

ECLAC SUBREGIONAL HEADQUARTERS FOR THE CARIBBEAN



United Nations

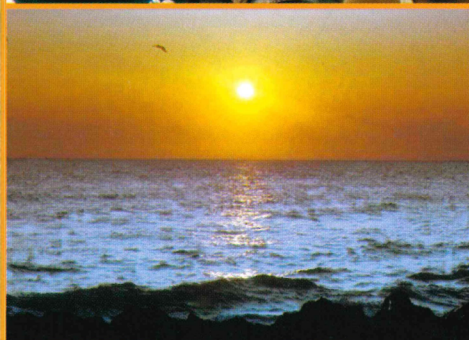
**ECLAC**

# FOCUS

Newsletter of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC)



POPULATION AGEING –  
SUBREGIONAL CHALLENGES OF A  
GLOBAL PHENOMENON



ECLAC, THE SIDS POA AND  
THE WHITE WATER TO BLUE  
WATER INITIATIVE



ECLAC STAFF TRAINING  
CONFERENCE – DEVELOPMENT  
EXPERTS LEAD DISCUSSIONS

APRIL-JUNE 2004

# CDCC

## CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION COMMITTEE

In 1975, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) – then known as ECLA – established the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) as a permanent subsidiary body at the governmental level. The ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean provides secretariat services to the CDCC.

The CDCC functions as an intergovernmental organization that meets annually at the technical level and every other year at the ministerial level. Its operational activities are carried out under the regular ECLAC work programme in the Caribbean, which includes economic and development planning, demography, economic surveys, the environment, international trade and trade-in-service, information for development, statistics, small island developing States, science and technology, women in development, tourism, training, and assistance with the management of national economies.

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# POPULATION AGEING – SUBREGIONAL CHALLENGES OF A GLOBAL PHENOMENON



*“We must be fully aware that while the developed countries became rich before they became old, the developing countries will become old before they become rich.”* Gro Harlem Brundtland, World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General, at the Second World Assembly on Ageing, Madrid, 2002.

Population ageing is a global phenomenon, one that continues to have major implications for all aspects of human life in every society. This process is enduring and irreversible, following differing patterns and distinct paces. The United Nations has sought repeatedly to draw governments' attention to the growing demand for responses to these encompassing and profound demographic changes. In addition, a range of initiatives at the global and regional levels has also served to highlight the need for concerted action.

This ongoing call for action led to the Second World Assembly on Ageing, held in Madrid from 8-12 April 2002, where Governments agreed to the implementation of a global action plan. The new International Plan of Action focuses on political priorities such as improvements in the living conditions of older persons, combating poverty, social inclusion, individual self-fulfillment, human rights and gender equality. Attention is also devoted to such holistic and overarching themes as intergenerational solidarity, employment, social security, health and well-being.

Mandated by the World Assembly, the Population Division of the Economic

Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC/CELADE) convened the Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing in November 2003 in Santiago, which adopted a regional strategy for the implementation of the commitments reached in Madrid. Participating government officials formally committed themselves to work on national follow-up strategies and in June 2004 reported to the ECLAC Ad hoc Committee on Population and Development on progress made in meeting their commitments.

**The trend towards an older population is largely irreversible, with the young populations of the past unlikely to occur again.**

## CRITICAL POLICY ISSUES IN THE CARIBBEAN

A study conducted by the United Nations Population Division in 2001 (United Nations, 2002) summarizes general global trends on ageing<sup>1</sup>:

- The trend towards an older population is largely irreversible, with the young populations of the past unlikely to occur again.
- The increase in the size of the older population is the result of

the demographic transition from high to low levels of fertility and mortality.

- Globally, the population of older persons is growing considerably faster than the population as a whole.
- As the pace of population ageing is much faster in developing countries than in developed countries, developing countries will have less time to adjust to the consequences of population ageing. Moreover, population ageing in developing countries is taking place at much lower levels of socio-economic development than was the case in the developed countries.
- The older population itself is ageing. The fastest growing age group in the world is the oldest old - those aged 80 years and older. By the middle of this century, one fifth of older persons will be 80 years and older.
- The majority of older persons are women, as life expectancy for women is higher than that for men. In 2000, there were 63 million more women than men aged 60 or older, and at the oldest ages, there are two to five times as many women than men.
- The health of older persons typically deteriorates with age; consequently, the demand for long-term care increases as the number of the oldest old grows.
- In the developed world, where pension schemes and welfare systems are provided, older

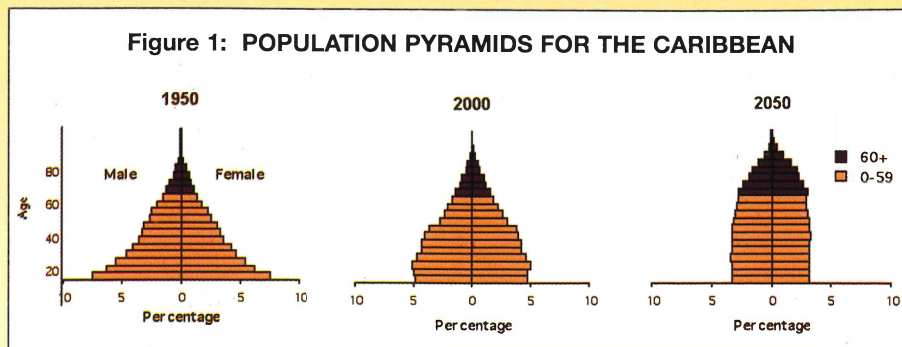
<sup>1</sup> The age group 'older persons' is defined by the United Nations as those persons aged 60 years and over, whereas the 'oldest old' age group comprises persons aged 80 years and over.

persons tend to have lower labour force participation rates than in developing countries, where such programmes provide only limited benefits or, often, simply do not exist. The elderly in developing countries must therefore continue to sustain themselves economically (often through the family support network) well beyond their sixtieth birthday.

Population ageing in the Caribbean generally follows global trends. The patterns and demographic changes described are illustrated in population pyramids for the years 1950, 2000 and 2050 (Figure 1). Each pyramid is composed of consecutive five-year age groups from age zero to age 100 and represents the age structure for both sexes of any given population at a given time. Pyramids representing young and growing populations typically consist of a large base and progressively narrowing bodies that indicate proportionately smaller older age-groups. In the 1950s, the populations of all countries in the Caribbean could fit into such a model.

An ageing, shrinking population, however, is characterized by a smaller base and wider body, indicative of the growing percentage of its people that are in older age groups. Such pyramids represent the population structure of all societies in Western Europe and Northern America, and the developed countries of Asia, such as Japan and South Korea today. Many countries in the developing world, particularly in Asia and in Latin America and the Caribbean are beginning to experience such a transition. However, the timing of the onset of the demographic transition, as well as the pace of this process, varies considerably from region to region and often even from country to country.

In the 1950s, the subregion was characterized by a young and growing population with only a small group of its population aged 60 years and older. However, the onset of the demographic



Source: United Nations Population Division, 2000 Revision2

transition in many Caribbean countries in the late 1960s triggered major changes in the age-composition of its population: fewer children were born and, with improvements in living conditions and better health services, fewer people died at an early age; since then, therefore, more persons have been experiencing longer, healthier lives. The impact of these fundamental changes is shown in the pyramid for

age groups since females tend to outlive males by several years.

There is much variation among the individual countries of the Caribbean in the onset of this process as well as in its pace. Relatively advanced are Barbados, Cuba and Puerto Rico, whereas Haiti, Belize, the Dominican Republic and Guyana still have rather 'young' populations. The analysis of country-specific data published in the 'World Population Ageing 1950-2050' report, shows the following patterns for the countries in the Caribbean:

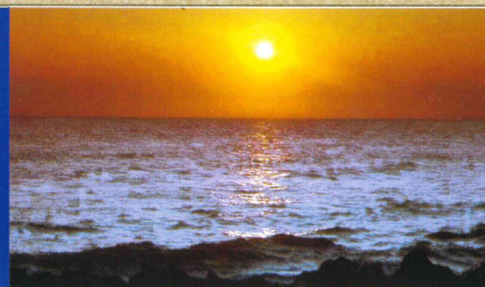
- Only 50 years ago all countries in the subregion had rather young and growing populations - less than 10% of any of these populations were older than 60 years of age.
- In the following years, the age-composition of the countries in the region began to change considerably. By 1975 Barbados had become the first country to show this change (more than 10 per cent of its population was now older), followed closely by Cuba, Martinique and Puerto Rico.
- By 2000, Guadeloupe and the Netherlands Antilles could be included in this group of countries since more than 10% of their population was over 60 years of age.

**Over the next 50 years all CDCC member states will experience at least a doubling of the percentage of older people.**

the year 2000. The striking differences in comparison to the 1950 pyramid are a weaker fundament and an increasing shift of the population distribution towards the middle and the top of the pyramid. Population projections forecast that within only 50 years these changes will become even more profound, since fertility is expected to decrease further and life expectancy is foreseen to increase for both sexes. Such changes will lead to a continuous reduction in the size of younger age groups and growth in the size of older age groups. Gender differences are also worth noting in this process: more women than men are found in older

(continued on page 13)

# ECLAC, THE SIDS POA AND THE WHITE WATER TO BLUE WATER INITIATIVE



## THE WHITE WATER TO BLUE WATER INITIATIVE

From 22 to 26 March 2004, the White Water to Blue Water (WW2BW) Partnership Conference convened in Miami, United States. The Conference was the first major forum among participants in this initiative, which had been launched by the United States on 2 September 2002 at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg, South Africa. The initiative is summarily described in the Conference literature as “a partnership to link freshwater and oceans”, which has three major objectives:

- Strengthening national and regional institutional capacity to implement cross- sectoral watershed and marine ecosystem-based management;
- Facilitating closer cooperation and good governance within and among nations, regional agencies and civil society in coastal and marine resource management, water management, health, environmental protection, agriculture, and urban planning; and
- Engaging business partners in the major growth sectors, such as tourism and marine transportation, to promote best business and environment practices; and to support regional activities in watershed and marine coastal management.

The WW2BW initiative is predicated on the recognition of integrated watershed management and marine

ecosystem-based management as critical elements in the sustainable development of the wider Caribbean. Based on this recognition, the Miami Conference focussed on the four closely related themes of integrated watershed management; marine ecosystem-based management; sustainable tourism; and environmentally sound marine transportation. Such cross-cutting themes as education; marine science and adaptation to climate change, provided additional reference points for the development of the primary issues.

The fundamental objective of the proposal was the international recognition of the Caribbean Sea as a special area, not by reference to any single mode of use or abuse, but in the comprehensive context of sustainable development.

## WW2BW AND THE SIDS PROGRAMME OF ACTION

The issues highlighted at the WW2BW Conference are closely related to and indeed, to a significant extent, overlap with the activities identified in the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of

Small Island Developing States (SIDS POA), which addresses Coastal and Marine Resources, Freshwater Resources, Land Resources, Tourism Resources, and Transport and Communication, as well as National Institutions and Administrative Capacity, Regional Institutions and Technical Cooperation, Science and Technology, and Human Resource Development. Inspired initially by the provisions of Chapter IV (Coastal and Marine Resources) of the POA, but taking into account all of its other elements, the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean has provided the forum for the introduction of and development of a major initiative that is similar to WW2BW in many ways.

## THE CARIBBEAN SEA PROPOSAL

Within the Caribbean, the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for Caribbean, in accordance with its mandate to facilitate follow-up of global conferences, has played a central role in coordinating the implementation of the SIDS POA. Among the major activities undertaken by ECLAC, to this end, was its convening of the Caribbean Ministerial Meeting on the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, held in Barbados from 10 to 14 November 1997. Following a discussion on the agenda item dealing with *Coastal and Marine Resources*, the Meeting decided to promote an initiative to have the Caribbean Sea internationally recognised as *a special area in the*

1 Negotiations at the United Nations General Assembly have produced Resolutions 54/225, 55/203, and 57/261, in which the nomenclature now reads “Promoting an integrated approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development.”

context of sustainable development.<sup>1</sup> In adopting that decision, the ministers explicitly recognised that political support for the proposed initiative had to be sought in collaboration with the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), non-AOSIS members of the Association of Caribbean States, and other stakeholders.

The fundamental objective of the Caribbean Sea proposal was the international recognition of the Caribbean Sea as a *special area*, not by reference to any single mode of use or abuse of that sub-oceanic basin, but in the comprehensive context of *sustainable development*. The proposal would build on the *Cartagena Convention*<sup>2</sup> as it seeks global acknowledgement of the unique environmental, economic and social values of the Caribbean Sea and of the significance of these to the peoples of the region. The detailed elaboration of the proposal would also be informed by the recognition in the SIDS POA (Paragraph 25) that *sustainable development in small island developing States depends largely on coastal and marine resources, because their small land area means that those States are effectively coastal entities*.

Taking these considerations into account and given, moreover, the close interface between the land and the sea, it was deemed more than feasible, not to say practical, to construe small island States, including the marine areas under their jurisdiction, as single units for development-planning purposes. This approach is advocated in the SIDS Programme of Action and, at a subregional level, within the

Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) circles as *Island Systems Management (ISM)*.<sup>3</sup>

Armed with an all-embracing concept, such as was envisaged with the formulation of *the special area in the context of sustainable development*, a proposal could be formulated to provide the rationale for all development programmes of the SIDS of the Caribbean in respect of marine as well as coastal activities. Likewise, donor funding could be sought on that basis to facilitate technical, financial and other forms of assistance to deal with development problems on land as a means of preventing damage to the marine environment. There could be, for example, a situation in which it is poverty and unemployment on land that lead to over-fishing and the degradation of the marine environment. For the corresponding policies to be successful, both sets of issues must therefore be addressed in tandem. Implicit in the proposal is the recognition of the importance of the marine environment as a key resource of central social, economic and political significance to the Caribbean reality. The overall texture of the proposal was informed therefore by considerations that transcend the purely environmental sphere.

In its initial phase, the Caribbean Sea proposal was anchored in the CARICOM Secretariat, but primary responsibility for the initiative now rests with the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), the membership of which spans most countries and territories of the wider Caribbean. Within the Association, a Technical

Advisory Group (TAG) has been established as the mechanism for the further development of the proposal. ECLAC has been an active participant in this group and collaborates very closely with the ACS on research relating to this issue.

## CONCLUSION

The *Caribbean Sea proposal* is considerably wider in scope than its WW2BW counterpart, though their fundamental similarities can hardly be overlooked. It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that ECLAC and CARICOM were among the co-chairs of the Miami Conference<sup>4</sup>. At the Conference ECLAC also delivered a presentation embodying a "*Review of the Caribbean Seascape and Selected Subregional Initiatives to Inform the White-Water-to-Blue-Water Process*." The Caribbean Sea proposal was among the initiatives reviewed in this presentation.<sup>5</sup>

The presentation also identified a number of political, institutional, philosophical, conceptual, technical and strategic factors that might inform the WW2BW process. Significantly, the factors identified are precisely those that are also relevant to the further development of *the Caribbean Sea proposal*. The potential for the establishment of a symbiotic relationship between the two initiatives is once more illustrated by this discovery. It remains to be seen, however, whether and in what precise manner, these very similar initiatives are brought into some form of collaborative relationship. ■

2 The Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment of the Wider Caribbean.

3 The ISM concept is approached as a framework as well as a process for integrated development. This approach seeks the involvement of all stakeholders and holds out the prospect of providing an effective mechanism for addressing the sustainable development agenda of small island developing countries. The WW2BW is but another formulation of its ISM precursor. Latterly, reference has also been made to other concepts such as "Ridge to Reef" and "Hill Tops to Oceans (H2O)" Reference has already been made to the description of WW2BW as "a partnership that links freshwater and oceans".

4 Other co-chairs were the CARICOM Secretariat, the Central American Commission for Environment and Development, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the government of the United States of America. The partnership is under the direction of an international Steering Committee representing governments, United Nations organizations, non-governmental organizations, universities and the private sector.

5 The other initiatives reviewed were the Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP) of UNEP; the Caribbean Sea Ecological Assessment (CARSEA); the IOCARIBE Caribbean Large Marine Ecosystem Project; and the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) of CARICOM.

# ECLAC STAFF TRAINING CONFERENCE – DEVELOPMENT EXPERTS LEAD DISCUSSIONS

Substantive staff of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean attended a Training Seminar in Tobago from 18 to 19 March 2004. This Seminar was designed to support implementation of the 2004-2005 work programme and was structured to address the following key issues in contemporary Caribbean development:



*Officer-in-Charge, ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, Rudolf Buitelaar, addresses the opening session.*

- Measuring and meeting the Millennium Development Goals
- Social Capital as a factor of production
- Corporate governance and competitiveness in Caribbean economies
- The provision of public goods: the challenges ahead
- Issues of methodology: foresighting for development
- Advancing the reform agenda in the Caribbean

According to the conference coordinator, the objective of the workshop was to “define a frame within which ECLAC could, in a cohesive manner, develop its work programme for the immediate years ahead.” To this end, the workshop began with an overview of the development project since its beginnings in the 1950s, and in subsequent sessions examined specific implementation issues. Some of these presentations are here summarized.

## DEVELOPMENT POLICY: CHANGING PERSPECTIVES AND EMERGING PARADIGMS

In his review of subregional development policy, Professor Denis Benn of the University of the West Indies pointed to the emergence in the 1960s of Arthur Lewis’s “industrialization by invitation” model, which was based on the grant of tax incentives and import duty concessions to foreign businesses to stimulate investment. In addition, both Lewis and William Demas advocated a strategy of Caribbean economic integration to expand market size.

This framework influenced development thought at all levels, leading to such long-standing global facilities as the Generalized System of Trade Preferences (GSP), which was designed to increase access to developed markets for the exports of developing countries. At the national level, the state was deemed essential for stimulating investment and the other economic activity needed for development, and its role in the process more deeply entrenched.

By the 1980s, however, the state had been relegated to a less significant role and Caribbean governments (like those of other developing countries) were being pressured by international financial organizations to implement stabilization

and structural adjustment policies. Such policies were meant to address these countries’ stifling debt and restore the health of their economies using a monetarist approach that emphasized the primacy of market forces and private sector initiatives as well as a minimalist role for the state. Professor Benn observed that while in some instances these policies reduced public sector deficits and controlled inflation, they often led to more widespread poverty, greater income inequality and deterioration in social conditions as a result of the cutback in social expenditure.

The failure of these neo-liberalist approaches to meet the challenges of development had led to calls for new approaches, the most significant features of which would include the identification of more complementary roles for the state and the private sector; the recognition of new and emerging technologies that impact on the development process; and the incorporation of such new development concepts as *psychic income* in strategies being formulated to achieve human development goals.

Within the subregion, a primary development strategy is economic integration through the realization of a Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME). Countries of the Caribbean have also sought to develop and expand





Deputy Executive Secretary, ECLAC, Alicia Bárcena, delivers her presentation.

markets through cross border investment, and intensified international and intraregional trade. In his presentation, Professor Benn argued that production integration strategies (such as collaboration in oil exploration) should be promoted in support of existing approaches, in order to optimize development opportunities.

### **CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND COMPETITIVENESS IN CARIBBEAN ECONOMIES**

Preparatory Workshop material notes:

*Traditionally, competitiveness was addressed from a narrow perspective and limited to firm level efficiencies. More contemporary study recognizes other important factors at the global, country and institutional levels, which include five variables that are considered key to economic growth and improved competitiveness – innovation and technical progress; institutions and governance; openness and integration into the world economy; a stable macroeconomic environment; and the joint influences of distance, geography and costs of trade. Of these variables, issues of institutional governance probably require the greatest attention and understanding within the Caribbean discourse on competitiveness.*

In his presentation, former World Bank Specialist, Mr. Anil Kapur pointed to the low ranking of CDCC countries in the Global Competitiveness Report (GCR) 2003-2004 (World Economic Forum 2004), which signalled weak economic growth.



Final session: Presenter, Winston Dookeran; ECLAC Economic Affairs Officer, Helen McBain; ECLAC Research Assistant, Anesa Ali

These countries were ranked at the bottom of the middle third (Trinidad and Tobago and the Dominican Republic) and in the bottom third of the report's Growth Competitiveness Rankings, and also made a poor showing in the Business Competitiveness Index.

In assessing what were, on average, weak rates of growth, Mr. Kapur attributed the Caribbean's modest economic performance to the slow rate of fiscal reform; limited product and market diversification; and poor governance (characterized by an inefficient bureaucracy and weak infrastructures). At the national level, economic, corporate, social and political components of governance must all be addressed if significant improvements in competitiveness were to be realized. Among the priority areas to be addressed towards improving competitiveness and governance were:

- Identification of key industries – for example, tourism, agriculture, finance and energy – where distorted policies have thwarted competition;
- Identification of new products for export diversification and entry or expansion into service sector activities, with a focus on employment generation;
- Review of regulatory structures, especially labour and competitive policy that have discouraged local and foreign investment;
- Review of the structure and size of the market for both entry and geographic diversification.

Mr. Phillip Marshall, Director, Group Technology and Integration, RBTT Bank, considered this subject from the company

level and proposed stakeholder management as a model for effective corporate governance. Within this model, the corporation's stakeholders – which include customers, suppliers, shareholders, lenders, managers, staff, technical support, leadership (Board), and regulatory bodies – collaborate with each other in a "corporate community" to maximise each group's benefits while enhancing corporate profitability. Caribbean firms could become more competitive by converting intangible, knowledge based assets (such as workforce knowledge, leadership, information systems, work processes and intellectual property) into tangible outcomes.

### **INTEGRATED PLANNING AND FORESIGHTING FOR DEVELOPMENT**

The third session of the Workshop reviewed integrated planning and foresighting methodologies designed to guide the allocation of resources and support the implementation of development programmes. Project Management Consultant, Azad Hosein outlined the strategic planning and development model, which is structured as a blueprint for project management from planning through the implementation and evaluation phases. The policy and management approaches required for the successful execution of projects were said to include:

- Creation of a cross-sectoral project management system that incorporated a data communications platform, and subsystems for managing finance, information access, and project management and evaluation;

- Definition and use of uniform budgeting standards and controls;
- More stringent analysis of programmes and projects, using leading edge analytical tools; and
- Closer collaboration with the private sector and with civil society organizations.

In his presentation, Professor Anthony Clayton of the University of the West Indies argued that the foresighting model of development management, which was based on projections of and planning for desired outcomes, was a more useful tool than traditional forecasting, which sought to predict future events, assuming the continuity of current circumstances. Forecasters regarded change as a threat to their plans while foresighters assumed change and sought to manage it to their advantage. This model was applied primarily in long term decision-making; selection of technology; generation of "alternative trajectories" for future developments; preparation for emergencies; and to motivate change.

Both presentations confronted methodological issues that have been deemed critical in addressing the *south-south* divide: a situation in which some developing countries seem better able than others to capitalize on opportunities and adapt successfully to the contemporary global environment.

## MEETING THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Workshop background notes emphasise that sustained political consensus building and

increased institutional capacity are fundamental requirements for meeting the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of the United Nations. To this end, a Caribbean consultation relating the MDGs to issues of sustainable development was organized by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2003. Participants at this consultation underlined the need to establish reporting mechanisms and national machineries as well as to strengthen those that already existed.

In his presentation on the subject, Denis Benn stressed the importance of integrating the MDG concepts into national development frameworks, which should be implemented with collaboration from the private and civil society sectors. He also called for revisions in existing MDG indicators and targets to reflect the special needs of the Caribbean, including the subregion's environmental vulnerability to such specific natural hazards as hurricanes, earthquakes, floods and volcanoes. At the same time, and notwithstanding these concerns about scope and applicability, Professor Benn remained optimistic that with a strong political will and the availability of adequate human capital and financial resources Caribbean countries would be well poised to fulfil the commitments made at the Millennium Summit in 2000. ■

Workshop presentations and papers are available at ECLAC/CDCC Web site: [www.eclacpos.org](http://www.eclacpos.org)



## Charting progress toward the Millennium Development Goals

Deputy Executive Secretary of ECLAC, Alicia Bárcena, in her presentation on the MDGs in Latin America and the Caribbean, highlighted critical issues related to realisation of the six Goals that are of greatest significance to the region:

### Eradication of Extreme Poverty

Stable economic development is crucial. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) rates of 4%, on average, are needed to halve 1990 poverty rates over the next decade.

### Achieve Universal Primary Education

Drop-out rates at the primary level have been growing, especially in rural areas where mostly young boys from poorer segments of the society often leave school and find jobs in order to support their families.

### Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women

Though girls are outperforming boys in schools, women's opportunities in the labour market are not increasing. Women are still more vulnerable to unemployment and wage discrimination.

### Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other Diseases

Social strategies with the potential to combat the HIV/AIDS pandemic in the region include provision of equal access to a complete secondary education and to employment; and the development of efficient social protection schemes.

### Ensure Environmental Sustainability

Policies directed to achieving this goal should recognize the region's particular vulnerability to such natural disasters as hurricanes, floods and earthquakes.

### Develop a Global Partnership for development

International cooperation is central to combating worldwide poverty and achieving sustainable development. The ideal partnership would aim to achieve an adequate supply of global public goods; the correction of international asymmetries; and the building of a rights based social agenda.

# IMPROVING DATA STORAGE AND ANALYSIS: CARIBTRADE AND THE SOCIAL STATISTICAL DATABASE



**Through projects funded by the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean recently completed and launched databases constructed to strengthen the bank of CDCC trade and social analysis data available to subregional governments and researchers, as well as the wider public.**

## BOOSTING CARIBBEAN NEGOTIATING CAPACITY

The CARIBTRADE Merchandise Trade and Transportation Database was developed to provide trade analysts and negotiators with timely, quality statistics on intra- and extra-regional trade. It is a fully searchable database of current, comparable trade data, with the capacity for analysis of trade performance, trade flows and competitiveness. The Database is a major output of the project "Support to the Development of Trade in the Caribbean" (NET/00/081)<sup>1</sup>

The analytical capability of the database is based on use of the REDATAM search engine, which was initially developed by CELADE<sup>2</sup> to process population and housing censuses in countries with large populations. The processing speed and affordability of REDATAM identified it as the most suitable engine for querying and retrieval, on the World Wide Web, of the database's (nearly 20 million) records.

At the time of its launch on 16 April 2004, the database already provided data on trading activity during the years 1995 through 2002 for the following countries: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Barbados, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, the Netherlands Antilles, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and

Tobago. Since each country used its own nomenclatures and coding schemes to prepare and process its trade information, the data received had to be normalized to make them sufficiently comparable for inclusion in the database. It is expected that statistical offices in other CDCC countries will soon be able to add their own trade statistics to the database.

CARIBTRADE provides two levels of access. The first level – provided up to the third digit of the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) and up to the second digit of the Harmonised System (HS) classification – accommodates the queries of most users. The other, more disaggregated level, limits access to a small number of statistics personnel in the country for which data are being queried. Those database users wishing to use such data (at a lower level of aggregation than three digits) would have to contact the Chief Statistician in the relevant country.

The CARIBTRADE database can be accessed at:  
<http://stnt01.eclac.cl/redatam/RpHelp/CARIBTRADE/index.html>

## SUPPORT FOR EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY FORMULATION

The ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean launched the Social Statistical Database (SSD) on 24 June 2004. Construction of the Database was one component of the project, "Development of Social Statistical Databases and a Methodological Approach for the Construction of the Social Vulnerability Index for Small Island Developing States in the Caribbean", begun in 2001<sup>3</sup>. The Database was unveiled during the first session of the two-day seminar, "Reporting on the results of the Social Vulnerability Index", which convened at the ECLAC Office in

Port of Spain at the conclusion of the project.

The SSD was developed in response to calls from Caribbean policy-makers and researchers for the quality social statistics needed in the formulation of evidence-based social policy. The Database provides access to datasets from three major social surveys - the Population Census, the Survey of Living Conditions, and the Labour Force Survey – which include information on such areas as population, education, employment and housing conditions. Sixteen Caribbean countries have so far contributed to the Database.

According to the Permanent Secretary in the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Planning and Development, the SSD "adds depth to the data, enabling a focus to be given to dimensions that highlight the vulnerability, resilience and capabilities of our countries." Indeed, through the quality of statistics and depth of analysis it provides, the Database is a critical tool in the development of indices needed to measure social vulnerability.

User access is available at two levels. The first level (a standard query mode) is available to governments, researchers and the general public. The other level, still under construction, will be available only with the permission of the directors of National Statistical Offices (NSOs).

The Social Statistical Database was developed in collaboration with NSOs and counterpart subregional institutions including the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB).

The Social Statistical Database is available at [cssdbs.eclacps.org](http://cssdbs.eclacps.org). ■

1 More detail on this project is provided in "Developments in the Trade Statistics Database Project", FOCUS Newsletter, October – December 2002, 12-13.

2 ECLAC Population Division

3 See the following FOCUS articles: "Caribbean Social Statistical Databases Project: Training Component Begins", July –September 2002, 9-10; and "Experts Review Social Vulnerability Index Methodology", July-September 2003, 11-13.

# ECLAC/CDCC 2006-2007 WORK PROGRAMME APPROVED

**The ECLAC/CDCC Work Programme for the 2006-2007 biennium was approved at the ECLAC Thirtieth Session held in Puerto Rico from 28 June to 2 July 2004. In his presentation to member countries, the Deputy Director of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean (ECLAC/CDCC secretariat), and current Officer-in-Charge, Rudolf Buitelaar, outlined the main features of the planned programme of work. The main components of this presentation are summarized below.**

During the 2006-2007 Biennium, the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean will support member governments in their decision-making and policy-making processes as they seek to address the main challenges to sustainable development. Towards this end, it proposes a work programme structured into four major areas of activity:

## **ECONOMIC POLICY, INTEGRATION AND TRADE**

Among the major responsibilities within this subject area is the annual assessment of Caribbean economies; as well as technical and research support to member countries in the trade liberalization and subregional integration processes.

- The ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean monitors the macroeconomic performance of all CDCC countries. Its findings are expressed most strongly through the recurrent publication "Economic Survey of Caribbean Countries", which comes out every August. The research and analysis underlying the Survey is being refined to make it more relevant and useful to member countries. Specifically, the Office

seeks to incorporate the most recent data and it also envisages the construction of models to map out possible macroeconomic scenarios.

- Free trade negotiation processes are part of a global tendency towards the adoption of liberalization policies; among the most significant for the subregion during the 2006-2007 biennium will be the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA). Small economies such as those of the Caribbean are especially vulnerable to changes in their external environment. The possible negative impacts of trade liberalization must be thoroughly assessed. At the same time, these very liberalization requirements can be conceived as an opportunity for countries to reposition their productive potential and become more competitive in the contemporary global economy. The secretariat's research will seek to identify those ways in which free trade arrangements can benefit the smaller economies of the Caribbean – and to support these countries in utilizing such benefits to their greatest advantage.
- Subregional integration remains one of the main pillars of economic policy orientation among smaller economies. Indeed, intraregional trade has expanded over the last decade. An advanced stage of the integration process is the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) – the terms of which are being gradually phased in by Caribbean governments. Yet we see that there are few in-depth analyses of the dynamics of intraregional trade. It is this lacuna that the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat seeks to fill during the 2006-2007 biennium.

## **SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

The primary challenges in this subject area continue to include the

strengthening of evidence-based social policy; achieving gender equality and equity; and adapting to changing population structures.

- A relatively high Gini coefficient for Caribbean countries points to a comparatively high level of social inequality throughout the subregion. Strengthening countries' capacity to reduce poverty while supporting the formulation and application of evidence-based social policy, can contribute to reducing social inequality. The ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean will continue to support governments in their efforts to strengthen the culture of evidence-based social policy formulation in the subregion – through training and the provision of technical assistance, and by strengthening statistical capacity in the social sector.
- Among the most direct manifestations of social and economic inequality is gender inequality. While there have been profound changes in the status of women in the past two decades – most notably in the areas of education and labour force participation – manifestations of gender inequality persist. The ECLAC/CDCC secretariat continues its focus on gender equality as a fundamental development issue in the subregion. During the 2006-2007 biennium, it will render technical assistance and research support to member countries, particularly in the entrenchment of gender mainstreaming, which has been identified as the key programming strategy for increasing the prominence of gender considerations within the development policy and planning process, and in macroeconomic analysis.
- Those responsible for Caribbean population policy are being forced to

address the consequences of the changing population age structure, which is part of a global phenomenon. It has been estimated that the Caribbean will experience absolute and relative increases in the elderly population (those who are 60 years and older) over the next fifty years, carrying the proportion of that population from what was 4.5% in 1950 to 18% in 2050. The secretariat will continue to provide the technical assistance needed to support governments in meeting this challenge.

### **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

A major aspect of the ECLAC/CDCC mandate is to assist member countries in their sustainable development activities. Accordingly, since 1994, the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat has provided technical support to countries' in their implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS POA). Work programme areas of focus will therefore continue to include marine-based tourism; human and natural resources management; and the compilation of science and technology indicators.

The SIDS POA Caribbean Model, which was adopted in 1997, was intended as a mechanism to coordinate, implement and report on activities undertaken or envisaged under the POA. The Model would also provide the means for pooling limited resources and maximizing the benefits that could accrue in this way.

- While this Model was very effective at first, its impact has not been sustained. There have been calls, therefore, to establish another subregional coordinating mechanism for the further implementation of the POA. The ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean is preparing a proposal for managing the new phase of implementation following the Mauritius meeting. It is expected that based on this post-Mauritius model, during the 2006-

2007 millennium, the Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean will continue its critical role of support in the implementation of the SIDS POA.

- Within the framework of ECLAC Caribbean work programme objectives, marine-based tourism is a tourism niche that is little known or understood in the subregion. There are indications that marine-based tourism (or yachting) contributes more to some Caribbean countries – in terms of revenues, employment (both levels and quality) than cruise ship tourism – although it is the cruise ship sub-sector that enjoys more public sector investment and incentives. The ECLAC/CDCC secretariat has recently completed a comprehensive project assessing the Eastern Caribbean yachting sector. During the next biennium it will conduct a follow-up study of the sector to review implementation of project recommendations.
- The 2006-2007 work programme reflects the growing awareness of the need to manage natural resources in the region in a more holistic manner and the need to emphasize the link to sustainable development. To this end, we will pay particular attention to scientific and technological considerations in the management of both water resources and human resource development. In addition, the Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean will continue to provide to subregional governments and institutions, technical assistance in science and technology policy development.
- With respect to data on science and technology, the required data is often absent – hampering the analysis of results and sometimes making analysis irrelevant. In countries with limited resources, those resources that do exist must be used efficiently and the results of this use clearly demonstrated. The compiling of science and technology indicators will provide the basis for analysis and decision-making, and for priority setting in the development process of Caribbean SIDS.

### **STATISTICS AND INFORMATION FOR DEVELOPMENT**

The framework for the Statistics and Information for Development programme will continue to be the subregion's thrust towards the achievement of a Caribbean Information Society. By 2006, one expects that several elements outlined in the WSIS process will have been implemented. It is anticipated that as a consequence of this, there will be increased demands placed on this office to deliver the kind of information services that would support the transition to an information society and prove effective in bridging the digital 'content' divide. The Caribbean work programme activities in this area will therefore be aimed at:

- Strengthening statistical capacity at the national and regional levels and promoting the importance and use of quality statistics in policies aimed at creating sustainable livelihoods. The ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean will establish, as far as possible, uniform metadata by which these statistics are produced in order to create comparable indicators for the Caribbean – and thereby strengthen the subregion's presence in global negotiations and initiatives. In support of this thrust, the Caribbean Office will continue to produce the "Selected Statistical Indicators" and "Abstracts of Major Statistical Publications" documents. We will also continue to refine the trade data and analysis available through the CARIBTRADE database.
- Expanding the Caribbean Digital Library (a virtual collection of Caribbean documents and other resources available on the World Wide Web). The Digital Library will become a portal for Caribbean development information.
- Assisting the region to develop *e-strategies*. This office will also play an important role in articulating a regional strategy for using information and communications technologies in the service of development. ■

## POPULATION AGEING – SUBREGIONAL CHALLENGES OF A GLOBAL PHENOMENON

(continued from page 4)

- It is projected that by 2025 Barbados and Cuba will be the first countries in the Caribbean in which more than a quarter of the population is older than 60 years.
- Projections suggest that in 2050, in Barbados, Cuba, Trinidad and Tobago, and Guyana, a third of the population will be older than 60 years.
- Generally speaking, over the course of the observed 100 years, Haiti, Saint Lucia and the Dominican Republic have been and will continue to be the “youngest” countries in the subregion.
- Over the next 50 years all member states will experience at least a doubling of the percentage of older people. Policy makers in the Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, Belize, Suriname and Guyana will have to deal with an even more drastic increase in their older population.

### ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED BY ECLAC IN THE CARIBBEAN

Governments and intergovernmental bodies in the region are recognizing the need to develop integrated strategies in the context of an economic downturn with little hope for sound economic growth. Retirement and pension schemes; social welfare plans; and improved health systems must be put in place to enable governments to respond to the changing requirements of an ageing population.

The ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean has embarked on various initiatives to support CDCC member governments in addressing population ageing. These include studies published on: “The phenomenon of ageing and the situation of older persons in the Caribbean” (ECLAC/CDCC, 2000), and “Population ageing in the Caribbean: an inventory of policies, programmes and future challenges” (ECLAC/CDCC, 2003). Also, this Subregional Headquarters is currently collaborating with the University of the West Indies, the Ministry of Social Development, Culture and Gender Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago and the

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Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) in the planning of a Caribbean Symposium on Ageing, which is scheduled for November 2004. This symposium will bring together government officials from the subregion as well as non-governmental organizations and academia to share best practices, discuss present and future research, and formulate a strategy on ageing for the Caribbean. ■

Material cited in this article includes:

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (2003a), Regional Strategy for the Implementation in Latin America and the Caribbean of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, Conference Room Paper DSC/1 21, November.

ECLAC/CDCC (2000), The Phenomenon of Ageing and the Situation of Older Persons in the Caribbean (LC/CAR/G.616), Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

ECLAC/CDCC (2003), Population Ageing in the Caribbean: An inventory of policies, programmes and future challenges (LC/CAR/G.772/Corr.1), Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Population Division, (2002), World Population Ageing: 1950-2050, Executive Summary (ST/ESA/SER.A/207/ES), New York.





## ABSTRACTS OF SELECTED ECLAC/CDCC PUBLICATIONS

JANUARY TO MARCH 2004

### **Challenges in the social sector confronting Caribbean SIDS**

*ECLAC. Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, 2004  
LC/CAR/L.7  
CDCC 20/Inf.8*

Prepared as a brief to the CDCC twentieth session, this document addresses some of the issues of social development that present the greatest challenge to subregional governments: the population dynamics of Caribbean SIDS; gender equality and Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS); and poverty reduction and human development. The ECLAC/CDCC secretariat has chosen to focus on these areas in the course of fulfilling its mandate to provide support for follow-up to the World Conferences on Women, the International Conferences on Population and Development, the World Assembly on Ageing and the World Summit on Social Development and the Millennium Development Summit. The Annex discusses these mandates and related activities.

### **The convergent/divergent economic trajectories of Puerto Rico and the United States**

*ECLAC. Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, 2004  
LC/CAR/L.11*

This document focuses on output convergence in its analysis of the

trajectories of convergence and divergence between the economies of Puerto Rico and the United States. As an introduction to this assessment, it provides an overview of the social and economic structure of Puerto Rico in relation to the United States. It then identifies the three phases of convergence/divergence for both economies and discusses their main features. The detailed analysis of this convergence/divergence that follows, seeks to identify the possible elements that account for the narrowing or widening output gap. The next section examines the relationship between trade and convergence. The concluding section attempts to highlight key current trends that may impact on the process of convergence of Puerto Rico relative to the United States.

### **Youth, Unemployment and the Caribbean Information Society: a challenge and an opportunity**

*ECLAC. Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, 2004  
LC/CAR/L.13*

This document proposes an approach for tackling the challenge of youth unemployment in the Caribbean. It argues that this problem can be addressed by capitalizing on the opportunities provided in the information and communications technology sector and by nurturing the entrepreneurial initiatives of

young persons. For the purpose of this paper, "youth" is defined as persons between the ages of 15 and 25. This group comprises roughly 25% of the labour force of the English-speaking Caribbean. Unemployed youth are persons in this age group actively seeking work. Two case studies are included.

### **Report of the Twentieth Session of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC)**

*ECLAC. Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, 2004  
LC/CAR/L.15*

The twentieth session of the CDCC was held in St. Croix, United States Virgin Islands, from 22-23 April 2004. At the session, the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat reported on its implementation of the 2002-2003 work programme; updated member countries on its activities for the current biennium (providing a progress report as well as presentations on individual subject areas); and submitted its draft programme of work for the 2006-2007 biennium. The report of the Session summarises these presentations and related discussions, and lists the major decisions and recommendations produced by the meeting. A list of participants is appended to the report. ■



**The Newsletter of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee**  
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