



PRASC NEWSLETTER

Vol. 1, no. 1, March 2016

Contact the PRASC team at
statcan.prasc-prasc.statcan@canada.ca

Funded by the
Government
of Canada



The PRASC team is pleased to introduce this first semi-annual newsletter. This edition presents activities that took place between October 2015 and March 2016, such as the regional seminar on administrative data, workshops on business surveys and data analysis, as well as the technical assistance provided to the national statistical offices.

Regional seminar: Fundamental role of administrative data in official statistics

The first regional PRASC seminar was held from January 26 to 28, 2016, in Trinidad and Tobago. Twenty-eight participants from 19 countries and 2 regional organizations attended. CARTAC graciously funded the participation of CARICOM associate member states. The seminar focused on topics such as defining a strategy for using administrative data, establishing a governance framework, managing collaboration to acquire such data, assessing the usability of a data source, as well as confidentiality and security aspects. On the last day of the seminar, participants received a summary document titled "Roadmap for access, use and maintenance of administrative data." This document provides 10 steps (including tools and templates) that NSOs can follow to enhance the access to, use of and management of administrative data in statistical programs. A one-day workshop on using administrative data to update and maintain a business register was also delivered to participants on January 25, 2016.

Participants at the PRASC Regional seminar on the Fundamental role of administrative data in official statistics

Trinidad and Tobago, January 2016

Photo: Julie Trépanier, Statistics Canada



Belize's Business Establishment Survey

Since May 2015, PRASC has been working with the Statistical Institute of Belize (SIB) on the upcoming Business Establishment Survey. This project shows the type of support that PRASC can provide, where Statistics Canada and the SIB work together to enhance the different survey steps. Through weekly virtual meetings and a few missions, the SIB created the sampling frame, redesigned the questionnaires with content to support future supply and use tables, and drew a sample. Data collection will begin in April 2016, after which the teams will work on post-collection steps.

Work on Jamaica's quarterly expenditure-based GDP

Work to refine the compilation methods for producing quarterly gross domestic product (GDP), using the expenditure approach, is progressing with the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN). The PRASC and STATIN teams are reviewing different aspects of the methodology, as well as deflators for estimating the GDP in constant dollars. Criteria to assess different data sources for use in the compilation were also discussed

Website: Needs assessment

A needs-assessment exercise was conducted in February 2016 with the Statistics Division of Antigua and Barbuda, the Statistics Department of Montserrat and the Statistics Department of St. Kitts and Nevis. The assessment led to a list of recommendations for creating the website for the NSOs. Based on these recommendations, project charters will be drafted with the NSOs to frame the technical assistance that will be provided to create the website.

Sub-regional workshop on business surveys

The Statistics Division of Antigua and Barbuda, the Barbados Statistical Service, the Department of Statistics of the Bahamas, the Statistical Institute of Jamaica and the Central Statistical Office of Trinidad and Tobago participated in a sub-regional workshop on business surveys in Trinidad and Tobago from January 19 to 22, 2016. The workshop gave an overview of the steps from frame to collection for business surveys. This workshop was provided as a first step for in-country technical assistance on business surveys.

PRASC on LinkedIn

The project will soon have a page on LinkedIn, so that news and announcements can be shared in real time. Details will be forthcoming.

Data analysis workshop

From March 21 to 24, 2016, a data analysis workshop was held with participants from four member states. The Statistical Office of St. Vincent and the Grenadines graciously provided the venue for this workshop, which included participants from the Bureau of Statistics of Guyana, the Statistics Department of Montserrat and the Statistics Department of St. Kitts and Nevis. The workshop began with a discussion of the role and principles of analysis in NSOs, as well as some descriptive analysis techniques. It also included data anonymization, gender-based analysis and a practical case study with SPSS examples.

A document of best practices will be produced to summarize the workshop. Since this workshop is a first step in technical assistance, the last day focused on discussions with each member state to identify specific datasets where the project could support the NSO with data analysis.

Communications activities

PRASC supported several NSOs with their communications activities in the past months. The project worked with the Statistical Institute of Jamaica to train spokespersons and prepare media kits for a future media event where annual reports will be presented. Work has begun with the Central Statistical Office of Trinidad and Tobago to develop a communication plan and activities for the upcoming census of agriculture. In February 2016, similar work was done in support of the establishment census of the General Bureau of Statistics of Suriname. As the Barbados Statistical Service is currently modernizing its information and communications technology statistical network, training to increase information security awareness was given in March 2016.

Data analysis workshop in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, March 2016 Photo: Michelle Simard, Statistics Canada



Annual meeting of the Project Steering Committee

The second meeting of the PRASC Project Steering Committee was held on March 16, 2016. The Statistical Institute of Jamaica graciously provided the venue for this meeting. It was co-chaired by Statistics Canada, the CCS and Global Affairs Canada, and included members from regional and international organizations, and two representatives from the member states (Jamaica and Saint Lucia attended this year) on a rotational basis. The purpose of the meeting was to review progress and approve the project's annual work plan. On March 17, the group discussed a regional approach for electronic data collection going forward.