

GENERAL

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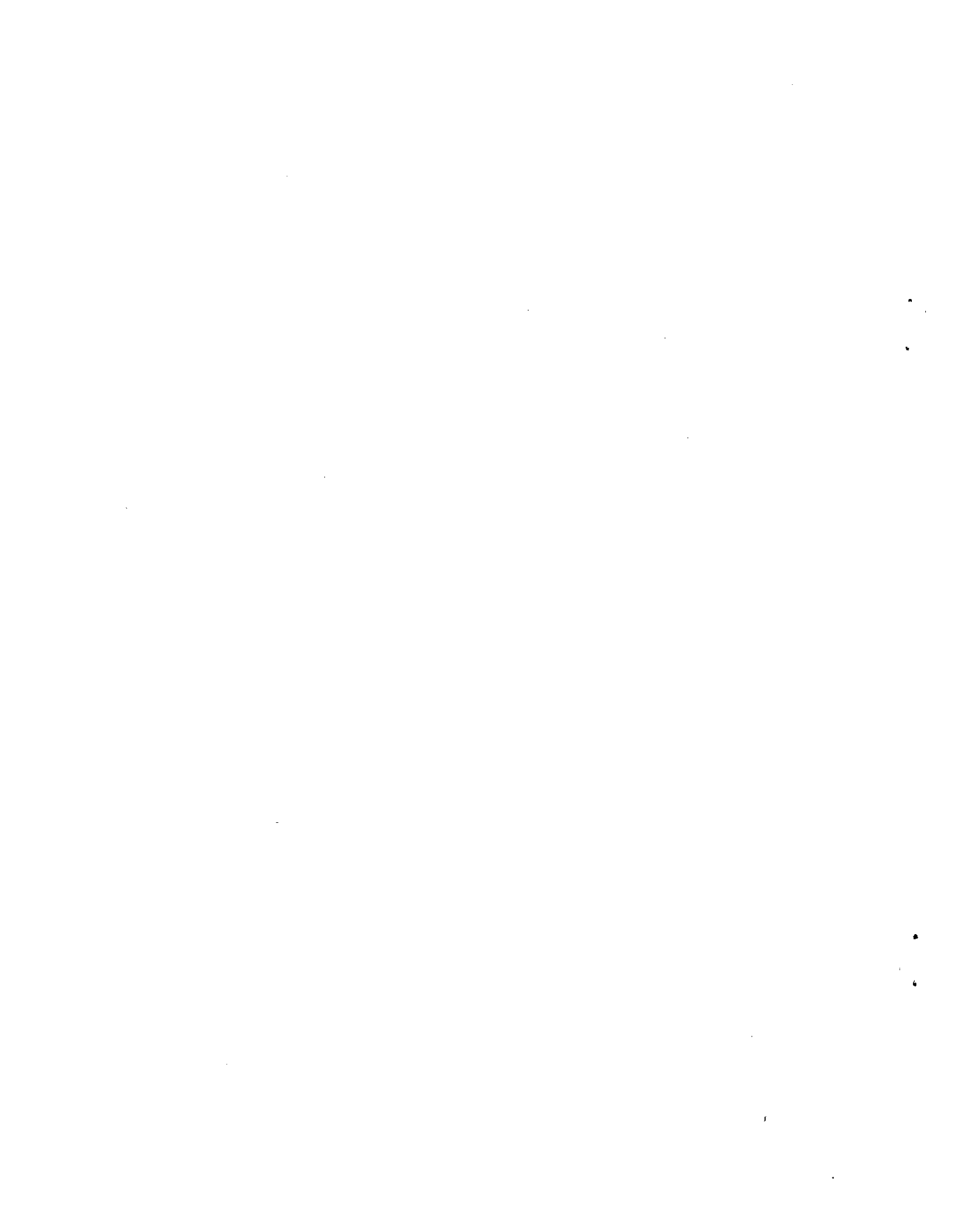
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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA  
Sub-regional Headquarters for the Caribbean



A SURVEY OF THE NEEDS FOR  
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND THE ABILITY TO PROVIDE SUCH -  
A DISCUSSION OF THE SURVEY FINDINGS  
AND OF THE  
PRINCIPLES AND MECHANISM OF  
TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES



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At the last meeting of the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians held in Grenada in October 1980, the Port-of-Spain Office of CEPAL was appointed to prepare and disseminate a questionnaire that sought to identify needs for technical assistance in statistics and the ability of CARICOM countries to deliver such technical assistance. This report discusses by way of introduction, the main purpose of technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC). The report sets TCDC activities within the context of the Constituent Declaration that established the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) of which governments of the CARICOM countries are members. The report introduces the findings of the survey and discusses the institutional structure for co-ordinating the technical assistance at both national and international levels.

The main purpose of technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) is the implementation of the policy of self-reliance at national and international levels. The effort to interpret TCDC as a process which would harmonize national development objectives with the overall system of international cooperation has been widely recognized as an initial step in the establishment of the New International Economic Order. To carry this effort a step further, TCDC thus requires new types of linkages among developing countries, as well as between developed and developing countries.

The Main Committee of the United Nations Conference on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries (Buenos Aires, Argentina, 30 August-12 September 1978) observed that TCDC is not an end in itself nor a substitute for technical cooperation with developed countries. Increased technical cooperation from the developed countries is required for transfer of appropriate technologies and also for transfer of advanced technologies and other expertise in which they have manifest

advantages. Further contributions from the developed countries are required for the enhancement of technological capabilities of developing countries through support to relevant institutions in those countries. TCDC can serve the purpose of increasing the capacity of developing countries to adapt and absorb appropriate inputs from developed countries.

TCDC as well as other forms of cooperation among countries observes the fact of national sovereignty, economic independence, equal rights, non-interference in domestic affairs of nations, irrespective of size, level of development and social and economic systems.

The Governments of the Caribbean countries, in establishing the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee, declared their political will and resolution to

"co-operate in the mutual transfer of technology and of technological and scientific knowledge in order to facilitate the adaptation of imported technology and the development of domestic technologies and increase the bargaining power of the sub-region's countries in operations between the latter and countries outside the area on these matters". 1/

The Governments of the sub-region pledged to observe the principles of sovereignty, self-determination, ..., solidarity and non-discrimination on account of differing social, political and economic systems, in all co-operation activities undertaken among the countries of the Caribbean. The Governments, recognizing that the Economic Commission for Latin America (CEPAL) had vast experience in the field of economic and social co-operation, appointed the Port-of-Spain Office of CEPAL as Secretariat to the CDCC, ... "to act as a coordinating body for whatever activities relating to development and co-operation may be agreed upon and to serve as an advisory and consultative body to the Executive Secretary of CEPAL in respect of Caribbean issues and circumstances."

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1/ Constituent Declaration and Functions and Rules of Procedure of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee - E/CEPAL/1022.

The Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians at the Grenada meeting of October 1980, appointed CEPAL to enquire into the needs of the various countries for technical assistance in Statistics, and the possible ability of the countries to render technical assistance in any of a large number of areas of statistics. The need for this type of assistance was reflected in the lack of published statistics in certain areas, and in some instances the deterioration in quantum and timeliness of data produced. This was partly due to the paucity and extreme mobility of the human resource factor engaged in statistics. This phenomenon was observed by the distinguished Director of Statistics of Jamaica in her report of December 1979<sup>2/</sup>, as being a major bottleneck to the development of the statistical programmes of the English-speaking Caribbean countries. Indeed, statistical administrators in the sub-region have made this observation for many years.

#### SURVEY ACTIVITIES

In designing the questionnaire, the Office considered the possible divergence between the statistician's priority and the official governmental view as most often enunciated by a Ministry such as the Ministry of Finance or Planning. The questionnaire was therefore directed to these Ministries, with a copy to the Statistical Office so that the latter could expedite the completion of the questionnaire. In at least one case, evidence of this divergence in priority assessment surfaced when the "controlling ministry" sent in a return that differed from that submitted by the statistician. It was obvious that there was no collaboration between the Ministry and the Statistical Office on the filling of the questionnaire. Despite the priorities as articulated by the statisticians, the Office had no choice but to subordinate his comments to those of the "controlling" ministry, which were interpreted as being official. Table 1 presents an analysis of respondent by country.

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<sup>2/</sup> "The Needs for Training Statistical Personnel - CARICOM REGION" - Carmen McFarlane, December 1979.

Table 1

Analysis of Respondents by Country

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<u>Country</u>	<u>Responding Agency</u>
Antigua	Finance/Statistics
Barbados	Finance and Planning/Statistics
Belize	Central Planning Unit
Dominica	Ministry of Finance
Grenada	NON RESPONSE
Guyana	(1) Ministry of Planning: (2) Statistics
Jamaica	Statistics
Montserrat	Statistics
St. Kitts/Nevis	Planning
St. Lucia	Finance/Statistics
St. Vincent	Statistics
Trinidad and Tobago	Statistics (cc Finance)

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Source: Various returns submitted.

The Office assumed that the returns submitted were authoritative and reflective of government's thinking, except in the instance of the submission of two returns from the same country. Of the twelve countries surveyed, returns for 11 were received, producing a response rate of 91.7 percent, the questionnaires having been despatched on 17 November 1980. From the returns received by the Office, summaries of the indications of need for technical assistance and of the possibilities of rendering technical assistance were made. These appear at Annex I and II to this report.

The area in which technical assistance was most needed was National Accounts, with Industrial Statistics and Demographic Statistics occupying the second place in the priority rating. Several countries registered their wish for assistance in the establishment of or improvement in a household survey capability. Table 2 below presents a summary and ranking of responses by area of need.

Table 2

Summary of Responses by Area of Need

<u>Area of need</u>	<u>Number of indications of need</u>	<u>Rank</u>
Agricultural Statistics	4	6
Demographic Statistics	6	2
External Trade Statistics	2	9
Industrial/Construction Statistics	6	2
National Accounts Statistics	8	1
Balance of Payments Statistics	5	4
Price Statistics	3	7
Household Surveys	5	4
Labour Statistics	3	7
Tourism Statistics	1	10

The positive correlation between human resource availability and (1) "Domestic production" of statistics, and (2) The ability to offer technical assistance to others, is seen clearly in the analysis of countries indicating possibilities of offering technical assistance in Statistics. The fact that two of the three possible donor countries have themselves indicated their need for technical assistance in certain areas of statistics underscores the role and direction of technology transfer from developed countries (which will be in the best position to assist the two proposed Caribbean "donor countries") to the less developed countries of the region. The claims of these three countries of staff shortages, juxtaposed to their offer to assist less developed countries highlights the relativity of the shortages experienced. These three countries, despite their real staff shortages, do possess a capacity to absorb technical assistance. Their offer to render assistance despite their internal problems is most commendable and stands out as an example of the solidarity that should underpin the Caribbean integration movement.

Annex II presents an analysis of the possibilities of rendering technical assistance in selected areas of statistics. All three would-be "donor" countries indicated a willingness to extend assistance in External Trade and price Statistics, while two countries offered assistance in Agricultural and Demographic statistics as well as household surveys.

The questionnaire sought an indication of dates from which assistance can be accommodated. The majority of responses - about 64 percent of all dates indicated - favoured the receipt of technical assistance to commence in 1981, with the others favouring 1982 or 1983. One country, in addition to offering technical assistance in specific areas of statistics, informed of technical assistance that it could render by means of formal training courses and attachments of officers of the less developed countries to the relevant section of the Statistical Office.

One question addressed itself to whether or not the recipient countries would be able to assist with the payment of subsistence allowances for the consultant while the latter was in the recipient country on mission. Only two of the responding countries indicated a willingness to assist in the payment of subsistence allowances.

A copy of the questionnaire is presented at Annex III.

#### MECHANISMS FOR THE TRANSFER OF THE TECHNOLOGY

TCDC involves the transfer of knowledge developed or adapted locally by developing countries for the solution of specific development problems which can be brought to bear on similar situations in other developing countries. The act of transferring technology must at all times be modified by the extent of the need for adaptation to suit the local situation. The greatest contribution of TCDC to the establishment of a New International Economic Order is its ultimate aim to enable the developing countries to reduce the "dependency" on the developed countries and to develop individual and collective self-reliance - to build "Bridges across the South".



### Institutional Arrangements

Since action is necessary at both the national and international (sub-regional) levels for "landing" a TCDC project, cooperation at sub-regional level is required. A forum must exist for the interchange of professional experiences in the field of statistics. Such a forum exists in the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians. At a higher level, the technical collaboration should be supported by an integration mechanisms so that the possibilities of technical cooperation can be given political support. The Caribbean integration movement is well poised, through its various high-level fora, to support TCDC activities.

At a level somewhere between the technical forum and the political level, given the human resource problem in statistics in the sub-region, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Statistics project finds a place, in that it attempts to strengthen the statistical capabilities of the less developed countries of the sub-region through international funding, and with exports from developing countries. This project is, in the opinion of the writer, already some form of technical assistance between peoples of developing countries, although not between developed countries because of the fact of its international character as distinct from a bi-lateral form of assistance. The UNDP-funded project, like the CARICOM Secretariat and ECLA, works to assist national governments in the training of statistical personnel, to assist in the promotion of a regional statistics training institute, and to assist in the coordination of bilateral and multilateral technical assistance in statistics and to maximize the impact of external technical co-operation at the national and regional levels.

Given the presence and functioning of the institutions mentioned, a framework emerges and suggests itself as being suitable for the "landing" of Technical Assistance in Statistics.

LEVELS OF ACTION SUGGESTED  
SUPRA-NATIONAL LEVEL

1. Technical Level. The problem is identified, that is, the need for technical assistance is registered by a country. The need may be registered at a meeting or through a vehicle set into motion by the technical group. The report of the technical group with a reflection of the problem will go to the political forum for information, comment or support in principle, or for all three.
2. A Coordination Committee comprising the regional or international statistical initiatives present in the region - the UNDP, ECLA, the OECS Secretariat and the CARICOM Secretariat - should meet to review the articulated needs for and abilities to deliver such assistance, and should consult between the country offering the expertise and the would-be beneficiary of the transfer of knowledge, first at the technical level, then through a project document, to the National entities which must sanction the project and arrange the release of the necessary personnel. The Coordination Committee should assist the countries in the preparation of the project document, and arrange the timing of the project in consultation with the countries concerned.

AT NATIONAL LEVEL

Three levels of action are identified at National level. The first is initiated by the National Statistical Office at the technical forum mentioned earlier on, and its subsequent reporting to the "controlling" ministry of its stance at the technical meeting. The second form of action at national level would be the preparation of a project proposal to Government after preliminary discussions have been held with the Coordination Committee. The third national action involves the actual transfer of knowledge with the appropriate national counterpart personnel having been identified.

## FUNDING

The majority of respondents stated on the return that they would not be able to contribute financially towards the subsistence of the experts while on mission. This inability to meet daily expenses is a natural result of the present balance of payments and foreign exchange crises affecting most of the Caribbean countries, especially after the 1973 petroleum price increase.

At present TCDC is being financed in a variety of ways, including arrangements for bilateral financing, third country financing, and multilateral financing. The financial arrangements may be considered on two separate levels:-

- a) the national level, and
- b) the international level.

### National Level

Budgetary financing is used in the existing practice of TCDC. In cases where vast amounts of budgetary financing are not forthcoming, other sources of financing TCDC must be sought.

If one assumes that an increased demand for statistics is in part, a function of increased economic activity of both the Public and Private sectors, one would give serious consideration to the suggestion of the creation of a "Statistical Development Fund", with levies being made on the Private sector. This suggestion falls down when questions of the implementation of the levy are raised. An alternative suggestion is that the Central Government be asked to establish this fund and allocate to it a given percentage of the total tax take. These funds can be utilized to finance statistical activities at the national level, among them being the defraying of expenses incurred in TCDC activities.

### International Level

The vagaries of funding possibilities from international agencies render the latter unreliable as sources of funding. The timing of the request for funding may not coincide with the ability of a given international agency to disburse such funds. The exploration of the

national possibilities should therefore be given a greater weight in the determination of sources of financing for TCDC activities.

#### CONCLUSION

Generally, administrative, legal and financial problems can hinder the development of a more effective TCDC. Fellow delegates have all witnessed in the past the great cooperative spirit of the people and countries of the sub-region in cases of natural disaster. It is evident that developing countries can act quite flexibly, even to the extent of budgetary commitment, when there is a need or political will to render assistance. One can conclude, therefore, that formal or organizational obstacles are not the major constraint to assistance between the countries of the sub-region. While international funding for TCDC would be welcome, it should not be the sine qua non of the implementation of technical assistance in statistics in the sub-region. It would appear that coordination at the supra-national level is important in the evolution of an efficient and effective system of TCDC. The ensuing mutual cooperation will speed up the harmonization of concepts and definitions in the sub-region - a task at the base of the actions of all of the international and regional agencies at work in statistics in the sub-region.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL TO PROMOTE  
AND CONDUCT TECHNICAL COOPERATION  
AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

- Note by the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries - Documents No. A/CONF. 79/PC/16 and A/CONF. 79/PC/17 -  
27 June 1977.

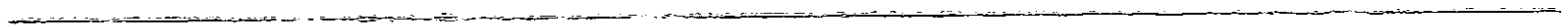
Constituent Declaration and Functions and Rules of Procedure of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee. E/CEPAL/1022.

The Needs for Training Statistical Personnel - CARICOM Region -  
Carmen McFarlane, December 1979.



## AREAS IN WHICH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE NEEDED

	Agric.	Demog.	ExtTrade	Indus/Const.	Nat.Acc.	BalofPay.	Price	H/h surveys	Labour	Tourism	Remarks
ANTIGUA		X	X		X	X	X	X			Will assist in payment to consultant.
BARBADOS											
BELIZE	X				X						Will assist in payment to consultant.
DOMINICA	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Will not assist in payment of subsistence to consultant.
GRENADA							NON RESPONSE				
GUYANA				X				X	X		Will assist in subsistence for consultant. No Dates.
JAMAICA		X		X	X						No assistance in payment to consultant.
MONTserrat	X				X	X					No assistance in payment to consultant.
ST. KITTS/NEVIS	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		No assistance in payment to consultant.
ST. LUCIA		X									No assistance in payment to consultant.
ST. VINCENT		X		X	X	X					
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO				X	X	X		X			Will not assist in payment of subsistence for consultant.
TOTAL	4	6	2	6	8	5	3	5	3	1	





POSSIBILITIES OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

	Agric.	Demog.	ExtTrade	Indus/Const.	Nat.Acc.	BalofPay.	Price H/h surveys	Labour	Tourism
BARBADOS	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
JAMAICA			X				X	X	
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO	X	X	X				X		
TOTAL	2	2	3	1	1	1	3	2	1

