



CARIBBEAN YOUTH

ECLAC REVIEWS
CARIBBEAN YOUTH
POLICIES

TOURISM

EXPERTS DISCUSS STRATEGIES
TO IMPROVE THE TOURISM SECTOR
AT ECLAC MEETING

CLIMATE CHANGE

WORKSHOP ON CLIMATE CHANGE
ADAPTATION, DISASTER RISK AND
RESILIENCE



ECLAC

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Issued on a monthly basis, The Hummingbird offers strategic insights into the latest projects, publications, technical assistance missions and research carried out by ECLAC Caribbean. In addition to these, sneak previews are provided of the most salient upcoming events, alongside enriching follow-ups to previously covered issues. With a view to featuring a variety of facets of Caribbean life and lifestyle, The Hummingbird also zooms in on cultural activities and landmark occurrences through an eye-opening regional round-up.

EDITORIAL TEAM

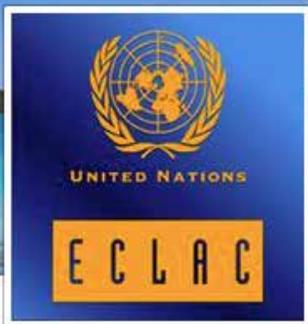
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3 March 2019

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International Women's Day
8 March 2019

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Commission on the Status of Women, Sixty-third session,
New York
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International Day for the Elimination of Racial
Discrimination
21 March 2019

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International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of
Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade
25 March 2019



ECLAC Caribbean

Posted Mar 21

"Sustainable Development Goals: Improve Life All Around The Globe" is a hip hop music video that was produced by Flocabulary in partnership with the United Nations.



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ECLAC Caribbean

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EXPERTS DISCUSS STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE THE TOURISM SECTOR AT ECLAC MEETING

Mass tourism has brought many benefits to Caribbean countries, including a significant contribution to foreign exchange earnings, greater employment, especially for medium and lower level skilled workers, tax revenues and earnings for farmers and taxi drivers, among others. The World Travel and Tourism Council (2017) estimates that the direct contribution of travel and tourism to Caribbean economies stood at US\$17.9 billion in 2016, which translated to 4.7% of GDP. Moreover, for several economies, tourism continues to be the most important economic sector, especially where the service industry plays a major role in employment. In this context, attention has been given mainly to mass tourism, which emphasizes 'sun, sea and sand'.

In the interest of promoting a more sustainable tourism industry, ECLAC

Caribbean is undertaking a study that will examine policies and strategies for restructuring the sector. Policy makers and educators will have an opportunity to analyze the recommendations of the study and provide insights into the latest opportunities, best practices and lessons learned for enhancing tourism-driven economic growth and employment in a sustainable fashion in an upcoming expert group meeting.

Entitled 'Industrial Upgrading and Diversification to address the Competitiveness Challenges in the Caribbean: the case of Tourism', the study will examine the experiences of the Bahamas, Belize and Saint Kitts and Nevis, with a view towards improving the competitiveness and contribution of tourism to their development. ■



JAZZ AT LINCOLN CENTER TO TEAM WITH SAINT LUCIA JAZZ FESTIVAL

One of the biggest names in the world of jazz is partnering with the Caribbean's leading jazz festival. This year's Saint Lucia Jazz Festival will be produced in collaboration with Jazz at Lincoln Center. This year's festival, which will take place from 5-12 May, will feature some of the finest names in jazz recording, with a lineup including Gregory Porter, Dianne Reeves, Catherine Russell, Somi, The Baylor Project, Veronica Swift, members of the New Orleans Jazz Orchestra and a large number of regional talents.

"This collaboration between Saint Lucia and renowned Jazz at Lincoln Center reflects Saint Lucia's exceptional reputation for consistently producing a world-class festival. The 2019 Saint Lucia Jazz Festival Produced in Collaboration with Jazz at Lincoln Center marks an important collaboration in our small island's history.

We are excited to begin this partnership which will bring together some of the world's best jazz artists in the world's most beautiful destination," said Saint Lucia Tourism Minister Dominic Fedee.

Saint Lucia has been hosting the festival since 1992. "We are proud to support the re-establishment of the Saint Lucia Jazz Festival as the premier jazz festival in the Caribbean," said Wynton Marsalis, Managing and Artistic Director, Jazz at Lincoln Center.

"This collaboration reflects our shared commitment to presenting music at the highest level of artistic integrity and quality, while also offering festival-goers a profoundly good time. Jazz has a unique power to bring people of all ages together and lift up communities." ■



FEATURE ARTICLE

ECLAC REVIEWS CARIBBEAN
YOUTH POLICIES



It is estimated that almost half of the population in the Caribbean is under the age of 25. This means that there are more young people in the subregion than ever before. The opportunities for economic and social progress that this situation presents are unprecedented, given the tremendous potential that youth possess to serve as agents of social and economic transformation.

READ MORE



ECLAC reviews

Caribbean Youth Policies

In keeping with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, ECLAC Caribbean has recently issued a policy brief which provides an account of the current status of Caribbean youth policies. The paper, entitled 'Implementation strategies for youth mainstreaming in sustainable development processes (<https://www.cepal.org/fr/node/48438>)', focuses on how youth mainstreaming policies can be applied constructively to strengthen sustainable development planning and policies in the subregion.

The policy brief points out that the social and economic challenges that Caribbean citizens experience today in many countries of the subregion affect young people in a disproportionate manner. This observation draws on the findings of a recent ECLAC assessment

of National Youth Policies in the Caribbean.

Investing in youth will help to consolidate the progress achieved thus far in terms of health and social development in the Caribbean. Doing so, however, will require addressing the multiple challenges posed to youth. These include the existence of education systems that do not always directly match labour market requirements, as well as access to adequate housing and addressing poverty and unemployment.

Moreover, lack of good employment opportunities poses a significant threat to the inclusion of youth in Caribbean societies, with youth unemployment in the subregion being among the highest in the world. Today, a quarter of

Caribbean youth are unemployed – this is more than three times the adult rate of 8% (as noted in The Caribbean Outlook).

To address these challenges, National Youth Policies will be essential, along with other long-term policy frameworks for progressing youth development that lend support to locally-driven sustainable development processes in critical areas such as employment and entrepreneurship. Furthermore, clear mechanisms for implementation, including financing opportunities for youth development, must be integrated, in order to fully achieve policy goals. In this context, ECLAC's policy brief supports the implementation of strategies to promote young people's potential as agents of change for peace and development.





The document is the result of a series of consultations held during the past year with Caribbean youth organizations, Youth directors and practitioners in the field, as well as diverse regional partners, such as CARICOM, The Commonwealth and the Caribbean Development Bank. It was presented to Caribbean Youth Organizations, the Youth Directors Caucus, various NGOs and academia, as well as government officials from across the Caribbean represented at the “Youth Mainstreaming Strategy” consultation organized by The Commonwealth in Belize, from 27 February to 1st March. More than 70 participants drawn from social development agencies in Belize participated in the consultation, with a view to increasing understanding and consensus on the principles,

approaches, and outcomes of youth-centric national planning and arrive at a consensus for a strategic framework for youth mainstreaming in Belize. It is hoped that this initiative might be replicated across the Caribbean region.

Representing ECLAC Caribbean was Dr. Catarina Camarinhas, Social Affairs Officer, who introduced the policy brief on Implementation strategies for youth mainstreaming in sustainable development processes and presented on Financing for Youth Development in the Caribbean, a paper developed in collaboration with ECLAC’s Economic Affairs Officer, Mr. Michael Hendrickson.

Beyond advancing an understanding of practical

mechanisms for Youth mainstreaming, the meeting, hosted by Belize Department of Youth Services, offered an opportunity for policy makers, youth representatives, the academia and development partners to constructively engage with a view to taking youth policy forward in the Caribbean Sub region. ■





WORKSHOP ON CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION, DISASTER RISK AND RESILIENCE

The Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Planning and Development recently co-hosted a workshop on climate change adaptation, disaster risk and resilience. The InterAmerican Development Bank co-funded the event sponsored by the Caribbean Catastrophic Risk Insurance Facilities Segregated (CCRIF SPC) Participants were drawn from several national agencies, including the Tobago Emergency Management Agency (TEMA), the Trinidad and Tobago Red Cross Society, the Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission, and other partner Ministries involved in disaster response and management in Trinidad and Tobago.

The workshop was divided in two modules, the first of which included an overview of the ECLAC DaLA methodology, as well as a detailed explanation of its use to assess damage, losses and additional costs in the housing, education,

telecommunication, transportation and agriculture sectors. Secondly, it included presentations on topics including Planning for resilience; Financial protection and resilient recovery; Disaster risk management and its impact on the attainment of the SDGs; and lessons learned from recent DaLA assessments in the Caribbean.

In opening remarks Dr Alleyne, Deputy Director of ECLAC Caribbean, highlighted ECLAC's role in disaster assessment. "ECLAC's work in this area has shown that in order to understand and reduce the risk of future disasters, there is need to evaluate the effects and impacts of past disasters, regardless of their magnitude." Dr. Alleyne explained that large disasters bring significant social, economic and environmental challenges, and remind us of our vulnerabilities. In addition, the systematic assessment of disasters is crucial and highlights the importance of measuring

the effects of these events by collecting relevant data.

Dr. Alleyne's sentiments were echoed by the Deputy Permanent Secretary of the T&T Ministry of Planning and Development, Marie Hinds, who expressed confidence that the training will serve the needs of the country's Vision 2030 national development plan, which aims to improve policy making and resource allocation through the development of a system to quantify the impacts of national disasters in Trinidad and Tobago.

The 2018 floods in Trinidad and Tobago are still fresh in the public memory. The request of the Ministry of Planning and Development of Trinidad and Tobago to ECLAC to organize a workshop on disaster assessment and resilience demonstrates country commitment to being better prepared for future events and to improving national capacity to estimate the effects and



SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS ECO-PARK TO PROVIDE LOCAL RESIDENTS WITH BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

impacts of such events.

ECLAC Caribbean's team included Dr. Omar Bello, Coordinator of the Sustainable Development and Disaster Unit, Willard Phillips, Economic Affairs Officer, Luciana Fontes de Meira, Associate Environment Officer and Blaine Marciano, Public Information Assistant. ■

Residents living in areas surrounding the Saint Kitts Eco-Park, known as the Agro-Tourist Demonstration Farm Co-Op were recently encouraged to be innovative and to capitalize on the high pedestrian traffic at the site, located in Sandy Point.

"Experience has shown that when properly managed, initiatives such as the Eco-park spur private sector innovation," said Saint Kitts and Nevis Minister of Tourism, the Honourable Lindsay Grant during a ceremony to mark the official handing over of the Eco-Park from the Republic of China, which funded the project.

"Infrastructural development and employment opportunities increase as ancillary services such as restaurants, car rentals, tour companies and a myriad of other businesses spring up in the nearby communities to cater to its demands," said Grant.

Minister Grant said the new construction site appeals to the upscale visitors who are looking for an off the beaten track vacation and hideaway. As examples, he cited the Saint Kitts Ramada Hotel, just outside Newton Ground, which is set to open its doors in September and the Kittitian Hill Development located in the hills of Saint Paul's. Grant said the Eco-Park intends to capitalise on the close proximity of these properties to network and forge mutually sustainable business relationships. "This is a public invitation and challenge to those with unique ideas and plans to contribute to our tourism product," said Grant. "Put your creative ideas and creative juices to work, to bring interesting designs, interesting ideas, compelling tours and attractions that are specific to this area." ■



TRINIDAD & TOBAGO'S ANIMATORS TO TAP INTO BILLION-DOLLAR INDUSTRY

The Trinidad and Tobago government is supporting the growth of animation to allow nationals to tap into the global US \$259 billion industry. Highlighting the potential earning power of the sector, which is among the fastest growing segments of the digital economy, Minister of Trade and Industry Senator Paula Gopee-Scoon said the global trend offers myriad opportunities for young, innovative and talented local animators.

"Trinidad and Tobago will take the necessary steps to successfully capture market share. The Government is committed to supporting new and emerging sectors to achieve global competitiveness," the Minister said.

Citing various incentives and capacity building opportunities created by the government, Gopee-Scoon expressed confidence that great prospects lie ahead once stakeholders actively participate.

"While we do possess some advantages, it is up to you the young, intelligent animators and entrepreneurs to capitalize on these opportunities and grow the local industry," she said, as she also recognized the contribution of state agencies exporTT and FilmTT for the provision of financial, and other resources.

Dionne Mc Nicol Stephenson, Chairman of FilmTT which is responsible for developing and growing the local film Industry, emphasized the importance of the collaboration and highlighted social, cultural and economic benefits for Trinidad and Tobago which could be leveraged through that area of creativity and intellectual property.

She referenced the support being provided by the Government to the four animators to attend the Kidscreen Summit in the United States – considered the children entertainment industry's most important annual event. "We

feel sure that the export of these products will redound to the benefit of not only our creatives, but the entire nation. As we continue to plant, and water the seeds that have been planted, we will contribute to our economy from the trade and export of our fruits."

Coordinator of the mission and Animae Caribe founder, Camille Selvon Abrahams said this year's Animation Summit created an opportunity to not only create local and Caribbean content but to also apply local talent and knowledge and exploit outsourcing.

Her organization, Animae Caribe, has outlined a three-phased plan to increase Trinidad and Tobago's share in the growing global animation market, by creating animated content for global distribution. The first phase includes the participation of local animators at the four-day Kidscreen Summit. ■



WOMEN'S AUTONOMY AND GENDER EQUALITY DISCUSSED AT ECLAC SANTIAGO HEADQUARTERS

Ministers for women's affairs and senior authorities from agencies for women's advancement in Latin America and the Caribbean met recently at ECLAC headquarters in Santiago, Chile, to discuss progress in and obstacles to promoting women's autonomy and achieving gender equality. The occasion was the 58th meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, on 22-23 January 2019, held in anticipation of the XIV Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, which will take place on November 4-8 of this year in Chile.

The Regional Conference is a subsidiary body of ECLAC, which brings together government representatives to monitor compliance with international and regional agreements on gender equality, and to promote the incorporation of the gender perspective and the guarantee of women's human rights in public policies in countries of the region. Attending the meeting from ECLAC Caribbean was Lydia Rosa Geny, Associate Gender Affairs Officer.

Delivering remarks on behalf of ECLAC Executive Secretary, Alicia Bárcena, was Cielo Morales, Chief of the Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES). Morales warned that the low levels of growth seen in the region in the last few years "limit the opportunities for creating jobs for women and reducing poverty."

"It is worrisome that the proportion of women living in poor households is systematically greater than the proportion of men," the senior official stated, indicating that the persistent sexual division of labor – which, among other things, leads to women being primarily responsible for domestic work and unpaid care – has negative repercussions for their incorporation into the labor market. ECLAC data from 2017 indicates that women's participation in paid work continues to be lower than that of men (50.2% and 74.4%, respectively) and that the level of female unemployment remains above that of males (10.4% versus 7.6%).

Although in recent years the number of women without their own income has declined, according to figures

from ECLAC's report *Social Panorama of Latin America 2018*, 49% of employed women have work-related income that is below their country's minimum wage.

Outcomes from the 58th meeting include a peer-to-peer exchange on the implementation of the Montevideo Strategy, the induction of new members of the Regional Fund for Support to Women and Feminists Organizations and Movements; and the adoption of several agreements. The meeting enjoyed the active participation of representatives from the Caribbean community including Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Cuba, Curaçao, the Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. ■



CARIBBEAN ECONOMIES SHOW IMPROVEMENT

There is renewed optimism for a turn-about in the world economy. Global growth for 2018 is estimated at 3.7 percent, as in the October 2018 World Economic Outlook (WEO) forecast, despite weaker performance in some economies, notably Europe and Asia.

According to the World Trade Organization (WTO), an improved forecast may be on the horizon, due to the impact that United States (US) tax reforms will likely have on short term growth with the retention of higher earnings by large corporations.

World output is expected to increase from 3.2% in 2016 to 3.9% in 2018. The global economy is projected to grow at 3.5 % in 2019 and 3.6 % in 2020. While this is not a huge increase, it is trending in the right direction. For Latin America, economic activity is also expected to show significant

improvement, with 2.8% growth expected for 2018. However, this could be reduced if conditions deteriorate further in Venezuela. This forecast is outlined in the ECLAC Caribbean report, entitled "Preliminary Overview (PO) of the Economies of the Caribbean".

The report provides an overview of the economic performance for 2017 of the Caribbean economies, based on data and were collected from subregional institutions and national governments, as well as from interviews with government officials.

According to the Caribbean PO, the situation in the subregion has improved and in 2018 growth is expected to be 2.9%, which is quite remarkable in light of the devastating impact of the hurricanes that affected the subregion in recent years, leaving in their wake considerable damage and losses. Caribbean economies have demonstrated

considerable economic resilience despite these disasters. If the forecast holds, growth in 2019 would reflect a performance as good as that in 2014, which was the last time the subregion grew by at least 2%.

The performance, however, will continue to be uneven between the service and goods producers, with the service producers growing at an average rate of 3.1% and the goods producers at 2.1%. The performance of the latter will depend on the gradual pick up in commodity prices while the growth of the service producers will depend heavily on the performance of the tourism industry.

Monetary policy perspectives across Caribbean countries continued to be mixed in 2017 and the average deposit rate (1.93%) in the subregion remains unchanged relative to the previous year, while average lending rates decreased. Moreover, there was a cooling



JAMAICA ON INFLUENZA ALERT

of the average rate of inflation in the Caribbean to 2.2% when compared to 4.0% in the previous year.

The major economic and structural challenges facing the subregion continue to be the high debt burden and the undiversified nature of its economies. It is, therefore, crucial that member states persist in their efforts to reduce public debt, so as to create the requisite fiscal space to invest in much needed industrial restructuring, focusing on key sectors identified for export diversification.

In this context, ECLAC's debt for climate adaptation swap initiative provides an avenue for beneficiary countries to simultaneously reduce debt service, and invest in adaptation while diversifying the economy. ■

The Jamaica Ministry of Health recently placed the country on influenza alert in light of the significant increase in the number of cases of fever and respiratory illnesses reported across the island. Health Minister, Dr Christopher Tufton, said that data collected within the last few weeks indicate an increase in a particular type of influenza.

Parishes showing a growing trend include Kingston and Saint Andrew, Trelawny, Clarendon, Manchester, Saint Elizabeth, and Portland.

"The flu is to be taken seriously, as it can lead to pneumonia and blood infections, and cause diarrhoea and seizures in children. The flu can also worsen chronic medical conditions such as heart or lung disease," he said. Dr Tufton said persons at greater risk of severe complications from the flu are infants and young children, adults 65 years and older, pregnant women and persons with chronic medical conditions or weakened immune systems.

With the activation of the alert status, the Ministry will intensify its public education campaign to reinforce good hand hygiene and emphasize respiratory etiquette. There will also be an enhanced infection control programme in hospitals and health facilities to prevent, control and investigate communicable diseases. The Ministry will further increase the stock of medication in hospitals and health facilities to respond to the greater number of persons hospitalised.

The Ministry will also expand the opening hours at health centres to provide access to at-risk populations, including the elderly and children under five years. Dr Tufton said that 21,900 doses of influenza vaccine were purchased by the Ministry through the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) Revolving Fund and distributed to parish health departments in late October 2018, and vaccination of target groups commenced in November 2018. ■



AGRIFEST CELEBRATES CRUCIAN CULTURE

There was something to delight every man, woman and child at the annual Virgin Islands Agriculture and Food Fair, called Agrifest, which was held a few weeks ago at the Rudolph Schulerbrandt Agricultural Complex on St. Croix.

Governor Albert Bryan and other officials opened the fair, with the announcement of the Livestock Farmer of the Year and the Crop Farmer of the Year, who were Henry Schuster and Charles Burton, respectively.

This year's 48th annual three-day event also honored the late Audrey O. Browne, who worked at the Department of Agriculture for many years.

The Agrifest incorporates religion into its activities, and this year, Pastor Walton Frederick of the Frederiksted Moravian Church led several dozen people in services and hymns.

An interesting attraction at the fair was the row of vendor booths lining the walkway, with various assortments of wares for sale. Visitors enjoyed clothing choices for men, women and children, with African, South American and Asian themes and fabrics. Booths with hand-crafted leather goods, custom made T-shirts, fine woven baskets and locally made silver and gold jewelry, also attracted shoppers.

Adults and children flocked to the animal pens, where they were able to cuddle bunnies, chicks and baby ducks. The Saint Croix Animal Welfare Center also showcased pets which were available for adoption. ■

STATE *of* AFFAIRS



Dominica

9 WOMEN CANDIDATES

- Feb -

Prime Minister Roosevelt Skerrit has named nine women, including his wife, Melissa, in a virtual new slate of candidates as the ruling Dominica Labour Party (DLP) seeks to maintain power in the upcoming 2020 general election. Prime

Minister Skerrit said that the new look DLP slate is in response to the many calls by supporters for fresh faces ahead of the 2020 elections.

WORLD BANK NEGOTIATIONS

- Feb -

Negotiations were successfully held between the Government of Dominica and the World Bank on financial assistance for the development of its geothermal sector. Co-ordinator of the island's geothermal energy development project, Ambassador Vince Henderson, said that he was pleased with the outcome of the negotiations with the World Bank.



Grenada

INDEPENDENCE

- Feb -

Grenada celebrates 45 years of political independence from Britain. In an Independence Day message, the country's Prime Minister, Dr. Keith Mitchell, said that the island has achieved a certain level of maturity. "As a nation, we have matured throughout many experiences over the last four and a half decades."

MONETARY FUND UPDATE

- Feb -

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) expressed satisfaction with the Grenada economy during its meeting with the Grenadian government in February 2019. In January 2014, Grenada entered into a three-year, US\$21.9 million IMF supported, Homegrown Structural Adjustment Programme in. The main objectives of the programme were to boost inclusive growth and job creation and to restore fiscal and debt sustainability.



Jamaica

COASTAL RESILIENCE

- Feb -

The Government of Jamaica/ Adaptation Fund Programme (GOJ/AFP) is embarking on a US\$5.3-million project to build the country's resilience to climate change. The North Eastern Coastal Resilience Building project will aim to address the retreat of the coastline toward several major assets in various communities. The project will address the issues identified by implementing shoreline protection and ecosystems restoration (reforestation), a drainage system outfall upgrade and capacity building.

AID FOR AGRICULTURE

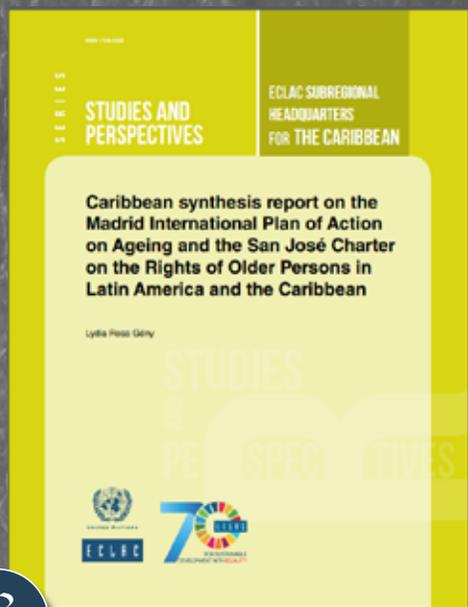
- Feb -

The UK Department for International Development (DFID) under the UK Caribbean Infrastructure Fund has provided grant funding of £35.5 million (JMD 5.75 billion) for the Essex Valley Agriculture Development Project. This project aims to provide reliable irrigation to 700 hectares of arable land in Essex Valley, Jamaica. The project will also provide packaging and processing infrastructure to assist farmers in marketing their produce, and ensure that it meets GlobalG.A.P. standards for export markets and domestic retailers.



1.

Advancing the economic empowerment and autonomy of women in the Caribbean through the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



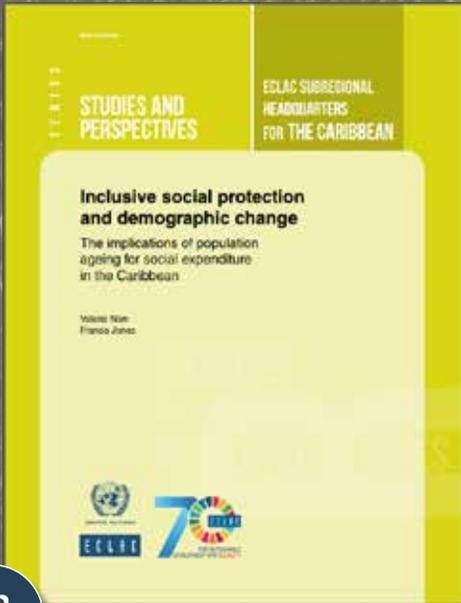
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Caribbean synthesis report on the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and the San José Charter on the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean

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DIANE'S CORNER

The Director's views and thoughts on the occasion of:



DIANE QUARLESS
Director of ECLAC Caribbean

28/1



Data for development planning

"Data for development planning are scanty and in instances where data are available, they are seldom sufficiently disaggregated to help identify disparities that might be due to gender, age, and geographical location. Meanwhile, the 2030 Agenda will require much more. Not only will data have to be disaggregated by sex, age, and geographical location, SDG indicators will need to be disaggregated by income, race, ethnicity, migratory status, and disability, where relevant. A bold effort is required to achieve this, given the uneven state of national statistical systems in the Caribbean."

#DirectorsTake

<http://vrb.al/directors-take>



ECLAC CARIBBEAN *Family*

A FEW FACTS ABOUT ARMENIAN CULTURE AND HISTORY BY ISKUIH MKRTCHYAN

I believe I am the only United Nations staff member from Armenia, currently serving in the Caribbean, so I am pleased at this invitation by The Hummingbird to share with everyone some information about my beloved home country.

Facts about Armenian culture and history are countless and these are the things that make Armenia one of the most unique, special and must-visit countries of the world. The uniqueness of Armenia, one of the world's most ancient countries is emphasized by its culture and traditions. Not surprisingly, Armenia boasts many firsts historically as you will see from the facts I share with you below.

So, let's discover Armenia!

#1: One of the Oldest Civilizations on Earth
Armenia was first mentioned in the Behistun inscription by Persian King Darius III in 520 BC. Ancient Greek historians of the 5th century BC, like Herodotus and Xenophon, also mentioned Armenia in their work.

#2: The First Christian Country
It is the first country to adopt Christianity as a State Religion. Christianity religion spread in Armenia soon after Jesus's death. The devoted apostles, Saint Thaddeus and Saint Bartholomew did their best to spread Christianity in Armenia. Their efforts were not in vain. In A.D. 301, Armenian King Tiridates III established Christianity as a State religion. The name of the Armenian Apostolic Church comes from the apostles who spread Christianity in Armenia.

#3: Armenian wine production
The world's oldest winery was discovered in Armenia. According to archaeological research the winery dates back to 4100 BC. The local tradition of wine making has been carefully preserved to the present day.



#4: Yerevan is one of the oldest cities of the world

The capital of Armenia, present-day Yerevan is one of the oldest cities of the world. Situated on the north-western side of Ararat Valley, Yerevan was founded by the Urartian King Argishti I in 782 BC. Fun fact: Yerevan is 29 years older than Rome, and celebrated its 2800th anniversary in 2018.



#5: Early Footwear

In 2007, during archaeological excavations, 5500-year-old leather footwear was discovered. This well preserved leather footwear is considered the oldest shoe in the world. Scientists claim that the shoe belongs to a woman.



#6: Armenian Genocide

The most tragic page of Armenian history is the Armenian genocide. In 1915, the leaders of the then Ottoman Empire started expelling all Armenian citizens living in the Ottoman Empire. On April 24, 1915, hundreds of Armenian intellectuals were arrested and executed. This was followed by the mass murder of 1.5 million Armenians who were forcefully put out of their homes and sent on death marches to the Der ez-Zhor desert. They perished from heat and thirst.



#7: Mount Ararat

While being in Armenia, don't be surprised to see the image of Mount Ararat everywhere. According to the Holy Bible, Noah rested with his ark on this Mount. This is the reason that Ararat is the holy mountain of Armenia. ■



Stuffed Eggplant Parmesan

Preparation time: 1 hour

Servings: 4 persons

What you will need:

Ingredients:

2 tablespoons olive oil
2 medium eggplants, cut in half lengthwise and hollowed out to 1/4 inch flesh rim
1/2 cup chopped onion
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 teaspoon dried oregano
Freshly ground black pepper to taste
1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
1/2 cup bread crumbs
1 teaspoon chopped fresh Italian parsley
2 cups tomato sauce
1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese

What you need to do:

1. Preheat oven to 325 degrees F (165 degrees C).
2. Heat olive oil in a large skillet over medium high heat. Roughly chop eggplant centers, and add to pan with onion, garlic, oregano, and pepper. Cook and stir until lightly browned.
3. Spoon mixture back into eggplant, and sprinkle each with Parmesan cheese, bread crumbs, and parsley.
4. Place in a shallow baking dish, and cover with tomato sauce and mozzarella cheese.
5. Bake in the preheated oven for 30 minutes, or until eggplant is fork-tender and cheese is bubbly.
6. Serve immediately.



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