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**REPORT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF OFFICIAL STATISTICS IN  
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN \***

\* This is a draft document prepared by ECLAC for the comments of the delegates at the fifth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean. This document has been reproduced without formal editing.

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## INTRODUCTION

This document was prepared by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) to be presented at the forty-first meeting of the United Nations Statistical Commission. It offers a description of the main trends in the development of official statistics in Latin America and the Caribbean and the principal challenges that exist in this regard. It should be regarded as a draft document and will be presented for comments by the participants in the fifth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC.

First, the document gives an analysis of the state of development of statistical capacity in the region, employing statistical capacity indicators developed by the World Bank and a table prepared by ECLAC to show the availability of statistical information for 33 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. There follows a more detailed analysis of the evolution of statistics in eight specific areas: population censuses, household surveys, national accounts and economic statistics, gender statistics, vital statistics, education statistics, environmental statistics, and statistics on ICTs.

Section II considers the institutional organization of national statistical systems in the region, drawing upon the findings of a recent self-assessment survey sent to the countries. Section III examines the history and current status of mechanisms for regional coordination in the countries and their links with international agencies and bodies. This section looks at the different stages and agencies involved in promoting regional and international coordination and cooperation on statistical matters up to the creation of the Conference of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC. Here, attention focuses on the creation and operation of the eight working groups, which represent very powerful tools for technical capacity-building within national statistical systems and for cooperation among international agencies and bodies. This part of the document also reviews the different mechanisms for subregional cooperation which have been created more recently in the Caribbean, Central America, the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) and the Andean Community (CAN).

Lastly, section IV describes the main challenges facing the countries now and in the immediate future as regards the development of official statistics and the strategies that the Statistical Conference of the Americas and ECLAC propose to address those challenges.

## I. PROGRESS IN THE PRODUCTION AND DISSEMINATION OF STATISTICS IN THE REGION

### 1. Indicators of statistical capacity

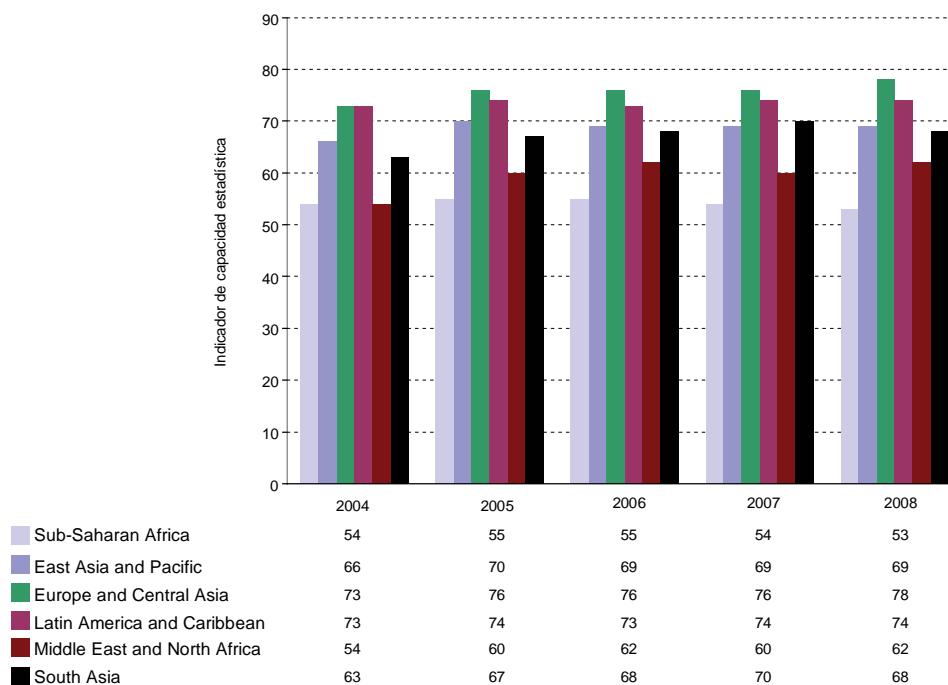
One way of examining progress in the production of statistics in the region is to use the statistical capacity indicator, which measures and compares the capacity of national statistical systems in developing countries.<sup>1</sup> The index has a range of 0 to 100, where 100 represents the maximum positive value. It is a composite index which contains information from several aspects of national systems and statistical practice in the countries, and the overall value of the index is an average of the values scored in each of three categories: statistical practice, data collection and availability of indicators.

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<sup>1</sup> See "Country Statistical Information Database" [online] <http://go.worldbank.org/GH0QVQ9R30>.

According to this index, in recent decades the region's countries in general have seen major progress in the development of their national statistical systems and in the production of official statistics. In 2008, 24 Latin American and Caribbean countries were at or above the average for all the countries included (65) and 14 were at or above the average for the region. Those positioned below the average pertained mainly to the English-speaking Caribbean.

Figure 1  
STATISTICAL CAPACITY INDICATORS BY REGION, 2004-2008



**Source:** Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of information provided by the World Bank.

The relatively positive situation in the region shown by the aggregate indicator reflects progress made in different areas of official statistics. The following table shows evidence of advances in these areas.

The data in table 1 show that 97% of the Latin American and Caribbean countries have conducted a population census in the last 10 years. Forty per cent of the Latin American countries conduct continuous household surveys and have national accounts with a base year dating back no more than 10 years, and 35% of them have a comprehensive vital statistics system. In the areas of environment and ICTs, 70% and 80% of the countries, respectively, publish statistics. As may be expected, however, there are significant differences among geographical areas. The Caribbean countries show smaller advances, except as regards censuses and vital statistics. Naturally, there are also major differences within subregions. Of the total of 33 countries examined, only 9 run continuous household surveys and 10 have national accounts with a base year dating back not more than 10 years.

Table 1  
**LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (33 COUNTRIES): INDICATORS OF AVAILABILITY  
 OF STATISTICAL INFORMATION, 2008**

|                                 | Total | Countries which have carried out a census in the last 10 years |                         | Countries which conduct continuous household surveys |                         | Countries whose national accounts base year dates back no more than 10 years |                         | Countries with comprehensive vital statistics systems |                         | Countries that publish environmental statistics |                         | Countries that publish ICT statistics |                         |
|---------------------------------|-------|--|-------------------------|--|-------------------------|--|-------------------------|---|-------------------------|---|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|
|                                 |       | No. of countries   | Percentage of the total | No. of countries                                     | Percentage of the total | No. of countries   | Percentage of the total | No. of countries                                      | Percentage of the total | No. of countries                                | Percentage of the total | No. of countries                      | Percentage of the total |
| Caribbean                       | 13    | 13   | 100                     | 1  | 8                       | 2  | 15                      | 9   | 69                      |   |                         |                                       |                         |
| Latin America                   | 20    | 19   | 95                      | 8  | 40                      | 8  | 40                      | 7   | 35                      | 14  | 70                      | 16                                    | 80                      |
| Latin America and the Caribbean | 33    | 32   | 97                      | 9  | 27                      | 10   | 30                      | 16  | 48                      |   |                         |                                       |                         |

**Source:** Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of official information from the countries.

## 2. Development of statistical information in selected areas

There follows a more detailed description of the main trends in the development of public statistics in selected areas. The information presented here corroborates the view expressed above that coverage and dissemination of data and indicators in the region have improved notably. This progress has occurred not only in the more traditional areas of censuses, household surveys and economic surveys; national statistical systems have been developing to respond to new demands for data in such fields as the environment, the information society and gender affairs.

### (a) Population censuses

According to schedules, between 2010 and 2012, 16 of the 20 Latin American countries and 20 Caribbean countries will conduct population and housing censuses (see annex tables 1 and 2). Intercensal headcounts have also increased: between the 1900 and 2000 censuses only Mexico conducted a headcount, whereas in the following decade Brazil also did so and Colombia plans to do so in 2010, since its last census was in 2005. Uruguay did not take a census in the 1990s, but ran a headcount in 2004. In the Caribbean countries, most censuses will be taken in 2010 or 2012 and the intercensal period will generally be 10 years (see annex table 2).

Making use of population censuses is an ongoing challenge, given the wealth of information they generate. Great strides have been made in the region in this regard; with the development of the software known as Retrieval of data for small areas by microcomputer (REDATAM) —which was purpose-designed by the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE) - Population Division of ECLAC for the dissemination and use of census data— 13 Latin American countries and 4 Caribbean countries allow online census data processing over the Internet.<sup>2</sup> Some, including Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador and Panama, also allow access to earlier censuses (from the 1970s, 1980s or 1990s) and to other data sources through this system.

<sup>2</sup> See Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE) - Population Division of ECLAC, "REDATAM informa" [online] <http://www.eclac.org/REDATAM/default.asp>.

Other initiatives have been taken to help mine censuses by building the capacity to analyse these databases for public policy and social research purposes.<sup>3</sup> The opportunity to access specialized databases that allow comparison of some or even all the countries of the region is another Latin American milestone in the dissemination and use of census information.<sup>4</sup> The great stock of Latin American and Caribbean census information and the extent to which it is used is reflected in the project “Integrated Public Use Microdata Series” (IPUMS) of the University of Minnesota, to which the region has contributed 173 censuses dating back to the 1960s.<sup>5</sup>

As well as horizontal cooperation within Latin America, a new perspective has been opened with South-South (in this case, extra-regional) cooperation for national capacity-building in the management and dissemination of census information. CELADE-Population Division of ECLAC has collaborated with the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics (AITRS) in training staff from statistical institutes in Arab countries in the management and analysis of census information using REDATAM and is responding to similar requests from the Department of Statistics of Jordan and statistical offices from other countries and, at the request of the Regional Office for Sub-Saharan Africa of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in Côte d’Ivoire.

Beyond the advances already mentioned, making good use of census information remains a challenge, because users demand ever increasing levels of disaggregation, greater precision and options for crossing data and territory, especially at the local level. All these challenges share a common base: the regionwide shortage of human resources trained in demography and population and development studies. Attempts are being made to make up this shortfall with isolated initiatives and meagre financial resources and a coordinated regional strategy is lacking.

## **(b) Household surveys**

Since the 1990s, household surveys have become an indispensable point of reference for tracking the development of the social situation in the countries of the region. Today, the data these surveys generate are essential for following up on public policies and on progress in meeting international commitments signed by the Governments of the region. These are also used for tracking progress towards achievement of some of the targets established in relation to the Millennium Development Goals.

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<sup>3</sup> Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE) - Population Division of ECLAC, “Potencialidades y aplicaciones de los datos censales: una contribución a la explotación del Censo de Población y Vivienda de Nicaragua 2005”, Manuales series, No. 56 (LC/L.2786-P), Santiago, Chile, August 2007. United Nations publication, Sales No. S.07.II.G 119.

<sup>4</sup> See database on the Investigation of International Migration in Latin America (IMILA) [online] [www.eclac.org/migracion/imila/](http://www.eclac.org/migracion/imila/); Database on Internal Migration in Latin America and the Caribbean (MIALC) [online] [www.eclac.org/migracion/migracion%5Finterna/](http://www.eclac.org/migracion/migracion%5Finterna/); Spatial distribution and urbanization in Latin America and the Caribbean (DEPUALC) [online] <http://www.eclac.org/celade/depualc/>; International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), <http://celade.cepal.cl/cgibin/RpWebEngine.exe/PortalAction?&MODE=MAIN&BASE=ELCAIRO&MAIN=WebServerMain.inl>; “Indicadores para el seguimiento de la Plataforma de Beijing” [online] <http://celade.cepal.cl/cgibin/RpWebEngine.exe/PortalAction?&MODE=MAIN&BASE=BEIJING&MAIN=WebServerMain.inl>; Regional System of Indicators on Ageing (SISE) [online] <http://celade.cepal.org/cgibin/RpWebEngine.exe/PortalAction?&MODE=MAIN&BASE=MADRID&MAIN=WebServerMain.inl>; System of Sociodemographic Indicators for Indigenous Peoples and Populations of Latin America (SISPPI) [online] <http://celade.cepal.org/redatam/PRYESP/SISPPI>; Millennium Development Goals in Latin America and the Caribbean [online] <http://www.cepal.org/mdg/>; “IPUMS International” [online] [https://international.ipums.org/international/microdata\\_inventory.shtml](https://international.ipums.org/international/microdata_inventory.shtml).

<sup>5</sup> See “IPUMS International” [online] [https://international.ipums.org/international/microdata\\_inventory.shtml](https://international.ipums.org/international/microdata_inventory.shtml).

As noted earlier, many of the countries already run a programme of regular household surveys, as shown in table 2, which provides them with data on trends in the labour market, income, poverty, living standards, population dynamics and food consumption, among other subjects of interest. Table 3 shows the availability of the different types of information in the various survey years.

Table 2  
**LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN: HOUSEHOLD SURVEYS 2000-2009**

| Region/countries                  | Employment surveys a | Income and expenditure surveys | Surveys of living conditions | Population and/or health surveys |      |                     |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|------|---------------------|
| North America and Central America |                      |                                |                              |                                  |      |                     |
| Costa Rica                        | 2000-2009            | 2004-2005                      |                              |                                  |      | 2001                |
| El Salvador                       | 2002-2004            | 2004-2005                      |                              |                                  | 2004 | 2001                |
| Guatemala                         | 2000-2009            |                                | 2006                         |                                  | 2005 | 2000                |
| Honduras                          | 2000-2009            |                                | 2004                         | 2005                             | 2002 | 2002                |
| Mexico                            | 2000-2009            | 2000-2008 b                    |                              | 2006                             |      | 2007                |
| Nicaragua                         | 2000-2009            | 2007                           | 2003 and 2005                | 2001 and 2006                    | 2003 | 2000                |
| Panama                            | 2000-2009            | 2007-2008                      | 2003 and 2008                |                                  | 2005 | 2005                |
| Caribbean                         |                      |                                |                              |                                  |      |                     |
| Dominican Republic                | 2000-2009            | 2006-2007                      |                              | 2002 and 2007                    |      | 2000                |
| South America                     |                      |                                |                              |                                  |      |                     |
| Argentina                         | 2000-2009 c          | 2004-2005                      |                              |                                  |      |                     |
| Bolivia (Plur. State of)          | 2000-2009            | 2003-2004                      | 2008                         | 2003 and 2008                    | 2001 | 2004                |
| Brazil                            | 2000-2009            | 2002-2003                      |                              |                                  |      | 2008                |
| Colombia                          | 2000-2009            | 2006-2007                      | 2007                         | 2000 and 2005                    |      | 2001                |
| Chile                             | 2000-2009            | 2006-2007                      | 2006                         |                                  |      | 2001                |
| Ecuador                           | 2000-2009            | 2005-2006                      | 2005-2006                    |                                  | 2004 | 2004                |
| Paraguay                          | 2000-2009            | 2005-2006                      |                              |                                  | 2004 | 2006                |
| Peru                              | 2000-2009            |                                | 2000-2009                    | 200, 2004 and 2009               |      | 2001, 2004 and 2007 |
| Uruguay                           | 2000-2009            | 2005-2006                      |                              |                                  | 2003 | 2003                |
| Venezuela (Bol. Rep. of)          | 2000-2009            | 2004-2005                      |                              | 2009                             |      | 200                 |

**Source:** Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of official information from the countries.

<sup>a</sup> In many countries, household surveys are multi-purpose surveys with an emphasis on the labour market.

<sup>b</sup> In the period 2000-2008, Mexico has conducted five income and expenditure surveys.

<sup>c</sup> In the Plurinational State of Bolivia the programme of household surveys is entitled "living standards survey" and this is used to generate labour market and poverty figures.

This table is indicative of the marked interest of the countries in generating data that help to characterize the population's standards of living and, in particular, trends in the labour market. These regular surveys also provide information about household income, which is used to measure the magnitude and severity of poverty. In this decade, most of the national statistical offices in Latin America have carried out research in order to update consumption structure based on income and expenditure surveys, and ascertain the realities of child and adolescent labour, people living with disabilities and population dynamics associated with reproductive health.

The advances registered in much of the region with respect to earlier decades have been the fruit of major efforts on the part of the countries, backstopped by contributions from bilateral and multilateral donor agencies which have helped to build the capacity of statistical offices to conduct household surveys. A major contribution was made by the Programme for the Improvement of Surveys and the Measurement of Living Conditions in Latin America and the Caribbean (MECOVI), a joint undertaking by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the World Bank and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), in which the countries of the region were actively involved. MECOVI ran from 1997 to 2003 and sought to: (i) improve the quality of surveys on living conditions; (ii) establish mechanisms for consultation between producers and users; and (iii) develop institutional capacity to ensure the sustainability of household survey programmes. Through MECOVI, the countries received financial and technical resources to consolidate or begin their programmes and courses and seminars were organized on different survey issues. The Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC has also created working groups on related matters, which have helped to channel resources to expand the capacity of these surveys. ECLAC has a long tradition of regular support for countries on this issue, which is materialized through technical assistance missions —during which on-the-job training is often conducted on issues of interest for the country— and the promotion of forums for discussion and exchange of experiences. The International Labour Organization (ILO) also collaborates through its work on the measurement of labour indicators. A recent agreement between the two institutions has helped to increase the resources available for these activities.

Despite the major advances made, especially since the 1990s, challenges remain in terms of institution-building and the sustainability of household survey programmes, and with regard to technical aspects such as the design and implementation of surveys and the analytical capacity of statistical institutions. Also, most countries do not yet apply the Integrated Household Survey System concept. As table 2 shows, some countries, especially in the Caribbean, have not yet been able to fully institutionalize their programmes. Factors such as institutional weakness, lack of resources to drive statistical development or staff turnover seem to conspire against that objective.

The countries need to continue to pursue the implementation of continuous household survey programmes and the international agencies must continue to support those efforts and to facilitate reflection and exchange of experiences in different areas of interest.

### **(c) National accounts and economic statistics**

Some Latin American and Caribbean countries have yet to adopt the methodological recommendations of the 1993 System of National Accounts (1993 SNA) of the United Nations. Since 2001, however, 18 new countries have adopted this methodology and in 2006 a total of 22 countries, or 61% of the region's countries, used it as a framework for calculating macroeconomic statistics (see annex table 3).

There are also cases in which the reference year used for the accounts represents a statistical base far removed from the economy's current structure (in terms of weighting and prices). Another limitation is the fact that most of the countries do not yet have a full set of estimated tables.

The situation with regard to 1993 SNA (year 2007) is summarized in table 3 below.



Table 3  
**CLASSIFICATION OF ACCOUNTS BY COMPILATION AND DISSEMINATION**

|                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| I                             | Published on the Internet (and possibly paper)                             |
| P                             | Published only on paper  |
| C                             | Compiled but not published   |
| E                             | In preparation   |
| N                             | Not prepared / not reported or no data                                     |
| Sequence of accounts prepared |  |
| 1                             | Overall supply and demand  |
| 2                             | GDP by type of economic activity, current and/or constant prices           |
| 3                             | GDP by expenditure, current and/or constant prices                         |
| 4                             | Supply and use table   |
| 5                             | Goods and services account   |
| 6                             | Income generation account  |
| 7                             | Allocation of primary income account                                       |
| 8                             | Secondary distribution of income account                                   |
| 9                             | Capital account  |
| 10                            | Financial account  |
| 11                            | Opening and closing balance sheets (for at least one institutional sector) |

**Source:** Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of official information from the countries.

It may be observed that in most of the countries the greatest strides have been made in origin and use of goods and services and the calculation of GDP by components of expenditure (although only 12 countries have supply and use tables dating from after 2000 and only 10 publish them). Conversely, only eight countries publish institutional sector accounts, which cover from the production account to the financial account, and only two countries have begun preparing balance sheets of assets and liabilities for the institutional sectors. In regard to this last point, the difficulties are even greater in the case of non-financial corporations, households and non-profit institutions serving households (NPISHs). That said, even for general government adequate information is not always available.

All this refers to annual estimates, while just over half the countries of the region have systems to track quarterly macroeconomic data on GDP, by sector and by the main components of spending. There is less experience with the production of what are known as extensions to the central framework in different segments of the economy: some countries have tourism satellite accounts, and a few have some experience in environmental accounts and in other specific fields such as health, education and culture.

It is important to note that it is not possible to classify the countries by level of adoption of 1993 SNA simply as a function of the number of accounts and tables they prepare and compile. It is necessary to analyse statistical, methodological and organizational aspects in each country in order to establish the degree of development of 1993 SNA, and to review the problems encountered in implementing it.

The availability and quality of basic statistics for preparing goods and services accounts represents a serious challenge in most of the countries. The limits they still face are the root cause of obstacles to progress towards completing and updating systems of national accounts and improving their quality. In the last few years priority has tended to be given to sectoral surveys rather than economic censuses, because of cost considerations and ease of processing. This indicates the need for directories of

production units covering the entire formal production universe. The broad range of informal or unstructured production units poses an additional difficulty since it is particularly complicated to capture their transactions. Some progress has been made in measuring this sector, however. The employment matrix, providing it is duly updated, represents a key instrument for examining the informal universe.

The adoption of 2008 SNA represents a new challenge for the countries of the region and it highlights the need to redouble efforts to implement 1993 SNA definitively and to modernize national account systems.

ECLAC has long supported the countries in preparing their national accounts, through direct assistance, the dissemination of international recommendations and the promotion of forums for exchanging experiences with other countries in the region. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has also played an important role in this field and has created two regional technical assistance centres, one in the Caribbean and the other, more recently, in Central America.

The Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC has created a Working Group on National Accounts, which has recently concluded an analysis of the situation in the region. In the framework of the working group, with the support of ECLAC in its capacity as secretariat and the engagement of other agencies with interests in this topic, it is hoped to agree upon a programme or plan to improve economic statistics and support the implementation of the System of National Accounts. The activities under this plan should be carried out in the framework of the guidelines arising from the Luxembourg Recommendations, an initiative brokered by the United Nations Statistics Division and the Statistical Office of the European Communities (EUROSTAT) for the global implementation and dissemination of the system of national accounts. The Luxembourg Recommendations centre largely on statistical capacity-building at the national level.

The overall objective of this regional plan is to coordinate the activities conducted by national, regional and international agencies to create and strengthen technical capacities at the national level in order to generate high-quality basic economic statistics and incorporate the new methodological recommendations of 2008 SNA into the calculation of national accounts. This will require increased efforts to strengthen the system of basic economic statistics and this is perhaps the greatest obstacle the region's countries face in preparing their national accounts and incorporating international recommendations. Indeed, for many countries it would be inappropriate to devote scarce resources to introducing the recommendations of 2008 SNA when the statistics used in preparing the accounts do not meet the necessary quality and coverage requirements.

#### **(d) Gender statistics**

In May 1999, ECLAC prepared a system of gender indicators for following up and evaluating the regional programme of action and the Beijing platform for action.<sup>6</sup> A process of coordination then began among the United Nations agencies and the Governments of Latin America and the Caribbean, which was consolidated at the thirty-first meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, at which the States members agreed to harmonize statistics disaggregated by sex and promote cooperation among national women's institutes and national statistical offices.

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<sup>6</sup> Thelma Gálvez, *Gender indicators for follow-up and evaluation of the Regional Programme of Action for the Women of Latin America and the Caribbean, 1995-2001, and the Beijing Platform for Action (LC/L.1186)*, Santiago, Chile, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

At the fourth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (Santiago, 25 to 27 July 2007) it was agreed that the strategic objectives of the Conference would include the promotion and development of gender statistics. ECLAC was asked to act as technical secretariat of a new working group on gender statistics created “*to encourage efforts to systematize national statistical information with a gender perspective [...] and the systematic and regular submission to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean of the relevant statistical information for the monitoring of the Millennium Development Goals*”.<sup>7</sup>

The construction of the regional system of gender indicators has been accompanied since 2001 by regular dissemination of information through a website that gives access to 35 profiles of countries of the region and a series of regionwide comparative socio-economic indicators. This website is updated regularly on the basis of processing of household surveys.

As table 4 shows, major strides have been made in national systems of gender indicators. A growing number of Latin American countries (Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama and Uruguay) have independent systems of gender indicators developed by national statistical offices or mechanisms for women’s advancement with the support of ECLAC, and others have begun compiling information on gender disparities and disaggregating official data by sex (Argentina, Belize, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Paraguay, Peru, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Puerto Rico and Trinidad and Tobago).

Significant progress has also been made as regards the time-use measurement. As of 2001, 18 countries had conducted time-use measurements, either through independent surveys or by means of modules (see annex table 4).

Most of the countries have also been institutionalizing the cooperation links between producers and users of gender statistics, especially among national statistical offices, mechanisms for the advancement of women and a growing number of area ministries.

Although there has been progress, many countries in the region, and especially in the Caribbean, lack the statistical capacity to generate data on key issues such as women’s participation at all levels of decision-making, poverty with a gender perspective, paid and unpaid work performed by women, time use and violence against women. There are also huge information gaps with respect to particular population groups, either because the sources are not representative enough to disaggregate at those levels or the questionnaires or statistical records do not include questions that identify members of those groups. This represents an obstacle to measuring gender gaps by ethnic identity, disability and migrant, refugee or displaced status, among others.

Most of the countries of the region regularly produce a broad set of gender-disaggregated social and labour-market indicators. Efforts to harmonize this information have been promoted by the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean and by the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC.

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<sup>7</sup> See Report of the fourth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (LC/L.2795), paragraph 11.

Table 4  
**ADVANCES IN GENDER INDICATOR SYSTEMS AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL**

| Country                     | Type of information  | Inter-agency cooperation agreements at the national level   |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| Argentina                   | Construction of gender indicators by the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INDEC)   |   |
| Brazil                      | National Gender Information System (SNIG-BR) / Gender Equality Observatory   | Between the Special Secretariat for Women's Policies of the Office of the President of the Republic, the Brazilian Geographical and Statistical Institute (IBGE) and other public-sector institutions   |
| Chile                       | Gender statistics from 1992-2002 censuses online   |   |
| Colombia                    | Gender Affairs Observatory (OAG) (Law 1009 of 2006)  |   |
| Costa Rica                  | Preliminary proposal for a gender indicators system which in 2008 included 98 indicators for 10 thematic areas of the Beijing Platform for Action            | Between the National Institute of Statistics and Census (INEC) and the National Institute of Women (INAMU), to mainstream the gender perspective in the National Statistical Development Strategy   |
| Cuba                        | Database with the information available  | Commitment between the Federation of Cuban Women (FMC) and the national statistical office to compile more information  |
| Ecuador                     | SIMUJERES in the integrated system of social indicators of Ecuador.  | Between the National Women's Council and National Statistics and Census Institute   |
| El Salvador                 | Integration of the gender perspective in the sixth national population census and the fifth housing census, held in 2007                                     | Between the General Directorate of Statistics and Censuses and the Salvadoran Institute for Women's Development   |
| Guatemala                   | System of indicators for gender analysis in Guatemala  | Between the National Statistical Institute and the Secretariat for Women of the Office of the President   |
| Haiti                       | Process of integration of gender indicators in national surveys  | Between the Ministry for the Status of Women and Women's Rights and the Haitian Institute of Statistics and Informatics   |
| Honduras                    | National system of information on women and girls  | Between the national statistical office and the national women's institute, with the cooperation of UNFPA and the Division for Gender Affairs of ECLAC, to process and generate a proposal of 99 gender indicators, and with other government agencies to provide statistical data disaggregated by sex |
| Mexico                      | System of indicators for monitoring the status of women in Mexico (SISESIM)  | Between INEGI and INMUJERES   |
| Nicaragua                   | System of gender-focused indicators (SIEG)   | Between the Nicaraguan Women's Institute (INIM) and the National Statistics and Census Institute (INEC)   |
| Panama                      | System of gender-focused indicators (SIEGPA)   | Network of public and civil-society agencies that produce and use statistical information to mainstream the gender perspective in national statistics   |
| Paraguay                    |  | Agreement being prepared between the Department of Women's Affairs and the Department of Statistics, Surveys and Censuses (DGEEC)   |
| Peru                        | Sectoral statistics with gender indicators – Strategic Plan for National Statistics (PENDES) 2008-2012 includes a project for constructing gender indicators | Between the Ministry for Women's Affairs and Social Development (MIMDES) and the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI) to prepare a first time-use survey   |
| Dominican Republic          | Women's Observatory  | Between the Secretary of State for Women's Affairs and the national statistical office to produce gender statistics   |
| Uruguay                     | Gender Information System (SIG)  |   |
| Venezuela<br>(Bol. Rep. of) |  | Between the National Institute for Women (INAMUJER) and the national statistical office to prepare statistics disaggregated by sex and create gender indicators   |

**Source:** Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of official information from the countries.

ECLAC links the mandates of the Statistical Conference of the Americas and the Quito Consensus with the coordination of the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean, forming a bridge between users and producers of gender statistics.<sup>8</sup> The creation of the Observatory not only strengthens the role of national mechanisms for the advancement of women but also raises the profile of gender indicators as a tool for monitoring the results and follow-up of public policies.

**(e) Vital statistics<sup>9</sup>**

All countries in the region have vital statistic systems that regularly produce data on births and deaths, but many of them face coverage and quality issues. In seven of the 25 countries, coverage is good (over 85% of births and deaths) throughout the national territory. But another seven countries have coverage levels of roughly 50%. Quality issues, however, are more common to all the countries, particularly when analysed at the local level. Lack of information about mother's age, baby's birth weight, residence and socio-economic characteristics of the parties (parents of stillborn babies, deceased adults), or imprecise or non-existent information about cause of death impede understanding of the true levels of risk and incidence of disease, and hinder the formulation of epidemiological mortality profiles.

As regards morbidity statistics, resources and services, there are substantial differences between the Latin American countries. Notwithstanding the progress that has been made in vital statistics, the issues that arise in this statistical area reflect the operational difficulties of health systems themselves and, in particular, the population's access to them. Low coverage in some geographic areas and fields—such as social security or the private sector—is a common problem that prevents the compilation of complete, accurate and reliable information for formulating health policy.

The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) has prepared a Plan of Action for Strengthening Vital and Health Statistics, aimed at addressing and overcoming the limitations on these essential components of health information systems. The plan promotes horizontal cooperation and collaboration with other international organizations and entities involved in improving vital and health statistics in the countries of the region. The Plan has already produced results in this area: a majority of countries involved have used the diagnostic tools proposed in the Plan, and a number of countries have formulated strategic plans for strengthening vital statistics and health data systems. For example, four countries in the region (Honduras, Mexico, Panama and Paraguay) have already undergone this process and are currently receiving assistance from PAHO to mobilize resources for implementing their plans. The Dominican Republic and Peru are concluding the formulation of their respective strategic plans. On a regional level, joint activities between countries, or groups of countries, are being examined, and on a macro or global level, harmonization activities and alliances are being developed within the framework of the reform in the United Nations system, to coordinate actions and prevent the duplication of work which has led to inefficient use of scarce resources available for these topics in the region.

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<sup>8</sup> The Observatory was established with the inter-agency cooperation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with the support of Spanish International Cooperation Agency for Development (AECID) and the Ibero-American Secretariat (SEGIB).

<sup>9</sup> This section is based on a contribution prepared specially by PAHO for this report and is based on Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)/World Health Organization (WHO), *Status of Vital, Morbidity, and Health Resources and Services Statistics in the Countries of the Americas. Summary of the Regional Report*, Santiago, Chile, November 2007, which was prepared using responses to a guide specifically designed for this purpose and answered by 25 countries.

**(f) Education statistics<sup>10</sup>**

In the late 1990s, the production of education statistics in Latin America and the Caribbean still suffered from lack of basic information, isolation of education statistics units from decision-making processes, little use of the information produced, non-existent venues for exchanging standardized information and methodologies and lack of institutional leadership at the regional and international levels. This situation was exacerbated by educational decentralization processes in several countries in the region, which took a toll on the efficiency of their information systems.<sup>11</sup>

During this decade, however, the majority of countries in the region have significantly improved their production of education statistics and indicators, thanks to the spread of low-cost information and communications technologies, among other factors. Projects on internationally comparable education indicators for monitoring the commitments undertaken by the international community, such as the Education for All (EFA) programme of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and schemes formulated in the framework of the Millennium Development Goals, have also played a role.

In addition, the creation in 1999 of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), which is responsible for overseeing the production of official education statistics within the United Nations system, reinforced areas of work that promoted the development of education statistics and indicators with shared conceptual frameworks, quality standards and methodologies, international classifications and common glossaries.

In Latin America and the Caribbean it is now possible to produce the indicators needed to monitor international commitments on education —such as EFA and the Goals— with high-quality standards with respect to the reference population covered. For example, 37 of the 41 countries in the region have data on the education system. The following table shows the percentage of the population covered by some key indicators for monitoring the Goals.

Table 5  
**CoVERAGE OF KEY INDICATORS FOR MONITORING THE MILLENIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS  
IN EDUCATION (WEIGHTED BY COVERED POULATION), 2009 ANNUAL SURVEY**

| Net enrolment rate in primary education <sup>a</sup> | Index of parity between the sexes in the gross enrolment rate <sup>b</sup> |             |            |
|--|--|-------------|------------|
|  | Primary %  | Secondary % | Tertiary % |
| 91   | 95   | 95          | 82         |

**Source:** UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS).

<sup>a</sup> Official indicator for monitoring Goal 2 of the Millennium Development Goals.

<sup>b</sup> Indicators used for monitoring Goal 3 of the Millennium Development Goals.

In addition to the new challenges posed by the demands of the sector, some of the previous issues persist. In light of this fact, several ongoing initiatives seek to improve and increase the information produced, through training and assistance for national technical teams. In this area, UIS works in Latin

<sup>10</sup> This section is based on a contribution prepared specially by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS).

<sup>11</sup> R. McMeekin, “Education statistics in Latin America and the Caribbean” [online] <http://www.iadb.org/sds/doc/edu-104e.pdf>, 1998.

America and the Caribbean and in other world regions, by coordinating these efforts within a strategy of collaboration with other agencies and organizations operating in the region. This requires constant support for the demands of countries through visits and collaboration with local projects and, principally, the organization of regional and subregional workshops to promote proper use of international standards and methodologies and best practices in this field.<sup>12</sup>

The Regional Education Indicators Project (PRIE)/OEA13) identifies several challenges and priorities, many of which are related to institutional aspects and changes in the culture of information and assessment. Thus, the following efforts and actions need to be considered:

- Producing analytical reports that explain and interpret the information produced.
- Training and strengthening the capacities of human resources involved in statistical processes.
- Integrating different sources of information in education, particularly in human resources, investment and knowledge assessment.
- Developing policies to disseminate the information produced.
- Improving data on private institutions, teachers, education spending, early childhood education and higher education.
- Increasing the availability of metadata.
- Achieving better institutional integration between ministries of education and statistical institutes.

Efforts are being made to support the coordination and promotion work carried out by UNESCO within the framework of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC.

#### **(g) Environmental statistics**

In 2009 ECLAC published the results of a study undertaken to ascertain the current state of national environmental statistical programmes in the region.<sup>13</sup> The results of the study indicate that substantial progress has been made in the last eight years, with a large number of national agencies having made headway on institutionalizing environmental statistics.

According to the study, for 2008, 21 of the respondent countries indicated that they have programmes on environmental statistics, while 14 of the 28 national entities surveyed stated they had a unit dedicated solely to the issue. In terms of dissemination and publication of environmental statistics, it is interesting to note that in 2008 all of the 16 surveyed countries (except Paraguay, which is in the process of preparing its first publication) reported having some kind of environmental statistics publication, be it in the form of a compendium, yearbook, bulletin or online database.

This significant progress demonstrates the growing importance of environmental statistics in the countries of the region. This has translated into a higher level of institutional development, particularly

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<sup>12</sup> Several projects include joint activities with the Organization of American States (OAS), the Organization of Ibero-American States for Education, Science and Culture (OEI) and ECLAC, among others.

<sup>13</sup> Kristina Taboulchanas and Franco Fernández, “Estado de situación de las estadísticas ambientales en América Latina y el Caribe al 2008: avances, desafíos y perspectivas”, *Estudios estadísticos y prospectivos series*, No. 67 (LC/L.3003-P), Santiago, Chile, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). United Nations publication, Sales No. S.09.II.G.11.

for national statistical offices. However, national institutions face several challenges in further developing an environmental statistics unit or programme, including insufficient financial or human resources. This is reflected by the fact that the majority of institutions participating in the study (62%) have only one to three individuals working to environmental statistics.

The study highlights the need to improve several aspects of national environmental statistical systems, including strengthening inter-institutional mechanisms, developing metadata and methodological documents and establishing capacity-building programmes on technical and organizational issues.

Other significant limitations include the availability and quality of environmental data. The lack of systematic collection and processing of environmental data in official statistical series represents a real challenge.

Although the region has made substantial progress, there is much more work to be done to achieve the ideal development of environmental statistics, thus contributing to public policy in the countries of the region.

With a view to further developing environmental statistics, the study presents recommendations for national and international organizations that produce and develop environmental statistics. These include:

- Strengthen work on environmental statistics institutionally by creating and consolidating specialized units for generating environmental statistics with adequate financial and human resources.
- Promote collaboration between national statistical offices and environmental ministries or departments to generate systematic, high-quality official environmental statistics.
- Employ the definitions, concepts and classifications found in the System of Integrated Environmental and Economic Accounting (SEEA) as a conceptual framework for developing related basic statistics in the countries.
- Develop a mechanism for coordination between institutions that report to the main international conventions and organizations responsible for national environmental statistical systems.
- Invest in training on environmental statistics.
- Collaborate in the production of technical and operational materials (manuals, guidelines, tool kits, and so forth) in Spanish in order to respond to countries' needs.

#### **(h) Statistics on Information and communications technologies (ICTs)**

In recent years the region has seen significant progress in the production of harmonized statistics and indicators on ICT access and usage based on household and business surveys. In 2004, only 15 countries in Latin America had indicators on Internet access and three had indicators on Internet usage based on information from household surveys, while those numbers have now increased to 18 and 15, respectively. This type of information is less readily available in the Caribbean, given that in 2004 only two countries had indicators on Internet access and the same number had indicators on Internet usage. Those figures are now six and five, respectively.<sup>14</sup> Eleven countries in Latin America and the Caribbean have incorporated questions on ICTs in business surveys and in more than half of the countries ICT statistics are a regular part of surveys conducted by the national statistical offices.

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<sup>14</sup> Most population censuses in the Caribbean countries include questions regarding computer and Internet access in the section on household goods and services.



This progress has resulted in the development of regional capacities for formulating and designing questionnaires, compiling data, harmonizing indicators and disseminating methodologies. The Observatory for the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean (OSILAC) has provided significant support for the process and has maintained close collaboration with the Working Group on Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC.

One aspect that has facilitated this progress has been the approval by the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC of the Compendium of practices on the inclusion of ICT questions in household and business surveys.<sup>15</sup> OSILAC is currently reviewing the 2009 version of the Compendium, and has noted that 20 countries in the region (15 in Latin America and 5 in the Caribbean) have adopted at least one indicator on ITC access and one indicator on ITC usage from among the indicators suggested by the Observatory.

In addition, efforts were focused on unifying and coordinating initiatives with the Statistical Conference of the Americas and the United Nations Statistics Commission, through the work carried out with the Partnership on Measuring ICTs for Development. This network also includes offices that measure indicators beyond access and usage in households and businesses, such as spending on ICTs, the ICT industry, education and others. In particular, the Working Group on Information and Communications Technologies of the Statistical Conference of the Americas, in collaboration with OSILAC, is developing a regional proposal on key indicators for education and e-government, to be sent to UNESCO and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) respectively, as the coordinating entities of the Partnership's initiatives.

It is worth noting, lastly, that ECLAC and OSILAC have implemented the ICT Statistical Information System ([www.cepal.cl/tic/flash](http://www.cepal.cl/tic/flash)), which contains statistical information for 17 countries in the region. The system includes 71 databases of household surveys developed in the countries of the region that have been compiled and harmonized by OSILAC. The information available through the system shows the existing gaps in ICT access and usage among population groups by social, economic and demographic factors.

The main challenges in developing statistics on information and communications technology are to:

- Promote the use of statistical information in formulating and evaluating digital policies, as well as for assessment and decision-making.
- Continue to develop technical assistance and capacity-building, focusing on countries that have yet to adopt the process of harmonized measurements of ICTs and those that have not incorporated the internationally recommended indicators.
- Increase efforts to create a series of historical statistics on ICT access and usage in countries. To achieve this it is essential to maintain questions in the surveys over time.

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<sup>15</sup> see <http://www.cepal.org/cgi-bin/getProd.asp?xml=/publicaciones/xml/3/32163/P32163.xml&xsl=/ddpe/tpl/p9f.xsl&base=/socinfo/tpl/top-bottom.xsl>

## **II. ORGANIZATION OF STATISTICAL SYSTEMS IN THE COUNTRIES OF THE REGION**

Most statistical systems in Latin America are organized around a national statistical office,<sup>16</sup> which is usually created under a special law or as part of legislation on statistical functions in the country. Most national statistical systems are decentralized as regards the production and dissemination of statistics and centralized as regards normative aspects, with the national statistical office issuing guidelines and steering the system as a whole.

According to the results of a recent self-assessment survey on best statistical practices answered by 19 countries, the following are some of the characteristics of national statistical systems: In 100% of cases, the mandate to compile data for the production of statistics is specified under the law and statistical secrecy is guaranteed in national legislation.

- In 84% of cases, statistical offices have a strategic or long-term plan for surveys (five years or more).
- In 42% of cases, the head of the statistical office is appointed through a public competitive recruitment process.
- In nine cases the head of the statistical office is a senior civil servant (non-political) and in two countries that person is a government minister.

The demand exists in the region today for governments to take steps to build the capacity of national statistical systems in various areas. The Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC has taken up this call and, with the collaboration of ECLAC and EUROSTAT, is driving forward the project to prepare a code of good practice in statistics.<sup>17</sup>

## **III. REGIONAL COORDINATION**

### **1. Brief history**

The efforts made by Governments and specialized agencies to improve the regional coordination of official statistics date back several decades. The first major landmark was the creation by the Organization of American States (OAS) in 1950 of the Inter-American Statistical Conference as one of its specialized conferences. This was preceded by the establishment of the Inter-American Statistical Institute (IASI) in 1940 and the organization of two Inter-American Statistical Congresses, one in 1947 and one in 1950. The first plenary session of the Inter-American Statistical Conference was held in Quitandinha, Petrópolis, Brazil, in June 1955. This meeting was arranged with the support of IASI and named the III Inter-American Statistical Conference in retroactive recognition of the Inter-American Statistical Congresses that IASI had held as forerunners to the event. Subsequently, the Inter-American Statistical Conference met on a regular basis, and its sessions continued to be organized in conjunction with IASI.

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<sup>16</sup> Only two countries in Latin America have departments or divisions responsible for producing and disseminating within a ministry.

<sup>17</sup> For a description of the project and its implementation see Report on the development and adoption of the Code of Good Practice in Statistics in Latin America and the Caribbean (LC/L.3075(CEA.5/13)).

These regional coordination efforts provided a considerable boost to statistics in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, and some of the most notable developments are listed below:

- The first Inter-American Demographic Congress was held in Mexico City in October 1943. The Congress recommended that all the countries of the Americas make every effort to conduct, in or around 1950, a complete census of the population, social issues and economic resources.<sup>18</sup>
- In January 1946, the IASI Executive Committee set up the 1950 Census of the Americas Commission (COTA). This Commission comprised senior technicians from the 22 member countries of IASI as well as observers and representatives of the statistics and population offices of the United Nations, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Pan American Union (PAU). This programme had a huge impact: in the first half of the twentieth century, few countries took regular censuses; in 1950 the majority of the countries in the region were starting to participate in census rounds.
- Pursuant to one of the recommendations made at the second Inter-American Statistical Congresses, IASI created the Committee on Improvement of National Statistics (COINS), which first met in June 1951. During its 30 years of existence, COINS carried out its programme of action through a series of thematic subcommissions: one initially constituted to continue the work of COTA; another on agricultural statistics organized together with FAO; one on households, whose activities were coordinated with the United Nations National Household Survey Capability Programme (NHSCP); and several others that were set up over the years to promote the development of statistics in specific sectors.

The first Conference of Directors of Statistics of the Americas was organized by ECLAC in 1989 and held every two years afterwards. This Conference of Directors served as a technical forum for the heads of statistical offices at a time when the Inter-American Statistical Conference of OAS was facing serious financing problems. The aim of the Conference of Directors was to bring about the implementation of the standard practices of the United Nations system in statistical offices throughout the region, as the Conference of European Statisticians had done in Europe. For some time, the meetings of the Conference of Directors of Statistics of the Americas organized by ECLAC subsisted at the same time as the Inter-American Statistical Conference of OAS. In the end, on 17 September 1998, the Permanent Executive Committee of the Inter-American Council for Integral Development of OAS decided to discontinue the Inter-American Statistical Conference and urged the member States of OAS to pursue their coordination efforts in the field of statistics through a single entity within the framework of ECLAC.

## **2. The Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean**

The Conference of Directors of Statistics of the Americas was the direct forerunner of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), which was created to support the development of official statistics in the region in keeping with the objectives set forth in resolution 2000/7 of 25 July 2000 of the United Nations Economic and

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<sup>18</sup> Inter-American Statistical Institute (IASI), *Relato del Censo de las Américas de 1950*, Washington, D.C., Pan American Union (PAU), 6 September 1953, p. 8.

Social Council.<sup>19</sup> Pursuant to that resolution, the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean is a subsidiary body of ECLAC and has the following objectives:<sup>20</sup>

- Promote the development and improvement of national statistics and work to ensure that they are comparable internationally, bearing in mind the recommendations of the United Nations Statistical Commission, the specialized agencies and other relevant organizations.
- Promote international, regional and bilateral cooperation among national offices and international and regional agencies.
- 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.

In discussions at meetings of the Conference and in various studies performed to assess the situation in the region, countries have referred in particular to:

- The need to raise the coverage, quality and transparency criteria of national statistics to the level of the best international practices and to use them as a basis to develop a reputation for excellence for official statistics among the users, economic stakeholders, social actors and decision makers.
- The fact that, in some cases, national statistical offices of the region carry out their functions in a precarious institutional and legal framework.
- The fact that, in many cases, national statistical offices operate without sufficient information technology and human and financial resources.
- The need to improve the way in which the work of multilateral, regional and subregional organizations is coordinated with national and regional priorities in terms of statistical development.

In view of this situation, the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC has reiterated the urgent need for the Governments of the region to adopt measures to ensure that the national statistical systems attain an adequate level of institutional development and have the resources necessary to carry out completely the function incumbent upon them in the new millennium, in accordance with the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics. Steps must also be taken to further the technical training of statisticians in the region and research into statistics methodology.

The Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC acknowledges that the diversity of situations in the member countries of the region means that convergence towards that goal of regional excellence will take place in stages, while at the same time there is a huge potential for horizontal cooperation that, as the vast experience in the area has shown, makes it possible to take effective advantage of the experiences and progress achieved in each of the countries of the region.

The Conference has a Strategic Plan for 2005-2015, which sets out the main challenges facing regional development in statistics, as well as the basic lines of action for successfully tackling them. According to the Strategic Plan, the main challenges for national statistical offices between now and 2015 lie in: developing an appropriate information system for monitoring progress towards the Millennium

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<sup>19</sup> Establishing the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (E/2000/INF/2/Add.2).

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

Development Goals; preparing for the 2010 round of censuses; and implementing the System of National Accounts (2008 SNA) in all the countries of the region.

The Conference has functioned as the most important forum in the region for discussions on public statistics. It has promoted a series of activities aimed at achieving the aforementioned general objectives that are framed as more specific targets in the Strategic Plan. The details of these activities are set out in biennial programmes, which have generally been implemented through working groups comprising several country representatives, one of whom acts as the group coordinator. ECLAC or another organization usually provides secretariat support for the working groups. In some cases, the work is carried out with resources provided by certain agencies and/or under projects that are drawn up within the framework of the Conference and then submitted to donor agencies for funding.

The following working groups are currently operating:

*Working Group on Censuses.* This Group has undertaken support activities for the preparation of the censuses that the countries of the region are due to carry out under the forthcoming 2010 round. Exchanges of experiences have been organized and progress has been made in harmonizing some of the census variables. Meetings were held, for example, on measuring people's ethnic origin; internal and international migration and other forms of territorial mobility; and operational aspects of cartography. Funding has been made available for these activities by IDB and UNFPA.

*Working Group on Institution-Building.* This Group has been working on promoting the harmonization of social statistics, for which it has received funding as a project submitted by the Statistical Conference to IDB. At the recent meeting of the Conference, the Group was requested to focus its activities on preparing, with support from ECLAC and EUROSTAT, a proposal for a code of good statistical practices for Latin America and the Caribbean on promoting the use of international standards.

*Working Group on Gender Statistics.* The work of this Group has focussed on three areas: (i) the development of statistical and methodological capacities to produce high-quality gender statistics; (ii) the strengthening of ties between the producers and users of gender statistics; and (iii) the promotion of international development cooperation and the diffusion of gender statistics. It has promoted exchanges of experiences, discussions on common definitions and/or approaches, technical assistance and training in matters such as time-use surveys, statistics on violence against women and household satellite accounts (with regard to measuring the contribution of unpaid work). The Group has engaged the region in the discussions that are under way on some of these issues within the international statistics community.

*Working Group on Migration and Trends in Remittances.* This Group has looked into the methods used in the region to measure international remittances and has analysed ways to improve these procedures. It has headed an IDB-financed project that has facilitated the Group's work.

*Working Group on the Monitoring of Progress towards the Millennium Development Goals.* The Group has geared its work towards analysing the definitions and methodologies of the indicators that have been established for monitoring progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. It has focussed on analysing the differences that tend to arise between the estimates made by countries and those made by international organizations. An agenda is being drawn up for bringing about the reconciliation of these differences. The Group has also promoted greater participation of national statistical offices in the preparation of national reports on progress towards the Millennium Development Goals.

*Working Group on National Accounts.* The Group carries out activities to improve the basic economic statistics and estimates used in national accounts in the region. It has performed a diagnosis of the current situation and drawn up a set of proposals for creating a programme to link the activities carried out by countries and international agencies, with a view to addressing the difficulties encountered in producing primary economic data. These were identified as the main bottleneck that is hampering the possibility of improving the scope and quality of national accounts.

*Working Group on Information and Communications Technologies.* The Group seeks to serve as a discussion forum on the measurement of access to, and use of, information and communications technologies (ICT) and to contribute to the development and dissemination of statistics and indicators relating to ICT and their comparability at the regional level through the sharing of national experiences and the harmonization of methodologies. The Group has closely coordinated its activities with the Observatory for the Information Society in Latin America and the Caribbean (OSILAC). It has also undertaken activities to further the discussion and dissemination of proposals made at the global level and to generate awareness of the experiences of developing countries.

*Working Group on Human Resource Education and Training.* One important initiative was the transformation of the Working Group on Human Resource Education and Training into the Knowledge Transfer Network. This network works to coordinate, promote and disseminate statistical training activities that are of interest to statistics officials in the region. For this purpose it has set up a basic coordinating unit that is financed partially by the World Bank and is located in the offices of the National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics (INEGI) of Mexico.

*Working Group on Environmental Statistics.* This Group was formed recently and aims to promote the regular production of environmental statistics in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean through the dissemination of the experiences from outside the region and the exchange of national experiences within it.

*Working Group on Poverty.* This Group, which was created at the most recent Conference, aims to further the harmonization of methodology used to measure poverty in terms of income in Latin America and the Caribbean. Using the proposed new methodology that is to be completed by ECLAC in 2009, as well as the methods used by several countries in their national estimates, the Group will put forth a set of recommendations to improve the interregional comparability of measurements.

### **3. Subregional coordination mechanisms**

#### **(a) Statistics development in MERCOSUR<sup>21 22</sup>**

MERCOSUR, which has been in existence for almost two decades, has been promoting the development, harmonization, validation and dissemination of statistical information among its member countries. In the work leading up to the first Convention on Statistics, for example, the Directors of the national statistical institutes of MERCOSUR (including Chile) signed a framework agreement on the coordination and harmonization of statistics in which they affirmed their willingness to proceed with the

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<sup>21</sup> This section was prepared on the basis of a report issued by the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INDEC) of Argentina.

<sup>22</sup> The member countries of MERCOSUR are Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay, while Chile is an associate member and participates in several aspects of statistical coordination.

harmonization of statistics in different fields. There is no common statistics policy, however, for guiding statistics activities in accordance with the needs of the regional integration process. Nor is there an institutional structure for statistics in MERCOSUR, which means there are no commonly applied norms. This is one limitation that the national statistical offices are trying to resolve.

The cooperation received from the European Union since 1998 has facilitated statistical harmonization activities. These include the regional and itinerant workshops, meetings (usually biannual ones), local and international technical assistance, internships and studies. Various working groups have been set up. These consist of experts and officials from national statistical institutes and/or central banks of the subregion that work in the same area, and they are each responsible for presenting progress reports on their area. The working groups are organized around three main topics:

- The harmonization and development of social statistics (employment and income distribution statistics, household budget surveys and the statistical measurement of poverty).
- The harmonization and development of economic statistics (national accounts, the measurement of the unseen economy, services and foreign trade in services statistics).
- The overall statistical harmonization process and the convergence of the regional institutional framework for statistics (approval and implementation of the community statistics plan, the creation of the virtual network for information exchange, the implementation of a remote statistical data capture scheme, administrative directories and records, classifications and nomenclatures and total quality as applied to statistics).

The harmonization of the statistical output of the member States of MERCOSUR faces some difficulties, mainly owing to inequalities in the availability of resources, the lack of prior experience in statistical harmonization within an integration process, and the absence of a propitious environment as a result of the non-existence of a common institutional framework for statistics. The various working groups are proceeding at different paces according to the experience they had prior to starting activities under the project.

The European Union has also been approached for support for the common statistical tasks performed by central banks and ministries of economics in the subregion in areas such as: fiscal statistics; monetary, credit and interest-rate variables; the balance of payments; and the international investment position.

#### **(b) The Statistical Commission of the Central American Integration System**

The Statistical Commission of the Central American Integration System was set up as an international cooperation initiative promoted by the directors and managers of the statistics and census offices of Central America and as the result of the agreements reached at meetings held in 2003. The Statistical Directors Forum of Central America and Panama was held in Tegucigalpa in June 2003 for the purpose of considering the establishment of the Statistical Commission of the Central American Integration System.

The constitution of the Central American Statistical Commission of the Central American Integration System (CENTROESTAD) was signed at the Thirty-Third Regular Meeting of Heads of State and Government of the Member Countries of the Central American Integration System, and ratified in paragraph 10 of the Declaration of San Pedro Sula issued at the end of the Meeting. The Commission comprises: Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama, and is open other member States.

The objectives of CENTROESTAD are to:

- Facilitate the development of a regional statistical system.
- Generate up-to-date and timely regional statistical information based on information provided by national and regional institutions.
- Standardize methodologies and definitions to allow for the comparability and aggregation of statistical data in Central America and the Dominican Republic in keeping with international principles and in accordance with universally applied procedures and techniques.

In May 2009, as part of the action to further the work of CENTROESTAD, Honduras arranged for cooperation from the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21) with a view to bringing the directors of the national statistical offices of the Central American Integration System together at a meeting in San Salvador on 11 and 12 May. At the meeting, Belize and the Dominican Republic were invited to join CENTROESTAD under the provisions of the San Pedro Sula Declaration. Belize accepted the invitation.

The goal of the meeting was to start preliminary coordination activities in regard to the following: the drafting of the regulations of CENTROESTAD; and the preparation of the Pluriannual Plan 2009-2011 on the basis of the seven axes of integration. The purpose of the Plan is to address the requirements that the various secretariats and institutions that make up the Central American Integration System have with regard to statistics and indicators and thus assist them in their regional decision-making. It was also agreed at the meeting that Honduras would continue as pro tempore chair of CENTROESTAD until the regulations had been approved by the foreign ministers of the Central American Integration System.

**(c) The Andean Statistics Committee**

The Andean Statistics Committee is the permanent technical support and advisory body to the Commission or General Secretariat of the Andean Community and is responsible for issuing non-binding technical opinions on issues related to community statistics. The goal of the Committee is to foster improvements in economic, social, demographic and environmental statistics and to harmonize concepts, definitions, minimum contents, methodologies and the presentation of statistics in such a way as to allow comparability among the countries of the Andean Community.

The Committee comprises the highest authorities of the governing bodies of the national statistical systems of the Community's member countries. The presidency is held by the highest authority of the national statistical office of the country that assumes the presidency of the Andean Presidential Council. There is a statistical office in the General Secretariat of the Andean Community.

The operative instruments of the Community statistical system are:

- The Community Statistics Programme 2008-2013
- National Strategic Plans for Statistical Development
- Community legislation on statistics
- The Andean Centre for Training in Statistics (now CANDANE)
- The Andean Centre for the Compilation and Dissemination of Statistical Information
- International cooperation
- Annual work plans



(i) *The Community Statistics Programme 2008-2013*

This programme sets out a strategic vision of statistics that is to be incorporated Community-wide in 2008-2013 in response to the demands of the Andean integration process. It was approved by the Commission of the Andean Community by virtue of Decision 700 of 10 December 2008.

The Programme covers:

- Five areas of action: (i) the social sphere; (ii) the environment; (iii) external relations; (iv) economics and trade; and (v) institutional management, which are organized into ten chapters.
- The basic precepts governing the production of statistics in the Community, which are equivalent to the good practices of EUROSTAT were laid down within the framework of a supranational law (Decision 648) in the Andean Community in December 2000.

(ii) *National Strategic Plans for Statistical Development*

Community statistics depend heavily on the production of national statistical services and the General Secretariat of the Andean Community, with the support of the World Bank, and PARIS21, promoted the formulation of National Strategic Plans for Statistical Development for the period 2008-2012. So far, Ecuador, Colombia and Peru had approved their National Strategic Plans and are now implementing them.

The Plan of the Plurinational State of Bolivia is in the final stage of revision.<sup>23</sup> The general objective of the Strategic Plans is to determine, together with political authorities, relevant public- and private-sector users and statistics producers, the strategic statistical information that the country requires for its economic and social development. The Strategic Plans are therefore linked to: (i) the country's Political Constitution; (ii) the national development plan; (iii) priority programmes and projects; (iv) international commitments; and (v) the Community Statistics Programme. Approval of a draft law (decision) that institutionalizes the formulation of National Strategic Plans for Statistical Development in each country is expected shortly.

(iii) *Community legislation on statistics*

Binding commitments for the countries have been established in Community legislation on the preparation and transmission of harmonized statistics to the Andean Centre for the Compilation and Dissemination of Statistical Information.

The Community decisions and resolutions on the subject have the status of supranational laws, in other words they come into effect immediately and no national legislation within the Community may contradict them. The decisions and resolutions currently in force cover social, economic and environmental statistics, manuals, nomenclatures, directories and other matters. Six other decisions and approximately 16 resolutions on technical provisions for data transmission, that fall within the juridical competence of the General Secretariat of the Andean Community are awaiting approval by the Commission of the Andean Community.

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<sup>23</sup> These documents and the process can be viewed at: <http://www.comunidadandina.org/estadisticas/pendes.htm>various.

(iv) *The Andean Centre for Training in Statistics*

There is a Community policy for statistics training that guarantees a training system that meets the needs of statistics systems, can adapt to developments in the field and enhances the quality of data production.

Decision 648 establishes the framework for the development of the Andean Community Statistics Training Programme. By this Decision, the Andean Centre for Training in Statistics is established as the coordination mechanism and national statistics training centres are established as the executing agencies of training programmes and policy. It also establishes the preparation of a triennial Andean Training programme. In the short term, this programme will focus on training trainers, which will enable at least 20 officials per course/country to be replicated at zero cost. In the medium term, statistical training will be boosted in the national statistics training centres with the support of trainers with expertise in specific areas, among other initiatives. The coordination of the Andean Centre for Training in Statistics rotates every five years among the national statistical offices. During the first period, coordination has been assumed by the national statistical office of Colombia (DANE).

(v) *The Andean Centre for the Compilation and Dissemination of Statistical Information*

The dissemination of statistical information has been identified as the most important stage in the development of Community statistics. Dissemination is understood as any activity that allows users access without distinction and in an appropriate manner to Community statistics.

The objectives of the Statistics Dissemination Programme are set out and approved in Andean Community Decision 690. National statistics dissemination centres and the Andean Centre for the Compilation and Dissemination of Statistical Information are responsible for the implementation of the Decision.

(vi) *International cooperation*

Harmonization processes and the generation of harmonized statistics require additional efforts as well as both national and international resources. Statistics production must be financed by each country's ordinary resources, with international cooperation to support capacity-building.

As proposed by the Andean Statistics Committee, article 6 of Decision 700 stipulates that each member country of the Andean Community shall contribute US\$ 60,000 annually as of 2009 for the duration of the Community Statistics Programme. The funds are to be transferred to the General Secretariat for the creation of the Counterpart Fund for the 2008-2013 Community Statistics Programme.

Priorities:

- Carry out the action referred to in the 2008-2013 Community Statistics Programme (Decision 700)
- Manage international cooperation for the implementation of the 2008-2013 Community Statistics Programme (Decision 700), given that the ANDESTAD (Andean statistics) project culminates this year.
- Set up and start up operations at the Andean Centre for the Compilation and Dissemination of Statistical Information.

## IV. MAIN CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF STATISTICS IN THE REGION

### 1. Main challenges

The main challenges facing the development of statistics in Latin America and the Caribbean can be divided into two categories: those that affect supply and those that affect demand for statistical information. Although these challenges are generally found throughout the region, they do not affect every country to the same degree. It is important to keep this mind, as the level of development of the different national statistical systems also varies considerably.

On the supply-side, the main challenges are:

- Increasing the availability of information on relatively new topics (including gender, environmental and information technology statistics) and moving toward complete coverage of traditional topics (such as household surveys, censuses, vital statistics, national accounts and sectoral accounts).
- Performing the census of the 2010 Round in every country.
- Making more intensive use of administrative records for statistical purposes; in particular, building comprehensive and up-to-date directories of companies and establishments, in addition to developing vital, health and education statistics.
- Implementing permanent quality management systems.

On the demand-side, the main challenges are:

- Improving and extending dissemination platforms for specialists and the public at large, especially in terms of making statistics and indicators available through digital media and the Internet.
- Introducing initiatives to increase the use of the data and statistics available for the design, monitoring and evaluation of public policies.
- Promoting dialogue between statistics producers and users with a view to improving the relevance, scope and quality of statistical supply.

Another highly important issue facing national statistical systems in the region is the need to ensure the medium- and long-term sustainability of statistics programmes. This means:

- Securing medium- and long-term financing for national statistical offices.
- Generating the necessary conditions to develop and maintain the basic permanent professional and technical staff needed in national statistical offices.

Lastly, the legal and institutional framework for the national statistical offices and systems need to be strengthened. In this regard the situation also varies considerably from country to country, but in general, not only statistics producers and users, but also other stakeholders in the public sector are aware of the need to keep boosting the mechanisms that improve professional independence given the key role this plays in the workings of national statistical systems.

## **2. ECLAC strategy and the role of the Statistical Conference of the Americas in tackling the challenges**

The broad lines of action for addressing the challenges outlined above are:

- Implementation of the 2005-2015 Strategic Plan through the biennial regional and international cooperation programme.
- Bringing the technical assistance and training action of international organizations into line with the priorities of the Conference's Strategic Plan.
- Stepping up action to mobilize financial resources for regional cooperation programmes in statistics.
- Action on the part of ECLAC and the Conference to raise awareness among Governments of the need to award priority to strengthening the legal-institutional framework and to increase funding for statistical development in the region's countries.
- Strengthening national statistical systems to enhance coordination, avoid duplication of efforts and improve advocacy.
- Boosting horizontal technical cooperation among countries.

## Annex

Table A-1  
**DATES SCHEDULED FOR THE CENSUSES OF THE 2010 CENSUS ROUND IN THE  
 COUNTRIES OF LATIN AMERICA**

| Country                   | 2000 Census Round | Headcount | 2010 Census Round | Interval |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-----------|-------------------|----------|
| Argentina                 | 2000              |           | 2010              | 10       |
| Bolivia (Plur. State of.) | 2002              |           | 2012              | 10       |
| Brazil                    | 2000              | 2007      | 2010              | 10       |
| Chile                     | 2002              |           | 04-2012           | 10       |
| Colombia                  | 2005              |           | Headcount 2010    | -        |
| Costa Rica                | 2000              |           | 06- 2011          | 11       |
| Cuba                      | 2002              |           | 09- 2012          | 10       |
| Ecuador                   | 2001              |           | 2011              | 10       |
| El Salvador               | 2007              |           | -                 | -        |
| Guatemala                 | 2002              |           | 2012              | 10       |
| Haiti                     | 2003              |           | 2013              | 10       |
| Honduras                  | 2002              |           | 05-2011           | 9        |
| Mexico                    | 2000              | 2005      | 05-2010           | 10       |
| Nicaragua                 | 2005              |           |                   |          |
| Panama                    | 2000              |           | 05-2010           | 10       |
| Paraguay                  | 2002              |           | 2012              | 10       |
| Peru                      | 2007              |           | -                 | -        |
| Dominican Republic        | 2002              |           | 10-2010           | 8        |
| Uruguay                   | 1996              | 2004      | 2010              | 14       |
| Venezuela (Bol. Rep. of)  | 2001              |           | 10-2011           | 10       |

**Source:** Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE) - Population Division of ECLAC, "Censos de población y vivienda. Encuesta sobre estado de avance de los censos de 2010 e identificación de las necesidades nacionales. Actualización", 2009, unpublished.

Table A-2  
**DATES SCHEDULED FOR THE CENSUSES OF THE 2010 CENSUS ROUND IN  
 THE COUNTRIES OF THE CARIBBEAN**

| <b>Country</b>                   | <b>2000 Census Round</b> | <b>2010 Census Round</b> | <b>Interval</b> |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Anguilla                         | 2001                     | 2011                     | 10              |
| Antigua and Barbuda              | 2001                     | 2011                     | 10              |
| Netherlands Antilles             | 2001                     | 2010                     | 9               |
| Aruba                            | 2000                     | 2010                     | 10              |
| Bahamas                          | 2000                     | 2010                     | 10              |
| Barbados                         | 2000                     | 2010                     | 10              |
| Belize                           | 2000                     | 2010                     | 10              |
| Cayman Islands                   | 1999                     | 2010                     | 11              |
| Dominica                         | 2001                     | 2010                     | 9               |
| Grenada                          | 2001                     | 2011                     | 10              |
| Guyana                           | 2002                     | 2012                     | 10              |
| Jamaica                          | 2001                     | 2011                     | 10              |
| Montserrat                       | 2001                     | 2011                     | 10              |
| Puerto Rico                      | 2000                     | 2010                     | 10              |
| Saint Kitts and Nevis            | 2001                     | 2010                     | 9               |
| Saint Lucia                      | 2001                     | 2010                     | 9               |
| Saint Vincent and the Grenadines | 2001                     | 2010                     | 9               |
| Suriname                         | 2004                     | 2010                     | 6               |
| Trinidad and Tobago              | 2000                     | 2010                     | 10              |
| Turks and Caicos Islands         | 2001                     | 2010                     | 9               |
| United States Virgin Islands     | 2000                     | 2010                     | 10              |
| British Virgin Islands           | 2001                     | 2010                     | 9               |

**Source:** United Nations Statistics Division “2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme” [online] <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic/sources/census/censusdates.htm> and Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE) - Population Division of ECLAC, “Censos de 2000” [online] [http://www.eclac.cl/cgi-bin/getProd.asp?xml=/celade/noticias/paginas/2/11112/P11112.xml&xsl=/celade/tpl/p18f.xsl&base=/celade/tpl/top-bottom\\_cen.xslt](http://www.eclac.cl/cgi-bin/getProd.asp?xml=/celade/noticias/paginas/2/11112/P11112.xml&xsl=/celade/tpl/p18f.xsl&base=/celade/tpl/top-bottom_cen.xslt)

Table A-3  
**COUNTRIES THAT HAVE IMPLEMENTED THE 1993 SYSTEM OF NATIONAL ACCOUNTS**

| Country                          | 2001 | 2003 | 2006 |
|----------------------------------|------|------|------|
| Anguilla                         | 0    | 0    | 0    |
| Antigua and Barbuda              | 0    | 0    | 0    |
| Netherlands Antilles             | 0    | 0    | 1    |
| Argentina                        | 0    | 1    | 1    |
| Aruba                            | 0    | 0    | 0    |
| Bahamas                          | 0    | 0    | 1    |
| Barbados                         | 0    | 0    | 0    |
| Belize                           | 0    | 0    | 1    |
| Bolivia (Plur. State of)         | 0    | 0    | 0    |
| Brazil                           | 1    | 1    | 1    |
| Chile                            | 1    | 1    | 1    |
| Colombia                         | 1    | 1    | 1    |
| Costa Rica                       | 0    | 1    | 1    |
| Cuba                             | 0    | 1    | 1    |
| Dominica                         | 0    | 0    | 1    |
| Ecuador                          | 0    | 1    | 1    |
| El Salvador                      | 0    | 0    | 0    |
| Grenada                          | 0    | 0    | 0    |
| Guatemala                        | 0    | 0    | 0    |
| Guyana                           | 0    | 0    | 0    |
| Haiti                            | 0    | 0    | 0    |
| Honduras                         | 0    | 0    | 1    |
| Jamaica                          | 0    | 0    | 0    |
| Mexico                           | 1    | 1    | 1    |
| Nicaragua                        | 0    | 0    | 1    |
| Panama                           | 0    | 1    | 1    |
| Paraguay                         | 0    | 0    | 1    |
| Peru                             | 0    | 1    | 1    |
| Dominican Republic               | 0    | 0    | 1    |
| Saint Lucia                      | 0    | 0    | 0    |
| Saint Kitts and Nevis            | 0    | 0    | 1    |
| Saint Vincent and the Grenadines | 0    | 0    | 0    |
| Suriname                         | 0    | 0    | 1    |
| Trinidad and Tobago              | 0    | 0    | 1    |
| Uruguay                          | 0    | 0    | 0    |
| Venezuela (Bol. Rep. of)         | 0    | 0    | 1    |
| Total                            | 4    | 10   | 22   |

**Source:** Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Progress in implementing the System of National Accounts 1993 (1993 SNA) in Latin America and the Caribbean, 2001 (LC/R.2073); Estado de avance en la implementación del Sistema de Cuentas Nacionales en América Latina y el Caribe al 2006 (DDR/3) 26 June 2007.  
(1 = implemented; 0 = not implemented / information not available)

Table A-4  
**COUNTRIES THAT HAVE CONDUCTED TIME-USE STUDIES BETWEEN 1998 AND 2008**

| Country                     | Year       | Representativeness   | Type of interview  | Reference period        |
|-----------------------------|------------|--|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Argentina                   | 2005       | City of Buenos Aires, people aged between 15 and 74 years              | Independent survey | Average day             |
| Bolivia<br>(Plur. State of) | 2001       | National   | Questions (1)      | Previous day            |
| Brazil                      | 2005       | National   | Questions (2)      | Week                    |
| Chile                       | 2007       | Metropolitan region  | Independent survey | Previous day            |
| Colombia                    | 2006, 2008 | National   | Module             | Week                    |
| Costa Rica                  | 2004       | National   | Module             | Previous day            |
| Cuba                        | 2001       | Pinar del Río, San Juan y Martínez, La Habana Vieja, Bayamo and Guisa  | Independent survey | Day of the interview    |
| Ecuador                     | 2007       | National   | Module             | Previous week           |
| Ecuador                     | 2005       | Quito, Province of Esmeraldas and rural area of Province of Chimborazo | Module             | Previous week           |
| El Salvador                 | 2005       | National   | Module             | Día normal de la semana |
| Guatemala                   | 2000       | Regional coverage (8 geographical regions) and nationwide              | Module             | Previous day            |
| Guatemala                   | 2006       | Regional coverage (8 geographical regions) and nationwide              | Module             | Previous day            |
| Mexico                      | 2002       | National   | Module             | Previous week           |
| Nicaragua                   | 1998       | 7 macro-regions  | Module             | Previous day            |
| Panama                      | 2005       | National   |                    |                         |
| Uruguay                     | 2007       | National   | Module             | Day                     |
| Uruguay                     | 2003       | Montevideo and the metropolitan area                                   | Independent survey | Previous week           |
| Venezuela<br>(Bol. Rep. of) | 2008       | National   | Independent survey | Weekday                 |

**Source:** Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of official information from the countries.