Energy Efficiency
ECLAC AND GIZ JOIN FORCES

5 things to know
ACHIEVING WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Sneak Preview
DIGITAL ECONOMY WORKSHOP IN TRINIDAD
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page</th>
<th>Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Article</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Feature Article</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Things to Know</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Recent Publications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>State of Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Around the Caribbean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>ECLAC Caribbean Family</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Article
Member States to benefit from ECLAC’s Development Account project

### Feature Article
ECLAC and GIZ join forces to improve Caribbean energy efficiency

### Things to Know
Improving Caribbean energy efficiency

### Recent Publications
Documents relating to ECLAC’s work or the Caribbean region

### State of Affairs
Recent activity by Caribbean governments

### Around the Caribbean
A boost for internet in Belize
A new way to tour Kingston, Jamaica

### ECLAC Caribbean Family
The On-the-job Trainee experience

---

**EDITORIAL TEAM**

Director: Diane Quarless, ECLAC
Editor: Alexander Voccia, ECLAC
Copy Editor: Denise Balgobin, ECLAC
Publication Design: Blaine Marcano, ECLAC
There is an urgent need for governments to strengthen social protection against the risks associated with ageing. Find out more: http://vrb.al/ageing-eclac

Senior policy makers recently received a comprehensive introduction to the ECLAC Development Account project. Find out more: http://vrb.al/public-expenditure

ECLAC convenes a Regional Policy Dialogue and Training Workshop, with the support of the German Federal Enterprise for International Cooperation (GIZ): http://vrb.al/eclac-giz

Upcoming Events

1-3 Workshop: Exploring innovation in transactions and financing in the Caribbean
Port-of-Spain, Trinidad
1-3 June 2016

4 7th Summit of Head of State and/or Government of the ACS Ministerial Council
La Havana, Republic of Cuba
4 June 2016

5 World Environment Day
5 June 2016

12 World Day Against Child Labour
12 June 2016

14 Fifteenth meeting of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC
Santiago, Chile
14 June 2016
Member States to benefit from ECLAC’s Development Account project

Caribbean governments are set to gain greater capacity in the management of public finance in the near future, as ECLAC Caribbean continues to roll out its Development Account project to four member states over a period of three years.

The project is entitled “Strengthening the technical capacity of public finance managers in select Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS)”, and implementation has commenced in Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize and Saint Kitts and Nevis. A team led by ECLAC Caribbean Director Diane Quarless, recently visited each of the three Caribbean island nations in an effort to increase stakeholder awareness of the purpose of the project.

The project focuses on increasing the capacity of policy makers and finance managers to apply the methods and procedures for better monitoring and forecasting of public expenditure and revenue, and is expected to have a positive outcome on the efficiency of public finance management in the selected countries, ultimately helping them to improve their debt ratio and contribute to a more stable economic environment and to social development.

The impact of the recent global economic crisis was particularly severe on the economies of the Caribbean, especially those that depend heavily on services for their economic growth. It has exacerbated already existing high-levels of debt for several countries of this region.

The persistent fiscal challenge in the region is partly a reflection of the difficulty which small export-dependent economies experience in addressing negative external shocks. In addition, the random occurrence of natural disasters also leads to unplanned spending and contributes to expanding deficits.

Furthermore, the approach to revenue and expenditure planning and forecasting appears to be weak in a number of countries, particularly as they relate to containing contingent liabilities.
Given the number of countries and extent of the problems, the region requires a broad programme of capacity building to strengthen public finance management to control fiscal deficits, and ECLAC’s assistance was requested in dealing with the challenge of fiscal imbalances.

It is within this context that the ECLAC Development project - funded by the United Nations Development Account - is being implemented, through a series of integrated activities including specialized research, knowledge and capacity building activities (seminars and workshops), technical advice and the upgrading of public finance management systems. Moreover, targeted follow-up will be undertaken to determine additional capacity needs, prior to targeted technical advisory missions to support the effort of member States to incorporate in their public finance management practices, processes and systems, the skills and knowledge acquired.

The three year initiative, which began in 2015 with analysis of each participating country to determine their respective needs and priorities, includes the preparation of a training manual and accompanying reference material to facilitate the conduct of expenditure reviews, planning and forecasting revenue and expenditure and developing approaches for enhanced fiscal transparency.

National training workshops using this manual are set to begin in June 2016 in each of the participating countries. These national workshops will be designed to respond to the specific priorities of the participating countries. The final phase of the project constitutes technical advisory missions to provide post-training support to the participating countries.
ECLAC and GIZ join forces to improve Caribbean energy efficiency

ECLAC Caribbean, with support from the German Federal Enterprise for International Cooperation (GIZ), recently convened a two-day Regional Energy Policy Dialogue and Training Workshop in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago (17-18 May 2016), to discuss the many opportunities to be gained through initiatives in renewable energy technologies. The workshop brought together senior policy makers from the region, and was attended by the Trinidad and Tobago Minister of Energy and Energy Industries, Nicole Olivierre, and the German ambassador, Dr. Lutz Görgens.
Q: Willard, can you please tell us what is the main objective behind this ECLAC/GIZ collaboration?

A: The project seeks to promote financing opportunities which will provide greater incentives for the development of energy efficiency measures and renewable energy technologies for the region. This effort is especially relevant for us in the Caribbean if we consider that the region faces high energy insecurity due to its high reliance on imported fossil energy, which has until recently placed a heavy burden on the region's balance of payments, as substantial foreign reserves were used for energy imports. This, along with the need to mitigate the emission of carbon dioxide which contributes to global climate change, has motivated many Caribbean countries to seek to better utilize their current energy resources through energy efficiency measures, or to use alternative energy sources such as solar, wind or geothermal.

Q: Why is the project important?

A: It must be remembered that although the subregion contributes less than 1% of the world's carbon emissions, it will be among the first to be impacted by changes in climate, especially sea level rise that threatens the coastal and marine populations and resources. It has therefore become necessary to develop a definitive programme of support to the Caribbean in an attempt to reduce carbon emissions through the development of a low energy pathway. In this regard, it is important to sensitize the public on strategies for reducing the carbon footprint through more efficient energy use, as well as on options for increasing the use of renewable energy.

Q: Can you tell us more about the recent workshop in Trinidad?

A: The workshop was entitled “Regional Energy Policy Dialogue and Training Workshop”. It was convened to identify issues relevant to the development of energy efficiency and renewable energy policy, and to share experiences in implementing such policies in the Caribbean. Additionally, ECLAC Caribbean proposed the training workshop – which is part of a wider project on “Sustainable Energy in the Caribbean” – as a forum for stakeholders to explore feasibility analysis for financing energy projects in the Caribbean.

Q: What benefits has the wider project brought so far?

A: Well, the wider project seeks to engage countries in strengthening their capacity for securing financing for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects, as well as enhancing the policy framework for the sustainable development of the energy sector. Three pilot countries (Dominica, Saint Lucia and Martinique), have received support in developing country profiles of their energy sectors, and
identifying financing options for the development of energy efficient and renewable energy technologies in these countries. To-date, the technical work of the project has benefitted from the collective contributions of ECLAC consultants, national energy policy makers, and regional partners. ECLAC has so far undertaken missions to Antigua and Barbuda, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Saint Lucia and Martinique.

Q: What are some of the expected results?

A: By the end of the project, national governments should have new and/or innovative mechanisms for financing projects in energy efficiency and renewable energy, and will be able to design and finance mechanisms to reduce carbon emissions. In this regard, it is expected that Caribbean countries will have increased capacity to utilize new concepts, strategies and mechanisms for the formulation of projects in energy efficiency and renewable energy. It is also foreseen that context-related, Caribbean mechanisms for promotion of energy efficiency will be strengthened throughout the region. Finally, it is anticipated that the capacity of policymakers and technical experts at the national and regional levels for the promotion of energy efficiency will be improved.
From the two days of discussions, the following five strategic lessons emerged with direct implications for the work of ECLAC in the subregion.

1. ECLAC should strengthen its substantive work programme in examining socio-economic issues related to energy efficiency and renewable energy in the Caribbean.

2. ECLAC’s work on energy in the subregion should also be crafted for direct consumption by the private sector.

3. The subregion should prepare itself to receive increased FDI’s in the area of renewable energy and energy security.

4. Successful experiences of countries in securing financing for energy efficiency and renewable energy should be shared for the benefit of all.
Following a request from the Government of Grenada, ECLAC Caribbean has initiated a study on the country’s non-tourism services sector, in order to determine the areas in which Grenada has a competitive advantage, and the potential to significantly improve its service exports.

As part of its growth strategy, and dependant on the findings of the study, the Government has articulated the need to develop a broad policy framework for this sector, in recognition of the need for possible diversification in light of the economic downturn.

ECLAC Research Assistant, Machel Pantin, along with consultant, Ava Jordan, recently visited Grenada and met with representatives from various Ministries, the St. George’s College, the Yachting Association, the Coalition of Service Industries, and the Grenada Industrial Development Cooperation, to discuss the issues and challenges faced by service operators, and to identify possible opportunities in the sector.

Grenada’s tourism sector accounts for a large percentage of the country’s gross domestic product (GDP). The economy has traditionally been agriculture-based and maintains a relatively active agricultural sector; it is the world’s second largest exporter of nutmeg, after Indonesia. Over the years, Grenada has transitioned to a service-based economy centered primarily on tourism.

The dominant tourism industry is itself dependent on a few source markets, with the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom, responsible for over 60% of all stay-over visitors to Grenada (as of 2014). Another 17% of visitors came from the Caribbean. The reliance on just three extra-regional countries makes Grenada vulnerable to negative external economic shocks. This situation is compounded by the physical vulnerability inherent in its status as a small island developing state (SIDS).

In the past 15 years, Grenada has seen tourist arrivals fall significantly after two international events: the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 and the fallout from the global financial crisis of 2007-2008. Between those events, Grenada was hit by two major hurricanes in 2004 (Ivan) and 2005 (Emily), which destroyed housing, crops and capital stock.

The local economy has not had a chance to recover from these shocks and public debt. Growth has averaged just 1.8 per cent from 2001-2014 and unemployment has skyrocketed; it is estimated that 30 per cent of the labour force was unemployed in 2014.

The position of vulnerability drives the need to diversify the Grenadian economy. Since the island is not rich in natural resources, the government has decided to pursue the path of services diversification. The representatives who met with Machel and Ava acknowledged the need to develop the education and health tourism sector, citing the possible benefits from a medical teaching hospital attached to St George’s College.

The study is expected to be completed by the end of July 2016.
ECLAC/ITU/TATT convene digital economy workshop in Trinidad

ECLAC Caribbean together with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the Telecommunications Authority of Trinidad and Tobago (TATT) will convene a workshop to inform regional stakeholders on the opportunities which exist in a digital economy.

The workshop will take place at the Trinidad Hilton and Conference Centre in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, from 1-3 June 2016, and is entitled “Exploring Innovation in Transactions & Financing in the Caribbean.”

During the workshop, there will be a series of interactive sessions aimed at providing an understanding of the international trends towards improving efficiency and speed of financial transactions, and the potential impacts of increased participation in the digital economy through the lowering of transaction costs and improvement in the ease of doing business.

The sessions will be grounded in the local and regional context, and will include participation of regional bodies such as the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). ECLAC will also present the findings of its study on “Opportunities and Risks Associated with the Advent of Digital Currency in the Caribbean,” released earlier this year, at this forum.
The UWI St Augustine Institute for Gender and Development Studies, recently hosted a seminar on work/life balance and ageing, in which ECLAC Caribbean Social Affairs Officer, Sheila Stuart, participated. The seminar was entitled “Work/Life Balance and ageing in Trinidad: studying the productivity and wellbeing of working men and women”.

The work/life balance component focussed on the specific challenges that contemporary working populations face in meeting work and family life commitments, and will produce findings and recommendations that are very much needed in this under-researched area. The Hummingbird sought out some recommendations on how to achieve a healthy work/life balance, and here is what Sheila shared:
Build downtime into your schedule. When you plan your week, make it a point to schedule time with your family and friends, and activities that help you recharge.

Drop activities that sap your time or energy. Many people waste their time on activities or people that add no value – it’s better to take stock of activities that don’t enhance your career or personal life, and minimize the time you spend on them.

Rethink your errands. Consider whether you can outsource any of your time-consuming household chores or errands. Even if you’re on a tight budget, you may discover that the time you’ll save will make it worth it.

Get moving. It’s hard to make time for exercise when you have a packed schedule, but it may ultimately help you get more done by boosting your energy level and ability to concentrate.

Remember that a little relaxation goes a long way. Don’t feel that you need to make big changes to bring more balance to your life. You can get there by slowly building more activities into your schedule that are important to you, such as a hobby. Even during a hectic day, you can take 10 or 15 minutes to do something that will recharge your batteries.
This document identifies mechanisms for financing investments in energy efficiency and renewable energy initiatives in the Commonwealth of Dominica. The overall objective of this study is to examine financing opportunities which will provide greater incentives for the development of energy efficiency measures and implementation of renewable energy technologies.

The survey provides an overview of the economic performance for 2014 of The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago plus the eight member states of the Eastern Caribbean Currency Union (ECCU) and the outlook for 2015.
This paper was prepared to guide the first session of the training workshop Introduction to Financial Feasibility Assessment of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Projects in the Caribbean. We explore two potential reasons that might be hindering the adoption of energy efficiency policies in the Caribbean.

The methodological approach of this study involved conducting a literature review related mainly to energy policies and plans in Saint Lucia. An overview of the national economy and energy sector was then undertaken, including information on recent energy balances.
During the third meeting of the negotiating committee of the regional agreement on access to information, public participation and access to justice in environmental matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, that took place in Montevideo, Uruguay, from 5-8 April 2016, Grenada signed on to the Declaration on the application of Principle 10. Here is some further information about Principle 10.

The Declaration currently has 21 signatory countries regional process and is open to all countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. ECLAC acts as technical secretariat to the process, promoting and tapping the synergies of the relevant regional and international agencies in the framework of the United Nations Regional Coordination Mechanism.

**What:** During the third meeting of the negotiating committee of the regional agreement on access to information, public participation and access to justice in environmental matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, that took place in Montevideo, Uruguay, from 5-8 April 2016, Grenada signed on to the Declaration on the application of Principle 10.

**Where:** Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

**How:** By means of the Declaration, the signatory countries committed themselves to work towards a regional agreement on the rights of environmental access to information, public participation and access to justice.

**Who:** The Declaration currently has 21 signatory countries regional process and is open to all countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. ECLAC acts as technical secretariat to the process, promoting and tapping the synergies of the relevant regional and international agencies in the framework of the United Nations Regional Coordination Mechanism.
Three Queens and Plumeria - Caye Caulker (Belize)

State of Affairs

Saint Lucia

OPPOSITION WINS ELECTION
Jun 7th - Saint Lucia’s general elections resulted in a victory for the opposition United Workers Party (UWP). The UWP beat the ruling Saint Lucia Labour Party (SLP), 11 seats to six, effectively reversing the result of the last election in 2011. Voters had to choose from among 39 candidates vying for the 17 seats in the country’s parliament. Based on preliminary published figures, voter turnout was around 52.85 per cent.

FORMER PRIME MINISTER WILL NOT SERVE AS OPPOSITION LEADER
Jun 7th - Former Prime Minister, Kenny Anthony, acknowledged that the UWP’s win “was a convincing victory.” Dr. Anthony also announced that he does not intend to serve as the leader of the opposition or as Political Leader of the SLP any longer. However, he will continue to serve as the parliamentary representative for Vieux-Fort South and support his colleagues.

Trinidad and Tobago

VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT VISITS
May 24th - Venezuelan President, Mr. Nicholas Maduro, made a state visit to Trinidad and Tobago. Maduro was accompanied by the Venezuelan Foreign Affairs Minister, the Petroleum Ministers and Industry Minister as well as representatives of Venezuela’s National Gas Company. After the visit, President Maduro described his meeting with Prime Minister Rowley and his Cabinet as fruitful and successful, promising to strengthen ties and the relationship with Trinidad and Tobago going forward.

TRADE DEAL
May 24th - Venezuela has agreed to buy US$50 million in goods from Trinidad and Tobago to help ease the country’s food shortages. Likewise the twin-island republic agreed to purchase natural gas from Venezuela to meet a shortfall in the supply to the local market. During their talks, Mr. Maduro and Dr. Rowley also agreed to discuss the repatriation of five Trinidadian nationals in Venezuela who have been imprisoned in that country for the past two years on suspicion of terrorism.

Suriname

SURINAME SEEKS ECONOMIC REFORM
May 29th - The government of Suriname has secured a US$478-million loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to boost an economic reform programme amid a drop in commodity prices. The reform is designed to strengthen Suriname’s finances following a drop in prices for its principal exports, including gold and oil.

SURINAME STRENGTHENS ENERGY SECTOR
Jun 9th - Suriname will increase the efficiency, transparency, sustainability and accountability of its energy sector, supported by a US$70 million loan approved by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). The IDB loan is the third in a programmatic policy-based series of independently and technically connected loans to strengthen the country’s electricity sector.
The Belize Public Utilities Commission announced that Belize’s first Internet exchange point, named BIXP, was successfully launched in Belize City in May 2016 at the campus of the University of Belize.

The launch was the culmination of unprecedented collaboration between Belizean Internet Service Providers (ISPs) in the highly competitive local telecommunication sector. The Belize Public Utilities Commission, the national regulator, facilitated the process, with support from regional and international agencies.

An Internet exchange point is a piece of physical infrastructure through which ISPs exchange traffic between their networks. Many ISPs in the Caribbean pass the data through faraway networks in the United States or Europe, before rerouting to their consumers in their own country.

The BIXP launch is a major milestone for the telecommunication sector in the Central American nation, as the country has traditionally ranked poorly according to regional standards. The Belize Public Utilities Commission and industry watchers hope that the establishment of a local IXP can now catalyze the delivery of services based on e-health, distance learning, domestic data storage, video and audio streaming, e-government services, VoIP and other applications that depend on local traffic exchange.

So far, more than 300 IXPs exist in 80 countries around the world. Still, some 90 countries that are predominantly developing economies do not yet have IXPs of their own and depend on imported Internet bandwidth.
If you’ve stayed in Jamaica’s resort hubs of Montego Bay and Ocho Rios but you still haven’t yet seen the Irie Isle’s capital, Kingston, one company wants to fix that.

Starting last month (May), the company, Island Routes, has been operating a new Kingston cultural tour that will whisk visitors via air-conditioned Wi-Fi-enabled buses from Mo’Bay and Ochi to see some of the capital’s highlights, including Emancipation Park, The National Gallery, the Bob Marley Museum, and Devon House, the former home of Jamaica’s first black millionaire.

The tour, led by expert local guides, has been facilitated by the recent completion of Jamaica’s 140-mile north-south highway, which has reduced driving time from Montego Bay to Kingston to approximately two hours. “Just like a number of people in our team, I am from Kingston,” Island Routes’ CEO, Adam Stewart noted. “So it made complete sense to take advantage of our insider knowledge and develop a Kingston highlight tour exploring the same local spots we grew up surrounded by.”

This is the company’s second Kingston tour; it currently operates the Bob Marley and Kingston Highlight tour from Ocho Rios.
The Caribbean has some of the world’s highest energy costs, and that means the need for new sources. High on the list right now in the region is geothermal energy, something that is a major priority for Saint Kitts and Nevis (SKN).

Speaking at the recent Regional Geothermal Forum, held in May 2016 at the Saint Kitts Marriott Resort, Prime Minister Dr. Timothy Harris predicted that successful geothermal development can positively impact energy security within the Eastern Caribbean Community, and indeed within the wider Caribbean Community. He said the opportunity is “a watershed for a transformed energy future that delivers affordable, reliable, sustainable and clean energy to the citizens of the Caribbean region.”

The twin-island federation has so far achieved some success with geothermal exploration. Mark Brantley, SKN Minister of Foreign Affairs and Aviation and chair of ECLAC’s Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) has been a key figure behind a decade-long effort to construct a geothermal power plant on Nevis.

In an interview in January 2016, Brantley stated, “This is an important step to enhancing the leadership of Nevis in the transformational impacts of the new, post-fossil fuel world economy. The Nevis Geothermal Project will create increased economic growth, reduced power costs, increase employment and create new economic opportunities for local businesses.”

The first phase of the plant is expected to be in operation as early as late 2017 and will provide both base load and peak power supply to the island. The cost will be significantly less than the existing diesel generators used to supply power to the island, and transition the Island to one hundred percent power generation from renewable energy sources. In addition, this will enable the Nevis tourism industry to promote Nevis as a 100 percent green energy vacation destination.

Brantley’s efforts saw some success in January 2014, when the country contracted with Nevis Renewable Energy International (NREI) to build a geothermal power plant and injection and production wells on government land leased from the Nevis Island Administration. If all goes according to plan, then by December 2017, Nevis’ geothermal facility will produce 10 megawatts of power daily, equalling Nevis’s peak demand use and establishing the tiny island as “the greenest place on planet Earth.”

Beginning that month, all commercial and residential power will be supplied through non fossil fuel sources, Brantley said. Construction of the plant is expected to begin in May and a second phase of the project will boost the facility’s output to 150 megawatts, enabling the plant to fully service Saint Kitts and export power to nearby Caribbean islands. “You have individual hotels that can say that, but no entire country,” Brantley observed.
Nevis’ geothermal reservoir is in fact thought to be capable of producing up to a year-around supply of 500 megawatts. SKN currently imports 4.2 million gallons of diesel fuel annually at a cost of $12 million. Once up and running, the new facility is expected to lead to a 30 percent reduction in energy costs.

Brantley noted the high cost of electricity in the Caribbean. “You take the Four Seasons Saint Kitts and Nevis, or any large hotel, any major property – the electricity costs are huge. This overnight wipes out 60 percent of that cost.”

The savings will help operators predict and manage energy supply and ensure price stability, important considerations for hospitality investors comparing individual Caribbean destinations, he noted.

Full geothermal production will also place Nevis in the position of regional power supplier. “We have the potential to generate enough energy not only for our needs but to become a provider to other islands, all within a 50-mile radius of our country. Geothermal is transformative and will change our way of doing business on our islands. It also allows us to protect what we have because we are not subject to the same pressures that we see with other islands with large chains and cruise ships coming in,” he said.

He envisioned that the project provides the country with a new economic framework, “and shows that a small Caribbean island can become a model for sustainable development.”
ESTHER KISSOON - Sustainable Development and Disaster Unit

I remember the first day of my OJT placement as if it was just yesterday. I was nervous, excited and ready to experience my first job at the age of 23. I am very grateful that I was placed as a Research Assistant Trainee in the Sustainable Development and Disaster Unit (SDDU) because I now have a greater appreciation for cultural diversity, teamwork and creativity, together with appropriate communication skills and the commitment for continuous learning.

I have had substantial growth in speaking Spanish, and I know a lot more than “buenosdias”, thanks to colleagues encouraging dialogue in Spanish. I also value planning and organising skills as well as the importance of meeting logistics, as I’ve been a part of the team that hosted the Regional Energy Policy Dialogue and Training Workshop.

I have learnt that an organisation is only as strong as the team behind it, and ECLAC has persons that commit their time and maximum efforts to ensure work outputs are delivered with the highest quality within pressed time frames. ECLAC has definitely impacted on both my personal and career development over the past two years, and I look forward to further developing the skills and competencies I have learnt from the great minds with whom I have interacted in the organisation.

RUNAKO HENRY - Caribbean Knowledge Management Center

I joined as an Information Systems Assistant, and was very excited about the opportunity to gain work experience. Over the last two years, I have been able to develop my communications skills and learned how to interact in a professional environment.

Some of the areas I worked in have given me opportunities that I probably would not have had in another organization – and I am grateful for this. I have had some exciting opportunities at ECLAC Caribbean, such as assisting in setting up the CISCO video conferencing – I had no experience, but I enjoyed creating and managing webex.

The Brown bag OJT event, which was more of a semi-social nature, was something I enjoyed as colleagues from other UN agencies were able to appreciate our contribution, which will hopefully help the OJT programme to continue in the future.

The main challenge that I faced was during the 17th meeting of the Monitoring Committee, in June 2015, at the Radisson Hotel in Trinidad and Tobago. It was attended by ECLAC Deputy Executive Secretary Antonio Prado. There was a point where a document was needed at the last minute for him and, right then, the printer malfunctioned. I had to do some quick thinking and improvise to make sure that the document was printed and ready. For a few minutes it caused me a little nervousness, but it was one of those moments that you take away as a learning experience, especially since I was able to do what I had to.
Over the past few weeks, we at ECLAC Caribbean have welcomed new faces in our midst as new staff members joined us, while at the same time having bid au revoir to one or two. Here is the latest on the ECLAC family in Port of Spain.

**ROBERTA DOORGADEEN - Economic Development Unit**

My experience at ECLAC Caribbean was very rewarding. I was very grateful to be afforded the opportunity to be a part of such a world-reaching organization as the United Nations, where I contributed to the work of the economic development unit through their annual flagship publications, such as the Economic Survey of the Caribbean and the Preliminary Overview.

This opportunity allowed me to get a better understanding of the economic situation of the region and its development challenges. The workload that comes with being a member of the Economic Development Unit (EDU) proved very challenging at times. However, the synergy amongst the team always kept us committed to our tasks.

The international and regional exposure which I received through participating in ECLAC’s major meetings such as the 17th meeting of the Monitoring Committee of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee as a rapporteur, was a life-changing experience which will definitely serve me well in my future endeavours. Even though most of the work I have undertaken was data oriented; the level of independence which I acquired has definitely improved the quality of my work standards. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the EDU team and the entire ECLAC office for affording me the enlightening experience of being an on-the-job-

**TANISHA ASH - Statistics and Social Development Unit**

During my degree program, I had an idea of what I wanted to become but did not have a clear understanding of the roles and steps to take in order to become an economist/statistician. I began my OJT program in January 2015 in the United Nations joint program for HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS), as a research assistant. After this agency shut its doors in Trinidad and Tobago, I was transferred to ECLAC to continue my contract as a Statistical Assistant in the Statistics and Social Development Unit.

My main objective was to gain experience in the field of statistics, but during the course of the program, I not only gained experience in statistics but learnt life lessons. The ability to interact with persons of different cultures and backgrounds, time management and organizational skills are a few of the many traits I have gained in my short time in the United Nations, and I continue to gain many more of these skills every day.

The time spent in the United Nations has provided me with a better understanding of whom and what I wish to become, and the steps I need to take to reach my goals.

**BLAINE MARCANO – Strategic Planning and Outreach Unit**

It was a chance opportunity that I became an OJT. Whilst on my way to another interview, I happened to be walking by the ECLAC Caribbean office in Port of Spain. I’ve always wanted to work with the UN, so I thought, “Why not just go and ask?” So I did. I had a chat with personnel from the Administration unit (human resources), and was advised to register as an OJT with the government programme. A few months later, I was called for an interview and then selected for a position. I was expecting to work in administration or HR, however I was told that I would instead be part of a new unit, and this was equally as exciting. After two years, I can now honestly say that I really enjoy the unit I work with. I have been able to create new products that the organization never had before, literally “blaze the trail”, and collaborate with every unit in creating these products.

I have benefitted from a comprehensive media training course, which focused on how to work with media, deliver outreach products, and tailor communication messages. I also learned how much work it takes to organize meetings and conferences, preparing documents, reports, statements.

One of the most interesting aspects for me was learning about politics in the region – more than I ever knew before. As for some of the main highlights of the past two years, these must include: participating in the CDCC Monitoring Committee, meeting ECLAC Deputy Executive Secretary Antonio Prado, attending the Caribbean Future Forum, and listening to UN Special Advisor on Sustainable Development Amina Mohammed.