

A Strategic Framework for the Coordination of Regional Statistics - The CARICOM Region

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Sonia Jackson
Statistical Institute of Jamaica

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Overview of the Presentation

- Objectives
- Historical similarities
- Rationale & Vision for the Framework
- Implementing the Vision
- Existing regional organisations – roles & similarities
- Guidelines for developing international relationships – OECD & UNSD
- Recommendations

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Objective

- The objective of the framework is to create & establish a “**Regional Statistics System**” that complements the countries’ statistics systems and reduces the burden on the NSOs of the CSME

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Common Background

- Legislative framework
 - **18** countries of the 15 member states & 5 associate member states – have a common heritage of English jurisprudence
 - The other 2 are – Haiti – French & Suriname - Dutch
- **SIDS** – with the exception of Guyana, Suriname & Belize all fall within the definition SIDS. These **3** though mainland states have the similar history, development issues & fall within the definition of SIDS

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Rationale for the Framework

- The need for a framework
 - Small population numbers & consequently small NSOs
 - The inability of the NSOs to deliver on all requests for data in a timely manner
 - The NSOs & other producers of Official Statistics are usually under resourced
 - NSOs & country statistics are at different levels of development
 - Duplication of efforts within the Region
 - Scarce resources

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Vision of the Framework

- The creation of a **Regional Statistics System** that:
 - Allows for the delivery/depositing of country data in a timely manner – data structure & format to be agreed
 - Establishes the rules pertaining to dissemination of data
 - The governance structure is clearly defined, documented and agreed
 - Requires regional & international institutions to work in harmony in order to avoid duplications
 - Facilitates south-south cooperation among the countries of the region
 - Facilitates joint Donor/Partners/IDP relationship for the delivery of services and data collection and dissemination

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Strategic Drivers

- Domestic Situation
 - Individual countries establishing development plans
 - Countries are signatories to international protocols
 - Most countries are prone to natural disasters
 - Increased demand for data

- Regional imperatives
 - The CSME

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Strategic Drivers

- International Users
 - The region is being promoted for development
 - Data are required for evaluation of the Region as a whole
 - The IDPs require individual country & regional data

- The Results Agenda
 - MDGs & Other IADGs

- International Quality Standards & Systems
 - GDDS & SDDS
 - Note: adherence to these quality standards facilitate access to international funding

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Implementing the Vision

- Areas of Coordination

- Inter-Country Cooperation for capacity building
- Standard statistics legislative framework
- Harmonization of concepts & definitions within country & across the region
- Capacity building within countries, NSOs & other statistics units – technology transfer, professional statistics training, specialist training, on the job training, etc
- Cooperation/coordination between CARICOM & other regional & international agencies
- Coordinated Donor/Partner/IDP relationships

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Implementing the Vision

- Issues to be addressed

- **Country Assessment** - to do gap analysis (RSWP Questionnaires)
- Establishment of **Minimum Datasets** for each area of statistics – economic, social & environment
- The issue of **Confidentiality** – micro data vis-à-vis tabulations
- Establishing **data sharing agreements** among the regional partners/agencies

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Implementing the Vision

- Issues to be addressed

- Use of **harmonised codes & classification systems**
- The **legislative framework** for official statistics within each member/associate member state to be standardised
- **Developing, Establishing & Managing a data repository**
 - Resource allocation
 - Providing access to users
 - Physical location
 - Governance system
 - Business rules
 - Data management
 - Data quality
 - Access control/security
- Establishing **Donor/Partnership/IDP Relationships** for access to the data, training & development, etc.

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Existing Regional Organisations

- The role of
 - CARICOM
 - ECLAC,
 - CARTAC,
 - ILO

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CARICOM

- 1972 – CARIFTA
- 1989 – Revised Treaty – CARICOM
- 1993 – 2001 – Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas – CSME and was signed by the heads of Government in 2001

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CSME

- **Purpose of the CSME** - create one large market among the participating member states
- **Key elements of the CSME include:**
 - Free movement of goods and services** - eliminating all barriers to intra-regional movement and harmonising standards to ensure acceptability of goods and services traded;
 - Right of Establishment** - to permit the establishment of CARICOM owned businesses in any Member State without restrictions;
 - A Common External Tariff** - a rate of duty applied by all Members of the Market to a product imported from a country which is not a member of the market;
 - Free circulation** - free movement of goods imported from extra regional sources which would require collection of taxes at first point of entry into the Region and the provision for sharing of collected customs revenue;
 - Free movement of Capital** - through measures such as eliminating foreign exchange controls, convertibility of currencies (or a common currency) and integrated capital market, such as a regional stock exchange;
 - A Common trade policy** - agreement among the members on matters related to internal and international trade and a coordinated external trade policy negotiated on a joint basis;
 - Free movement of labour** - through measures such as removing all obstacles to intra-regional movement of skills, labour and travel, harmonising social services (education, health, etc.), providing for the transfer of social security benefits and establishing common standards and measures for accreditation and equivalency.

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CARICOM - Statistics

- The objectives of the Statistics Sub-programme are ***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.***
- Implementation is being done through the improvement & development of statistics at the country level, - developing common methodologies, training programmes, harmonization of concepts & definitions, providing secretarial services to the SCCS & RCCC

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CARICOM

- **SCCS**
 - The Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians was established, in accordance with Resolution No. 54/74/4 of the 4th meeting of the Common Market Council of Ministers with the main objective being:
 - “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.”
- **RCCC**

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UN ECLAC - History

- The Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) (Spanish CEPAL) established by ECOSOC on 25 February 1948
- 1966 POS sub-regional office established
- 1984 name and role expanded to include Caribbean – now ECLAC (Spanish acronym remains unchanged)
- ECLAC is one of 5 UN Regional Commissions

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Role & Mandate of ECLAC

- Undertakes studies, research & other support activities within the terms of reference of the Commission;
- Promotes economic & social development through regional and sub-regional cooperation and integration;
- Gathers, organizes, interprets and disseminates information and data relating to the economic and social development of the region;
- Provides advisory services to Governments at their request & plans, organizes and executes programmes of technical cooperation;
- Formulates & promotes development cooperation activities and projects of regional and sub-regional scope commensurate with the needs and priorities of the region and acts as an executing agency for such projects;
- Organizes conferences and intergovernmental and expert group meetings and sponsors training workshops, symposia and seminars;
- Assists in bringing a regional perspective to global problems & forums & introduces global concerns at the regional and subregional levels

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ECLAC & the SCA

- Nature: The SCA of ECLAC shall be a subsidiary body of the Commission that shall contribute to the progress of policies on statistics and statistical activities in the countries of the region
- Objectives: a) To promote the development and improvement of national statistics ensure comparable internationally, b) To promote international, regional and bilateral cooperation among national offices and international and regional agencies; c) To draw up a **biennial programme of regional and international cooperation activities**, to meet the demands of the countries of the region, subject to the availability of resources.

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ECLAC & the SCA

- Membership: All **countries that are members of the ECLAC are members of the Conference**
- Secretariat: The secretariat of the ECLAC shall serve as the secretariat of the Conference

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CARTAC

- The Caribbean Regional Technical Assistance Centre (CARTAC) provides technical assistance and training in core areas of economic and financial management
- The CARICOM Council of Ministers of Finance and Planning (COFAP) took the decision to establish the Centre in September 1999. The Centre became operational in November 2001.

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Funding CARTAC

- CARTAC is structured as a UNDP cost-sharing project with the IMF serving as executing agency for the Centre. Sources of funding:
 - Government of Canada, CIDA
 - The Caribbean Community Secretariat, CARICOM
 - Caribbean Development Bank, CDB
 - International Monetary Fund, IMF
 - Inter-American Development Bank, IDB
 - European Union, EU
 - United Nations Development Programme, UNDP

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ILO - POS

- To promote the theme of ***Decent Work for All*** through the implementation of the following strategies:
 - Promote and realize standards and fundamental principles and rights at work
 - Create greater opportunities for women and men to secure decent employment and income
 - Enhance the coverage and effectiveness of social protection for all
 - Deepen tri-partism and social dialogue by strengthening the capabilities and knowledge base of the social partners

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Guidelines for developing relationships

- Extracts form the OECD Donor Practices
- UN Guide for Technical Cooperation

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Donor/Partnership Relationship

– Extracts from OECD Donor Practices

- All development agencies have operational policies and procedural requirements that guide their engagement with partner countries. A major problem is that even where agencies have similar objectives, their specific requirements can be different.
- The challenge for donors is how to assist governments to raise quality, coverage, consistency, transparency and relevance of analytic work to policy development and reform.

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Extracts from OECD Donor Practices

- The over-arching objectives of the suggested good practices are to make aid more effective by:
 - Strengthening the ownership of partner governments over externally funded development activities, and
 - Alleviating the burden imposed on host governments by multiple donor regulations and practices.

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Extracts from OECD Donor Practices

- Donor/IDP harmonisation – two or more working together by :
 - Sharing information, or
 - Adopting common systems and procedures, or
 - Adopting joint working arrangements that include shared decision-making
 - Deliver joint training/development programmes and agreeing on the areas of responsibilities of each

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Donor/Partnership Relationship

– Extracts from UN Guide for Technical Cooperation

- Coordination is needed to avoid conflicting projects, to seek synergy and to create optimal conditions for working together in partnerships, and is best achieved by:
 - The recipient national statistical system playing the key role in the coordination process;
 - Making explicit which objectives, values and methods are shared by the partners involved;
 - Establishing the exchange and sharing of information among the relevant partners;
 - Coordinating the work of regional or subject matter working groups to ensure the exchange of information;
 - Extending the exchange of information within national statistical services to all relevant organizations, including the Central Bank and the Ministry of Finance;
 - Making coordination proactive to promote the design of joint or complementary projects and activities involving different partners.

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Recommendations

- At the individual country level – implement the strategies necessary to strengthen the national statistics system & improve data quality;
- At the regional level:
 - Develop a model statistics legislation that will address all the weaknesses in the existing statistics acts and encourage the member states to adopt it (already en train);
 - Seek funding to address specialists needs e.g. sampling
 - Collaboration is required among regional Agencies - CARICOM, UN ECLAC, CARTAC, ILO, etc to avoid duplication of activities particularly in the area of development programmes, training & data collection

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Recommendations

- A framework agreement among countries, regional agencies, & IDP partners needs to be developed. It should incorporate:
 - The UN guidelines for technical cooperation & the OECD Donor Practices
 - Rules on collection and dissemination of country/regional statistics
 - A governance structure
- The development of a virtual statistics system that would incorporate
 - The governance structure for the virtual statistics system
 - An agreement on the support systems required to sustain it and where it would reside
- An advocacy programme delivered by all Donors/Partners/IDPs targeted at the Governments of the region for more resource allocation to their respective statistics programmes

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Reference material

- National Statistics – A strategic Framework for Regional Statistics - May 2006 - a publication of the UK ONS
- DAC Task Force – Donor Practice – an OECD publication October 2002
- Is special treatment needed for small island developing states? – a UN publication – UNCTAD/LDC/2004/1
- Economic & Social Council – Some guiding principles for good practices in technical cooperation for statistics – E/CN.3/1999/19
- UN Principles governing International statistical activities –
- Website – CARICOM
- Website – ILO POS
- Website – UN ECLAC
- Website – SCA/ECLAC
- Website - CARTAC