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ECLAC

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

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Statistical Conference of the Americas of the
Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

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**PROGRAMME OF WORK OF STATISTICS AND ECONOMIC PROJECTIONS DIVISION,
2010-2011**

SUBPROGRAMME 10: STATISTICS AND ECONOMIC PROJECTIONS

Presentation

The countries of the region need to improve quality and transparency criteria in their national statistics systems in line with international best practices and promote their use among economic agents, social actors and decision-makers. These targets were defined in the strategic plan 2005-2015 for regional statistical development, adopted at the third meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC in June 2005.

At a time when information has become a vital component for the international competitiveness of the economies, the quality, timeliness and integrity of the region's statistical outputs must be brought into line with the most rigorous standards. The growing importance of statistics is also linked to the reinforcement of democracy, as they contribute to the process of public participation and enhance the transparency and accountability of the political system. Reliable and easily accessible national information systems are not only a concern for statisticians, but a condition for good governance at the country level. They are basic inputs for decision-making, impact assessment as well as for appropriate monitoring and evaluation are needed.

Although the quality and completeness of the region's statistical output have improved significantly in the economic, environmental, demographic and social dimensions, the region must continue to move forward and consolidate its position in order to face future challenges. All the countries of the region must strive to implement the System of National Accounts (1993 SNA) and to apply the new recommendations agreed in 2008. Countries must also strengthen their capacity to monitor the indicators to follow up on internationally agreed development goals, particularly those contained in the Millennium Declaration. Together with the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses, these are the main challenges to be faced by the region's statistical systems, as determined at the meeting of the Statistical Conference held in July 2007.

At the same time, the harmonization of statistical data remains a key issue. Taking into account the diversity which characterizes ECLAC member countries in this area, improvements will have to take place in progressive stages, to favour the sharing of experiences, good practices and the progress achieved in each country.

Such considerations underpin the conceptual and methodological content of the programme of work for the 2010-2011 biennium. The purpose of the subprogramme is to support regional countries in their efforts to build, strengthen and harmonize statistical information and the decision-making systems underlying the design, monitoring and assessment of development policies in the region. In particular, the subprogramme proposes to provide support to countries in the improvement of their national capacities to enable them to generate, analyse and disseminate, in a timely manner and in keeping with internationally accepted standards and best practices in the field, the statistical information and indicators vital to the design and monitoring of economic and social development policies.

The proposed activities seek to contribute to the fulfilment of the objective of the subprogramme in the medium term and to achieve the more specific expected outputs during the biennium, which will be demonstrated by performance indicators as described below.

Objective of the organization: To enhance the production and timely dissemination of regionally comparable statistical information and indicators to design and monitor economic and social policies in the region

<i>Expected accomplishments of the secretariat</i>	<i>Indicators of achievement</i>
1. Progress in the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2005-2015 of the Statistical Conference of the Americas	1. (i) Number of countries in the region that make satisfactory progress in implementing the System of National Accounts 1993 and incorporated satellite accounts, in accordance with international recommendations and their own requirements (ii) Increased number of countries in the region that make satisfactory progress towards the collection of data and the production of indicators to follow-up on the Millennium Development Goals
2. Increased technical capacity of ECLAC member States to monitor economic, social and environmental trends and to formulate evidence-based policies	2. (i) Increased number of countries that take action to implement ECLAC recommendations to monitor economic, social and environment trends and formulate evidence-based policies (ii) Increased number of downloads from CEPALSTAT and the <i>Statistical Yearbook</i>

Strategy

The Statistics and Economic Projections Division will be responsible for the implementation of the subprogramme and, given its interdisciplinary nature, it will work in close collaboration with other ECLAC subprogrammes, to which it will continue to provide services.

The strategy will focus on continuing to provide secretariat services at the meetings and Executive Committees of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, the intergovernmental body subsidiary to the Commission that sets cooperation priorities for statistical development in the region. The subprogramme will provide specialized advisory services and technical cooperation to strengthen the countries' technical and institutional capacities in the statistical field and to help them in the adoption of the international agreed standards. Meetings and seminars will be organized to facilitate the sharing of experiences and promote horizontal cooperation in this field. Support will also be given for the development of networks to strengthen the harmonization and coordination of statistical data among countries. From the methodological and technical viewpoints, the subprogramme has identified essential areas relating to the current stage in the region's statistical development for the creation of a modern system of information to support decision-making processes in economic and social policy. Such areas span the full range of statistics from national accounts, economic and environmental statistics, through social indicators and statistics and information dissemination. Each area includes both conventional statistical development activities that continue to prove relevant to national statistical systems and emerging issues and methodologies stemming from new demands voiced by Governments and civil society. The subprogramme will place its pool of statistical and methodological information at the disposal of a wide range of stakeholders: Government agencies of member States, particularly national statistical offices, central banks and ministries with responsibility for economic and social affairs, but also business and labour organizations, technical and professional institutions with links to productive sectors, universities, research centres, regional and subregional integration bodies and other public or private entities which need comparable information on the countries of the region. Efforts will be made to bring about closer collaboration with the United Nations Statistical Commission, the other regional commissions, the

secretariats of regional integration organizations and the statistical offices of member States as well as with other international organizations.

External factors

The goal and expected outputs of the subprogramme will be achievable based on the following assumptions:

(a) The socio-economic and institutional environment in the region remains stable or improves, thereby allowing national statistical systems to function normally and make progress.

(b) The international community continues to support the work of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC and the priorities it sets for statistical development in the region, in response to the specific needs and concerns of the member States of ECLAC in this field. To that end, it takes into account General Assembly and Economic and Social Council guidelines and internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration and those arising out of instruments adopted at major world economic and social summits and conferences.

(c) International agencies and organizations working in the region support the coordination efforts aimed at increasing the efficiency and helpfulness of their statistical cooperation activities.

(d) Available financial resources, including those from extrabudgetary sources, are sufficient to fulfil the subprogramme mandates, which call for promoting horizontal cooperation among the countries of the region and facilitating interaction between its key actors and users.

Activities

Subject area 10.1: Technical cooperation among Member States and within regional and global statistical bodies

1. Substantive Servicing of Meetings

(i) Sixth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC. This activity includes the coordination and monitoring of technical cooperation agreements in different areas relating to the technical and institutional development of statistics in the region, the preparation of reports on the activities of the ECLAC secretariat and on outputs and advances in statistical development and international cooperation, as well as the preparation of substantive documentation for presentation at the Conference (high correlation with expected accomplishment 1).

(ii) Two meetings of the Executive Committee of the Conference, including the preparation of progress reports on advances and outputs of the programme of work defined by the Conference (high correlation with expected accomplishment 1).

2. Advisory services

(i) Provision of technical cooperation services to member States and regional bodies that request them for the harmonization of basic economic statistics and the

implementation of the latest revised international nomenclature as well as the System of National Accounts 1993 and its satellite accounts (high correlation with expected accomplishment 1).

(ii) Provision of technical cooperation services to member States and regional bodies that request them in the development of systems for monitoring and modelling economic development and the design of analytical indicators (high correlation with expected accomplishments 1 and 2).

(iii) Provision of technical cooperation services to member States and regional bodies that request them in areas relating to household surveys, social indicators and statistics and in the quantification and analysis of situations of poverty as part of the follow-up to the Millennium Development Goals (high correlation with expected accomplishments 1 and 2).

(iv) Provision of technical cooperation services to member States and regional bodies that request them in the development of the institutional organization of the national statistical system and national statistical offices (high correlation with expected accomplishments 1 and 2).

3. Field projects

It is expected that during the biennium, projects will be under way on strengthening national methodological capacities for the collection and monitoring of statistics and indicators (high correlation with expected accomplishments 1 and 2).

The implementation of operational activities will be subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources.

4. Intermediate activities

(i) Provision of support to the working groups created by the Statistical Conference of the Americas. This activity includes the organization and servicing of the working groups' meetings, preparation of background documents and other materials, preparation of meeting reports and monitoring of the tasks assigned to each working group (high correlation with expected accomplishment 1)

(ii) Preparation, upon request and in collaboration with other agencies, of substantive inputs supporting and channeling the view of Latin American and Caribbean countries for meetings of the international bodies such as the UN Statistical Commission, the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities, meetings convened by other agencies and for global conferences on statistics and indicators such as Statistical Conference of the Americas or the UN Statistical Conference (high correlation with expected accomplishments 1 and 2).

Subject area 10.2: Statistical databanks on Latin America and the Caribbean, and dissemination of regional statistics and indicators

1. Recurrent publications

(i) *Statistical Yearbook for Latin America and the Caribbean* (two issues during the biennium) (high correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

2. Other Substantive Activities

a. Technical materials

(i) Maintenance and updating the different databases that make up CEPALSTAT, including the expansion of their historical coverage, the inclusion of new economic, social and environmental topics and the improvement of short-term indicators. Improving support for internal and external users and interconnection services, particularly with respect to the economic and social information system of the United Nations (high correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

(ii) Preparation of statistical indicators for the annual editions of the Social Panorama of Latin America (2010 and 2011 editions), in conjunction with the Social Development Division

(iii) Preparation of the statistical summary and economic projections for the Economic Survey of Latin America and the Caribbean (2009-2010 and 2010-2011 editions)

(iv) Preparation of the statistical summary and economic projections for the Preliminary Overview of the Economies of Latin America and the Caribbean (2010 and 2011 editions)

3. Intermediate activities

Statistical and modelling support for the execution of ECLAC studies and projects in the economic, social and sustainable-development areas, and for inter-agency work, particularly in the context of the monitoring of the development goals contained in the Millennium Declaration (high correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

The implementation of the operational activities will be subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources.

Subject area 10.3: System of National Accounts and economic statistics

1. Expert Groups, Rapporteurs, Depository Services

b. Ad-Hoc Expert Groups

(i) Two meetings of experts to evaluate the inclusion of new international recommendations in the implementation of the System of National Accounts and its adjustment to the characteristics of the economies in the region, within the framework provided by the Latin American Network of Experts on National Accounts (moderate correlation with expected accomplishment 1, high correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

(ii) One meeting of experts to analyse the advance of the satellite accounts with respect to development priorities in the region (moderate correlation with expected accomplishment 1, high correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

(iii) Two meetings of experts to promote and analyse the incorporation of the new international recommendations on classifications and nomenclature in basic

statistical practices for national and foreign trade in goods and services. These meetings will be held in cooperation with the Statistics Division of the United Nations and the Statistics Department of the International Monetary Fund (moderate correlation with expected accomplishment 1, high correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

2. Recurrent publications

Cuadernos Estadísticos de la CEPAL. Two issues during the biennium, one on the dissemination the new economic and social classification and nomenclature in basic statistical practices for national and foreign trade in goods and services, and another on the systematization of economic statistics on national accounts and the external sector (moderate correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

3. Non-recurrent publications

(i) A study on the progress made in the region in implementing the new international recommendations on the upgrades of the System of National Accounts (1993, rev. 1) or external sector statistics (moderate correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

(ii) A study on the regional implementation of satellite and other accounts (moderate correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

4. Field projects

It is expected that during the biennium projects will be under way on: International Comparison Programme (ICP); Regional Program to support countries of the region in the implementation of the 2008 SNA recommendations and to improve basic economic statistics; the implementation of satellite accounts relating to specific sectors such as tourism and health (high correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

The implementation of the operational activities will be subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources.

5. Intermediate activities

Support for the Latin American Network of Experts on National Accounts.

Subject area 10.4: Modelling and forecasting of the development process in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean

1. Expert Groups, Rapporteurs, Depository Services

4. Ad-Hoc Expert Groups

(i) A meeting of experts to analyse methodologies for macroeconomic monitoring based on short-term indicator systems in Latin America and the Caribbean (moderate correlation with expected accomplishment 1, high correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

(ii) A meeting of experts to consider new progress in modelling in open economies and its contribution to short-term forecasting (moderate correlation with expected accomplishment 1, high correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

(iii) A meeting of experts to analyse alternative methodologies for simulating scenarios for growth in the medium and long term, and their potential in identifying economic and social policy implications (moderate correlation with expected accomplishment 1, high correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

2. Non-recurrent publications

(i) Two studies on macroeconomic projections and trends in productive sectors in Latin America and the Caribbean based on the main scenarios for the international economy (moderate correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

(ii) Two studies on modelling medium- and long-term growth prospects based on alternative economic and social policy scenarios (moderate correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

3. Intermediate activities

Analysis, in conjunction with the Economic Development Division, of the trends and projections of the economic situation in the region for publication in the annual editions of the *Preliminary Overview of the Economies of Latin America and the Caribbean* (2010 and 2011 editions), the *Economic Survey of Latin America and the Caribbean* (2009-2010 and 2010-2011 editions), as well as for project LINK and *World Economic Situation and Prospects* (2011 and 2012 editions) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (moderate correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

Subject area 10.5: Statistics and quantitative analysis of social trends

1. Expert Groups, Rapporteurs, Depository Services

a. Ad-Hoc Expert Groups

(i) Two meetings of experts to make recommendations on promoting technical and methodological improvements to social information systems and household surveys, in addition to broadening the subject matter and geographical areas covered (moderate correlation with expected accomplishment 1, high correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

(ii) Two meetings of experts to make recommendations for improvements to the harmonization and homogenization of social statistics and indicators, with emphasis on the monitoring of the Millennium Development Goals and social cohesion (moderate correlation with expected accomplishment 1, high correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

(iii) A meeting of experts to examine the harmonization and standardization of national indicators and their integration into a system for the regional monitoring

of the development goals contained in the Millennium Declaration (moderate correlation with expected accomplishment 1, high correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

2. Non-recurrent publications

(i) Two studies consisting in the statistical analysis of the situation of poverty, income inequality and social cohesion in selected countries of the region (moderate correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

(ii) Two studies consisting in a methodological analysis of the measurement of living conditions and social cohesion in selected countries of the region (moderate correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

(iii) A study on progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals (high correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

(iv) Two non-recurrent publications on the monitoring of the MDGs and IADGs.

3. Courses, seminars and training workshops

Cooperation with Government entities, universities, non-governmental organizations and regional and subregional bodies in support of training activities on topics relating to monitoring progress towards the development goals set out in the Millennium Declaration, poverty, income distribution and relevant aspects of social cohesion and vulnerability (high correlation with expected accomplishments 1 and 2).

4. Field projects

It is expected that during the biennium, projects will be under way in the following areas: monitoring of progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals and statistics and indicators relating to social cohesion and poverty (high correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

The implementation of operational activities will be subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources.

5. Intermediate activities

Periodic analysis of the poverty situation, social vulnerability and income distribution in the region, for the annual editions of the *Social Panorama of Latin America* (2010 and 2011 editions), in conjunction with the Social Development Division (moderate correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

The implementation of operational activities will be subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources.

Subject area 10.6: Environmental statistics

1. Expert Groups, Rapporteurs, Depository Services

a. Ad-Hoc Expert Groups

(i) A meeting of experts to analyse the advance of the statistics and environmental accounts (moderate correlation with expected accomplishment 1, high correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

2. Advisory services

Provision of technical cooperation to countries of the region, at their request, to support the development of environmental statistics

3. Courses, seminars and training workshops

Cooperation with Government entities, universities, non-governmental organizations and regional and subregional bodies in support of training activities on topics relating to the development of environmental statistics (high correlation with expected accomplishments 1 and 2)

4. Field projects

It is expected that during the biennium, projects will be under way in the area of environmental statistics (high correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

The implementation of operational activities will be subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources.

Subject area 10.7: Institutional organization of the national statistical systems

1. Expert Groups, Rapporteurs, Depository Services

a. Ad-Hoc Expert Groups

(i) A meeting of experts to analyse issues related to the improvement of the organization of the national statistical offices and/or the national statistical systems. (moderate correlation with expected accomplishment 1, high correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

2. Courses, seminars and training workshops

Cooperation with Government entities, universities, non-governmental organizations and regional and subregional bodies in support of training activities on topics relating to the organization of the national statistical systems (high correlation with expected accomplishments 1 and 2).

3. Field projects

It is expected that during the biennium, projects will be under way in the area of the organization of national statistical systems (high correlation with expected accomplishment 2).

The implementation of operational activities will be subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources.