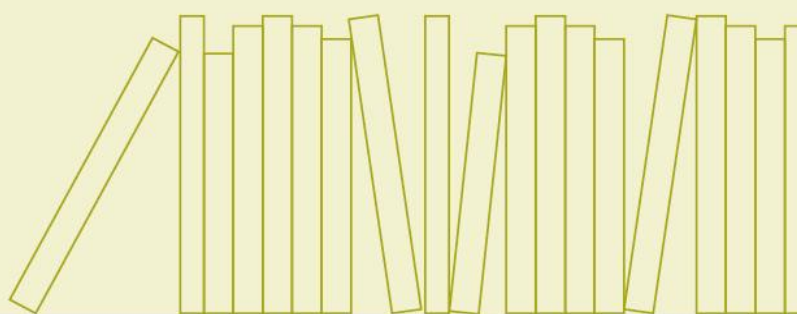


Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

# ECLAC SUBREGIONAL HEADQUARTERS FOR THE CARIBBEAN



## Workshop to accelerate the Sustainable Development Goals implementation in the Caribbean



UNITED NATIONS

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Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean  
Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean

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Workshop to accelerate the Sustainable Development Goals  
implementation in the Caribbean  
18 May 2017  
Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago

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**REPORT OF THE WORKSHOP TO ACCELERATE  
THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IMPLEMENTATION  
IN THE CARIBBEAN**

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## **A. SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) provide a platform for the sharing of experiences on successes, challenges and lessons learned, and serve as global impetus for accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This annual reporting process promotes policy coherence, as well as accountability and transparency at the national level. Caribbean Member States should ensure that the subregion is represented among countries presenting their VNRs every year to advocate for support and financial resources for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
2. One of the most crucial steps involved in the mainstreaming of the SDGs at the national level is the establishment of a strong institutional framework for promoting, coordinating and overseeing implementation of the goals as well as mobilizing various non-state actors in the sustainable development process.
3. Special attention should be paid to the timely production and dissemination of quality disaggregated data to successfully measure national and regional progress in the attainment of the SDGs. There is a need for collective discourse and agreement on the priority indicators for the Caribbean that are congruent with national development objectives, as may be broadly defined. Even if priorities are not of the same level of importance across the subregion, there will be common themes across all Member States. The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) are currently working on the finalization of list of core indicators on which all Caribbean countries would be encouraged to produce data for SDG follow-up and review.

## **B. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK**

### **1. Place and date**

4. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) subregional headquarters for the Caribbean convened a one-day workshop to accelerate SDG implementation in the Caribbean, with the aim of enhancing technical capacity in planning, implementing, and monitoring the SDGs at the national level. The workshop took place on the 18 May 2017 in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

### **2. Attendance**

5. The workshop brought together senior government officials with responsibility for planning, sustainable development and foreign affairs, as well as representatives from other regional and international organizations. The following ECLAC member countries were represented: Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago. The following associate member countries were also represented: Aruba, British Virgin Islands, Curaçao and Montserrat. Other workshop participants included United Nations agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Children's Funds (UNICEF), International Labour Organization (ILO), and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Regional development organizations represented at the workshop include CARICOM, Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), and Association of Caribbean States (ACS). Representatives of academia, other international organizations, and civil society included the University of the West Indies (UWI), Caribbean Policy Development Centre (CPDC), Latin America and Caribbean Network Information Network (LACNIC), and the Sub-committee on SDGs.

### **3. Agenda**

1. Opening of the workshop
2. Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs): Building blocks for SDG reporting
3. Formalizing institutional arrangements to mainstream the SDGs and other relevant development platforms in national development processes
4. Breakout session to examine the challenges of national development processes
5. The data challenge for evidenced-based policy planning and SDG implementation
6. Closure of the workshop

## **C. SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS**

### **1. Opening of the workshop**

#### **Welcome remarks**

6. The Director of ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean welcomed all the participants to the workshop and urged them to use the opportunity as a starting point to pursue comprehensive, integrative and dynamic development strategies as stipulated in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. She informed the participants that the 2030 Agenda with its 17 SDGs and 169 targets, offers a comprehensive response to a range of essential development imperatives that all countries in the Caribbean subregion would inevitably face. These issues include poverty and hunger; education and health; climate change; gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls; effective consumption and production practices; resilient infrastructure; energy; industrialization and innovation. Additionally, there was also recognition of the central importance of reducing inequality both within and among states, for countries to achieve economic growth and socially sustainable development.

7. She informed the participants that ECLAC was mandated to assist countries of the Caribbean subregion to fully integrate the SDGs in their national development plans and also to provide a mechanism for regular monitoring and review of the implementation of 2030 Agenda. With this mandate in mind, ECLAC convened the First Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development in Mexico City in April at which a number of Caribbean Member States participated. The national reports received during that meeting formed part of the annual comprehensive regional report to be submitted to the High Level Political Forum (HLPF). This process known as the Voluntary National Reviews is a central element in the peer review process that was built into the follow-up and review mechanism of the 2030 Agenda. As such, the HLPF convenes annually to discuss updates and solutions to the challenges of SDG implementation. The Director encouraged the countries to consider registering for the process to assist them in jump-starting implementation and to keep track of progress.

8. Within the Caribbean subregion, the United Nations system was collectively engaged in supporting the SDG implementation and the contribution of ECLAC counts toward this collective effort. With the support of the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ) funding, ECLAC organized a symposium on mainstreaming the SDGs in national development planning which was held in Jamaica in February 2017. That symposium addressed the importance of national institutional frameworks for SDGs

and the SAMOA Pathway implementation, as well as tools for integrated national development planning. UNDP has also been conducting Mainstreaming, Acceleration, Policy Support (MAPS) missions and other United Nations agencies have been providing sectoral support through the Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework (MSDF).

9. The Director acknowledged the capacity constraints of the countries in the subregion as they prepare to embark on the implementation of the SDGs and emphasized the need for a strong institutional framework at the national level to provide coherent and integrated leadership for the sustainable development process. She stated that many countries were still at the early stages of designating or establishing a lead institution. The delay in identifying such an institution can contribute to the slow pace of SDG implementation in the subregion. She reminded countries that there would have been greater success in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) if there had been key institutions charged with leading the process at the national level.

10. Another well-known challenge facing Caribbean states was in the area of data collection and statistical analysis. The Director stressed that special attention should be paid to the timely production and dissemination of quality disaggregated data to successfully measure national and regional progress on the attainment of the SDGs. ECLAC had already started to work with the CARICOM Secretariat and UNDESA to identify, from among the global SDG indicators, a minimum core set for monitoring the implementation of the SDGs and the SAMOA Pathway in the Caribbean. A draft list of core indicators, on which all Caribbean countries were encouraged to produce data for SDG follow-up and review, was being reviewed by a Technical Working Group of the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians.

11. The Director ended her remarks by thanking all participants for committing to the implementation of the SDGs.

### **Purpose and structure of workshop**

12. The Coordinator, Statistics and Social Development Unit of ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean informed the participants that the workshop to accelerate SDG implementation in the Caribbean was a component of the GIZ-sponsored project entitled “Support for the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean”. The overall purpose of the project is to build capacity among governments and policymakers for the planning, management and monitoring of SDG implementation at the national level.

13. He acknowledged that countries were at different stages of implementation of the SDGs, and the workshop would help determine guidelines for institutional frameworks to get the process started. The workshop will also provide a forum for countries to exchange ideas and share their experiences on what institutional arrangements worked best. Under the GIZ project, ECLAC was also committed to providing additional support to Member States based on their needs and readiness to start the process of SDG implementation.

## **2. Voluntary National Reviews: building blocks for SDG reporting**

14. The Director, ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean gave a presentation on the guidelines for reporting at the HLPF. As stipulated in the 2030 Agenda, the HLPF meets every four years under the auspices of the General Assembly and within this cycle there are yearly thematic review meetings under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to monitor the progress made on specific SDGs. At these annual meetings, countries have the option to volunteer to present on their progress on implementing the SDGs, which is referred to as the VNR process.



15. The VNRs are a multi-stakeholder process that facilitates partnerships, including those with civil society and the private sector. Furthermore, they provide a platform for the sharing of experiences on successes, challenges and lessons learned, while determining ways to accelerate the implementation of the Agenda globally. The HLPF is scheduled for July 2017 and will review Goals 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, and 14 under the theme “Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world”. Belize will be the first Caribbean country to present their VNR out of the forty-four countries carded to present. In 2018, the Bahamas and Jamaica have volunteered to report on their progress under the theme “Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies”. The Director urged more Member States to participate in the VNRs process as it would help with monitoring and evaluating challenges and progress made in each country, while facilitating peer learning by nations.

16. The Director then gave more insight into how Member States should structure their national review reports. She highlighted that the content of the VNRs should have the following sections<sup>1</sup>:

- i. An opening statement by the Head of State or Government, a Minister or another high-ranking government official with key messages from the review. The opening statement should also highlight the critical issues in implementation of sustainable development in the country being reviewed.
- ii. A one or two page synthesis of the VNR process, which summarizes the findings of the country review. The summary should also highlight two or three good practices from the country’s experience; two or three lessons the country has learned in its acceleration of SDG implementation efforts; two or three challenges confronting the country and on which they wish to learn how other countries’ good practices could help resolve them; and two or three areas where the country would need support in terms of finance, capacity-building, technology and partnerships.
- iii. An introduction to present a brief description of the key features of the country context, critical challenges and national priorities and targets as it pertains to the 2030 Agenda.
- iv. A methodology that discusses the process that was adopted for the review that includes scope, depth and limitations. Information in this section should include the process for preparation of the national review; the sources of information used for the review; the support received in preparation of the review; and how the data for the review was collected.
- v. A section on policy and the enabling environment with the following subsections:
  - a) Creating ownership of the Sustainable Development Goals, which would outline the efforts made to include different stakeholders; plans to keep the Goals under review at the national level; and plans for disseminating reviews and their findings.
  - b) Incorporation of the Sustainable Development Goals in national frameworks- that would outline the critical initiatives that the country undertook to adapt the SDGs and targets to its national circumstances. It should also include a description of national efforts to mainstream the SDGs; a discussion of the main challenges and difficulties in implementing the SDGs; a discussion on additional goals that are

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<sup>1</sup> Based on the guidelines provided in the annex of the report of the United Nations Secretary-General’s report on critical milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review at the global level, A/70/684.

national priorities that may go beyond the SDGs; and a discussion of major efforts undertaken by local authorities and non-state actors in implementing the SDGs.

- c) Integration of the three dimensions- a discussion on how the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) are being integrated into national development policies. This section should also have an assessment of how other principles of the 2030 Agenda such as “leaving no one behind” have been mainstreamed in the implementation of the SDGs.
  - d) Goals and targets- the review should have brief information on the progress and status of all SDGs while highlighting the critical difficulties that were encountered to attain these goals. A statistical annex with the relevant data should also be included. The section should also provide a description on what actions have been taken to address existing gaps and challenges.
  - e) Thematic analysis- As appropriate for the country, the review could include an analysis of progress and initiatives related to the high-level political forum’s thematic focus for that year. For example, the Bahamas and Jamaica may want to discuss progress in “transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies” in their VNRs for 2018.
  - f) Institutional mechanisms- The section should provide information on how the country has adapted its institutional framework in order to implement the 2030 Agenda. It should include information on the institution charged with coordination and integration and how responsibility is allocated among various levels of government (national, subnational and local) for coherent implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda. It should also have a section on how the country intends to review progress in implementing the SDGs, including possible plans regarding the conduct of national reviews.
- vi. Means of implementation- Based on the challenges and trends highlighted, the review may discuss the following: how the means of implementation were mobilized; the difficulties faced; the additional resources needed to implement the 2030 Agenda; financing and capacity development needs; data and statistics knowledge sharing; technology and partnerships.
  - vii. Next steps- The review should outline what steps the country is taking or planning to take to enhance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
  - viii. A statistical annex with data, using the global SDG indicators to be proposed by the Statistical Commission as a starting point and adding priority indicators identified at the regional and national levels. They may highlight whether statistics were collected from the national statistical system and pinpoint major gaps in official statistics on indicators. It was noted that the Caribbean subregion, under the auspices of CARICOM, has already started to identify and develop a core set of SDG regional indicators. This is critical, because without this information, it will be difficult to measure the progress in the implementation of the SDGs. Furthermore, it is a unique element on the emphasis placed on monitoring and measurement.
  - ix. A conclusion to present a summary of the analysis, findings and policy implications. It may discuss new or emerging issues identified by the review. Lastly, the country may

indicate what lessons it has learned from the review process, what support it would need in the future for preparing such reviews and any adjustment it believes should be made to the guidelines to ensure that they are useful.

17. The Director stressed that the VNRs should be seen as the building blocks for SDG reporting at the national level to promote policy coherence, as well as monitoring and accountability mechanisms that promote transparency. It will encourage the development of cross-sectoral and inter-institutional architecture under the umbrella of a single institutional framework with leadership of the implementation of the SDGs, as well as integrate the measurement processes necessary to build SDG indicators into national strategies for the development of statistics. Furthermore, it will help in the identification of good practices and challenges that remain at the community, local and national levels to prepare countries for implementing the SDGs.

18. She concluded her presentation by reminding the participants of the workshop that ECLAC was available to support Member States in their SDG planning, implementation, and follow-up and review processes, as well as institutional statistical capacity strengthening. There were also plans in the near future to develop a regional observatory on planning for sustainable development, which would include a regional repository for national development plans.

## **Discussions**

### ***Country updates***

19. Jamaica is in the process of preparing its national review for the 2018 HLPF session that will focus on the theme “Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies”. The country in partnership with Canada, is also spearheading an initiative to find new sources of public, private, and philanthropic financing to support the implementation of the SDGs. This joint Jamaican/Canadian initiative was established in December 2016, at a Group of Friends for the Implementation of the SDGs forum comprising of United Nations Member States, the private sector and other stakeholders. The Group will provide a platform to collectively discuss and promote solution-oriented ideas to unlock the funds needed to finance the SDGs.

20. The Bahamas is also in the process of preparing its national review for the 2018 HLPF session, and encouraged other Member States in the workshop to participate in upcoming VNRs. The country has also started to work on its institutional framework and has determined that the Office of the Prime Minister will be officially responsible for the implementation of the SDGs, and the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs will also have a leading role in this process.

21. Barbados outlined the steps that the country will undertake for the implementation of the SDGs. The first step will be to determine the priority indicators based on the CARICOM core set of indicators for the Caribbean. Data will then be collected from the various ministries, statistical institutions and private sector, and an assessment will be done to determine possible gaps in the information. Based on these assessments, training on data collection for these core indicators may be undertaken so that the country would be better equipped with the necessary technical skills to report on the implementation of the SDGs.

22. Guyana has developed a Green State Development Strategy (GSDS), which will guide the country’s economic and sociocultural development over the next 15 years, and inform the implementation of the SDGs. The country is also in the process of establishing a mechanism to monitor the implementation of all the elements of the SDGs, which will work alongside a group at the interministerial level composed of representatives of the Office of the President and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that is responsible for policy advice on relevant national and international issues. In January 2017, the United

Nations System in Guyana launched the United Nations Multi-country Sustainable Development framework in the Caribbean (UN-MSDF) to support the realization of the SDGs and the SAMOA Pathway by providing a platform for countries to access the global expertise and experience of the United Nations System at both the country and sub-regional levels.

23. Antigua and Barbuda is at the very early stage of implementation of the SDGs, with the Office of the Prime Minister assuming the overall coordinating role. The representative acknowledged the challenge of data and lack of fiscal space to allocate resources for the acceleration of the implementation of the SDGs, and mentioned that some of the Goals will be implemented on a regional level as part of the OECS.

24. Suriname is in the process of finalizing its national development strategy for the next five years, which will guide the implementation of the SDGs. A number of stakeholder consultations have been held with the local communities; indigenous groups in the rural and interior areas; the private sector and the youth to ensure a participatory approach and the promotion of national ownership of the SDGs. The representative of Suriname highlighted that domestic resources would not be sufficient to achieve the SDGs and as such would need to explore options for both technical and financial assistance.

25. Curaçao is currently working on its national report which will be included as part of the 2017 VNR report for the Kingdom of the Netherlands. The VNR process has been beneficial as it made the government more aware of the challenges associated with the implementation of the SDGs and the extensive list of indicators, and as such the country has started to work on prioritizing the indicators.

26. Dominican Republic is in the process of creating the institutions and mechanisms that will work on the implementation of the SDGs. However, an inter-ministerial commission was already established with the responsibility to start work on aligning the SDGs with the country's national development strategy.

27. The British Virgin Islands has held consultations with various policy makers from different ministries and a committee was established to assess the implementation of the SDGs in line with current national strategies. In terms of constitutional arrangements, the country is responsible for its own SDG indicators as it is not under the purview of the United Kingdom. The representative mentioned that his country looked forward to working in collaboration with the OECS and ECLAC to pursue the implementation of the SDGs.

28. Aruba is currently hosting a UNDP MAPS Mission to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the national planning level. The purpose of the mission was to determine a strategy to establish institutional mechanisms; prioritize SDGs in alignment with national goals; monitor and report on the SDGs and develop a national SDG action campaign.

### ***Importance of VNRs***

29. The workshop unanimously agreed that preparation of VNRs will strengthen advocacy for funds and resources in the subregion, as it will present irrefutable evidence which will determine the need for support for the implementation of the SDGs. Member States must ensure that the Caribbean is represented every year among countries presenting their VNRs at the HLPF in order to take advantage of available resources that the forum might present.

30. VNR consultations provide an opportunity for peer learning and continuous engagement with other Member States. When Member States volunteer to present their VNRs at the HLPF, they learn from other countries who are going through the same process of implementing the SDGs and how they are dealing with similar challenges.

31. The VNR process provides an opportunity for Member States to update and monitor national priorities as well as revise budgetary processes.

### *Challenges*

32. Member States raised their concerns about their ability to report at the HLPF every year. The issue of timeliness of data was considered to be a potential setback for reporting on the implementation of the SDGs in the Caribbean subregion. Furthermore, the subregion has already been challenged with identifying indicators that all Member States can collect data on. As such, there is a need for collective discourse and agreement on the priority indicators for the Caribbean that are congruent with national development objectives, as broadly defined. Even if priorities are not of the same level of importance across the subregion, there will be common themes across all Member States.

### *Resource mobilization*

33. Resource mobilization for the implementation of the SDGs is a critical challenge in the Caribbean subregion. The Group of Friends for the Implementation of the SDGs that is co-chaired by Jamaica and Canada is an important niche for the subregion to tap into and Member States should come together as one voice to influence the work and outcome of this platform. Caribbean countries must continuously engage in these platforms in order to benefit from the resources that they provide.

### *Regional support*

34. The Deputy Resident Coordinator of UNDP gave some insight into the UN MSDF that speaks to a joint United Nations initiative that will provide support to 18 English and Dutch speaking Caribbean countries and Overseas Territories for the implementation of the SDGs. The countries covered are Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Barbados, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Curaçao, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sint Maarten, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago. The framework aims to ensure that no one is left behind in national development efforts, and exemplifies the commonly shared belief that similar development challenges of the Caribbean countries require a coherent and coordinated response by the United Nations. Even though the scope of the UN MSDF will not cover all aspects of the SDG implementation, it is hoped to serve as a resource mobilization mechanism to leverage regional resources and promote new partnerships.

35. UNDP has also been providing targeted support to its member countries in the subregion through its MAPS approach for SDG implementation. Integrated missions are deployed to selected countries to develop capacity in the areas of budgeting; tailoring SDGs to national contexts; and monitoring and reporting, to name a few. Some of the countries that have benefitted so far from MAPS missions are Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and currently Aruba.

36. The Director of ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean informed the workshop participants that there will be more national workshops in the near future to improve data collection for the implementation of the SDGs. ECLAC has also worked with CARICOM to develop a set of core Caribbean indicators that is in the process of being finalized. Member States will be given an opportunity to identify their priorities based on their own national agenda.

## **3. Formalizing institutional arrangements to mainstream the SDGs and other relevant development platforms in national development processes**

37. The Coordinator, Statistics and Social Development Unit of ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean gave a presentation on the formalization of institutional arrangements to mainstream the SDGs and other relevant development platforms in national development processes. He suggested that one of the first steps involved in the mainstreaming of the SDGs should be the establishment of

institutional arrangements for promoting, coordinating and overseeing implementation and mobilizing various non-state actors.

38. Although the structure of the institutional arrangement may vary based on the country's strategic needs, there are some important characteristics that should be featured in any set up. High-level political support was highlighted as critical to mobilize and coordinate public institutions and policies, whereby coordination will take place at the high-levels of government such as the Office of Prime Minister or the Presidency. There should also be the involvement of key ministries with sufficient political power and clout as well as some degree of control over financial resources to operationalize the institutional framework. Last but not least, there should be the inclusion of Parliament as they would usually have oversight and legislative functions, which would include the adoption of a budget for SDG implementation.

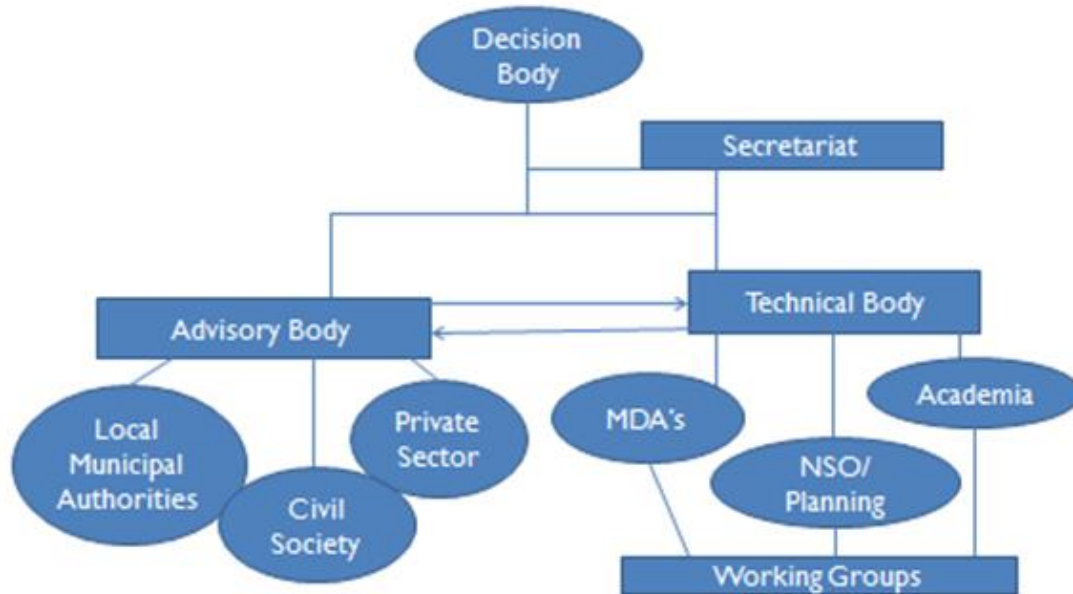
39. The Coordinator suggested that there are two main ways of setting up an institutional arrangement to mainstream the SDGs. Countries can create a new institution that would be headed by the Office of the Prime Minister or President and comprised of a ministerial or specialized unit with the technical expertise to coordinate the entire SDG process. He gave the example of the institutional arrangement in Aruba whereby the country set up a National Commission on the Sustainable Development Goals under the direction of the Office of the Prime Minister. The National Commission is comprised of members from the Central Bureau of Statistics and the Department of Economic Affairs, Commerce and Industry. Two national working groups focused on SDG indicators and SDGs Awareness and Communication exist under the National Commission. Another example was the National Commission for SDGs in Brazil that comprised of a diverse set of stakeholders and regional representation that focus on various sectoral issues. The National Commission in Brazil comprised of the Office of the Prime Minister/President; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Ministry of Social Development; the Ministry of Planning; the Ministry of Environment; Local Government and Civil society and overall technical advice from the Brazil Institute of Geography and Statistics and the Institute of Applied Economic Research.

40. The second option of setting up an institutional arrangement to mainstream the SDGs would be to assign new responsibilities to institutions that already exist. In this case, many countries basically transitioned the arrangement that was used for the implementation of the MDGs into a post-2015 mechanism that would focus on the SDGs. As such, it will most likely be the Ministry or Institute of Planning that will be the designated focal point that will work in collaboration with the National Statistical Office. Countries such as The Bahamas, Dominica, Jamaica, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines have adopted this approach of using existing institutions.

41. The Coordinator provided the participants of the workshop with a suggested template for an institutional arrangement for SDG implementation that comprised of three main bodies:

- i. A decision making body which would act as the Secretariat and lead the SDG process;
- ii. A technical body to formulate policies, that would consist of other ministries, the national statistical office and academia;
- iii. An advisory body which would involve the private sector; local municipalities and civil society.

## Template for SDG institutional arrangement



42. He ended his presentation by reiterating the challenges that can arise with the implementation of any type of institutional arrangement which ranged from additional costs and human resources; as well as fragmentation of mandates and responsibilities for implementation of the SDGs which can further result in insufficient synergy and coordination between the different ministries, agencies and other sectors that deal with sustainable development.

### Discussions

#### *Caribbean examples of institutional arrangements*

43. The representative from Jamaica sought to explain their current institutional arrangement for the implementation of the SDGs, and stated that the national development policy document entitled Vision 2030 Jamaica was the first long term development strategy to be established. In developing the Vision 2030 Jamaica, ensuring political buy-in was critical and since its inception, the development plan has remained in force despite a number of changes in the Government administration. The national development goals contained in Vision 2030 Jamaica have been aligned to the SDGs. The National 2030 Agenda Oversight Committee is comprised of a Secretariat and an SDG Core Group that includes the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), The Statistical Institute of Jamaica, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, the private sector, and civil society. The Vision 2030 Jamaica will be implemented through a three-year medium socioeconomic framework with development activities that would contribute to the achievement of the SDGs. These development activities have been anchored through the budgeting process of the Ministry of Finance.

44. The representative from CARICOM recommended that Member States should utilize existing mechanisms as formal institutional arrangements for the implementation of the SDGs. Partnerships with sectoral groups and civil society should also be strengthened so as to play a crucial role in the institutional arrangements for SDGs.

### ***Awareness raising***

45. Countries had adopted different strategies to sensitize the population about the implementation of the SDGs. For example, Curacao established national dialogues throughout the country to sensitize various stakeholders including NGOs, the private sector, and the youth on the national development plans. Curacao has also made an effort to enhance the youth's participation in the implementation of the SDGs by providing them with the opportunity to have inputs into the VNR reports.

46. Jamaica developed a stakeholder engagement strategy whereby several approaches to sensitize the population were used. The use of social media to disseminate information on the SDGs as well as presentations in schools were quite impactful in targeting the youth. Additionally, there were parish consultations in the communities, and all sectors including the civil society and the private sector were engaged as they all have an important role in the implementation of the SDGs.

47. The representatives from Barbados and the Dominican Republic reiterated that one of the most effective ways to raise awareness about the implementation of the SDGs would be through the school systems.

## **4. Breakout session to examine the challenges of national development processes**

48. Participants were divided into groups to discuss different topics related to the challenges of national development processes. The topics of discussion were as follows:

- i. Integrating the economic, social and environmental dimensions
- ii. Means of implementation
- iii. Broad stakeholder engagement
- iv. Institutional capacity

### ***Group 1: Integrating the economic, social and environmental dimensions***

49. **Question: How do we ensure that the three dimensions of sustainable development are synergized in our national development processes? (national development plan; institutional framework for SDGs/SAMOA; national budgeting, etc.)**

The group reported that synergizing the three dimensions of the SDGs could occur in three forms:

- The process could develop organically through consultations with relevant stakeholders;
- The integrated approach of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs itself has strengthened the synergies by bringing these three dimensions to development plans;
- Synergy can result from creating participatory and consultative processes which bring together stakeholders from different sectors and the budgeting process could be a tool for facilitating synergies.

50. The group made the following recommendations:

- It is important to find synergies between the SDGs and the national development plan and the national budget should be considered as an implementation tool;
- The assistance provided by international and regional organizations should include the identification of areas of synergies among the SDGs.

51. **Question: What are the critical challenges to implementing an integrated development process and how can they be tackled?**

Some of the challenges to implementing an integrated development process identified by the group are:

- Political and bureaucratic processes and the limited financial resources;



- Information and capacity gaps that impede the full implementation of an integrated approach;
- Work is being done in silos at the governmental level.

To address these challenges, the group made the following recommendations:

- There is a need to overcome financial resource competition among ministries and political parties, especially within the Office of the Prime Minister;
- There must be a change of mindsets in order to break the silo approach;
- There must be a change in the culture of data-driven decision-making, to strengthen information systems;
- Promote education and training programmes to change mindsets regarding the importance of evidence based approaches and the SDGs framework, as well as strengthen the public institutions through capacity-building on the SDG framework;
- Establish effective participatory and consultative processes with a broad participation of stakeholders, including private sector, civil society organizations, and political parties, that will add value to the development process and bring transparency and accountability;
- Mobilize financial resources for the implementation of the SDGs, which would require the conduct of surveys and poverty assessments to measure the targets and indicators;
- Incorporate the SDGs in national strategic plans and national budgets;
- Establish mechanisms to have an appropriate financial resource allocation based on the prioritized areas;
- Establish a monitoring and review mechanism to identify the challenges and overcome them.

**52. Question: What is the progress in establishing a national institutional framework for implementing the SDGs and other SIDS development agendas?**

The Member States have already started the process of identify an institution and establishing an institutional framework for the implementation of the SDGs. Although the process may vary, most countries have been working on already existing institutions while others are in the process of formalizing a new institutional framework.

***Group 2: Means of implementation***

**53. Question: What resources (identified, appropriated or anticipated) are available to national institutional frameworks in implementing the SDGs and other SIDS agendas?**

The group reported that only when the SDG priorities for the Caribbean subregion have been identified and formalized, would they be able to determine the resources that would be needed for the national institutional frameworks. However, resources may potentially be available from the following sources:

- Alternative development financing (away from development aid), since there has been a cut in the availability of funds from the United Nations system and other traditional sources of bilateral aid;
- Private sector and Public Private Partnerships (PPPs);
- Domestic sources of financing;
- Technical capacity assistance from regional organizations that have a strong track record for work on sustainable development such as OECS, CARICOM and ECLAC.
- Regional funding initiatives (less bilateral support and more promotion of regional assistance funding). Organizations such as the OECS and CARICOM will now become even more critical;
- Private capital especially for green projects.

**54. Question: To what extent have the SDGs been incorporated in the national budgeting process?**

The group felt that the SDGs were not distinct from countries' national development plans. In fact, a lot of the SDGs have already been mainstreamed in National Development Goals, and in some cases resources have already been allocated to some of the targets. The group did acknowledge that there are no direct funds for SDGs but that funds available for Climate Change, HIV and AIDS, and the environment, among others, are all mainstreamed into the SDGs.

**55. Question: How can we leverage dedicated resources for SDG implementation at the national and subnational levels?**

The group agreed that official development assistance (ODA) has become limited, and as such resources for SDG implementation should be sought from the following sources:

- The private sector and PPPs;
- Regional approaches to development financing;
- Creation of stronger linkages of tourism in the region to generate more employment and more generation of resources (joint marketing initiatives);
- Development of an advocacy strategy to push SDGs implementation.

**Group 3: Broad stakeholder engagement**

**56. Question: To what extent have the different ministries, departments, and agencies of the government been involved in planning for and implementing the SDGs at the national level?**

The group reported that, regardless of the strategy followed, most countries had already made updates to their national development instruments in alignment with the SDGs.

- In Curaçao, the National Development Plan (NDP) was drafted before the adoption of the SDGs;
- Trinidad and Tobago already had the national development policy document "Vision 2020";
- Jamaica aligned the SDGs with the goals of their National Development Plan.

57. Regarding public stakeholder engagement for the incorporation of the SDGs in NDPs, most countries followed a multisectoral approach that considered the expertise of government ministries and specialized agencies. The institutional and regulatory arrangements for engagement varied by country:

- Jamaica identified targets and stages and subsequently selected the appropriate stakeholders to incorporate in each phase;
- In Curaçao, sectoral and ministerial experts identified stakeholders to then be included in the discussion process;
- In the Dominican Republic, a Commission for Sustainable Development was created by law.

58. The group agreed that the planning phase enjoys broader stakeholder engagement in the region, and more countries are recognizing its value and the relevance of multisectoral collaboration. However, they acknowledged that the challenge is *how* and *who* to engage throughout the process. Participation must go beyond consultation to include various stakeholders in implementation programmes. There is a need to improve networks and coordination, as well as communication within and between ministries and agencies through focal points. It is also necessary to establish the rule of engagement for these stakeholders (including information disclosure policies), as countries throughout the subregion have various arrangements in place. Institutional arrangements are favored over *ad hoc* interactions.

59. Participants agreed that the implementation of the SDGs should be aligned with national goals and long-term strategies, and follow a multisectoral and interministerial approach that benefits from comprehensive projects that make more efficient use of budgets. Participants identified programme-based

budgets and result-based management as good practices, and considered that NDPs must be anchored in national budgeting processes. In addition, interministerial collaboration through the identification of common work areas was encouraged to avoid silo-budgeting and planning. Curacao was implementing a pilot interministerial work programme, which selected three areas for collaboration, elaborated an interministerial budget and identified common indicators shared by all three ministries. The project will be assessed in 2018 and, based on the results, more sectors will be included. In Jamaica, ministries are governed by Corporate Plans, which must include goals, objectives, operational plans and costs. These plans are revised and incorporated by the ministries of finance and planning; in addition, the country has a long-term strategic plan.

**60. Question: What are the plans to engage local and subnational governments in SDG implementation?**

The inclusion of local governments was deemed critical in the implementation process (in those countries that have a local/municipal component). Councils, community centers and regional offices have been identified as important stakeholders and implementation partners. Additionally, local engagement was seen as valuable as it helps better identify local needs and priorities.

**61. Question: How have we engaged/can we engage the private sector, civil society and youth organizations in implementing the SDGs?**

Regarding non-public engagement, NDP planning processes throughout the subregion includes businesses, civil society, academia, labor unions, and NGOs, confirming the commitment of governments with stakeholder engagement. However, it was agreed that more work needs to be done to increase stakeholder engagement in the implementation level, as participation was often through consultations and implementation was limited to few stakeholders involved in official implementation processes.

62. Dissemination of information, raising awareness, and results-based management are key for getting buy-in and local engagement. This also requires that governments increase their visibility in order to inform their citizens about their accomplishments and projects.

**Group 4: Institutional capacity**

**63. Question: What are the most binding capacity constraints that countries face in implementing the SDGs?**

The group listed a number of capacity constraints that included:

- Lack of human resources to be able to set up an institutional framework or focal point to implement and monitor the SDGs;
- Limited up to date data to define the status of the SDGs;
- Existing government structures that function in silos
- Financial constraints and limited funds
- Focus on other political crises and priorities such as climate change
- Limited partnerships with civil society and the private sector

**64. Question: What are the gaps in development planning and national statistical systems that need to be addressed?**

The group underscored that some countries feel overwhelmed with the SDG process, especially in the absence of an assessment of the indicators and their relevance to their countries. The subregion needs to

prioritize relevant SDGs and indicators. It was recommended that the list of core indicators should be finalized and transmitted to countries to assist them to accelerate the process of implementation.

**65. Question: What innovative ways should countries consider in addressing institutional capacity limitation?**

The group recommended the active engagement people in the process of institutional capacity building and noted that such activities should not only take place at the planning level but also during the data collection phase. Citizens should be actively sensitized to the value of their input during the data collection phase.

**5. The data challenge for evidence-based policy planning and SDG implementation**

**The data gap in the Caribbean**

66. The Coordinator, Statistics and Social Development Unit of ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean gave a presentation on the data gap issue in the Caribbean. He stated that data is a necessary input in the planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation stages of the SDGs. In order for countries to determine whether they have achieved their development goals, they need to assess their performance by measuring targets and indicators.

67. He looked at the gaps that existed in the current national development plans (NDPs) in the subregion and highlighted that some of these plans have targets that are difficult to measure and indicators without any baselines. Gaps in official statistics ranged from infrequent surveys with limited coverage; administrative records that are not managed in an integrated manner; to untimely dissemination of census and other survey results. Some of the reasons for the limited production of data by Caribbean countries included insufficient financial resources; insufficient technical capacity and human resources; and lack of internationally agreed methodology.

68. It was recommended that efforts should be dedicated to those SDG indicators that could be produced with the refinement of available data to close the data gap. Furthermore, technical capacity will need to be enhanced and more financial resources will ultimately have to be dedicated to these efforts. Countries should utilize the expertise of institutions that already collect certain data to add to the enhancement of the statistical process.

**Addressing the data gap through innovation in statistical capacity building**

69. The Senior Fellow from the Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies, University of the West Indies, Mona Campus, gave a presentation on how innovations in statistical capacity building can help address the data gap in the Caribbean. He noted that the Caribbean subregion's strength lay in their creativity which should be the vehicle for utilizing non-conventional data collection methods to advance the implementation of SDGs.

70. He believed that the work of data collection should not only be the responsibility of national statistical systems but should include inputs from other stakeholders such as tertiary and technical institutions, within a coherent system accompanied by a monitoring plan. As an example, he suggested that certain data collected through the censuses could be streamlined and sourced from the police and education systems if proper sharing protocols are in place. He noted, however, that in an effort to organize this type of work there would have to be a clear division of responsibilities for the collection of data, and as such scheduling of the work is critical.

71. The education system should be aligned to the SDG strategy, since children presently in schools will be in their twenties by the year 2030. School children should therefore be involved in data collection as part of their academic work to sensitize them from a young age. Secondary school children could also be involved in data processing and data analysis as part of their tertiary level curriculum. The presenter also suggested that the “unattached youth” with smart phones could be taught to report on their communities and what was happening in disasters, climate change and other issues, where such information can be uploaded to a website and other young people could be engaged in managing this information.

72. Another innovative way to address the data gap can be with the use of drones to measure forest management and other data with aerial photography e.g. climate change, housing, spatial disaster and traffic. However, in order for this to be feasible, license regulations would be needed to guide this process.

## **Discussions**

### ***Innovative data collection methods***

73. Data collection for the SDGs could be done through unconventional ways, outside of the statistical offices, but relevant legislation will have to be enacted after a thorough consideration.

74. Guyana is actually looking into ways to utilize low cost or free human resources contribution to assist in research and data collection. There is a programme that involved students in tertiary schools in the research process, to gain access to a substantial amount of resources with respect to the SDGs.

## **6. Closure of the workshop**

75. The Director, ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean emphasized that strong institutional leadership was required for the implementation of national development plans that would be synergized with the SDGs and the SAMOA pathway.

76. The preparation of VNRs is extremely important for setting baselines; raising awareness; establishing legitimacy of institutional frameworks and mobilizing support for resources.

77. She informed the workshop that ECLAC will provide technical capacity assistance to six countries in the implementation of the SDGs, as well as to help them address their data and resource issues. The countries to benefit from this technical assistance are Aruba, the Bahamas, British Virgin Islands, Grenada, Guyana and Saint Kitts and Nevis; with another group of countries to receive support in the next year as well.

78. The Director underscored the importance of regular regional discussion to keep the SDGs implementation momentum going. In closing, she acknowledged that the workshop yielded useful exchanges and resulted in invaluable peer learning. She noted the importance of maintaining contact among the Member States and with ECLAC, possibly through an online platform to strategize and ensure a more engaging process for the implementation of the SDGs.

Annex I

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

**A. Member States**

**ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA**

Representative:

- Amb. Colin Murdoch, Senior Adviser to the Prime Minister, Office of the Prime Minister

**BAHAMAS**

Delegation member:

- Tishka Francis, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Permanent Mission of the Bahamas to the United Nations

**BARBADOS**

Representative:

- Edison Alleyne, Permanent Secretary, Sustainable Development, Prime Minister's Office

Delegation member:

- Travis Sinckler, Senior Environmental Officer, Ministry of Environment

**DOMINICA**

Delegation member:

- Kyra Paul, Social Development Planner, Ministry of Planning, Economic Development and Investment

**DOMINICAN REPUBLIC**

Delegation member:

- Jacqueline Boin, Economist, President of Science and Art Foundation of the Dominican Republic, Embassy of the Dominican Republic in Trinidad and Tobago

**- GRENADA**

Representative:

- Michael Stephen, Chair of the National Steering Committee, National Sustainable Development Plan 2030

-

**- GUYANA**

Representative:

- Amb. Rawle Lucas, Adviser to the Minister of Foreign Affairs on Foreign Trade and Investment Matters, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

-

Delegation member:

- Teandra McKay, Foreign Service Officer II and Desk Officer for ECLAC, Department of Americas, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

## **JAMAICA**

### Representative:

- Amb. Sheila Sealey Monteith, Under Secretary, Multilateral Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade

### Delegation members:

- H.E. David Prendergast, High Commissioner, Jamaican High Commission in Trinidad and Tobago
- Delita McCallum, Counsellor/Head of Chancery, Jamaican High Commission in Trinidad and Tobago
- Toni-Shae Freckleton, Manager, Population and Health Unit, Planning Institute of Jamaica

## **SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS**

### Delegation member:

- Lorna Hunkins, Special Adviser, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Aviation

## **SAINT LUCIA**

### Representative:

- Hon. Ubaldu Raymond, Senator and Minister in the Ministry of Finance

## **SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES**

### Representative:

- Louise Tash, Senior Economist, Ministry of Economic Planning, Sustainable Development, Industry, Information and Labour

## **SURINAME**

### Representative:

- Oquemele Denz, Chargé d' affaires, Embassy of the Republic of Suriname in Trinidad and Tobago

## **TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO**

### Delegation members:

- Anesa Ali-Rodriguez, Foreign Services Officer, Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs
- Maureen Matheson, Planning Officer, Ministry of Planning and Development
- Cherry-Ann Millard, Director, Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs
- Peter Mitchell, Director of Planning (Ag.), Ministry of Planning and Development

## **B. Associate members**

## **ARUBA**

### Delegation member:

- Marcelino Kock, Policy Adviser, Department of Economic Affairs, Commerce and Industry

## **BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS**

### Representative:

- Benito Wheatley, Director, British Virgin Islands London Office, British Virgin Islands Government

### Delegation member:

- Elvia Maduro, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Premier's Office

**CURAÇAO**Delegation members:

- Danaë Daal, Senior Legal Adviser
- Neelam Jethi Melwani, Policy Officer, Directorate of Foreign Relations

**C. United Nations Programmes and Funds****United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**

- Sharifa Ali-Abdullah, Assistant Resident Representative, UNDP Trinidad and Tobago
- Shaunna Sankar, Communications Unit, United Nations Office of the Resident Coordinator, UNDP Trinidad and Tobago
- Khadine Smith, Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator

**United Nations Children's Funds (UNICEF)**

- Maya Faisal, Social and Economic Policy Specialist, UNICEF Eastern Caribbean Office

**D. Specialized agencies****International Labour Organization (ILO)**

- Claudia Coenjaerts, Director, ILO Decent Work Team and Office for the Caribbean

**International Organization for Migration (IOM)**

- Jewel Ali, Head of Office / Project Coordinator, Trinidad and Tobago Office

**E. Other intergovernmental organizations****Caribbean Community (CARICOM)**

- *Amrikha Singh*, Senior Project Officer, Sustainable Development

**Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)**

- Norma Cherry-Fevrier, Programme Officer - Social and Sustainable Development Division

**Caribbean Policy Development Centre (CPDC)**

- Gordon Bispham, Executive Director

**Association of Caribbean States (ACS)**

- H.E. June Soomer, Secretary General
- Tricia Barrow, Political Adviser
- Natasha George, Legal Adviser

**F. Other institutions****University of the West Indies (UWI)**

- Jacqueline Laguardia Martinez, Lecturer, Institute of International Relations, St Augustine Campus



- Michael Witter, Senior Fellow, Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies (SALISES), Mona Campus

### **G. Other participants**

- Roslyn Khan Cummings, Member sub-committee on sustainable development goals
- Kevon Swift, Head Strategic Relations and Integration, LACNIC

### **H. Secretariat**

#### **ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean**

- Diane Quarless, Director
- Dillon Alleyne, Deputy Director
- Abdullahi Abdulkadri, Coordinator, Statistics and Social Development Unit
- Johann Brathwaite, Programme Officer, Programme Support Unit
- Michael Hendrickson, Economic Affairs Officer, Economic Development Unit
- Willard Phillips, Economic Affairs Officer, Sustainable Development and Disaster Unit
- Alexander Voccia, Coordinator, Strategic Planning and Outreach Unit
- Leda Peralta, Associate Environment Affairs Officer, Sustainable Development and Disaster Unit
- Lydia Rosa Gény, Associate Social Affairs Officer, Statistics and Social Development Unit
- Denise Balgobin, Public Information Assistant, Strategic Planning and Outreach Unit
- Candice Gonzales, Research Assistant, Statistics and Social Development Unit
- Sita Inglefield, Personal Assistant to the Director and Deputy Director
- Blaine Marcano, Public Information Assistant, Strategic Planning and Outreach Unit
- Aurélie Quiatol, Meetings Services Assistant, Programme Support Unit
- Rossano Thompson, Computer Information Assistant, Caribbean Knowledge Management Centre
- Elizabeth Thorne, Research Assistant, Sustainable Development and Disaster Unit
- Veera Deokiesingh-Fraser, Public Information Assistant, Strategic Planning and Outreach Unit
- Colleen Skeete, Team Assistant, Statistics and Social Development Unit
- Jeniffer Sankar-Sooknarine, Team Assistant, Programme Support Unit
- Adanna Cudjoe, Research Assistant (*Individual Contractor*), Statistics and Social Development Unit
- Runako Henry, Computer -Information Assistant (*Individual Contractor*), Caribbean Knowledge Management Centre

Annex II**PROGRAMME**

Workshop to accelerate SDG implementation  
in the Caribbean

Distr.  
LIMITED

Port of Spain, 18 May 2017

15 May 2017

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

## PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

**Thursday 18 May**

08:00 – 08:30

**Registration**

08:30 – 09:00

**Opening of the workshop**

- Welcome remarks by Diane Quarless, Director, ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean
- Purpose and structure of workshop by Abdullahi Abdulkadri, Coordinator, Statistics and Social Development Unit, ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean

09:00 – 09:30

**Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs): Building blocks for SDG reporting**

- Diane Quarless, Director, ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean

09:30 – 10:30

**Discussion**

10:30 – 10:45

**Coffee break**

10:45 – 11:30

**Formalizing institutional arrangements to mainstream the SDGs and other relevant development platforms in national development processes**

- Abdullahi Abdulkadri, Coordinator, Statistics and Social Development Unit, ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean

11:30 – 12:30

**Discussion**

12:30 – 13:30

**Lunch**

13:30 – 15:00

**Formalizing institutional arrangements to mainstream the SDGs and other relevant development platforms in national development processes**

- **Breakout session to examine the challenges of national development processes**

Facilitator: Dillon Alleyne, Deputy Director, ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean

15:00 – 15:15

**Coffee break**

15:15 – 16:15

**The data challenge for evidence-based policy planning and SDG implementation**

- **The data gap in the Caribbean**  
Abdullahi Abdulkadri, Coordinator, Statistics and Social Development Unit, ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean
- **Addressing the data gap through innovation in statistical capacity building**  
Michael Witter, Senior Fellow, Sir Arthur Lewis Institute of Social and Economic Studies, The University of the West Indies, Mona Campus

16:15 – 17:00

**Discussion**

17:00 – 17:45

**Closure of symposium**

- **ECLAC support for SDG implementation in the Caribbean**
- **Conclusions**  
Diane Quarless, Director, ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean



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