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**REPORT OF THE ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE STATISTICAL CONFERENCE
OF THE AMERICAS OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION
FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

Virtual meeting, 23–25 November 2021



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A. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Place and date of the meeting

1. The eleventh meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) was held in virtual format from 23–25 November 2021.

Attendance¹

2. Representatives of the following member States of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean participated in the meeting: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Belize, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Italy, Jamaica, Mexico, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Plurinational State of Bolivia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Spain, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay.

3. The following associate members of the Commission were also represented: Anguilla, Aruba, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Curaçao, Montserrat and Sint Maarten.

4. The United Nations Secretariat was represented by representatives of the Statistics Division, Resident Coordinators and representatives of Resident Coordinators' Offices and the Development Coordination Office (DCO).

5. The meeting was also attended by representatives of the following United Nations agencies, funds, and programmes: World Bank, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), International Labour Organization (ILO), International Organization for Migration (IOM), and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

6. Representatives of the following intergovernmental organizations attended: Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Andean Community, Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and Central American Integration System (SICA).

7. Representatives of non-governmental organizations, other civil society entities, the private sector and academia also attended.

¹ See the list of participants in annex 2.

B. AGENDA

8. The following agenda was adopted:
 1. Adoption of the agenda.
 2. Presentation and discussion of substantive issues.
 - (a) Progress and challenges relating to the strengthening of statistical institutions.
 - (b) Regional perspectives on new methodologies and data sources.
 3. Outcomes of the biennial programme of regional and international cooperation activities, 2020–2021, of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.
 4. Review and adoption of the biennial programme of regional and international cooperation activities, 2022–2023, of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC.
 - (a) Proposals for the creation of working groups for the 2022–2023 biennium.
 - (b) Horizontal cooperation through the Knowledge Transfer Network.
 5. Other matters.
 6. Consideration and adoption of resolutions.
 7. Election of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas for the period 2022–2023.

C. SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

9. At the opening session, statements were made by Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Juan Daniel Oviedo, Director-General of the National Administrative Department of Statistics (DANE) of Colombia, in his capacity as Chair of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, and Stefan Schweinfest, Director of the United Nations Statistics Division.

10. The Executive Secretary of ECLAC said that the Statistical Conference of the Americas was one of the flagship mechanisms of ECLAC and the United Nations system. The region could and should continue to strengthen statistics, in a context in which the need for data was becoming increasingly urgent due to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Thanks to the efforts of the Conference's working groups, 10 documents had been finalized in the 2020–2021 biennium and were available to the regional statistical community, bringing together recommendations for good practices to strengthen statistical production in various thematic areas (for example, safeguarding the confidentiality of data on children and adolescents participating in studies, the proper measurement of time use in household surveys, and ways of working with ecosystem accounts). These issues and others were invisible in the measurement of development based on GDP, because they were invisible in the development model itself. The Executive Secretary emphasized the innovative nature of using administrative records for statistics, as well as the need to strengthen statistical systems and ensure statistical quality. In the 2020–2021 biennium, new good practice recommendations had been developed, for example, for collecting census data, formulating environmental indicators, adopting new International Labour Organization (ILO) standards for measuring

prices and volumes in the services sector, and measuring disaster-related indicators. Side events would be held in the framework of the Conference on the subjects of censuses and foreign direct investment (FDI). In that regard, countries should seek to attract not just any kind of FDI but the type that suited them best, especially in the recovery from the pandemic.

11. The Executive Secretary said gender mainstreaming was a pillar of the Conference and was necessary not only to measure unpaid work, but also to examine the cross-cutting impact throughout the entire work programme. Gender gaps should no longer be viewed as an isolated topic, but as central consideration, and a factor in disaggregating data for everything done and measured. The aim was to break the statistical silence on gender equality. The new version of CEPALSTAT, a data portal developed with open-source code that was interoperable with other data ecosystems, had been officially launched in October 2021, creating an interface between statistical data and geography. CEPALSTAT aimed to achieve interoperability between countries and agencies in the regional and global sphere. For the 2022–2023 biennium, there would be 11 working groups, whose topics reflected the interest in making statistical production increasingly efficient, making better use of administrative data, and making it a higher quality process, using the best tools. Two major topics to be addressed at the meeting were the challenges of modernizing national statistical legislation, and new statistical methodologies and data sources. Although that meeting of the Conference would not address the subject of environmental accounting in detail, firm progress also needed to be made on that issue. The region was at a turning point in the adoption of ecosystem accounts, which would provide an integrated analysis of the state and quality of natural capital so that countries could better measure the impacts of development policies and green growth strategies. It was necessary to examine how ecosystem extent accounts, ecosystem condition accounts and ecosystem services accounts could be developed to promote harmonious growth in the region. Lastly, she recalled that what was not measured was not taken into account, and that it was essential to continue working together for statistical development in the region.

12. The Director-General of DANE of Colombia, in his capacity as Chair of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, commended the way in which the countries of the region had set forth their situations in relation to various issues by means of official statistics, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. He said that the region had made great progress in the use of official statistics, and generic models to produce statistics always started from a fundamental pillar: the identification of users' needs. The countries of the region needed to make rapid progress in increasing not only trust in institutions, but also business productivity and recognition of ecosystem accounts as a framework for public policymaking. It was also essential to understand that poverty measurements should be more diverse and inclusive, and recognize more approaches (gender, ethnicity). There needed to be a rethinking of what the region's medium- and long-term challenges were in relation to official statistics (for example, in terms of technology, ethnicity and human resources), to be able to properly address the challenges of the 2030 Agenda and its social, economic and environmental dimensions. The Conference played an important role in fostering recognition that official statistics, together with data—which could be produced not only by national statistical offices but also by an ecosystem of producers—were national and regional public goods. ECLAC had demonstrated that countries' official statistical information was a regional and global public good. Given the recognition of that fact, dialogue should be opened with other stakeholders within the framework of statistical data production. In recent years, collaboration around the concept of data stewardship had been very productive and it was imperative to be aware that ongoing review of the practices of national statistical offices and peer review were becoming very significant challenges when approaching recognized concepts such as institutional effectiveness and self-assessment. Statistical offices provided a public service to countries and needed metrics for effectiveness to determine whether they were meeting users' needs in a relevant, high-quality, accurate and robust way. The Conference would set a new path for group work, aiming not only for a learning community, but also at an innovation community. Lastly, he stressed the need to continue to produce equity-oriented, gender-sensitive statistics, with a significant capacity for disaggregation at the subnational level and robust quality frameworks.

13. The Director of the United Nations Statistics Division congratulated the Statistical Conference of the Americas on its success with the two key tasks from its first meeting in 2001: establishing a strong body for the region, and ensuring regional work was well-connected to global efforts. He said that the United Nations as a whole was concerned with connections among actors and themes, and gave five examples of important links relating to statistical work: among countries, between governments and other stakeholders (such as academia and the private sector), between the regional and global levels, between statistics and geospatial information, and between statistics and policymaking. In closing, he encouraged participants to attend the fifty-third session of the Statistical Commission in March 2022, which would serve as a forum for review of issues such as the terms of reference for the Statistical Commission's mandate and for discussion of new issues such as the new role of national statistical offices, and gender mainstreaming, and expressed his hope that they would also attend the United Nations World Data Forum in Medellín (Colombia) in 2024.

Presentation and discussion of substantive issues (agenda item 2)

(a) Progress and challenges relating to the strengthening of statistical institutions

14. The discussion was moderated by Rolando Ocampo, Chief of the Statistics Division of ECLAC. The presentations were given by Mario Palma, former Vice-President of the Board of Directors of the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) of Mexico, and Juan Daniel Oviedo, Director-General of DANE of Colombia.

Strengthening of statistical institutions in Mexico through the lens of the book “Contar verdades: la saga del INEGI”

15. The former Vice-President of the Board of Directors of INEGI of Mexico gave an overview of the book *Contar verdades: la saga del INEGI*, which related the history of strengthening of statistical institutions in Mexico and analysed the circumstances and steps of the implementation process. The book was structured around two central areas of interest: proper measurement of real circumstances and its implications, and the professional independence of the Institute, which was legally known as “institutional autonomy”. It also highlighted the basis of the institutional independence which INEGI had since its creation, as well as the basic universal right to information.

Strengthening of statistical institutions in Colombia

16. The Director-General of DANE of Colombia said that his country expected to successfully strengthen the institutional statistical framework through approval of Bill No. 222 of 2021, which would provide a unified and robust legal framework for planning, producing and managing statistics at the national and subnational levels. The Bill stipulated the frequency of censuses, which enabled sampling frames and population projections to be updated. The text also provided for the non-opposability of reservations when providing information for statistical purposes, which would allow greater use of administrative records as a source of statistical information, and included provisions on quality assurance for official statistics, an area in which DANE was a leader. It provided for the creation of the Technical Advisory Council of the National Statistical System (CASSEN), which would support DANE as coordinator of the national statistical system to contribute to compliance with standards and best practices to strengthen the technical, operational and administrative autonomy of the entity.

Panel discussion on recent changes in statistical institutions

17. The panel was attended by Floribel Méndez, Manager of the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INEC) of Costa Rica; Roberto Castillo, Executive Director of the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses of Ecuador; Tiemonne Charles, Deputy Director of the Central Statistical Office of Grenada; and Miosotis Rivas, Director-General of the National Office of Statistics of the Dominican Republic, who presented their thoughts on the challenges and progress needed to strengthen statistical institutions.

18. The Manager of the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INEC) of Costa Rica said that her country's National Statistical System Act had been adopted in mid-2019, so one of the main challenges was to make it operational and put it into practice; manuals, guidelines and protocols were required to do that. Support also needed to be provided to the institutions in the national statistical system, with follow-up to determine whether the regulations were being implemented. Putting the hierarchical structure in place was another challenge, which required considerable logistics and organization. It also was necessary to raise awareness within entities, including among technical and senior staff, so that they could take ownership of the Act, which applied to them. Formation of a National Advisory Council on Statistics was yet another challenge.

19. The Executive Director of National Institute of Statistics and Censuses of Ecuador described the improvements recently made to the institutional framework of the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses and the extent to which the Generic Law on Official Statistics for Latin America, adopted at the tenth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC in November 2019, had been a point of reference for those improvements. He said that improvements had focused on three areas: strengthening technical and professional autonomy, modernizing the statistical system, and improving governance and the relationship with users. Lastly, he thanked the colleagues who had contributed to the preparation of the Generic Law for their support, as it had been a very valuable point of reference.

20. The Deputy Director of the Central Statistical Office of Grenada referred to the bill to strengthen the institutional framework for statistics, which was on the path to being adopted. He said that one of the challenges was related to the context created by the COVID-19 pandemic, which had deprioritized the bill for the time being. The population census had also affected progress with adoption of the new bill. The Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21) had conducted an institutional assessment of Grenada's national statistical system, which identified some weaknesses to be addressed. The benefits of implementing the law would include professional independence, establishment of an advisory board, and some degree of autonomy in terms of the programs to be implemented.

21. The Director-General of the National Office of Statistics of the Dominican Republic described the main rights and obligations included in the bill of that country. She said that the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics had been taken into consideration so that they would be respected by all stakeholders. The bill also included the need for the technical independence of the statistical agency so that it would have technical procedures for quality assurance when producing official statistics. The provisions of the bill covered respect for the respondents' rights, such as statistical confidentiality, which guaranteed that the data would be used only for statistical purposes, as well as penalties for those who infringed the rule. Lastly, accountability was needed at different levels, both horizontally and vertically.

22. In the ensuing discussion, the representative of Mexico said that the pandemic would have a lasting effect on the work of national statistical offices, although the nature of the impact was not yet clear. In the context of the new data ecosystem, data stewardship needed to be modernized, and in that area INEGI needed to link its work with other information systems and administrative records. The representative of

Argentina agreed on the need to have greater access to administrative records, and stressed the importance of safeguarding statistical confidentiality, which was why it was important to work on the relationship with users. The representative of Mexico said that national statistical offices had a responsibility to engage with users, and that was related to a dimension of increasing citizen participation in offices. The Executive Secretary of ECLAC added to that last reflection and linked it to the need to restore the legitimacy of institutions in the eyes of citizens. She said people often mistrusted institutions, so national statistical offices had an important role to play in restoring trust. The representative of Colombia stressed the need to form explanations and develop teaching that would facilitate relationships among the different stakeholders. Lastly, the representative of Aruba added her reflections on challenges relating to statistical confidentiality.

(b) Regional perspectives on new methodologies and data sources

23. The discussion was moderated by Marco Lavagna, Director-General of the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INDEC) of Argentina and Julio Santaella, President of INEGI of Mexico, participated in the first of the presentations.

Outcomes of the United Nations World Data Forum 2021

24. The President of INEGI of Mexico, in his presentation on the outcomes of the United Nations World Data Forum 2021, highlighted the need for greater collaboration with different areas of work to promote capacity-building and support, with a view to increasing information security and accountability. He highlighted two solutions that had been launched to reduce the gap between the supply and demand of financial resources for data and statistics programmes: firstly, the Bern Network's Clearinghouse for Financing Development Data, a platform for providers and requesters of financial resources, to promote the convergence of projects; and secondly, the World Bank's Global Data Facility. He also referred to the paper presented at the World Data Forum by the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which reaffirmed the importance of data as strategic progress, highlighted new approaches to data capacity and generation, drew attention to synergies in the data ecosystem, reiterated the importance of leaving no one behind and encouraged the world to build trust in data.

Panel Discussion with Directors of national statistical offices who participated in the United Nations World Data Forum 2021

25. The panel was attended by Dante Carhuavilca, Chief of the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI) of Peru; Iván Ojeda, National Director of the National Institute of Statistics (INE) of Paraguay; Eduardo Rios Neto, President of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE); and Samuel Moreno, Director of the National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INEC) of Panama. In their presentations, they analysed thematic elements arising from the World Data Forum that were considered relevant to the statistical development of each of the countries. They also reflected on how to incorporate data generated by the private sector into their work and on the enabling factors that should be considered.

26. The Chief of INEI of Peru said that society's demand for data was increasingly focused and required data to be generated more quickly. Richer data ecosystems were available at that time, but they were less aligned with official statistics. Following the United Nations World Data Forum 2021, the challenges for Peru were to reflect on how the national statistical office should set out a new regulatory framework in the national system, to strengthen the use of administrative records, to analyse how to adopt and use data from private sources, and to make progress on generating disaggregated data. It was therefore important to forge ongoing partnerships with the private sector and civil society, and necessary to align data from these sources

with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics. It was also vital that national statistical offices conveyed the need to have institutional frameworks, to build trust, to act with transparency and reciprocity, to develop statistical science and culture, and to ensure confidentiality.

27. The National Director of INE of Paraguay said that public trust in the national statistical office as an institution had been fundamental to continuing to conduct household surveys during the pandemic. Maintaining and increasing funding for censuses in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic was a challenge for producers of official statistics, meaning that awareness needed to be raised of the importance of statistical information. Different national statistical offices in the region had cooperated as a strategy for statistical development and because a road map was needed for the next five years. In addition, international cooperation was important when it came to obtaining financing.

28. The President of IBGE of Brazil said that it was the responsibility of national statistical offices to maintain data privacy and statistical rigor in the context of new data ecosystems, while bearing in mind that all stakeholders should adhere to the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics. Trust in official statistics was also important. The World Forum offered an opportunity to exchange experiences and new methodologies that strengthened and improved generation of sectoral statistics. Another requirement was cooperation among the different national statistical offices in the region for capacity-building. In that regard, he offered the support of IBGE to strengthen the statistical capacities of the countries in the region.

29. The Director of INEC of Panama said it was important to have disaggregated statistics at the regional, national and global levels in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) without leaving anyone behind as a result of asymmetries in the production of national data. For that reason, South-South cooperation was vital. Support was required to build the capacities of human resources in the use of software that made data use more efficient. It was also crucial to maintain the statistical confidentiality of data on the pandemic. Lastly, new data ecosystems needed to be formalized as public goods, seeking a balance between the public and private sectors, and safeguarding individuals' privacy.

Outlook for the World Data Forum 2024

30. The representative of Colombia said the fifth United Nations World Data Forum, to be held in Medellín, Colombia, in 2024, was an opportunity to give the meeting a regional character, giving a voice to Latin America and the Caribbean and its interests. There were significant challenges, and the Forum could be the opportunity to demonstrate with facts and progress how official statistical information could interact with the new data ecosystem, with a view to achieving development agendas in the region. To do that, some results needed to be consolidated, the region needed to demonstrate it was aware that it was moving from a data community to a data society, and empirical information was required on how official statistics could be inclusive and how the fundamental principles of statistics should be adapted to new realities. The region of Latin America and the Caribbean could be a good proving ground to show that it was possible to increase the visibility of social patterns such as migration and informal employment by producing statistics. By the time of the fifth World Data Forum, only six years would be left before the target year set in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and it could be of value to showcase regional good practices to measure and track progress in relation to implementation of the Agenda and the pursuit of SDGs. Lastly, data governance and data stewardship were essential requirements in the region.

Panel discussion on the challenges of new data sources and capacity-building

31. The panel was attended by representatives from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Centre for International Strategic Thinking (CEPEI).

32. The representative of IDB said that the Bank's work in relation to the basic principles contained in the Bern Data Compact for the Decade of Action on the Sustainable Development Goals was aligned with the work of national statistical offices in the region. The purpose of the technical cooperation operations was to contribute to building statistical capacities in the region. Such strengthening had been proposed in some of the financing operations, when a need was found to increase the use of official statistics generated by national statistical offices. That entailed expanding the concept of data quality (relevance, timeliness, reliability, accessibility) and creating programmes to raise society's awareness of the need to use official statistics. It was important to foster public demand for official statistics and contribute to national statistical offices having a critical mass of users beyond governments, which could support those offices in the event of budget cuts or political difficulties. Legal frameworks were critical to supporting national statistical offices' access to third-party data in a reliable manner, while respecting statistical confidentiality, and they should highlight the prerogatives and duties of such offices.

33. The representative of ILO said the pandemic had exacerbated existing trends and traits, which had led to changes in the labour market that had blurred the definitions, standards and methodologies used in relation to employment. The pandemic had highlighted the importance of defining concepts such as potential labour force and underemployment owing to insufficient working hours, and alternative metrics to the unemployment rate. In that regard, some important metrics had been identified in 2013. Flexible standards were also needed, which could be adapted to social circumstances. The proliferation of welfare systems had highlighted formality and informality, and the need to provide services to people in informal employment, making it clear that measurement of these new emerging forms of employment was a challenge for the future. Importantly, in 2018 classifiers had been adopted that covered new ways of working, contributing to having planned metrics in place, which it had proved necessary to apply. It was vital to gather information through improved household surveys, to produce statistics that reflected the new forms of employment.

34. The representative of FAO said that the large supply of available data and the public's need for more information both posed challenges for national statistical offices. National statistical offices also needed to modernize statistical production by conscientiously adopting new data sources. There was a lack of information from official statistics to produce agricultural statistics, meaning that new sources of statistical information were an opportunity. Alternative data sources were useful for measuring agricultural indicators. Some online data sources were unstructured and generated with mobile devices to fill information gaps or act as early warning systems. Use of those technologies entailed different technological, human and quality challenges, and standards and frameworks were needed for data produced through non-traditional sources, connected with the need to maintain data privacy and confidentiality.

35. The representative of CEPEI began by saying how important it was to have reliable statistics, data privacy and institutional frameworks. There had always been those who worked outside the scope of official statistics, but they did not have a suitable enabling environment, which was to say the legal frameworks and cooperation mechanisms needed to include new actors and their sources. Co-creation by non-State actors and national statistical offices suffered from a lack of incentives, and it was important to consider the data community in a broader and more holistic sense (academia, private sector and society). In that respect, he invited producers of official statistics to be open to including non-State stakeholders. He invited the Statistical Conference to be a facilitator of dialogue between producers of unofficial statistics and producers of official statistics, promoting such discussions at the regional, national and subnational levels.

Introduction to the regional hub of the United Nations Global Platform

36. The presentation was given by Andrea Diniz, from IBGE of Brazil, who gave a brief introduction to the subject and said that the regional hub could be a milestone for Latin America and the Caribbean, by freeing up the use of big data. A consultation was being carried out in the region, and it could be seen that although most centres were not analysing the use of big data for official statistics, many were making use of it in experimental statistics and were performing various studies, so sharing of experiences could be crucial in freeing up the use of big data throughout the region.

United Nations Global Platform

37. The presentation was given by Ronald Jansen, representative of the United Nations Statistics Division, who outlined the creation, structure, technological services, expert profiles and projects of the Committee of Experts on Big Data and Data Science for Official Statistics. He said that the United Nations Global Platform had more than 400 users from intergovernmental agencies in 31 countries and 16 international organizations, including 300 experts from all partner communities, who were working to develop new statistical methods using big data sources, such as automatic identification. The Global Platform enabled international collaboration and the sharing of data, methods and learning among trusted partners. It could provide the 193 member States of the United Nations with unlimited access to those global data sources using cloud services and enabled virtual international collaboration on data use, to develop new methods for constructing economic and social indicators, including many SDG indicators.

Regional hub of the United Nations Global Platform

38. Maysa Magalhães, representative of IBGE of Brazil, spoke about the regional hub of the United Nations Global Platform in Brazil, and said that its main goal was to contribute to progress on use of big data and data science to improve production of official statistics in Latin America and the Caribbean. The hub's four lines of work were: (i) strengthening partnerships and promoting cooperation among producers of official statistics in the region; (ii) training and encouraging the interest of young statisticians in the use of big data in official statistics; (iii) supporting research on the use of big data and data science; and (iv) organizing and offering seminars and conferences. She also outlined the work programme for the 2021–2022 period by activities and lines of work, the objective of which was to increase the participation of the national statistical offices in Latin America and the Caribbean in the development of new data sources, methods and algorithms for the global big data statistical system.

Outcomes of the biennial programme of regional and international cooperation activities, 2020–2021, of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (agenda item 3)

39. A representative of ECLAC presented a summary of the results of the working groups' activities in the 2020–2021 biennium. Of the 11 working groups, 6 had submitted documents on regional standards or guides for adoption by the Conference, which had undergone a regional review process in order to be endorsed by the countries. Of those six, five were already published as working papers, on the following topics: quality assurance for statistical processes and products, statistical use of economic administrative records, time-use measurements, collection and dissemination of data on children and adolescents participating in studies, and statistical systems for security and criminal justice. The sixth document, on the topic of measuring disaster-related SDG indicators, would be presented at the next meeting of the Executive Committee of the Conference, since for time reasons its final version was not available. The remaining five working groups had already finalized the pledged documents, which were available on the Conference

website. The documents addressed the following topics: census data capture, generating environmental statistics and indicators using geospatial information and non-conventional information sources, adoption of the new international standards of ILO, measuring prices and volumes in the services sector, and the capacities of statistical systems to measure international migration. Other subjects referred to included the Statistical Coordination Group for the 2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Knowledge Transfer Network.

Guidelines for gender mainstreaming in the working groups of the Statistical Conference of the Americas and terms of reference of the advisory group on gender mainstreaming of the Statistical Conference of the Americas

40. The presentation was given by a representative of ECLAC, who began by providing the background to preparation of the guidelines for gender mainstreaming, such as resolution 11 of the tenth meeting of the Conference. Those guidelines were important, and gender needed to be mainstreamed in each stage of statistical production, from specification of needs to dissemination of data, drawing on the Generic Statistical Business Process Model. All outputs produced by the working groups could contribute to gender equality or visibility, regardless of the theme or type of output. The gender perspective should be present at every stage of output development, from the proposal to the final document. The basic aspects to be considered included use of inclusive language and the sex variable as a minimum level of disaggregation. In that regard, to support the working groups, an advisory group had been formed, comprising members of various national statistical offices in the region, in addition to the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the Statistics Division and Division for Gender Affairs of ECLAC.

41. In the ensuing discussion, a representative of the National Office of Statistics and Information (ONEI) of Cuba expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to participate in the 2020–2021 working groups and said that the documents containing guidelines and recommendations were very relevant for statistical offices. The Chief of the Division for Gender Affairs of ECLAC commended the preparation of the gender mainstreaming guidelines as a milestone and said that the region was a pioneer in gender statistics. Argentina would host the next Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, to be held in 2022, where the great challenge would be how to mainstream gender in thematic statistics.

Review and adoption of the biennial programme of regional and international cooperation activities, 2022–2023, of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC (agenda item 4)

42. The presentation on the Conference’s biennial programme of regional and international cooperation activities, 2022–2023, was given by a representative of ECLAC, who said that the working groups for the new biennium would have the same life cycle as in the previous period: first, a selection of the proposals sent by the countries had been made and then, once the working groups had been adopted and formed, their activities would be followed up at the next two meetings of the Executive Committee of the Conference, until the presentation of the final output at the twelfth meeting of the Conference. For the 2022–2023 biennium, 14 output proposals had been received from 8 countries and circulated in the region to identify those of greatest interest. Through that process, the Executive Committee had selected 11 proposals, which would give rise to the new Conference working groups. The topics covered were peer review, data stewardship, gender, household surveys, administrative record quality, administrative records related to children, disasters, labour informality, measurement of perceptions, penal systems and input-output tables.

43. Representatives of the countries that submitted the chosen proposals that would give rise to the Conference’s working groups in the 2022–2023 biennium then gave brief presentations on the goals and purpose of each.

Peer review mechanism in Latin America and the Caribbean

44. The Director-General of DANE of Colombia presented the proposal to establish a peer review mechanism in Latin America and the Caribbean, with the aim of consolidating a regional methodology for peer review of statistical practices, established within the framework of the Conference and based on the examination of references in official statistics and international peer review methodologies, such as that of Eurostat. He said that it was hoped that that methodology would promote application of international and regional quality assurance standards and strengthen statistical cooperation among the countries of the region. The peer review mechanism was intended to consider the inclusion of gender as an evaluation variable. He then presented the plan of activities for the biennium.

45. In the ensuing discussion, the representative of Mexico applauded the proposal and said that other entities, such as metrology institutes, often used peer review systems that could be used as points of reference, as could the International Monetary Fund (IMF) evaluation of Mexico's national accounts. The representative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia also welcomed the proposal and said that it would be very useful for the countries.

Assessment of data stewardship in Latin America and the Caribbean

46. A representative of Argentina presented the proposed assessment of the scope of the concept of data stewardship in the role of national statistical offices in Latin America and the Caribbean. The aim was to define a regional concept of data stewardship in order to propose enabling elements for its implementation and mainstreaming by national statistical systems, and particularly national statistical offices. It was hoped that a common understanding of that concept would be reached—considering the particularities, challenges and different starting points of the countries in the region—for adoption by national statistical offices. With respect to the gender perspective, the goal was to raise awareness of good practices that would contribute to mainstreaming gender in production of official statistics. He then presented the plan of activities for the biennium in relation to that topic.

47. In the ensuing discussion, the representative of Chile commended the proposal. She said her country was available to contribute to the working group within the framework of the virtual talks of the Knowledge Transmission Network and wished to join as a member country.

Recommendations for quality analysis of household surveys

48. The representative of Chile said that the aim was to formulate a set of recommendations for quality analysis of the estimates resulting from household surveys, through methodologies that were accessible to the users of those statistics. She summarized the background of the project and how ECLAC and the National Institute of Statistics (INE) of Chile had pioneered development of quality standards in the region. With regard to the gender perspective, it was important to have quality statistics for appropriate decision-making to close the gaps that could be measured using household surveys. It was also crucial to systematize the current state of publication practices among different national statistical offices in the region and beneficial to have a regional standardized procedure which could be adapted to the reality of each country, including examining the particular characteristics of database anonymization processes.

49. In the ensuing discussion, the representative of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) said that the issue of estimate quality had already been addressed in the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS). A representative of ECLAC highlighted the potential and benefits of quality recommendations in

surveys with regard to generation of small-area estimation models. The representative of Cuba said that it was important to take into account non-sampling errors. The representative of ILO expressed interest in the application of small-area estimation models for labour market indicators. Lastly, the representative of Uruguay expressed his country's interest in the National Institute of Statistics of Uruguay participating in the working group and linked the topic to the technical standards that had just been developed in Uruguay regarding certification of statistical operations.

Guidelines for mainstreaming the gender perspective into statistical production

50. A representative of Mexico presented a proposal for practical methodological and conceptual guidelines for mainstreaming gender in the production of official statistics, mainly with respect to priority issues. She said the first step would be to systematize the work done in that area in the countries of the region and in other regions, followed by the development of a general conceptual framework on the gender perspective and the definition of criteria and recommendations. It was hoped that thematic coverage of statistical production with a gender perspective would improve as a result, offering statistics in a clearer form so that they could be used more widely and closing gaps in the production of statistics. Lastly, she presented the plan of activities for the biennium.

51. In the discussion that followed, the representative of the Dominican Republic commended the proposal and said it would be very useful, since the region had yet to make progress in mainstreaming gender throughout the statistical production process. Her country had been working with PARIS21 in that area and was interested in participating in the working group. The representative of Chile noted that the National Institute of Statistics of her country had created a Gender Statistics Subdepartment, which could contribute to the working group. The representative of Paraguay applauded the proposal and said that a strategy document on gender statistics had recently been published in his country. The representative of Argentina outlined to the work the country's National Institute of Statistics and Censuses had been doing to mainstream gender in statistical production and expressed his country's interest in participating in the working group. Lastly, the Chief of the Division for Gender Affairs of ECLAC stressed the importance of institutionalizing gender statistics and strengthening links with other entities, such as the United Nations Statistics Division.

Quality assessment tool for administrative records

52. The representative of Colombia stated that the proposal was aimed at improving governance and expanding the use of administrative records as a statistical source, taking into account the diversity of the entities that compiled them and the purposes for which they did so, as well as the difficulties that entailed in terms of standardization of statistical processes. The goal was to formulate a set of recommendations regarding inputs, processes and outputs to ensure the quality of the source, homogenize evaluation criteria and standardize tools, taking into account the gender perspective. He presented the plan of activities, which would include an evaluation report, which, after analysis, would give rise to a set of recommendations for a tool to assess the quality of records.

53. In the ensuing discussion, the representative of Uruguay expressed his country's interest in participating in the working group. The representative of the Dominican Republic referred to the information needs in different fields and said administrative records could help fill different gaps with quality. The representative of Costa Rica said progress was required in the use of those records, given the regulatory

advances achieved by the countries of the region. The representative of Mexico said that the working group continued the work of the group on administrative records, whose tenure was coming to an end. He then offered the working group access to the HECRA administrative record quality assessment tool.²

Recommendations for the integration of administrative records related to children

54. The representative of Uruguay presented the working group’s workplan, proposed by the national statistical offices of his country and of Chile and by UNICEF, which he said aimed to develop an integrated set of administrative records related to children in order to improve their informative capacity and inclusiveness. Various challenges —institutional, methodological and relating to IT, among others— had to be overcome for there to be an integrated system of records. An evaluation of the maturity of child-related records in the countries of the region was therefore proposed, enabling preparation of a set of recommendations for a common methodology, inclusion of quality assurance mechanisms in the process and, if possible, an explanation of how to integrate the records with census information.

55. In the ensuing discussion, the representative of Colombia highlighted the importance of creating these integrated records in order to improve information on children, taking into account both gender mainstreaming and related ethical factors. The representative of Chile expressed her country’s interest in raising the profile of information on that population group, which had been affected by the pandemic in an as yet unquantified way. The representative of the Dominican Republic expressed her country’s interest in joining the working group, which would allow it to coordinate the work it was carrying out on vital statistics, and to produce information on the working group for the recently formed Office for Children and Adolescents.

Tools for the production of disaster-related indicators

56. The representative of Peru presented the proposal for an online toolkit and reference material, in order to produce indicators for the SDGs and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. He said it was important to have such tools, as to date 77% of the countries in the region had different levels of monitoring and reporting and faced common challenges, such as gathering and measuring disaster data. He then described the aims and expected outcomes, focusing on strengthening statistical information management practices related to disaster risk reduction. It was vital to consider gender mainstreaming, since women and girls suffered more from the effects of disasters, which exacerbated existing inequalities and gaps, and use of those statistics would enable better public policy design. Lastly, he presented the working group’s workplan for the next biennium.

57. In the ensuing discussion, the representative of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) said that the working group was doing very important work, including at the global level by participating in international forums. Work was needed on a common framework for the development of disaster-related statistics and indicators and the document on institutional and methodological recommendations for the measurement of disaster-related SDG indicators and the Sendai Framework included the outputs and positive experiences of the member countries of the working group. The web platform proposed for the biennium could be very useful and serve as a repository, since it promoted the conceptual and methodological development of disaster-related statistics and indicators in Latin America and the Caribbean, and was intended to disseminate comparable information at the regional level, for example, by providing access to reference documents such as a Spanish translation of the document *Recommendations on the Role of Official Statistics in Measuring Hazardous Events and Disasters*, prepared by the Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE).³

² See [online] <https://www.inegi.org.mx/infraestructura/hecra/>.

³ See [online] <https://unece.org/statistics/publications/recommendations-role-official-statistics-measuring-hazardous-events-and-disasters>.

Assessment of statistics on work relationships and labour informality

58. A representative of Chile presented a proposal for a document on progress made and challenges in the adoption of ILO international standards, adopted at the twentieth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) in 2018, for improving and harmonizing statistics on labour relations and informality in Latin America and the Caribbean. He said the expected outcomes were: a methodological document to systematize progress made in the region in adopting the latest ILO recommendations; keeping national statistical offices up to date with the discussions of the ILO Group of Experts in preparation for the next ICLS; strengthening the region as an interlocutor for ILO in the modernization of on labour informality statistics; and developing a body of knowledge and experience that was available to the countries when adjusting measurement instruments in response to changes in the labour market. The proposal was expected to contribute to gender equality by identifying the impact of statistical labour relations and informality standards on analysis of gender gaps in the labour market. He then presented the plan of activities for the biennium.

59. In the discussion that followed, the representative of ILO, in her capacity as technical secretariat of the working group, applauded the work carried out in recent years. She underscored the importance for the countries of the new category of “dependent contractor” and said that the new forms of work that had arisen during and after the pandemic should be made visible through surveys. The representative of Peru noted that the upcoming ICLS was an opportunity to measure the new labour relationships that were emerging in the pandemic, such as telework and dependent contractors. The representative of Argentina highlighted the challenge of measuring the new forms of labour relations in household surveys and expressed his country’s interest in collaborating in the working group. The representative of Cuba reaffirmed the importance of the working group and said that his country was working to include topics from the nineteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians in its National Occupational Survey, in order to encompass the different forms of work.

Recommendations for measuring perceptions in household surveys

60. The representative of Mexico outlined the proposal to create a working group on the measurement of perceptions, the aim of which would be to contribute to strengthening the capacity of national statistical systems of the region to measure well-being based on subjective information. He said the purpose of the working group was to review international experiences that were relevant to the region and conduct a regional consultation on important issues. The aim was to reach a regional consensus on the importance of incorporating statistics on perceptions into the routine work of national statistical offices and to propose a basic questionnaire to measure perceptions, which would mainstream gender and was intended as a regional benchmark. The outputs were expected to be produced mainly by drawing on the resources of the institutions participating in the working group. The possibility of financial support from international organizations for pilot questionnaires would be evaluated. A final report on all activities and outputs was expected to be submitted by November 2023.

61. In the ensuing discussion, the participants agreed that the topic was important and a challenge for national statistical offices, and that experiences needed to be shared to foster shared learning. They also highlighted initiatives to include questions on perceptions in the countries’ household surveys, which they said should be considered in the working group’s work. There was agreement that the working group could be a fundamental space for progress towards common reference frames and questions, which would not only facilitate harmonized measures, but would also avoid overburdening national statistical offices. They said that type of information was important for understanding the progress dilemmas faced by developing countries and for analysing complex phenomena such as jobless growth and high levels of citizen dissatisfaction. Finally, the importance of the working group was underscored, given the need to move closer to what was being done on the issue in other regions.

Compilation of experiences in generating statistics relating to prison systems

62. The representative of Mexico said that the region's penal systems were highly crowded, not only affecting the living conditions of those deprived of their liberty, but also making it more difficult to produce prison statistics that met standards concerning homogeneity, quality and certainty. He therefore proposed an evaluation of institutional capacities to produce prison statistics in the region. The evaluation would enable identification of the main challenges relating to collection, analysis and use of such statistics, provide feedback on international efforts to establish standards on prison statistics, contribute to the monitoring of the indicators of Goal 16 of the SDGs and provide insight into observance of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules) and the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules), the latter being particularly important in terms of the gender approach. The Centre of Excellence for Statistical Information on Governance, Victims of Crime, Public Security and Justice, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and INEGI were supporting the evaluation, and final report was expected to be delivered in August 2023.

63. The participants agreed that such statistics were important, since they increased the visibility of persons deprived of their liberty, and highlighted the contribution of the indicator based on the proportion of unsentenced detainees, corresponding to one of the targets of Goal 16. It was mentioned that these indicators were in high demand and therefore had to be addressed, particularly by national statistical offices. The participants also noted that production of security statistics involved many institutional stakeholders (ministries of justice and home affairs, the police and penal institutions), so there was a great need for coordination, and national statistical offices should play a central role in creating a prison statistics system of quality. UNODC support was essential for assessing and building institutional capacities. The representative of UNODC expressed the Office's great interest in supporting such tasks, since the lack of high-quality statistical information hindered implementation of crime prevention and social reintegration policies for prison populations worldwide, so the efforts made in the region would provide feedback for actions at the global level.

Guide on the compilation and use of input-output tables

64. The representative of the Central Bank of Guatemala presented a proposal for a guide on the compilation and use of input-output tables. He said it was important to have that type of tool for evaluating a country's production structure, as well as to create social accounting matrices, which would enable assessment of the circular flow of an economy. In recent years, such tools had also formed the basis for analysis of issues such as the use of renewable energy and carbon footprints. At that time, 14 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean were compiling such tables. Emphasis had been placed on their use for national accounts, simulations of economic models and estimates and indicators with a gender perspective. In relation to gender, it was hoped that gender mainstreaming would be analysed by including a vector of employment by sex. The work proposal was to develop a guide that would outline the minimum requirements for compilation of an input-output table and address the interpretation of its results, to encourage more countries in the region to develop such tools. Lastly, he presented the working group's workplan for the next biennium.

65. Thus ended the presentation of the biennial programme of regional and international cooperation activities, 2022–2023, of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, which was adopted, establishing 11 new working groups that would operate for the next two years. This was followed by the sessions to address the activities performed by the Statistical Coordination Group for the 2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Knowledge Transfer Network, the Buenos Aires Group on disability statistics and the working groups of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

Statistical Coordination Group for the 2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean

66. The representative of ECLAC outlined the activities carried out by the Statistical Coordination Group in 2021. With respect to the structure of the Group, he said that there had been confirmation of the countries that would represent the region in the 2021–2023 period in the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (Brazil, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Grenada and Trinidad and Tobago) and in the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Argentina, Belize, Ecuador, Mexico, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines). The reported activities included the development and upcoming launch of an information system on national capacities to produce SDG indicators, the purpose of which was to enable ongoing monitoring of the level of production of the indicators and to identify areas for horizontal cooperation and technical assistance. A description was given of a new online collaborative platform,⁴ developed to improve communication between the countries representing the region in the aforementioned two global groups and the rest of the Latin American and Caribbean countries, allowing information to be stored and shared and including collaborative features. The countries of the Statistical Coordination Group, with the support of the secretariat, would be responsible for managing the content to make it available to all the countries of the region.

Knowledge Transfer Network

67. The presentation was given by the representative of Chile, who said that the Knowledge Transmission Network had been created as a space that—in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic—enabled and fostered sharing of experiences and methodological discussions among the countries of the region through online talks. He said that there had been a high level of participation in the monthly meetings, which had contributed to peer-to-peer exchange and capacity-building. She presented the Network’s plan of activities for the 2022–2023 period, highlighting the pilot project for new forms of cooperation, which would focus on the topic of censuses. The project would be led by the National Institute of Statistics of Chile, and the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE)-Population Division of ECLAC would act as technical secretariat. The purpose of the pilot project was to create a community to exchange experiences, publish information and undertake closed and open discussions, offering the opportunity to carry out collaborative work.

68. In the discussion that followed, representatives from different countries expressed their appreciation to the National Institute of Statistics of Chile and ECLAC for the activities carried out within the Knowledge Transmission Network and acknowledged the importance of having those tools to generate knowledge and create a community in the field of statistics. Representatives of Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Panama and Paraguay, countries that were at different stages of preparation for the next census, said their countries were interested in participating in the future collaborative space to address census issues, in order to share best practices and learn from the experience of countries that had already gone through the different census stages. The representative of Chile expressed her country’s interest in participating in the pilot test of the information system on national capacities to produce SDG indicators.

⁴ See [online] <https://sdgstatsurvey.cepal.org/About>.

Buenos Aires Group on disability statistics

69. The representative of Argentina said that the Buenos Aires Group was created in May 2021, comprising the national statistical offices of the region, with ECLAC in the role of technical secretariat. The aim of the Group was to promote harmonization of disability measurement and to develop conceptual and methodological designs to improve measurement of disability in the region. The Group's planned activities included formulating proposals for measuring and disseminating information on persons with disabilities for the 2020 census round, incorporating standardized question modules based on the proposals of the Washington Group on Disability Statistics to measure disability based on administrative records and other sources, and creating spaces for countries to share experiences in measuring disability. Recently, the Group had agreed to create working subgroups (surveys, censuses and administrative records) and to give priority to work with educational records, including an ECLAC consultancy and presentation of a system of indicators by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The Group expected to produce a wide range of outputs, such as technical reports and question modules, and perform various activities, including workshops, to identify the population with disabilities in censuses and administrative records.

70. In the ensuing discussion, the Deputy Executive Secretary of ECLAC expressed his appreciation to INDEC of Argentina for the progress made. He said that disability inclusion was a priority for the Secretary-General of the United Nations, as reflected by the development of strategies to include persons with disabilities in the United Nations system and in ECLAC. Putting an end to the statistical invisibility of the population with disabilities was a challenge for human development, and ECLAC was committed to continuing to support the work of the Group. He then expressed the wish that the Buenos Aires Group would become a regular group of the Conference.

Working groups of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM)

71. The representative of CARICOM presented the report on the working groups of the Caribbean Community. She said that those technical working groups, with CARICOM as technical secretariat, had been created in 2008. She briefly introduced each of the working groups, starting with the areas of trade in services and national accounts, and stated that the latter was developing implementation of the System of National Accounts 1993 (SNA 93) and harmonizing national accounts estimates. The working groups on the environment and climate change, and on the SDGs, were working on specific targets for the Caribbean, seeking to ensure that they were related to regional and national programmes, to enable national, regional and international comparability. In the case of the working group on population and household censuses, the harmonization processes for methodological instruments in the countries of the region applied to the 2010 census round had been reviewed and improved for the 2020 census round. The working group on classifications was developing guidelines for the future formation of a group on Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX).

72. In the discussion that followed, the representative of the Dominican Republic expressed her country's appreciation for all the work being done, particularly in the working group on disability. She said that the 2021 National Multipurpose Household Survey (Enhogar) was being conducted in her country, which included the Washington Group's Short Set on Functioning (WG-SS), in a cross-sectional manner for all household members aged 5 years and older, taking into account the experience of the 2019 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), which had also gathered information on that topic. Since the creation of the Buenos Aires Group, an agreement had been reached to work in conjunction with the National Council for Persons with Disabilities (CONADIS) of the Dominican Republic. Therefore, the country offered its support to the working group.

Other matters (agenda item 5)

Status of the 2020 census round

73. The presentation was given by a representative of ECLAC, who said that in coordination with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), CARICOM and the United Nations Statistics Division, various activities were being carried out to address the situation of national statistical offices and the impact of the pandemic on censuses, in order to collaborate with the countries as appropriate. Within the framework of the Knowledge Transfer Network, three meetings had been held in 2020 on the effects of the pandemic and censuses. The workplan had been fulfilled and in October 2021 a document containing guidelines for census data capture had been presented, which was very useful as it provided guidance to national statistical offices on the requirements for the use of capture devices and their advantages and disadvantages. The Knowledge Transfer Network and the new way of working had enabled coordination on specific issues such as gender identity measurement and online self-registration, and a series of meetings had been held jointly with UNFPA. Another publication on recommendations on population and housing censuses in Latin America would soon be available. He then summarized the status of the census round.

Citizen-generated data

74. The presentation was given by the representative of GeoCensos. He said that citizen-generated data could support fulfilment of the SDGs and development of censuses, and proposed three lines of action: use of data dashboards for collating information from civil society, organization of crowdsourcing events, and the use of databases for monitoring of the SDGs at the local level. The data dashboards in question consisted of citizen-generated data visualizations to track events of local importance. The crowdsourcing activities consisted of meetings with the community, with talks and training courses, and challenges were set, which were solved by the attendees. Regarding monitoring compliance with the SDGs, his proposed approach was voluntary local reports. These three elements contributed to monitoring the SDGs and offered the possibility of downloading open data, metadata and disaggregated data, contributing to areas such as transparency and citizen empowerment.

Recent initiatives of the Statistics Division of ECLAC

75. A representative of ECLAC gave the presentation. He began by referring to the Economic Indicators and Statistics Database (BADECON), a repository of economic survey databases. He said that work was being done to create the database, so that it could be used to produce regional indicators and perform comparative analyses, by economic sector and by other variables. There was also a statistical record system project to make use of administrative data, in cooperation with DANE of Colombia and the Colombian Presidential Agency for Cooperation. That initiative was in line with the worldwide trend of using administrative records to generate statistics, the systematization process of which should take into account identification, characterization and record providers, in order to make use of them. In the environmental area, preparation of ecosystem accounts was being fostered and a project was planned for 2022. Work was being done on a statistical portal on inequalities in Latin America, to gather all the information available to ECLAC on inequality in areas such as income, employment, education, housing, services, security and participation. Lastly, he referred to translation into Spanish of SDG indicator metadata.

Consideration and adoption of resolutions (agenda item 6)

76. The Conference adopted the resolution included as annex 1 to this report.

Election of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas for the period 2022–2023
(agenda item 7)

77. In keeping with the provisions of resolution 2000/7 of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, the Conference elected the following Executive Committee for the 2022–2023 biennium:

Chair:	Argentina
Members:	Canada Colombia Dominican Republic Grenada Italy Jamaica

Closing session

78. In the closing session, statements were made by Alicia Bárcena, Executive Secretary of ECLAC, Marco Lavagna, Director-General of INDEC of Argentina in his capacity as incoming Chair of the Statistical Conference of the Americas for the 2022–2023 period, and Juan Daniel Oviedo, Director-General of DANE of Colombia, in his capacity as Chair of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC.

79. The Executive Secretary of ECLAC said the Conference had confirmed that the region's statistical community was stronger and more active than ever and had demonstrated the large number of activities being carried out by national institutions that produced statistics. The COVID-19 pandemic had not prevented work and had even prompted institutions to adopt new practices and use new data sources. Very specific documents had been presented, as a result of two years' work, and in the 2022–2023 biennium there would be 11 new working groups, covering three key areas of statistical work: (i) strengthening of statistical institutions; (ii) development of statistical processes and data sources; and (iii) progress on production of topic-specific statistics. The purpose of the production and dissemination of statistics by statistical institutions was to meet the needs of users. In that regard, legal frameworks were important, as was how statistical systems operated. The ultimate goal was to increase confidence in official statistics.

80. The Executive Secretary praised the innovative nature of the Conference, which she said was an example and inspiration for the world, and underscored the importance of gender mainstreaming in all statistical work. There was a need to move towards a care society and what had been achieved at the Conference in relation to measurements of time use and unpaid work went beyond the borders of the region. In order to talk about equality, it was necessary to address gender violence, a major pandemic that was systematic and persistent in the region and affected women and girls of all ages in all spaces. The situations of violence strengthened each other and exacerbated the structural challenges of inequality. At the root of the structural causes of gender inequality were a lack of economic autonomy and of full digital inclusion. Statistical offices could contribute to the collection of data to improve services, programmes and knowledge, and consolidation of statistical systems and technological innovation led to modernization of national legislation. Priority should be given to ecosystem accounts, going beyond environmental accounts, as they were important for monitoring and understanding environmental changes and linking them to economic activities. She underscored the high level of coordination of the Statistical Conference with the entire United Nations system. Lastly, she said there was a need to move towards fairer development on the basis of conclusive data and information —because what was not measured did not count— and a need to break the statistical silence that sometimes made social justice so elusive.

81. The Director-General of INDEC of Argentina highlighted the importance of the Conference and the growth it had achieved as a platform for coordinating the statistical community in Latin America and the Caribbean. He said that bilateral relations and relations with international organizations and civil society were all critical, and the focus should be on determining how to deepen the coordination and relationship that had been achieved. All the countries had much to contribute and could collaborate with each other, since the problems of one country were also the problems of others, and lessons could be learned from the mistakes and virtues of all. One of the great challenges of the Conference—and its commitment—was to continue growing as a statistical community for Latin America and the Caribbean.

82. The Director-General of DANE of Colombia, in his capacity as Chairman of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, noted that all members of the Conference were committed to continue working within the framework of the valuable space that had been built collectively. The 11 working groups that would operate in the 2022–2023 biennium were important, addressing topics with economic, social and institutional dimensions that would help strengthen the capacities and above all the voices of the region's national statistical offices. Statistics represented a voice that—in a neutral manner—strengthened conversations, dialogues and discussions, and explained public policies, which were so vital at that time in the region. Use should be made of the space offered by the Conference to encourage interdisciplinary dialogues and work with the different divisions of ECLAC. Work on the issue of gender-based violence was interdisciplinary because of the need to form links with the judiciary, civil society and other stakeholders. While the commitment was to make gender-based violence visible, decisions had to be made on how such sensitive issues would be handled in surveys and appropriate methods needed to be formulated for identifying women who were victims of any form of violence. Another important challenge was how to make use of crowdsourced statistics, which was to say how to empower users to contribute by complementing statistical production frameworks. Emphasis should be placed on the need to strengthen the institutional aspects of statistical systems and to build trust in official statistics. Lastly, he highlighted the importance of two particularly useful tools in relation to the pursuit of the SDGs and statistics: the Regional Knowledge Platform on the 2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean (SDG Gateway) and CEPALSTAT.

Annex 1

RESOLUTION 12(XI)

The Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, at its eleventh meeting, held virtually from 23 to 25 November 2021,

Bearing in mind Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/7 of 25 July 2000, in which the Council approved the proposal on the establishment of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean as one of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission,

Bearing in mind also that the annex to Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/7 provides that the Executive Committee of the Conference shall have the following duties: carry out the tasks assigned to it by the Conference; draw up, every two years, a biennial programme of activities of regional and international cooperation on statistical matters, to be submitted at the regular meeting of the Conference; follow up the implementation of the agreements reached at the Conference and the tasks entrusted to it by the Conference, particularly the biennial programme of activities; and decide on the documentation required for its meetings,

Presentation and discussion of substantive issues: progress and challenges relating to the strengthening of statistical institutions

1. *Takes note* of recent progress in strengthening and modernizing the legal frameworks for the production of official statistics in the region with a view to promoting consistency with the fundamental principles of official statistics, the proper coordination of national statistical systems and the use of administrative records and other data sources for statistical purposes;

2. *Expresses* its firm and resolute support for the updating and modernization of statistical legislation in Colombia, the Dominican Republic and Ecuador, which will contribute to the production of official statistics that are regionally and globally comparable and are essential inputs for decision-making on public policies in those countries, enabling them to address major challenges and adopt existing guidelines in this regard;

Presentation and discussion of substantive issues: regional perspectives on new methodologies and data sources

3. *Takes note* of the outcomes of the United Nations World Data Forum 2021 and the Bern Data Compact for the Decade of Action on the Sustainable Development Goals, which call for action on the implementation of the Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data, and bears in mind the challenges and opportunities for the statistical use and integration of new sources of data and the capacity-building needs in that regard, as well as the outlook for the World Data Forum 2024;

4. *Invites* the countries of the region to collaborate in the context of the new regional hub of the United Nations Global Platform, in order to foster access to and use of big data to improve the production of official statistics, both through the combination of big data and traditional data sources and the development of new indicators;

Outcomes of the biennial programme of regional and international activities, 2020–2021, of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

5. *Endorses* the Report on the outcomes of the 2020–2021 biennial programme of regional and international activities of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean;¹

6. *Endorses* the Methodological guide on time-use measurements in Latin America and the Caribbean (Summary)² and urges the countries of the region to incorporate, on a regular basis, the production of time-use surveys into their work programmes as an essential tool for measuring unpaid work and monitoring gender inequalities;

7. *Endorses* the Methodological document on statistical use of economic administrative records (Summary)³ and urges the countries of the region to take the necessary measures to strengthen the use of this source of information in statistical production;

8. *Endorses* the Protocol for the collection and dissemination of data from studies involving children and adolescents (Summary)⁴ and emphasizes the importance of taking into consideration the recommendations set forth in that document when conducting research involving children and adolescents;

9. *Endorses* the Framework of reference for security and criminal justice statistical systems in Latin America and the Caribbean (Summary)⁵ and calls on countries to develop these systems as an indispensable input for the design and evaluation of crime prevention policies and programmes, with a view to strengthening the rule of law and criminal justice;

10. *Endorses* the Guide for the implementation of a quality assurance framework for statistical processes and outputs (Summary)⁶ and calls on national statistical offices to strengthen the instruments and tools for quality assurance and control in statistical production, in line with the fundamental principles of official statistics, in order to respond adequately to the needs of policymakers and users in general;

11. *Notes* that the complete versions of the documents mentioned in paragraphs 6 to 10 were reviewed and commented on by the member countries of the Conference as part of a regional consultation process;

12. *Expresses its satisfaction* with the successful preparation of the following agreed outputs of the working groups: General guidelines for census data capture: a review of data capture methods with a view to the 2020 census round; Recommendations for generating environmental statistics and indicators with geospatial information and using non-conventional sources; the Guide for the measurement of prices and volumes in the services sector and the Document on good practices for the adoption of the new international standards of the International Labour Organization (ILO);

¹ LC/CEA.11/3.

² LC/CEA.11/4.

³ LC/CEA.11/5.

⁴ LC/CEA.11/6.

⁵ LC/CEA.11/7.

⁶ LC/CEA.11/8.

13. *Endorses* the extension of the working groups for the 2020–2021 biennium tasked with finalizing the Institutional and methodological recommendations for the measurement of disaster-related Sustainable Development Goal indicators and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction,⁷ which will be submitted for approval by the Executive Committee at its twenty-first meeting, and the Assessment of the capacities of statistical systems in Latin America and the Caribbean and best practices to measure international migration;

14. *Endorses* the Report on the activities of the Statistical Coordination Group for the 2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean for the biennium 2018–2019,⁸ expresses its satisfaction with the development of an information system for the continuous update of the inventory of national capacities to produce the indicators of the Sustainable Development Goal global indicator framework, and invites countries to use this tool to facilitate the planning of statistical cooperation and technical assistance activities related to the Sustainable Development Goal indicators, in collaboration with the Development Coordination Office and the working group on statistics and data of the United Nations Regional Collaborative Platform for Latin America and the Caribbean;

15. *Endorses* the Guidelines for the formation and functioning of the working groups of the Statistical Conference of the Americas (2022–2023 biennium),⁹ in update of the Operational guidelines for the working groups,¹⁰ incorporating the suggestions made by member States at the tenth meeting of the Conference;

16. *Endorses* the Guidelines for gender mainstreaming in the working groups of the Statistical Conference of the Americas,¹¹ and invites the working group focal points to follow the recommendations set forth therein for the proper consideration of the gender perspective in the outputs of the Conference;

17. *Reaffirms* the commitment of the Conference to mainstream the gender perspective and endorses terms of reference of the advisory group on gender mainstreaming of the Statistical Conference of the Americas,¹² which will contain recommendations and suggestions for the proper consideration of the gender perspective in the outputs of the working groups of the Conference;

18. *Conveys thanks* to the member countries of the Conference that have served as working group coordinators for their valuable efforts in pursuit of the statistical development of the Latin American and Caribbean countries through the cooperation of the international and regional statistical community;

19. *Thanks* the international organizations for their support and collaboration in assisting with the activities of the working groups, by serving as technical secretariats or by providing financing for planned activities;

⁷ LC/CEA.11/DDR/2.

⁸ LC/CEA.11/12.

⁹ LC/CEA.11/10.

¹⁰ LC/L.4156.

¹¹ LC/CEA.11/9.

¹² LC/CEA.11/13.

Review and adoption of the biennial programme of regional and international cooperation activities, 2022–2023, of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC

20. *Takes note* of the Draft biennial programme of regional and international cooperation activities, 2022–2023, of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean,¹³ as well as the suggestions made during the discussions at this tenth meeting of the Conference, which will be included in the respective report;

21. *Endorses* the establishment of a working group to propose a peer review mechanism in Latin America and the Caribbean, within the framework of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, based on the Code of Good Practice in Statistics for Latin America and the Caribbean and other international peer review practices;

22. *Endorses* the establishment of a working group for the preparation of an assessment of data stewardship in Latin America and the Caribbean, taking into consideration the particularities and different starting points of the countries of the region and proposing elements for implementing and mainstreaming data stewardship in national statistical systems;

23. *Endorses* the establishment of a working group to prepare a guide for mainstreaming the gender perspective in statistical production, as a methodological and conceptual tool to guide the incorporation of the gender perspective in the production of official statistics;

24. *Endorses* the establishment of a working group for the development of recommendations for quality analysis of household surveys, which will allow standardized analysis of the quality of data obtained from household surveys and the appropriate measurement of sampling errors, using methodologies that are accessible to the users of these statistics;

25. *Endorses* the establishment of a working group for the development of quality assessment tools for administrative records, to assist the countries of the region in carrying out proper quality and confidentiality management and thus enhance the use of this source of information in the production of official statistics;

26. *Endorses* the establishment of a working group to prepare recommendations for the integration of administrative records related to children, which will help to produce Sustainable Development Goal indicators related to this age group with more frequency, better quality and more disaggregation;

27. *Endorses* the establishment of a working group to develop tools for the production of disaster-related indicators, to help strengthen statistical information management practices for disaster-related Sustainable Development Goal indicators and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030;

28. *Endorses* the establishment of a working group to prepare an assessment of statistics on work relationships and labour informality, with the aim to promote the conceptual and methodological harmonization of labour statistics with the standards adopted at the twentieth International Conference of Labour Statisticians and identify good practices for the measurement of informality in the region;

29. *Endorses* the establishment of a working group to prepare recommendations for measuring perceptions in household surveys, in order to contribute to the generation of information needed to assess social progress and well-being beyond material conditions, taking into account people's perceptions, evaluations and experiences of their own lives;

¹³ LC/CEA.11/11.

30. *Endorses* the establishment of a working group to prepare a compilation of experiences in generating statistics relating to prison systems, to assist in the generation of useful information for the design, monitoring and evaluation of public policies and for follow-up and reporting on progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as well as compliance with international standards relating to prisons.

31. *Endorses* the establishment of a working group to develop a guide on the compilation and use of input-output tables, to be used in the preparation of these instruments and which will include suggested statistical procedures to be followed, as well as some guidelines for their use;

32. *Invites* member countries of the Conference to strengthen knowledge dissemination and horizontal cooperation through the Knowledge Transfer Network, by organizing remote meetings and jointly constructing a repository of information relevant to the production and dissemination of statistics;

33. *Takes note* of the proposed creation of virtual communities under the Knowledge Transfer Network, which are intended to encourage dialogue and the sharing of experiences on issues of importance for the countries of the region;

34. *Urges* the member States of the Conference to support the proper conduct of the 2020 round of population and housing censuses, both by applying relevant international recommendations and standards, and by mobilizing the necessary financial resources to carry out these censuses, as they are essential to decision-making in the framework of a sustainable and inclusive recovery that leaves no one behind;

Other matters

35. *Conveys its appreciation and thanks* for the work of the National Administrative Department of Statistics of Colombia during that country's service as Chair of the Executive Committee of the Conference during the biennium 2020–2021.

Annex 2

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¹ Los datos de esta lista son los suministrados por los participantes en el registro correspondiente que se habilitó para la reunión.

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Comunidad del Caribe (CARICOM)/Caribbean Community (CARICOM)

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- Stefan Schweinfest, Director de la División de Estadística de las Naciones Unidas
- Rolando Ocampo, Director de la División de Estadísticas de la CEPAL
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