are to be collected in the ICP and that some **preliminary work be put in place across the region relative to a comparative list of items in the CPI** prior to the next ICP round;

- The **request for a specialist technical support person** to work within the region for the duration of the next ICP round. It was **emphasised** that the Region should lobby for a technical support specialist from the World Bank or the supporting agency;
- (vi) The conduct of a pre-ICP Meeting in 2014 in order to mobilise countries to commence work in this area and to address the recommendations above. This could be done back-to-back with a National Accounts workshop hosted by the CARICOM Secretariat;
- (vii) That the challenges and good practices should be submitted to the World Bank/ ICP Global office;
- (viii) That the following specific recommendations on the current round be addressed/taken to the November 2013 meeting:
- (a) CARICOM Secretariat contact UNECLAC to enquire about the receipt of submitted data of the National Accounts and Prices activities by countries and to indicate whether there are issues with the data that were submitted. This is to be done immediately;
  - (b) Clarification be sought as to the borrowing of data from one country to break out the Basic Headings in the Expenditure on the GDP in another country;
  - (c) There is need to check the data sent by ECLAC against the data submitted by countries for errors that might have occurred at the data capture stage in ECLAC;
  - (d) There is need also for greater transparency in the methodology post the data capture stage;

## **B.8. DEVELOPMENT OF A QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK – REGIONAL AND NATIONAL EXPERIENCES**

### **THE ADVISORY GROUP ON STATISTICS (AGS):**

**Noted** the presentations made by the CARICOM Secretariat and Suriname on this Agenda item;

**Recommended** the development of a **CARICOM Data Quality Assessment Framework (C-DQAF) for the Region**;

**Also recommended** that reference be made to the documents that were provided during the International Statistical Fellowship Programme (ISFP) training conducted by Statistics Canada for the development of the C-DQAF for the Region;

**Further recommended** that countries consider the presentation made by Suriname in order to determine where they are in the context of a National Quality Assurance Framework (NQAF);

**Recommended** that the development of a quality assurance framework for the region be included in the proposed support to statistics by Canada;

## **B.9. PROGRESS ON THE FORMATION OF A CARIBBEAN ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL STATISTICIANS (CAPS) FOR CARICOM**

### **THE ADVISORY GROUP ON STATISTICS (AGS):**

**Noted** the presentation made by the CARICOM Secretariat on this Agenda item;

**Commended** the CARICOM Secretariat on the presentation made;



**Also noted** the following with respect to the national winners that were submitted to the CARICOM Secretariat:

Winners at the National Level of the Motto Competition submitted to the Secretariat:

Barbados, Dominica, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago;

Winners at the National Level of the Logo Competition submitted to the Secretariat:

Barbados, Dominica, Jamaica, Montserrat, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago;

**Also noted** that Dominica had requested an extension to 31 August, 2013 to submit their winning entries to the CARICOM Secretariat on the Logo and Motto Competitions;

**Further noted** that Jamaica also required an extension and that both Dominica and Jamaica were given an extension up to August 16;

**Noted** that the winning entries and their explanations are given in Attachment III to this document;

**Also noted** that the winner of the Logo Competition is from **Montserrat** and is Mr. **Roydenn Silcott**, while the winner of the Motto competition is from **Dominica, Mr. Jason Reynolds**

**Further noted** that prizes were funded by the European Union (EU) visibility support budget and comprised: iPads and trophies as well as airfares and accommodation to attend the Thirty-Eighth SCCS meeting to collect their prizes;

**Noted** that the AGS provided cash prizes amounting to upwards of USD \$500.

**Commended** the European Union for their support to this activity;

**Also commended** the AGS for contributing prizes to processes.

**B.10. PROGRESS ON THE FORMATION OF A DATABASE OF EXPERTS IN STATISTICS IN CARICOM – PREPARATION OF A CONCEPT NOTE FOR FUNDING THE ADVISORY GROUP ON STATISTICS (AGS):**

**Noted** the presentation made by the CARICOM Secretariat and Trinidad and Tobago on this Agenda Item;

**Reviewed** the summary of recommendations and conclusions from the past AGS and SCCS meetings in the context of the paper that was done by Trinidad and Tobago on the formation of a database of experts in statistics in CARICOM;

**Also noted** that some Regional and International organisations had commenced similar work on a Database of Experts in statistics;

**Highlighted** the following:

- That a **Database of Consultants** currently exists on the CARICOM Secretariat website emanating from the programme area, Technical Assistance Services Unit (TASU) which includes a Registration Guide that can be accessed through the CARICOM Consultant Portal;
- Discussions have been held relative to the use of the TASU databases between the Project Director, Regional Statistics and the Head of TASU to utilise this facility to build the Databases of Experts in Statistics.

**Recommended** the following with respect to developments on the Database of Experts in Statistics in CARICOM:

- (i) That the CARICOM Secretariat, Regional Statistics Programme share with TASU the work of the AGS on the development of the Database of Experts in Statistics in CARICOM;
- (ii) That discussions be held with TASU in order to review the database and determine whether the criteria as specified by the AGS could be incorporated into the database; and
- (iii) That the database of Experts in Statistics be launched at a timeline to be specified;

#### **B.11. COMMON FRAMEWORK FOR STATISTICS PRODUCTION IN CARICOM (FUNDED BY THE IDB) – ASSESSMENT OF THE PROJECT AND NEXT STEPS**

##### **THE ADVISORY GROUP ON STATISTICS (AGS):**

**Noted** the presentation made by the CARICOM Secretariat on this Agenda Item;

**Encouraged** countries to review the final reports and related project documents of the various projects that were executed under the IDB and the Ninth EDF consultancies, specifically the:

- Organisation and Use of Statistical Databases/ Data Management;
- The Web-based Communication Infrastructure /Data Transmission; and
- The Common Approach to Data Warehousing and Archiving project.

**Highlighted** that the **critical software requirement** needed for successful pilot testing of the data organisation and transmission is the **Microsoft SQL 2008 (R2 Standard Edition)**.

**Also noted** the following:

- (i) That pilot-testing of the data organisation and transmission was done with Grenada and Barbados; and
- (ii) Work is about to commence relative to attempting to organise the files submitted by countries using templates that were prepared out of these projects.

**Further noted** that Belize and Dominica have volunteered to have a pilot test done with the CARICOM Secretariat since they have the relevant software in place;

**Also recommended** that countries check to determine whether they have the relevant software in place in order for a pilot test to be done with the CARICOM Secretariat;

## **B.12 BIG DATA AND OFFICIAL STATISTICS**

### **THE ADVISORY GROUP ON STATISTICS (AGS):**

**Noted** the CARICOM has on its agenda the issue of big data and its impact on official statistics.

### **B.13. INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF STATISTICS – REPORT ON REGIONAL AND NATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS THE ADVISORY GROUP ON STATISTICS (AGS):**

**Noted** the activities conducted by the CARICOM Secretariat and AGS member countries present at the meeting present at the Twelfth AGS Meeting;

**Further noted** that Caribbean Statistics Day 2013 activities were incorporated as a part of the activities for Statistics2013 at the CARICOM Secretariat;

**Recommended** that countries document their Statistics2013 activities and submit the same to the CARICOM Secretariat for it to be uploaded to the Regional Statistics website;

**Requested** a copy of the video presentation that was produced by Bermuda to celebrate Statistics2013, in order to have a demonstration at the upcoming SCCS meeting;

#### **B.14 INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS – STATE OF PREPAREDNESS AND REPRESENTATION ISSUES.**

##### **THE ADVISORY GROUP ON STATISTICS (AGS):**

**Noted** the presentation made by Belize;

**Also noted** that challenges experienced with respect to official travel, leads to under representation of persons from the region at international meetings;

**Recommend** that Directors/Representatives should request to be on the board of various committees to increase the Region's participation in the international statistical development agenda;

**Also recommended** that the CARICOM countries need to lobby to regain its positions as members at the UN Stats Commission Meeting;

**Recognised** the need for increased participation from the Region at international meetings.

**B.15. REVIEW OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR) OF THE ADVISORY GROUP ON STATISTICS**

**THE ADVISORY GROUP ON STATISTICS (AGS):**

**Recommended** for consideration at the Thirty-Eighth Meeting of the SCCS, the changes considered by the Twelfth and Thirteenth Meetings of the SCCS as contained in **Attachment IV**- the Terms of Reference of the Advisory Group on Statistics.

\*\*\*\*\*