



Economic Survey

CONTINUING LOW GROWTH WITH
FISCAL CONSOLIDATION

Public Expenditure Reviews

ECLAC TRAINS PUBLIC
FINANCE MANAGERS IN BELIZE

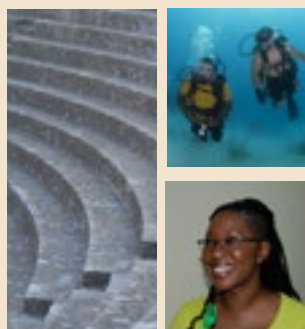
Telecommunications

ECLAC ENCOURAGES
COLLABORATION TO IMPROVE
POST-DISASTER RESPONSE



ECLAC

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ECLAC CARIBBEAN



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Upcoming Events

9

International Day of the World's Indigenous People
9 August, 2016

9-12

Fourth meeting of the Negotiating Committee of the
Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public
Participation and Access to Justice in Environmental
Matters (Principle 10)
Dominican Republic
9-12 August, 2016

12

International Youth Day.
12 August, 2016

22-26

Regional Joint Preparatory Meeting for CITES CoP 17
and CBD COP 13
22-26 August, 2016
Antigua, Guatemala

23

International Day for the Remembrance of the
Slave Trade and its Abolition
23 August, 2016



ECLAC Caribbean

Posted Jul 27

Experts are calling for more to be done to ensure the economic and social autonomy of Caribbean women. Find out more: <http://vrb.al/gender-eclac>



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ECLAC Caribbean

Posted Jul 21

Twenty Government officials from Belize benefited from a one week workshop to build capacity in Conducting Public Expenditure Reviews (PERs). Find out more: <http://vrb.al/belize-eclac>



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ECLAC Caribbean

Posted Jul 4

Want to help drive women's empowerment? Take the 'My World' survey, now!
<http://empowerwomen.myworld2030.org/index.html>

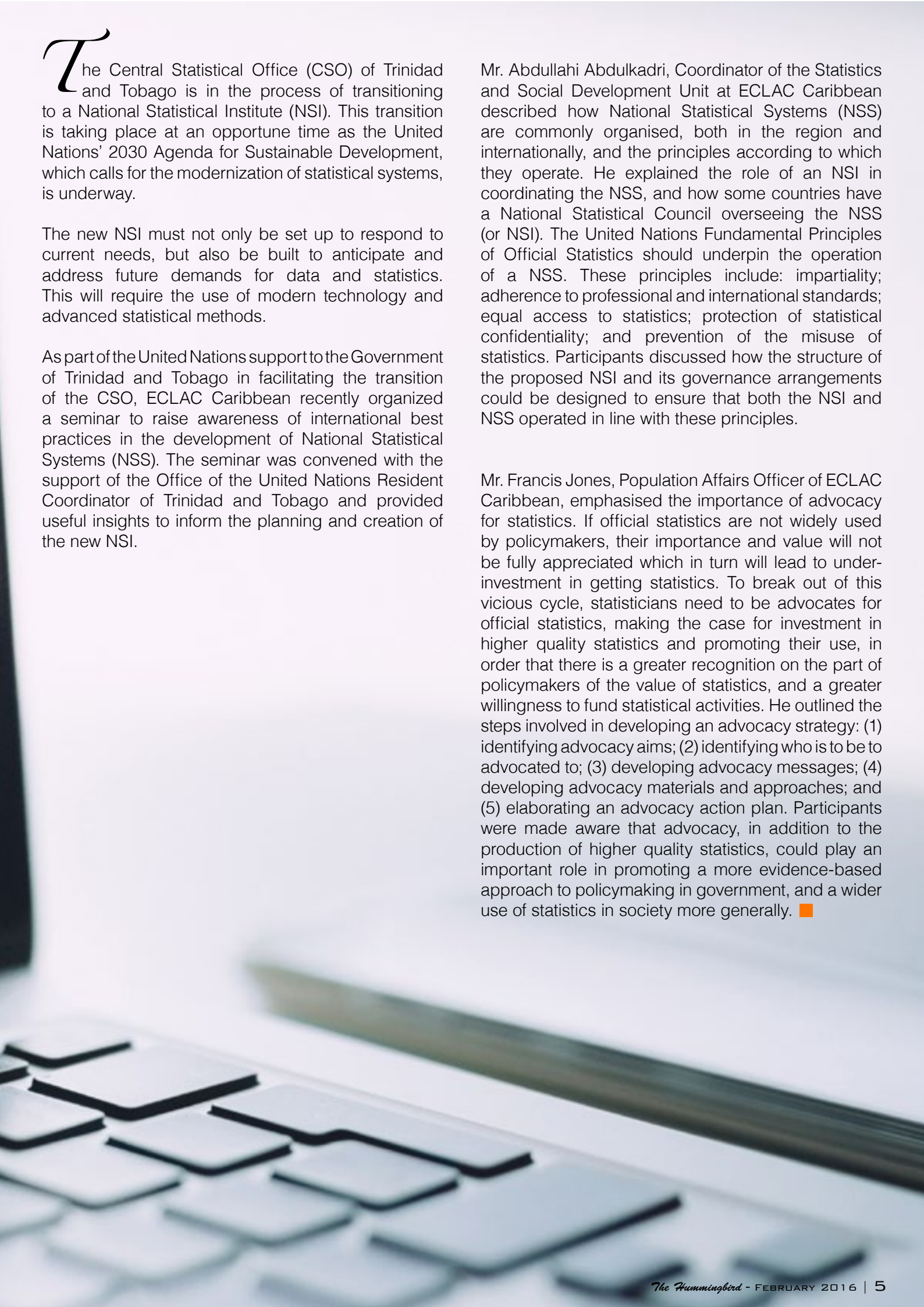


#empowerwomen24 7

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ECLAC SUPPORTS TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO IN STATISTICS TRANSITION PROCESS





The Central Statistical Office (CSO) of Trinidad and Tobago is in the process of transitioning to a National Statistical Institute (NSI). This transition is taking place at an opportune time as the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which calls for the modernization of statistical systems, is underway.

The new NSI must not only be set up to respond to current needs, but also be built to anticipate and address future demands for data and statistics. This will require the use of modern technology and advanced statistical methods.

As part of the United Nations support to the Government of Trinidad and Tobago in facilitating the transition of the CSO, ECLAC Caribbean recently organized a seminar to raise awareness of international best practices in the development of National Statistical Systems (NSS). The seminar was convened with the support of the Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator of Trinidad and Tobago and provided useful insights to inform the planning and creation of the new NSI.

Mr. Abdullahi Abdulkadri, Coordinator of the Statistics and Social Development Unit at ECLAC Caribbean described how National Statistical Systems (NSS) are commonly organised, both in the region and internationally, and the principles according to which they operate. He explained the role of an NSI in coordinating the NSS, and how some countries have a National Statistical Council overseeing the NSS (or NSI). The United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics should underpin the operation of a NSS. These principles include: impartiality; adherence to professional and international standards; equal access to statistics; protection of statistical confidentiality; and prevention of the misuse of statistics. Participants discussed how the structure of the proposed NSI and its governance arrangements could be designed to ensure that both the NSI and NSS operated in line with these principles.

Mr. Francis Jones, Population Affairs Officer of ECLAC Caribbean, emphasised the importance of advocacy for statistics. If official statistics are not widely used by policymakers, their importance and value will not be fully appreciated which in turn will lead to under-investment in getting statistics. To break out of this vicious cycle, statisticians need to be advocates for official statistics, making the case for investment in higher quality statistics and promoting their use, in order that there is a greater recognition on the part of policymakers of the value of statistics, and a greater willingness to fund statistical activities. He outlined the steps involved in developing an advocacy strategy: (1) identifying advocacy aims; (2) identifying who is to be advocated to; (3) developing advocacy messages; (4) developing advocacy materials and approaches; and (5) elaborating an advocacy action plan. Participants were made aware that advocacy, in addition to the production of higher quality statistics, could play an important role in promoting a more evidence-based approach to policymaking in government, and a wider use of statistics in society more generally. ■

ECLAC trains public finance managers in Belize

In early July 2016, an ECLAC Caribbean team led by Deputy Director Dr. Dillon Alleyne, hosted a capacity building workshop for public finance managers in Belize on how to conduct Public Expenditure Reviews (PERs). The weeklong event (from 11-15 July) provided information on building capacity in Conducting Public Expenditure Reviews (PERs), focusing on Applications for Education, Health, Agriculture and Social Protection.

The ECLAC technical assistance proved very timely, as the Government of Belize has embarked on a range of initiatives to reform the Public Financial Management (PFM) system during the past few years, including the introduction of a three-year budget framework and a program budget format. Given the continued challenges of a much reduced fiscal space, the Government is now ready to analyse the effectiveness of the budget process within the context of its policy.

The training complements ECLAC's debt for climate adaptation proposal, which calls for debt reduction and the need for enhanced fiscal responsibility. The training 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 to GDP ratio and contribute to a more stable macro-economic environment.

Held at the George Price Center for Peace and Development in Belmopan, Belize, the workshop was facilitated by eminent economist Professor Vanus James, and benefitted 20 Government officials from that country, from the Ministries of Finance, Health, Education, Agriculture and Public Works, the Statistical Institute of Belize and Human Resources.



PERs are designed to do the following: First, they align public expenditures with government's priorities such as those highlighted in this country's Growth and Sustainable development Strategy. Secondly, PERs are intended to generate savings, either from expenditure reallocation or by reducing unproductive expenditures. In addition they improve fiscal management and can expand the fiscal space especially given Belize's high debt levels.

On the final day, a special briefing was held for senior public officials, to demonstrate the value of high level support for PERs to generate better fiscal outcomes. Financial Secretary in the Ministry of Finance of Belize, Mr. Joseph Waight, and Deputy Financial Secretary and project focal point Mr. Marion Palacio, were among those in attendance.

Under the auspices of the Development Account project, this workshop was part of a four-country capacity building efforts organised and financed by ECLAC. The other Caribbean countries that will benefit from similar training workshops over the coming weeks are Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Barbados.

Following the national workshops, a regional training module in forecasting and fiscal transparency will be held in Port of Spain for one week. The final phase of the project will consist of follow-up technical assistance for the participating countries to support their implementation of the PER techniques. ■



belize



FEATURE ARTICLE

Economic Survey

Continuing Low
Growth with Fiscal
Consolidation





BREXIT

Following the launch of the Economic Survey of Latin America and the Caribbean by Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary of ECLAC, on 26 July 2016, the performance of the Caribbean economies in 2015, including projections for 2016 were given special focus by Dr. Dillon Alleyne, Deputy Director of ECLAC Caribbean.

[READ MORE](#)





Continuing Low Growth with Fiscal Consolidation

The Hummingbird caught up with Dr. Alleyne to gain further insights into the Caribbean situation.



with Dr Dillon Alleyne

Q What is the outlook for GDP growth in the Caribbean?

A Over the last few years, GDP growth has been volatile. In 2015, regional growth stood at 0.9%, marking a decline from 2014. The average growth among the service producing economies was 1.2% in 2015, and growth was projected at 2.5% in 2016. Among the goods producing economies, growth was flat (0%) in 2015, and is projected to be -0.3% in 2016. Overall, it is anticipated that growth in the Caribbean will increase to 1.8% in 2016, this positive growth being carried by the service economies.

Q How might this anticipated GDP growth impact unemployment?

A GDP growth usually leads to a reduction in unemployment. However, among countries with available data, the average regional unemployment rate remains very high at 15.2% in 2015. Improvements in growth among service producers have not resulted in substantial employment increases, especially among youth and women. The goods producers will likely experience an increase in unemployment in the face of lower commodity prices and declining growth.

Q How does the current debt crisis fit into this complex picture?

A The debt crisis is the single most critical challenge to Caribbean sustainable development. High debt and large fiscal balances continue to persist despite fiscal consolidation. The service producing economies have been especially challenged with debt to GDP ratio of 77.4% in 2015. Among the goods producers, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana will begin to sustain larger deficits if fiscal adjustments are not taken quickly, in light of lower export earnings due to falling commodity prices.

Q How has debt services affected the region?

A External debt service payments have increased for both goods and service producers since 2013. At the same time, domestic debt service has also risen. This is particularly worrisome given that high debt service limits government's capacity to invest. Furthermore, countries with floating exchange rates are exposed to exchange rate risks due to devaluation.

Q What has been the trend of prices in 2015?

A Prices have been falling with deflation of 0.5% across the service producers in 2015, which can have a dampening effect on investment. Very importantly, low prices impact positively on the poor and vulnerable, as low prices do not erode the value of their income.

Q What are some of the other significant issues that were raised during the launch of the Economic Survey?

A Among other issues raised, was the fact that foreign direct investment has not been robust, falling to 7.1% of GDP in 2015 from 8.7% of GDP in 2014. Additionally, while the service producers have reduced their current account deficit, the deficit for the goods producers has increased.

Q Let's talk about the Brexit; any thoughts on how it might affect the Caribbean?

A Following the Brexit, a number of challenges may arise. A weak British pound would impact on the ability of British citizens to take holidays in the Caribbean and to invest in vacation properties in the region. It can affect the value of remittances to the Caribbean. Brexit could also spark new impulses for questioning regional integration in the Caribbean.

Q How do ECLAC's ongoing efforts address some of the challenges we have discussed so far?

A In addition to calls for debt reduction to address the limited fiscal space facing many Caribbean economies, ECLAC has also urged countries to pursue industrial restructuring to develop new export activities and to promote diversification. ■



ECLAC encourages collaboration to improve post-disaster response

The Caribbean subregion is a disaster-prone area. Well aware of this fact, ECLAC Caribbean continuously seeks opportunities to foster innovative ways to prepare for and react to hazardous events. It is in this vein that an expert group meeting (EGM) was recently convened to discuss and identify areas in which enhanced cooperation between telecommunications companies and national disaster offices could result in improved post-disaster response and recovery.

The EGM discussed and took stock of the current state of telecom-disaster office coordination in Caribbean countries, based on the findings of a draft report by ECLAC Caribbean entitled 'Strengthening cooperation between telecommunications operators and national disaster offices in Caribbean countries'.

The meeting found that collaboration between telecommunications companies and national disaster offices following a natural disaster can help to streamline

response efforts and benefit public safety. Effective communication systems are vital in times of disaster – both to agencies coordinating disaster response operations, and to the public at large. In a post-disaster environment, it is important to assure effective coordination between the agencies responsible for managing national efforts on disaster planning, mitigation and response.

In particular, experts gathered at the meeting identified four areas that telecommunication companies and national disaster offices should consider in order to enhance their working relationship, namely mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. The first two – mitigation and preparedness – take place before a disaster occurs, while response and recovery take place following the disaster.

The following paragraphs provide brief insights into each of these areas.

Mitigation

Mitigation refers to measures taken to avoid or reduce the potential damage and losses associated with the impact of a disaster. The use of earthquake-resistant building practices for telecommunication exchanges located in areas of high seismic risk is an example of mitigation. Mitigation efforts that may benefit from enhanced coordination among telecommunications companies and national disaster offices include:

Mitigation

- Improving the use and sharing of geographic information systems (GIS) maps for hazards and telecommunications.
- Developing policy to prevent network congestion in a post-disaster environment.
- Enabling agreements for the sharing of capacity between telecommunications operators during an emergency situation.
- Preventing cell tower vandalism.

Preparedness

Preparedness entails taking steps to ensure the ability of an organization to react effectively in the event of a disaster. The development of disaster response plans and the testing of those plans as part of regular drills are examples of preparedness.

Preparedness efforts that may benefit from enhanced coordination among telecommunications companies and national disaster offices include:

- Sharing telecommunications disaster response and business continuity management plans.
- Establishing a protocol to advise national disaster offices of telecommunications service outages.
- Establishing geographically-targeted mobile phone-based early warning systems.
- Integration of telecommunications providers into Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) systems.
- Co-locating emergency telecommunications equipment.
- Ensuring that emergency telecommunications facilities are regularly tested, and that telecoms companies are integrated into national disaster drills.

Response

Response refers to actions taken in the immediate aftermath of a disaster to save lives, provide humanitarian relief, and restore the operational functionality of critical infrastructure.

Response efforts that may benefit from enhanced coordination among telecommunications companies and national disaster offices include:

- Standardization of protocols on the elevation of network priority for disaster-related communications.
- Establishment of an effective mechanism through which telecommunications companies can provide network status reports to disaster offices.
- Establishment of a mechanism through which intelligence collected by telecommunications crews in the field can be passed on to disaster management authorities.
- Coordination on the placement of Cellsite-on-Wheels (COW) facilities to locations of greatest need.
- Dissemination of public information notices to traditional media and social media to ensure public awareness of information updates.

Recovery

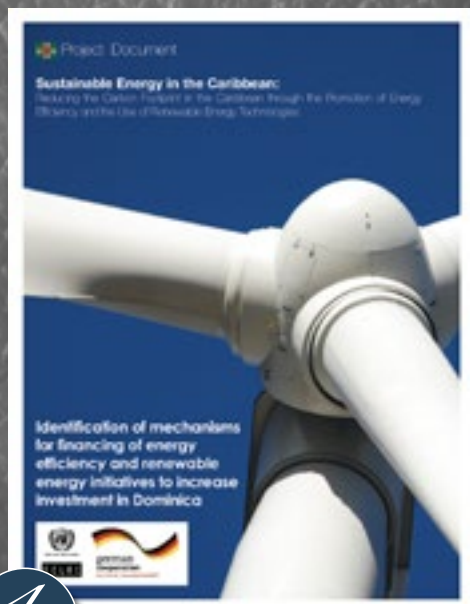
Recovery from disaster is a long term process. It is important that telecommunication companies coordinate at the outset of the recovery stage, to ensure that rebuilding plans are aligned with, and incorporated into, national priorities. Two specific areas in which this can be addressed are:

- Ensuring telecommunications company participation into post-disaster needs assessment (PDNA) and damage and loss assessment (DALA) processes.
- Ensuring that equipment used in the restoration of telecommunications infrastructure is granted the same import duty exemption available to other goods used in the rebuilding process.

The conclusion therefore, is that there are numerous areas in which telecommunications companies and disaster management offices can collaborate. This collaboration is already in practice in the British Virgin Islands, while in other countries there are opportunities for improvement. In this regard, national disaster offices should take the lead in inviting the telecommunications industry to work to strengthen this relationship. Telecommunications companies in turn, might consider greater participation

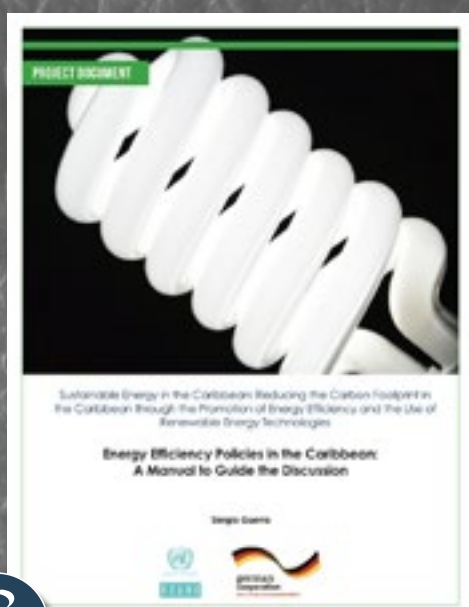
in national disaster simulation exercises, and sharing their disaster response plans with national disaster offices. Procedures should also be established for the regular exchange of updated GIS mapping data, so that telecommunications companies will have the most recently available hazard maps while equipping national disaster offices with current information on the national communications infrastructure. ■

ECLAC CARIBBEAN'S *Recent Publications*



1.

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.



3.

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.

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The objective of this study is to research barriers to the identification and implementation of mechanisms for enhancing energy efficiency and investment in renewable energy in the Caribbean. Specifically the study aims to provide an assessment of the region's status with respect to energy efficiency and renewable energy and to identify mechanisms for the enhancement of energy initiatives.

2.

DIANE'S CORNER

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



DIANE QUARLESS
Director of ECLAC Caribbean

18/7



Nelson Mandela International Day

"We would do him no greater honour than to live our lives as selflessly as he did his; in his words, "it is in your hands, to make a better world for all who live in it"

30/7



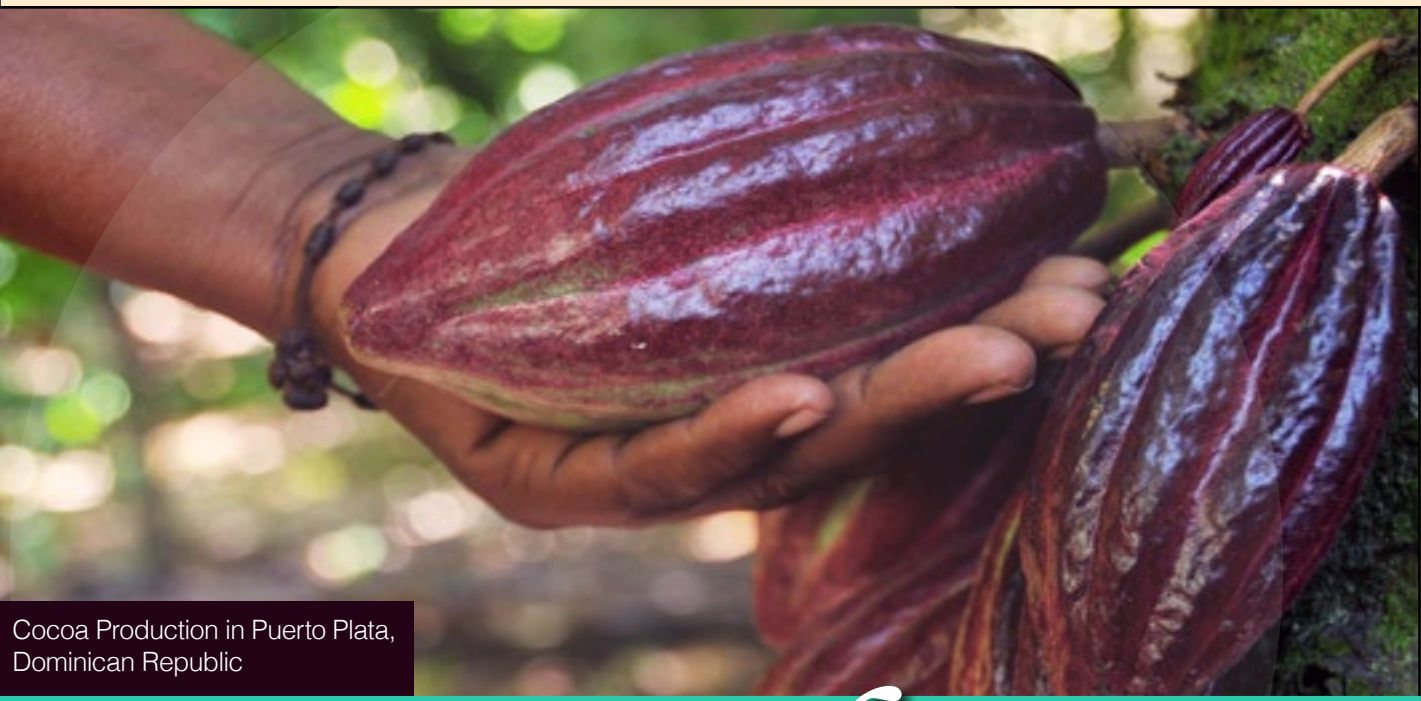
World Day Against Trafficking in Persons

"The illegal trafficking of persons brings to mind that atrocity of our colonial past; though nowhere near the scale or level of inhumanity, still it is every bit as repugnant to the principles of natural justice."

#DirectorsTake

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





Cocoa Production in Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic

STATE of AFFAIRS

Cuba



MINISTER OF ECONOMY CHANGED

Cuban President, Raul Castro, with the approval of the Council of State, replaced the Minister of Economy and Planning, Marino Murillo, by Ricardo Cabrisas, one of Cuba's six vice-presidents to replace him. Mr. Murillo will be expected to lead market reforms in efforts to manage Cuba's economy. A Cuban government statement said Murillo's efforts will be focused on tasks related to "updating the Cuban economic and social model."



CASTRO MEDIATES COLOMBIAN PEACE DEAL

Jul 27th - The representatives of the government of Colombia and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia-People's Army (FARC-EP), as well as the accompanying and guarantor countries signed a definitive agreement on cease-fire and the cessation of hostilities. The agreement is considered a key step to achieving peace, following more than 50 years of armed conflict. The agreement was handed over by Cuban President Raul Castro to Juan Manuel Santos, Colombia's president, and Timoleon Jimenez, commander of the FARC-EP at an official ceremony in Havana. Also attending the signing ceremony were the heads of delegations of the guarantor countries; Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon; and other heads of state of Latin America.

Dominica



CHINA INVESTS IN ROAD REPAIR PROJECT

Jul 15th - The People's Republic of China has made a major investment in the development of Dominica through the rehabilitation of the country's E. O Leblanc Highway. A ceremony for the commencement of the 'West Coast Road Rehabilitation Project' was held at the Financial Centre on Thursday, July 14th. The ceremony was attended by Dominica's Prime Minister, The Honorable Dr. Roosevelt Skerit, His Excellency the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Dominica, Li Jiangning, the Dominican Minister for Public Works and Ports, and other Cabinet Ministers and Government officials.



IMF CONCLUDES CONSULTATION

Jul 21st - The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) recently concluded a consultation with the Government of Dominica. The directors welcomed the progress made in strengthening the financial sector, but noted that high levels of non-performing loans and low capitalization across the financial industry posed risks to financial stability.

Caribbean Community



37TH MEETING OF CARICOM HEADS

Jul 6th - The 37th Meeting of the CARICOM Heads of Government was held in Guyana from 4th - 7th July. All fifteen Member States, with twelve represented by their Heads of Government were present at the meeting which was chaired by the Prime Minister of Dominica, The Honorable Dr. Roosevelt Skerit. The agenda covered three important matters: 1) the launch of an intensified public education campaign on the Ebola disease, 2) the convening of a meeting of the region's Chief Immigration Officers; and 3) the withdrawal of Correspondent Banking on the Region.



CORRESPONDENT BANKING RELATIONS

Jul 8th - International Banks have decided to end their correspondent banking relationships (CBRs) with the Caribbean's financial institutions in order to reduce reputational risks. This 'de-risking' process will bring difficulty in carrying out basic financial transactions. In an attempt to address de-risking and its effects on the Region, CARICOM Heads of Government have decided to directly approach the government of the United States and also to host a Global Stakeholder Conference on the Impact of the Withdrawal of Correspondent Banking on the Region. The CARICOM Heads also endorsed the ECLAC proposal on debt for climate adaptation swaps and gave their approval for the initiative to be pursued on behalf of the subregion to the extent possible.

Interesting facts about *Jamaica*



*T*hough many tourists fly straight to Jamaica's "second city" of Montego Bay, the capital, Kingston, is a vibrant and energetic metropolis well worth a visit. With a new highway that has dramatically cut drive time from the resort areas of Ocho Rios, Mo'Bay and Negril (now just 3.5 hours away), it's easier than ever to see the city on a day trip or overnight.

No doubt you'll want to tour the Bob Marley Museum, the National Gallery and Devon House, the historic home of Jamaica's first black millionaire. A trek to the beach at Hellshire for the best fried fish and bammy this side of heaven is also a possible treat. There's no time like the present to plan your itinerary, but in the meantime, here are five facts you may not know about Kingston.

1. Kingston is actually Jamaica's third capital. Spanish Town was the first, established in 1534, and then Port Royal, established by the British around 1655. When Port Royal was devastated by an earthquake in 1692, nearby Kingston – then an exclusively agricultural town – became a refuge for the survivors, and was designated the island's capital later the same year.
2. Jamaica is the largest English-speaking island in the Caribbean, and its capital is also the largest English-speaking Caribbean city south of the United States. (Still, is it a good idea to brush up on your patois before you go? Yeah, man!)
3. Despite Jamaica's size, Kingston is the seventh largest natural harbour in the world. The two-mile-long, 10-mile-wide deep harbour is bordered by the Palisadoes spit, now home of the Norman Manley International Airport. The first commercial flight into Kingston, however, was a Pan Am seaplane, which landed in the harbour's waters in December 1930.
4. Kingston is twinned with several cities around the world, including Coventry in England; Shenzhen, China; and Miami, Florida (which comes as no surprise since there are roughly 50,000 Jamaicans resident in South Florida.)
5. The capital is the birthplace of Jamaica's iconic fast food, the patty. Tastee, creators of the original (and still the best!), began baking the beef turnovers commercially in Cross Roads, Kingston back in the '60s, and will celebrate a half-century of piping-hot, golden-flaked goodness this year. ■

New Caribbean Music Venue

*T*he Dominican Republic's tourism hub of Puerto Plata has a major new attraction: the new Puerto Plata Amphitheater, which is being described as one of the most advanced in the wider region. It has the capacity for 4,000 people, boasts stunning ocean views and is located next to Fort San Felipe.

The Amphitheater has handmade seats in a dark teak colour aimed at blending into the local hillside. Tourism Minister Francisco Javier Garcia describes it as a stellar development for the sector. He noted: "This

project and modern amphitheater were designed to incorporate new elements into tourism in the north coast, and Dominican Republic in general. Distinct projects such as this help attract a wider range of tourists and enrich their experience while they are in country, encouraging return visits."

The Puerto Plata Amphitheater, which will reportedly generate 150 direct jobs and 600 indirect jobs, was designed by architect Maribel Villalona. ■





Belize Tourism Is Having Its Best Year Ever

Belize's tourism sector is booming. The country's latest figures show one of the fastest-growing destinations in the wider Caribbean region, with a 16.5% increase in stayover visitors compared to the first half of 2015.

This amounts to a total of 213,430 visitors in six months – the first time Belize has ever received more than 200,000 stayover visitors in the first half of the calendar year. All six months of 2016 showed double-digit growth, led by January, which saw a

24% increase in arrivals compared to January 2015.

The best calendar month for overall arrivals was March, when Belize received a total of 43,063 stayover visitors, itself a 10% increase over March 2015.

The United States is the main source market for Belize, with American tourists accounting for around 70% arrivals. ■



ECLAC

Happy
Birthday!



CARIBBEAN *Family*

ECLAC Caribbean staff members who celebrated birthdays in the second quarter (April to June 2016), enjoyed a sumptuous chocolate cake and mint chocolate chip ice cream, as the ECLAC family gathered to recognize their special day.

One of the persons who celebrated in the quarter expressed a special thank you to the Social Events Committee for continuing the birthday club effort. She said "it goes a long way in making people feel a bit special, and bringing us together, even if it's for a little while."

Here are some of the memories we made on that occasion. ■



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