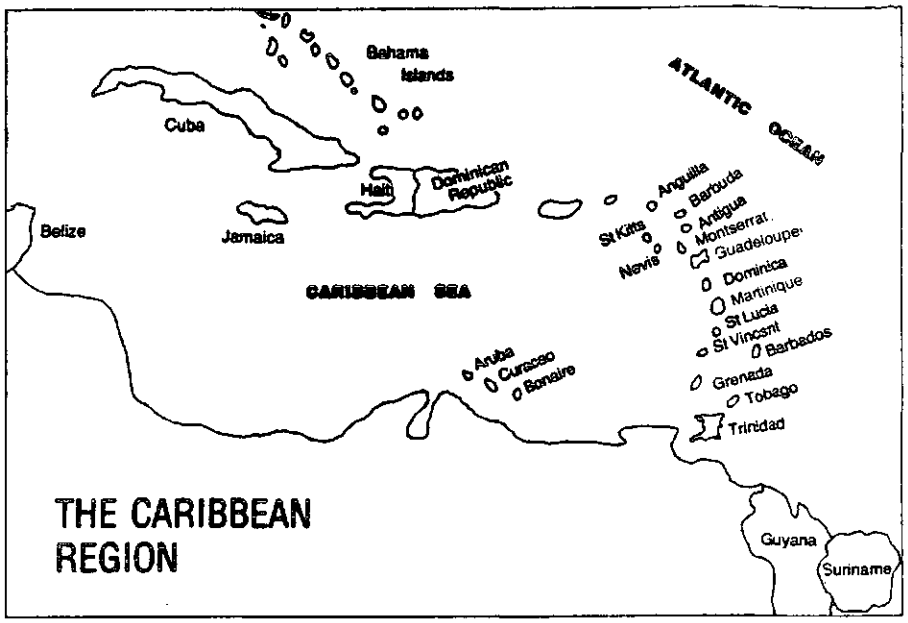
CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION COMMITTEE



GENERAL

E/CEPAL/CDCC/103

26 January 1984

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA
Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean

CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION COMMITTEE

Workshop on Techniques for Effective Participation in the Caribbean Information System
25-29 October 1982
Port-au-Prince, Haiti

REPORT ON THE WORKSHOP ON TECHNIQUES FOR EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION IN THE CARIBBEAN INFORMATION SYSTEM

UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA Office for the Caribbean

REPORT ON THE WORKSHOP ON TECHNIQUES FOR EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION IN THE CARIBBEAN INFORMATION SYSTEM

Haiti has been involved at an early stage in the design and development of the Caribbean Information System - Social and Economic Sector, and librarians had attended the 1977 meeting on the information needs of policy-makers and planners in the region, and Haiti was also represented at the first regional workshop for participation in CARISPLAN, which was held in May 1979 at the ECLA Office for the Caribbean, Port-of-Spain.

The Secrétairerie d'Etat du Plan serves as the national focal point of the Caribbean Information System in Haiti. Its Service de Documentation has existed for some years, and serves the information needs of planners and policy-makers.

In addition to the participation in the regional meetings, the Library and Information Training Officer undertook a mission to Haiti, to assist the documentalists of the Secrétairerie d'Etat du Plan in various aspects of their information services.

Before the workshop, the participation of Haiti in the Caribbean Information System had mainly involved use of CARISPLAN Abstracts and other services provided to the special libraries and their users.

The potential for participation involves also:

1. Knowledge of the technical and administrative developments in the Caribbean Information System, since its inception;
2. Detailed knowledge of selection procedures and the type of material to be included in the data base;
3. Knowledge of the locally produced material;
4. Input of the locally produced material;
5. Promotion of these services to users of the social and economic planning community.

It was expected, therefore, that a workshop covering the above aspects would make for effective participation of Haiti in the regional system.

The Workshop

The arrangements for the workshop had been made by the Secrétairerie d'Etat du Plan.

The opening session was chaired by M. Wilfred Bertrand, President of the Library Association, and was attended by some librarians and other personnel of the participating organizations.

M. Yves Blanchard, Director of the Secrétairerie d'Etat du Plan, congratulated CEPAL on its establishment of the Caribbean Information System, and said that he saw this as a great aid to planning and hoped that this aspect of Haiti's participation would provide increasing use of locally produced information and greater integration of Haiti in the region.

M. Telfort outlined the activities of the Caribbean Information System since its inception, and especially Haiti's participation in terms of use of the services, training received, and expectations for the future. He said that Haiti had benefitted from training in various aspects of developing special information services, and it was expected that there would be increased input of Haitian publications into the data base, as well as increased use of the services by the Haitian policy-makers and planners.

Ms. Fay Durrant, Library and Information Training Officer of the Caribbean Information System, brought greetings from the CEPAL Office for the Caribbean - the Secretariat for the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee. She welcomed the extended participation of Haiti in the Caribbean Information System and hoped that the workshop would be an added impetus to use of the System by Haiti.

Ms. Gisèle Morin-Labatut brought greetings from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) of Canada, she said that IDRC was very interested in the development of information systems such as the Caribbean Information System, and was, therefore, pleased to be able to assist in the mounting of this workshop.

The Participants

The participants were 20 librarians and library para-professionals involved in providing information to government officials or to researchers. They were:

- Librarians of Government Ministries or Departments and from the National Library.

The members of these organizations are all producers and users of socio-economic information, and participants were encouraged to be aware of the documents produced by their organizations and to be familiar with the contents of these documents. During the practical sessions of the workshop, participants selected documents which were appropriate for the data base, and indexed and abstracted these for input to the CARISPLAN data base.

The Resource Personnel

The resource personnel were the Library and Information Training Officer of the Caribbean Information System, Ms. Fay Durrant, who had prepared the papers and the manuals and who reviewed the bibliographic description, Ms. Gisèle Morin-Labatut of IDRC provided assistance by presenting the papers and by reviewing the bibliographic records prepared by the participants.

Evaluation

During the last session participants were requested to complete two questionnaires to help the organizers assess the effectiveness of the workshop for the future development of the Caribbean Information System.

The questionnaires covered:

1. Their backgrounds;
2. Their expectations;
3. Their understanding of the topics treated;

4. Their opinions on the content and organization of the workshop.

Their Backgrounds

A. - 2 participants with (1/2 yr.) certificates in library and information sciences;

- 2 graduates working as special librarians (both attended short courses for special librarians);

- 12 library assistants from special libraries (6 are in charge of their libraries - 2 have attended a short course for special librarians);

B. - 9 with previous training in indexing and abstracting;

- 1 with some on-the-job training in indexing and abstracting;

- 10 with no previous training in indexing and abstracting.

* Some of the librarians who had originally been invited to attend the workshop, were unable to do so for various reasons. The participants who substituted were, in several cases, the assistants of the original participants.

C. 100% of the participants had their expectations satisfied.

D. Their understanding of the topics:

- The structure of the national focal points of the Caribbean Information System:

	%
Excellent	10
Good	50
Fair	20
Poor	10
No response	10

- CARISPLAN Abstracts

	%
Excellent	40
Good	20
Fair	30
No response	10

- The CARBIB data base of the Caribbean Information System:

Excellent	30
Good	25
Fair	20
Poor	5
No response	20

- How to catalogue documents using the Bibliographic Record Card of the Caribbean Documentation Centre:

Excellent	45
Good	20
Fair	15
Poor	5
No response	15

- How to index documents using the Indexing Manual of the CDC:

Excellent	45
Good	40
Fair	10
No response	5

- How to abstract documents using the CDC Abstracting Manual:

Excellent	35
Good	40
Fair	15
No response	10

- The value of indexing and abstracting tools:

	%
Excellent	40
Good	20
Fair	20
No response	20

- Future implementation of computerized information systems:

Excellent	20
Good	30
Poor	10
No response	35
Not sure	5

- Possibilities for your country's participation in the Caribbean Information System:

Excellent	40
Good	15
Fair	25
Poor	10
No response	10

E. - The organization and presentation of the workshop was considered to be:

Satisfactory by	95
Fair by	5

F. - The coverage of the topics treated was considered to be:

Excellent	40
Adequate	55
No response	5

G. - The number of practical sessions (indexing and abstracting) was considered to be:

	%
Adequate by	70
Too short by	30

H. - 80% of the participants considered that the structure of the indexing and abstracting sessions was effective enough to satisfy their particular library situation, while 5% considered it to be not sufficiently effective and 15% did not know or were not sure.

I. - 80% considered that the working tools provided were enough, but 20% found that they were insufficient.

J. - The working tools were considered by 100% to be relevant to their needs.

K. - 75% of the participants reported the number of group discussions to be adequate, 25% considered them insufficient.

L. - 85% of the participants considered that the content of the group discussions helped them to learn from other participants, while 5% considered that they did not learn anything they could not have learnt otherwise. 10% gave no response.

M. - 25% of the participants recorded other topics which they thought should also have been considered in the workshop. These were in summary:

- The principles of bibliographic description.
- More indepth treatment of indexing principles.

- Reference services.
- More indepth treatment of the use of computers and the technical aspects of the Caribbean Information System.

N. - Participants considered that the workshop:

- would improve links between the Caribbean Information System (CARISPLAN) and Haiti;
- would improve co-ordination of the libraries in Haiti, but that the technical aspects of participation could not be mastered in one week and that a follow-up workshop should be held to accomplish this.

Participants were also requested to answer 33 questions on various aspects of the Caribbean Information System. 17 participants completed this questionnaire.

These were reviewed and returned to the participants with sample answers. The results were:*

78%	1 participant
54%	1 participant
53%	2 participants
44%	1 participant
39%	1 participant
33%	1 participant
30%	1 participant
29%	1 participant
25%	1 participant
20%	1 participant
19%	2 participants
17%	3 participants
15%	1 participant

* 60% of the participants had not completed their answers in the one hour allocated.