

ECLAC SUBREGIONAL HEADQUARTERS FOR THE CARIBBEAN

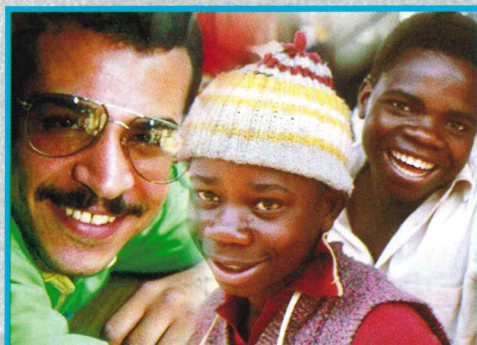


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Newsletter of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC)



REPORT TO THE CDCC:
REVIEW OF ECLAC/CDCC
PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES FOR
THE 2002-2003 BIENNIUM



TRADE TRENDS, TRADE POLICY
AND INTEGRATION IN THE
GREATER CARIBBEAN



CONFRONTING THE HIV/AIDS
EPIDEMIC IN THE CARIBBEAN:
ISSUES OF MIGRATION

January-March 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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Saint Lucia
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the Grenadines
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Trinidad and Tobago

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Montserrat
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Puerto Rico
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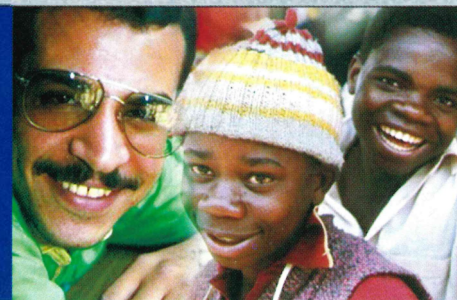
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REPORT TO THE CDCC: REVIEW OF ECLAC/CDCC PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE 2002-2003 BIENNIUM



As the Caribbean agency of the United Nations Economic Commission in the Latin America and Caribbean region, the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean is mandated to provide technical assistance and training to CDCC (Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee) countries in support of their development goals.

The CDCC was established by Caribbean governments in 1975 to guide ECLAC activities in the subregion. Its secretariat functions are fulfilled by the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean (ECLAC/CDCC secretariat). At its annual technical and biannual ministerial meetings, operational objectives are reviewed and revised. The ECLAC/CDCC secretariat supports CDCC member countries in pursuit of these objectives through the activities of its work programme.

Complementing the work programme framework, as defined by CDCC member countries, are the broader directives issued by the United Nations General Assembly, when in session. These constitute the United Nations mandate, which the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, like all United Nations agencies, seeks to fulfil. Currently, the overarching articulation of this Mandate is the Millennium Declaration, which outlines the Millennium Development Goals.

The ECLAC/CDCC secretariat work programme, completed in biennial periods, is developed as part of a broader ECLAC Medium Term Plan (covering a period of four years). Since the ECLAC 2002-2005 Medium Term Plan was approved by the United Nations General Assembly three years in advance, the secretariat was unable

to fully anticipate the circumstances that would affect implementation of approved outputs for the 2002-2003 biennium. Consequently, the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat has had to reformulate the work programme to address such new issues as the implications of the impending Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (FTAA); the requirements of the World Trade Organization (WTO); and the social and economic effects of natural disasters on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) of the Caribbean. Attention to such issues has been mandated by member and associate member countries at meetings of the CDCC.

The introduction of such areas to the work programme has strengthened awareness of these new and emerging issues within the social, economic and environmental fields and among researchers and technocrats in the subregion. As a result, more governments, institutions and researchers than before have been requesting technical support and information from the secretariat. Activities through which this need has been met include workshops, which have provided specialised training; meetings of experts that have generated much of the material that underlies the secretariat's technical research; and other technical support provided outside the specific requirements of the work programme. This active response to the initiatives of the work programme has led to the development of closer ties with counterpart bodies that include the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), and the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), as well as other United Nations Agencies serving the Caribbean subregion.

A large proportion the activities under review have been supported through the Netherlands-ECLAC technical cooperation programme, which funded projects addressing issues of trade, social development and tourism; and by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which funded the preparation of a human development agenda for Belize.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WORK PROGRAMME

In carrying out the directives of the work programme, considerable attention is paid to promoting cooperation among member and associate member countries of the Caribbean subregion. Furthermore, the activities of the secretariat specifically support the formulation and implementation of policies that promote growth, social well-being, subregional integration and the strengthening of linkages with the global economy. This is evidenced by the close involvement of member and associate member countries in the work of the secretariat, which has yielded ongoing benefits through such specific projects and programmes as the redrafting of physical planning legislation in Saint Lucia and St. Kitts and Nevis, and the review of policies governing the tourism sector in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Over the 2002-2003 period, the secretariat produced 61 technical studies and reports. These documented the findings of research and consultation in the areas of trade, economic development, information, social development, statistics, the environment, science and technology and population movement. In addition, 85

technical missions were undertaken at the request of member countries, which led to a significant increase (over the former biennium) in the number of countries that directly participated in projects and programmes specifically aimed at promoting sustainable development among the SIDS of the subregion. Finally, 415 persons received training in the collection and use of trade and social statistics, the development of science and technology indicators, and the application of information technology, as well as in natural disaster assessment and diplomacy.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

In response to the articulated need for improvements in the quality of trade and social statistical data available within the Caribbean, the secretariat, in collaboration with the government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands developed two projects aimed at refining data collection and interpretation skills in member countries. Emphasis was given to the development of fully searchable trade and social statistical databases to ensure that policy makers and negotiators had at their disposal the information needed to make evidence-based decisions.

The high dependence of Caribbean countries on external trade has meant the need for specialised data on trade and transportation to support subregional negotiators and policy-makers. Accordingly, the project, "Support to the Development of Trade in the Caribbean" (Net/00/081) was developed with the aim of promoting trade among CDCC members and to build their capacity to participate in external trading arrangements. The primary activity was construction of a merchandise trade and transportation database (CARIBTRADE) to store and analyse information on trends in trade and on the performance of those items traded. The launch of the CARIBTRADE database is scheduled for 16 April 2004, in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. In support of the database, a series of specialised papers comparing subregional trading performance with that of countries

outside the Caribbean has been prepared.

Improving the availability and quality of statistics in the field of social development was the overarching objective 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" (NET/00/035). Through this project, fully searchable databases of social statistics were constructed at the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, and social planners and statisticians were trained in the use of the databases to formulate social policy that was evidence-based. The project was also designed to develop a methodological approach for the creation of a Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) for SIDS.

A third project, on "Development of a Subregional Marine-based Tourism Strategy" (Net/00/79), was well received by participating countries, which requested follow-up activities to the national yachting studies that formed the basis of this exercise. Already, four of the seven participating countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago) have identified dedicated officers within the public sector to oversee activities relating to the yachting sector. These countries have also established a process for regular consultations between government and the private sector.

CAPACITY BUILDING

A "Disaster Assessment Training Manual for Small Island Developing States (SIDS)" (LC/CAR/G.730) was developed following the call by member countries to build the capacity needed to evaluate and respond to the impact of the natural disasters that continuously threaten Caribbean SIDS. The Manual was used in training technocrats and policy makers in the ECLAC methodology developed specifically to assess macroeconomic effects and post-disaster recovery and rehabilitation requirements. Countries already benefiting from the training programme

include Antigua and Barbuda, British Virgin Islands, Belize, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, and Trinidad and Tobago.

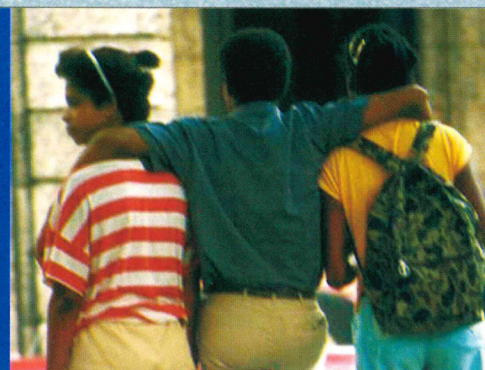
The secretariat has also contributed to the development of specific skills through the production of a series of video recordings on the establishment and operation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the Caribbean. These recordings have been used by agencies in a number of countries as a training resource and to encourage the development of the entrepreneurial base in rural communities. Thus far, recordings have been produced on the functioning of SMEs in the Eastern Caribbean, Haiti (narrated in Creole), and the Netherlands Antilles.

Support to the research and development sector was provided through the production of "The Manual for the compilation of science and technology indicators in the Caribbean" (LC/CAR/G.753), which was developed to guide the process of data collection and analysis. A training workshop was convened in December 2003 to introduce the manual to member countries and to review their experience in the collection and use of science and technology indicators.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SIDS PROGRAMME OF ACTION

The ECLAC/CDCC secretariat continued to monitor and appraise the implementation of the 1994 Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS POA). Technical support was also provided to the *Caribbean Regional Preparatory Meeting for the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States*, which convened in Port of Spain, from 6 to 10 October 2003. ■

CONFRONTING THE HIV/AIDS EPIDEMIC IN THE CARIBBEAN: ISSUES OF MIGRATION



Every 10 Minutes, four people in the Caribbean are infected with HIV/AIDS¹. In 2002, 420,000 people in the Caribbean were HIV positive; 60,000 new infections were reported in 2000 alone. About 2.3% of the adults in the region are affected, with Haiti suffering one of the highest prevalence rates (an estimated 6%). Two out of every three persons who become infected with HIV are women, many of whom are between the ages of 15 and 49 (UNAIDS 2002).

The Caribbean does not have a single HIV/AIDS epidemic, but a 'mosaic' of epidemics (World Bank, 1997). Affected countries may be categorized, according to their prevalence rates, into three main groups. The first comprises those countries that have generalized epidemics with prevalence rates higher than 5%, where the disease has already spread to the general population. The Bahamas, Barbados, the Dominican Republic, Guyana and Haiti make up this group. In other countries, the infection is still concentrated among specific population groups that engage in high-risk behaviours, such as men having sex with men (MSM) and commercial sex workers (CSW), though the rate of infection is accelerating rapidly and is

poised to spread to the wider population (World Bank, 2000). Finally, some smaller countries, particularly within those of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), still experience rather low infection rates – and, quite often, there are not enough reliable data available to allow for an accurate assessment of prevalence.

The severity of the epidemic is often overlooked because the Caribbean population is relatively small. HIV/AIDS is indeed the leading cause of death within certain age groups in some parts of the subregion. In the Dominican Republic for example, according to the most recently available statistics, HIV/AIDS is the leading cause of death among young women in the 20-34 age group (World Bank 2000). In Jamaica it is the leading cause of death among children under 8 (UNICEF, 2002). Across the Caribbean, this epidemic is having serious economic and social consequences as deaths from HIV/AIDS are concentrated in the productive sector of the population.

HIV/AIDS AND MIGRATION

Studies in many African countries show a significant link between population movement and the rapid spread of the disease from high-risk populations to the general public.

It is not the migrant, however, who poses a risk for the spread of the disease. The link between mobility and

HIV/AIDS is related to the structure of the migration process and the conditions this produces, such as poverty, exploitation, separation from families and partners, and separation from the socio-cultural norms that guide behaviours in stable communities. People move temporarily, seasonally or permanently, from one place to another, and for a variety of reasons. They may move in search of professional or economic opportunities; to join family members; or to flee ethnic tensions or violence. The circumstances created by the migration process contribute to the higher infection rates that tend to be found among migrants as compared with the non-migrant population. Some of the key factors that make mobile populations more vulnerable to HIV/AIDS infection are:

- Isolation resulting from stigma, discrimination and differences in languages and culture;
- Separation from regular sexual partners;
- Lack of support and friendship; and
- Lack of access to health and social services

Such circumstances contribute to the more frequent change of sex partners and more frequent sexual contacts. In addition, limited access to testing and treatment means a higher risk of carrying the disease unknowingly.

Given that human movement within and from the Caribbean has been a

1 Human Immuno-deficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

Factors contributing to the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in migrant populations

- Research in Africa (IOM, 2000) has shown a clear link between migration and HIV/AIDS. A distinct difference in HIV prevalence between major migrant towns and ordinary towns has been found in several African countries. Particular border towns, fishing communities, trading centres and refugee camps have higher infection rates than many capital cities or other major agglomerations.
- HIV/AIDS infected migrants also generally experience poor access to health services and social support, caused by not only legal but also cultural barriers.
- Some HIV-infected migrants undermine their own treatment by sending part of their medication back to their home country for use by infected family members.
- Migrant communities, themselves, quite often neglect their HIV/AIDS-positive members and thus exclude them from the primary health care and other services provided to non-infected members.
- The development of deportation policies by many migrant-receiving countries further contributes to the spread of the disease. Quite often work permits are only issued to healthy workers and, increasingly, HIV/AIDS tests become mandatory certification procedure. The threat of deportation makes many migrant workers go underground, a fact that negatively influences access to voluntary counselling and testing (VCT), and treatment.
- Mandatory screening, as well as stigmatization and marginalization of infected deportees at the receiving country will decrease the numbers of those who seek VCT and treatment out of fear of being further marginalized.

defining characteristic of its history, the challenge for the subregion may now be to learn from the experiences gained in other parts of the world and act decisively to halt the progressive expansion of the disease at its earliest stages. Even though migration patterns may vary in different regions, the major issue – the vulnerability of the migrant – remains the same. Thus, lessons to be learnt elsewhere in relation to mobile population and the spread of HIV/AIDS should be seriously considered (See Box).

The geographic, cultural and linguistic diversity of the Caribbean region underscores both the complexities in understanding the patterns of HIV contagion and successful responses. It should be clear that an appropriate response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic must recognize the contributing factor of geographical heterogeneity and the complete disregard by HIV of geopolitical boundaries.

For the Caribbean, migration has many faces, forms and expressions. People migrate seasonally over a certain period of time within the subregion, while others leave their home country permanently to find work further abroad. People move legally and illegally; and sometimes those who start off as legal migrants remain in the receiving country after their visa has expired and thereby become illegal. While historically more men migrated between the islands, female migration is growing steadily, with many new windows of opportunity opening for young, qualified women who seek employment in the health and education sector within North America and the United Kingdom. Less qualified women (and, increasingly, men) offer their services as sex workers not only in the subregion's tourist areas, but also abroad. Internal migration of workers in the mining sector is an area of particular concern in Guyana, Suriname and Belize. At the same time, the subregion's Small Island

Developing States (SIDS) are especially vulnerable, since they are confronted with the consequences of different forms of mobility, including immigration, emigration and, in some cases, even internal migration - all of which affect different segments of the population simultaneously.

The HIV/AIDS epidemic is clearly a problem that transcends national boundaries. As noted by the United Nations Security Council meeting convened in January 2001, HIV/AIDS has grown beyond a health epidemic and has become a threat to global security and stability. Less than a year earlier, the United States Government in a Draft Security Council Resolution² had expressed similar concerns. Contending that the ravages of HIV/AIDS could reverse the achievements of decades of development work in affected countries, the disease was deemed a threat to United States national security. These concerns are highly relevant for the Caribbean since the spread of HIV/AIDS within the subregion is having serious effects in the North American continent. According to recent health data, the fastest growing epidemic within Canada is the incidence of HIV/AIDS infection among immigrants from the Caribbean (mostly persons who have migrated from Haiti and now live in Montreal). Data from the Office of AIDS Surveillance, New York City Department of Health, show similar tendencies, with almost half of infected persons having migrated from the Caribbean (CAREC 2000).

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

The following are the main issues that must be urgently addressed in order to curb further spread of the disease:

- *Migrant and mobile populations may be more vulnerable than local populations to acquiring HIV.*

continued on page 15

² United States Draft Security Council Resolution, 7 July 2000.

TRADE TRENDS, TRADE POLICY AND INTEGRATION IN THE GREATER CARIBBEAN



The following is based on an assessment developed in the document, *Main Trade Trends, Trade Policy and Integration in the Greater Caribbean* (LC/CAR/G.756), which was prepared by ECLAC at the request of the Secretariat of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS).

The Association of Caribbean States (ACS) comprises a large number of developing countries located in the Caribbean Basin. Its membership includes countries of the English-, Spanish-, and French-speaking Caribbean, and those of Central America, in addition to Venezuela, Colombia, French Guyana and Mexico¹. This group is highly diverse, particularly in terms of size and growth-rate of economies, per capita income, and contribution of different sectors to gross domestic product (GDP). Among these countries, English-speaking Caribbean island States remain clearly apart, due to the small size of their markets, their relatively high levels of income and formal education, and the greater contribution of the services sector to their product.

A considerable number of smaller ACS countries remain critically dependent on the export of a few basic products and from the remittance of monies earned abroad. This asymmetric insertion of small economies is intrinsically linked to the difficulties they face in achieving economies of scale and agglomeration, which restricts their industrial activity. Their exports of manufactured products – limited as they are – depend largely on preferential treatment received in subregional markets and by a few developed countries.

The majority of the countries belonging to the region² are small States, many may be categorized as small economies, and most are quite vulnerable (meaning that they are exposed to frequent external shocks and natural disasters, and they have a limited capacity to react to these shocks). One of the main consequences of this vulnerability is

The export supply of any one country usually fails to satisfy the needs of the others, which leads to low levels of intraregional trade that are aggravated by tariff and non-tariff restrictions as well as inadequate communications and transport services.

that the growth rate of these countries' GDP is much more volatile than in larger economies.

Most ACS member states accumulate a large deficit in their capital account, and must balance their external accounts in differing proportions by exporting services, remittances from

migrants abroad, foreign investments and revenue from international cooperation. Nonetheless, some small and medium-sized countries have been successful in developing specific dynamic lines for the export of goods and services (niche markets), such as the assembly of more sophisticated products and the provision of specialised services.

EXPORT PATTERNS

Three quarters of exports from ACS countries are destined for the United States; this dependency on the United States market increased in the last decade. This is a response to a dynamic United States economy during that period, increasing integration of Mexico into that economy, and benefits enjoyed by Central American and Caribbean countries through preferential treatment granted by the United States.

On the other hand, the proportion of trade among ACS countries themselves is still small (8% of total exports). This is because the export supply of any one usually fails to satisfy the needs of the others, and there also exist tariff and non-tariff restrictions among them, in addition to which, communications and transport are scarcely adequate to respond to mutual trade needs.

1 The Association of Caribbean States (ACS) comprises 25 member States and three associate members. Member States: Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and Venezuela. Associate members: Aruba, France (on behalf of French Guiana, Guadeloupe and Martinique) and the Netherlands Antilles.

2 In this article, the ACS is referred to as a region. All smaller groupings within this region are referred to subregions.

Subregional integration agreements among the member countries of the ACS have contributed to overcoming these limitations by liberalising reciprocal trade and implementing other common trade disciplines. These arrangements have given rise to reciprocal trade of more sophisticated manufactured goods, but it would seem that this trade has reached its peak. Such goods are also not usually competitive in third markets.

At the same time, these countries have preferential access to markets in the United States as well as those of European Union (EU) countries. The United States has become especially important as a market for garments and textiles; meanwhile, many smaller Caribbean countries depend deeply on preferential access to the European market for such agricultural exports as bananas, sugar and rum.

FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT

During the 1990s, the region was successful in attracting considerable amounts of foreign direct investment (FDI); however, these flows declined between 1999 and 2002. The majority of FDI received during the 1990s was concentrated on a small number of countries that satisfied such structural requirements as political and economic stability, high growth rates and privileged access to the main international markets. (In the absence of such conditions, fiscal incentives to encourage FDI are generally of little use, and can turn out to be quite onerous.)

Mexico alone absorbed more than half of the FDI directed at the region. Its membership in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was particularly important in securing this FDI. In Central America, the two main recipients of FDI were Costa Rica and Panama, while in the Caribbean, most

FDI flows were directed towards Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, and, recently, the Dominican Republic - the major recipient during the 2001 to 2002 period. Among the associate members, the Netherlands Antilles received an increasing flow of FDI, especially from the second half of the '90s.

Intraregional investment accounts for a small portion of FDI, but its recent dynamism, as well as other factors such as its adaptation to local conditions

Many countries in the region have been granted an extended period in which to honour liberalisation commitments but have not yet been able to make the adjustments needed to completely liberalise trade policy and may not be able to meet impending deadlines.

makes it particularly important for the effective integration of productive and commercial mechanisms in the region. Several large cement and glass producing companies based in Mexico have been particularly active in such operations, and Venezuelan firms have also made investments in Colombia's financial sector, and in electrical energy and communications in El Salvador and Guatemala. Within the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) group³ intraregional investments flow mainly from the larger economies towards the smaller ones, and the sectors targeted are tourism, light manufacture, trade and finance.

TRADE AND TARIFF POLICY

The countries of the region began to liberalise their trade policies in the late 1980s, which led to the recovery of intraregional trade and a period of rapid growth during most of the 1990s - until 1998, when the ACS economies began to experience the effects of the Asian crisis. Subregional trade contingency schemes have made uneven progress in the management and enforcement of common disciplines (anti-dumping, countervailing duties and safeguards). This is why some member States continue to apply both formal and informal unilateral measures to handle extraregional competition. With the growing number of trade conflicts, there is a greater need to strengthen dispute settlement mechanisms.

In 1992, CARICOM countries agreed, in principle, to gradually lower the rates of their common external tariff (CET) to within a range of 0 to 20%. While most member countries have been consistently lowering their import tariffs, in accordance with the agreement, a few of the smaller countries have been slow in implementing this policy because of the reduction in the fiscal resources that would result. Even with the implementation of the CET tariff reductions, in many member States, locally produced agricultural goods still enjoy some protection, through price control programmes, licenses and import quotas. High tariffs and non-tariff barriers are also applied to specific lines of light manufacture that fall within import substitution programmes. On the other hand, member countries hardly use anti-dumping measures, countervailing duties or safeguards.

The countries of the Central American Common Market (CACM) - Costa Rica, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua - have

3 Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago and Suriname. Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands are associate members.

undertaken to streamline the regime's common external tariff to between 0 and 15% by the year 2005. These countries have also made great strides in restoring reciprocal free trade, although some agricultural products have been left out of the popular consumption basket. Most tariff and non-tariff restrictions have been formally removed but, in practice, several obstacles to the free movement of goods still remain. The CACM has common regulations concerning measures against unfair trading practices and the use of safeguard measures but these have only been applied in a few cases.

Colombia and Venezuela have pre-empted the other countries of the Andean Community⁴ by forming a bilateral customs union in 1992, with a common external tariff ranging between 5 and 20%; and by introducing reciprocal free trade. Furthermore, since June 1994, both countries have joined Mexico, and the G3⁵, which is targeting the liberalisation of trilateral trade before 1 July 2004, via automatic tariff reduction programmes. Meanwhile, the Community has established rules on anti-dumping, safeguards and countervailing duties that are applicable to all members. Such rules are also applied in situations involving external parties in which at least one Community member is involved.

Chile and Mexico adopted outward looking trading regimes in the 1980s through far-reaching unilateral reforms. Chile applies a flat tariff of 5.9% and Mexico uses an average rate of 16.5%, although, given the significance of its trade with the United States, the average weighted tariff is much less and is in fact closer to 2%.

Tariff policy has become more important than before for Cuba, because of the trade policy commitments it has undertaken as a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Similarly, the Dominican Republic has made

ambitious reforms in its external sector, involving large and successive tariff reductions and the removal of non-tariff restrictions, although imports of certain locally produced agricultural products are still subject to high surcharges. Both countries have shown an increasing interest in concluding trade agreements with countries in the region.

HEMISPHERIC AND INTERNATIONAL TRADING REGIMES

All ACS countries are members of the WTO and are therefore subject to the liberalisation commitments undertaken in the Uruguay Round. In spite of the extended period to meet the different commitments, which they have been granted because of their status as developing countries, many ACS members have not yet been able to make the adjustments needed to completely liberalise trade policy and may not be able to meet impending deadlines. Nor have the allowances made in these agreements for special and differential treatment brought tangible results to the people of the region. Member countries have therefore requested that another approach to such treatment be applied during the next negotiating round.

Developing countries also benefit from the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP). The conditions of access granted by the GSP are less favourable, however, than the non-reciprocal advantages that have been granted to specific groups of countries in the region through the Lomé Convention and the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI). This may be because the benefits enjoyed through the GSP cover a smaller range of products or their preference margins are smaller; or because individual countries can be graduated out of this preferential system when they reach a certain level of penetration in the issuing country's market.

The Lomé IV Convention grants to practically all Caribbean countries free access to the EU market for almost all of its industrial products and many non-industrial ones. More recently, contracting countries signed the Cotonou Agreement in 2000. The Agreement makes provisions for negotiating specific agreements with groups of beneficiary countries, which are applicable within periods that do not go beyond 2008. With the Cotonou Agreement, the EU has expressed its willingness not only to be gradual in incorporating elements of reciprocity in preferential treatment but also (through the conditions built into these agreements) to recognize respect for human rights and good governance.

Through the provisions of the Caribbean Basin Trade Partnership Act of 2000, Central American and Caribbean countries that were already benefiting from the CBI now enjoy additional access facilities to the United States market. Although it does not manage to match the level of access granted to Mexico through NAFTA, passage of this Act by the United States has improved the positioning of such exports as garments and textiles, which is of particular importance to the economies of Central America and the Caribbean.

Over the past decade, there have been many attempts by ACS member States to establish partial free trade or preferential trade areas. Countries such as Costa Rica, Cuba, Mexico, Panama and the Dominican Republic have been particularly active in organising such agreements. An intricate bilateral or multilateral network is thus being plotted, and it can lead the region into a situation of generalised free trade. Evidently, countries prefer these partial and cumulative approaches to agreements with a regional scope, since the former are easier to negotiate. This multi-dimensional integration process generates many different parallel agendas, and creates a complex mosaic of interests that are difficult to articulate. ■

4 Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela and the bodies and institutions that make up the Andean Integration System (AIS).

5 Group of Three: Colombia, Mexico and Venezuela

THE KINGSTOWN WAY FORWARD: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE FOURTH CARIBBEAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON WOMEN

The Beijing Platform for Action (POA) emerged from the Fourth World Conference on Women held in China in 1995. In 1999, Caribbean governments met at the Third Caribbean Ministerial Conference on Women to assess their performance in implementing the Beijing POA, as part of a global mid-term review process. Five years later, the Fourth Caribbean Ministerial Conference on Women convened for another periodic review of the Platform for Action. The Conference, held in Kingstown, St. Vincent and the Grenadines from 12 to 13 February 2004, was hosted by the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean in collaboration with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat.

The following is excerpted from "The Kingstown Way Forward", which records the recommendations and conclusions produced by the Ministerial Conference:

1. Women, the Economy and Poverty

- (a) Accelerate action in promoting an active and visible policy to address the gender dimensions of poverty reduction and women's place in the economy in the context of the impact of globalization on Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS);
- (b) Ensure that measures to increase competitiveness and productivity reflect the concerns for job creation for women; the need for safeguarding women in the flexibilisation of labour; the facilitation of sustainable livelihoods; protection and support for women working in the informal sector particularly with regard to care services for children and the elderly; the sexual harassment of women; and the roles and responsibilities of men and women in reproductive work;
- (c) Review and examine the policies and laws in order to enhance provisions for child support and maintenance in so far as the vulnerability of women and the households that they head is integrally linked to women's disproportionate responsibility for child care in all its dimensions;

- (d) Strengthen the gender framework (including time use surveys) within the methodology for poverty assessment in the subregion in order to capture the differential impact of poverty on women and men;
- (e) Address discrimination in all its forms including race and class in order to advance the well being of poor women;
- (f) Strengthen policies which take into account the rapid pace of globalization and the resultant displacement of women seeking better working conditions outside of their home environment; and
- (g) Continue to collect and examine data on women's and men's unwaged work as a contribution to the domestic economy;

2. Reproductive Health with particular reference to HIV/AIDS

- (a) Undertake legal reform to safeguard the rights of women infected with HIV/AIDS;
- (b) Strengthen advocacy in order to achieve responsible sexual behaviour between men and women and young adults, utilizing traditional and popular media;
- (c) Address the human, social and cultural rights of women, in order to strengthen reproductive health and HIV/AIDS policy and programme design and development;
- (d) Ensure that HIV/AIDS counseling, treatment and care is available to all women including those living in rural and isolated communities, and that VCT (voluntary counseling and testing) is available to women, and their partners, who so desire it;
- (e) Strengthen legal and social measures that protect women and children from all forms of sexual violence including child sexual abuse, incest, and trafficking as these relate to the economic and social costs of HIV/AIDS to Caribbean SIDS;
- (f) Develop legislation which makes it a criminal offence to intentionally infect another person with HIV/AIDS, and provides for civil remedies for a person so infected;
- (g) Ensure that appropriate health programmes such as anti-malaria programmes are supported for persons,

especially pregnant women, living in countries, so affected;

- (h) Encourage research and gender analysis of existing data in order to inform policy and programmes; and
- (i) Governments, as signatories to CEDAW, should take into account the provisions which protect the rights of women and girls in regard to HIV/AIDS and ensure that gender analysis is mainstreamed in all national HIV/AIDS policies, plans and programmes,

3. Strengthening institutional mechanisms

- (a) Strengthen national machineries through increased financial and human resources, and provide greater autonomy and strategic positioning in order to carry out their mandates effectively and efficiently;
- (b) Provide national machineries with requisite technical skills in gender analysis, the support of policy analysts, and the availability of sex disaggregated data to effectively mainstream gender throughout government policies and programmes;
- (c) Strengthen collaboration between the National Women's Machineries (NWMs), the regional and international agencies, tertiary institutions and civil society; and
- (d) Support and recognize the existing institutions within the subregion such as the University of the West Indies, and other academic institutions, international organizations and agencies and others, which are supporting the mechanisms for gender mainstreaming in the subregion.

Further agree to report, most importantly, on the outcome of this subregional meeting and on the status of preparations for the Ninth Session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean to our respective ministries of foreign affairs;

Thank the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines for its hospitality and for the facilities made available to participating delegations at this subregional meeting. ■

PUERTO RICO'S CONVERGENT AND DIVERGENT TRAJECTORIES WITH THE UNITED STATES



The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico covers an area of 9,104 square kilometres, has a population of 3.8 million inhabitants and occupies a central position among the islands of the West Indies, in the northern Caribbean. Its gross domestic product (GDP) per capita is almost three times the Caribbean average and is surpassed only by that of the British Virgin Islands.

In comparison with the fifty states of the United States, Puerto Rico is of median size in terms of population (ranking 27th) and small (49th) in terms of square kilometres. Its

population density is greater than that of any state, with the exception of New Jersey. Finally, in terms of its gross national product (GNP) Puerto Rico finds itself in 40th place, and therefore at the lower end of the scale (see *Table 1*).

Manufacturing and services (including finance, insurance and real estate services) are the main sectors of economic activity (contributing 45% and 54%, respectively, to GNP). The agriculture sector (at only 1.4%) has exhibited a small, and declining, share of GNP. Correspondingly, manufacturing, agriculture and services account for 14%, 1.9% and 31%, respectively, of total employment. In terms of its export structure, Puerto Rico has a leading edge over the high technological products industry in the United States.

CONVERGENCE PATTERNS

Figure 1 plots the relationship between real gross product measured in 1977 million dollars and real product growth for the period 1977-2001 for each of the federal states as well as for Puerto Rico. The data shows the existence of absolute convergence (the tendency of poorer states to grow at a faster rate, per capita, than richer states) for the federal states. Puerto Rico, however, does not seem to conform to this norm.

With a lower level of real gross product for 1977 than the simple average for the United States, Puerto Rico exhibits roughly the same rate of growth as that for the United States. This shows that if Puerto Rico continues to maintain its historical rates of growth it will fail to generate a path of convergent growth with the United States.

Figure 2 shows that a similar pattern of convergence applies to the productivity of non-farm employees and provides a similar diagnostic. The United States convergence productivity frontier is negatively shaped and the greater majority of states are situated along the frontier reflecting the existence of absolute convergence. Puerto Rico is the economy that is the furthest away from the convergence frontier and one of the economies combining the lowest productivity rate with the lowest rate of growth of output.

From a social point of view, the overall picture of Puerto Rico's standing relative to the rest of the United States is somewhat different. Puerto Rico's

Table 1

The United States and Puerto Rico – Selected social and economic statistics

	Puerto Rico	The United States
Population (000')	3,863 (rank 27)	5,619.8 a/
Size (Sq. Km)	9,104 (rank 49)	137,264 a/
Crude birth rate (2002)	15.1%	14.0%
Density (per Sq. Km)	425.2 (rank 2)	139.0 a/
Crude death rate (2002) (Per 1,000 inhabitants)	7.5	9.0
Infant mortality rate (Per 1,000 inhabitants)	8.0	9.0
Average life expectancy at birth	75	77
Unemployment rate (Dec. 2003)	11.4%	6.0%
GDP per capita (2004)	11,434.87	35,865 a/
Wage in manufacturing as a percentage of the United States average	65-80	100
Average annual wages (2002)	19,728	36,219 b/
Productivity of non-farm employees of Puerto Rico as a percentage of the United States average	60	100

*Note: a/ refers to the median for the United States.
b/ Does not take into account Puerto Rico or the United States Virgin Islands.*

Source: On the basis of official information

performance in terms of its social indicators suggests that it has reached standards similar to those prevailing in the United States, in terms of crude birth and death rates (15 and 8, respectively, per 1,000 inhabitants). Infant mortality rates have also converged and stand at 8 per 1,000 inhabitants for both economies (Table 1). The rate of unemployment is much higher and wages markedly lower in Puerto Rico than in the United States. Average annual wages for Puerto Rico in 2002 represent 56% of those earned in the United States (Table 2). Additional evidence shows that hourly earnings in the Puerto Rico manufacturing sector average between 65% and 80% of those in the United States.

REVIEW OF ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE (1950-2002)

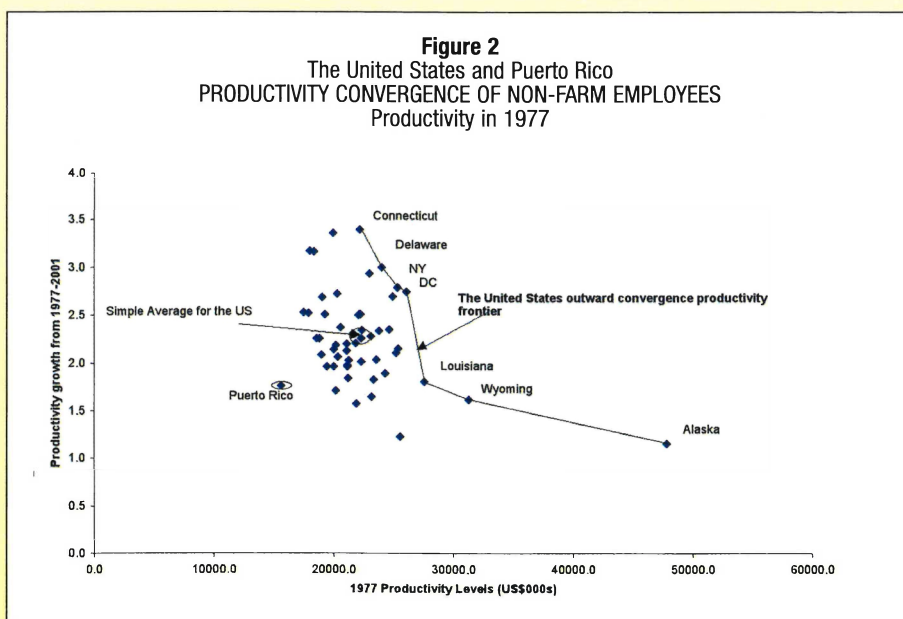
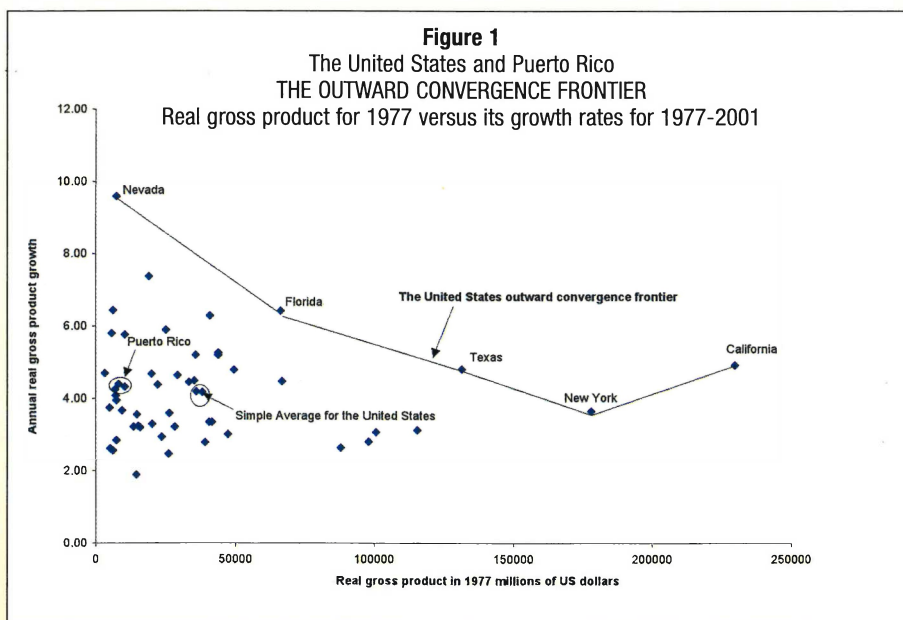
As with other developing economies, Puerto Rico registered high rates of economic growth during the ‘Golden Age of Capitalism’ (1950-1973) (see Table 2). These were accompanied by rising levels of productivity. This impressive performance gave credence to comparisons with the Newly Industrialised Countries (NICs) that labelled Puerto Rico the ‘fifth tiger’¹

In the early 1970s, Puerto Rico experienced a period of economic decline that lasted well into the middle of the 1980s (and led to a widening gap with the United States). The hallmarks of this period include a significant fall of the investment coefficient and a doubling of the rate of unemployment. The overall economic and social effects were mitigated in part by the existence of such safety valves as migration to and unilateral transfers from the United States, which offset losses in income and employment. Starting in 1986, the Puerto Rican economy seemed poised for another period of growth and convergence that appeared sustainable even if the mixed performance signals brought about by 2003 were taken into account.

Table 2
REAL GDP GROWTH – 1950-2001

Period	World	OECD	Developing Nations	United States	Puerto Rico
1950-1973	n.a.	5.9	5.5	4.2	6.7
1966-1973	5.1	4.8	6.9	4.0	6.9
1974-1980	3.4	2.9	5.0	2.5	3.4
1981-1990	3.2	3.1	3.3	3.2	4.3
1991-1997	2.2	1.9	5.0	2.8	3.9
1993-2002	3.5	2.7	5.1	3.4	4.8

Source: Davidson (2003), NBER (2004); Planning Board of Puerto Rico (2003)



1 The four East Asian tigers are: Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea.

ASSESSMENT OF ECONOMIC POLICIES

These three phases (Figure 3) corresponded to the implementation of three different economic policies. The first phase (1947-1971) was underpinned by a simple Keynesian model for a closed economy. The driving force of growth and convergence was the significant increase in the formation of gross fixed capital. In turn, domestic investment was encouraged by a tax incentives policy that was ultimately beneficial as it contributed to the development of Puerto Rican industry.

The *industrialisation by invitation* model formed the basis of "operation bootstrap" which, it is generally agreed, was the core economic strategy applied during this period. It is also maintained that the subsequent period of decline resulted from the failure of those policies to adjust to the realities of increasing global competition.

In fact, it was during the second phase (1971-1986) – a phase of decline and divergence – that industrialisation by invitation was developed to its full extent. Furthermore, it is argued that

these policies failed to provide adequate stimuli to growth and that this explains, in part, the contraction in economic activity. Indeed, during this phase, economic policy, federal and national tax incentives were used to encourage the establishment of a foreign capital-based manufacturing and services sector, which was allowed to repatriate its profits to the United States. As a result, the gap between the income produced and that available in Puerto Rico widened. At the same time, there was a marked shift in the distribution of wealth towards foreign owned assets.

The third phase (1986-2002) was marked by fairly steady growth in the United States and the increase in the investment coefficient, which was driven by the construction sector (whose effects on total output were not fully felt because of a slowdown in productivity growth). At the same time, the data indicates that part of the economic recovery was led by an expansion in the wage bill. Accordingly, the third phase was ultimately a wage-led phase.

During the final years of phase three, the tax legislation underwent important changes, the effects of which are not yet

visible for the last years of the sample, but which could have an important effect on the convergence trajectory of Puerto Rico to the United States.

More recently (since 1993), the United States has sought to gradually remove the special and differential tax treatment (Section 936 of the federal tax code) enjoyed by Puerto Rico. In 1993, the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act imposed cutbacks in the programme of tax incentives for new investments by retaining the investment tax credit while imposing limits on the income-based tax credit. The latter decreased by five percentage points a year in 1995 – from 60% of profits in 1994 to 40% of qualified labour costs in 1998.

In 1996, the main piece of legislation to grant special federal incentives to Puerto Rico was repealed through the Small Business Job Protection Act, which granted a phase out of 10 years for current beneficiaries. The government has proposed an amendment to the federal tax code, which would allow controlled foreign corporations (CFCs) to repatriate up to 90% of their profits to related or parent operations in the United States, tax free.

THE TAX INCENTIVES ACT OF 1998

At the local level, the authorities have sought to offset the negative effects of the Section 936 phase out. As a result, they passed the Tax Incentives Act of 1998, which allows exemptions from Puerto Rican taxes for approved firms. The Act also introduces tax incentives related to the generating of employment. An important change in the structure of the tax incentive system is that it has shifted from large tax exemptions to low tax rates. In 2001, the authorities approved the Export Law (August 2001) in an effort to "promote the distribution of products through existing channels

Figure 3
GNP Convergence
PUERTO RICO'S GNP PER CAPITA AS A PERCENTAGE OF THAT OF THE UNITED STATES
1947 - 2002

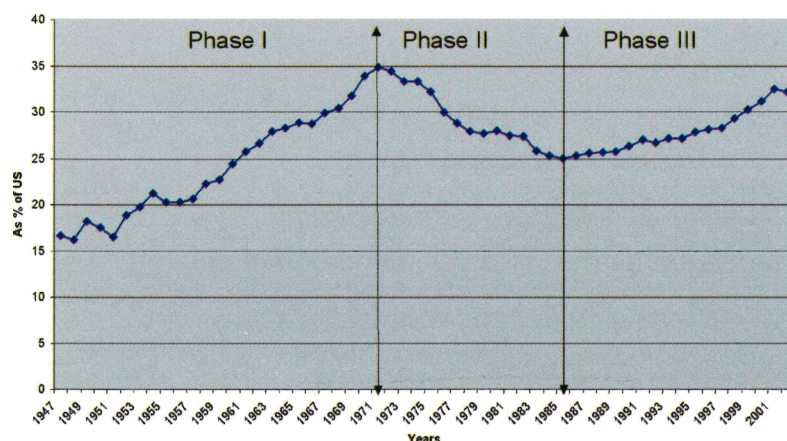


Table 3
THE TAX INCENTIVES ACT OF 1998
MAIN PROVISIONS

- The Tax Incentives Act is based on the application of a flat tax of, usually, 7% (though it can be as low as 2%) to replace the granting of tax exemptions.
- Non-exempt firms are subject to a 39% corporate tax rate.
- Textile, leather, shoes and fish canning operations are subject to a 4% tax.
- Strategic investment may be granted a 0% tax rate.
- Elimination of the 'tollgate' tax on repatriated earnings.
- High rate of deductions on expenses for job training, human resource development and research and development.
- Creation of a special fund for investment in new firms and research and development projects. The fund can draw on up to 5% of the income tax received to create new firms.
- Tax incentives are granted to companies that export national products.
- Companies operating under Section 936 or Section 30A may also qualify for tax exemptions.
- Maintains tax incentives for employment (tax deductions include 15% of a firm's payroll and 50% of total net income) and property tax benefits (100% exemption is granted for one year and 90% for subsequent years).
- Grants a tax credit of 10% of expenditure on local products.
- New tax credit for investors buying plants that will close.

Source: On the basis of official information

such as multinationals retailers and joint venture agreements." This law raises, from 10% to 25%, the tax credit applied for buying products that are manufactured in Puerto Rico. This policy of tax incentives together with the structural shift to the services sector and the development of Puerto Rico's natural resource base (human capital) may define Puerto Rico's growth path in the coming years and determine whether it will indeed prove to be a 'convergent path'.

The changes in tax incentives may give an advantage to CFCs in Puerto Rico since firms operating in states of the United States do not enjoy similar tax incentives. According to unofficial

sources, the new policy of tax incentives has, to some extent, fulfilled its functions of providing the incentives for firms to maintain their working operations in Puerto Rico. The point has been made, however, that the legislation for CFC's may prove to unnecessarily complicate what should be a simple and transparent investment decision. Moreover, the issue of whether these tax changes can revamp a stagnant domestic industrial sector or whether they will simply deepen the growing process of substitution of local by foreign assets, has not been fully contemplated or analysed. ■

Material cited in this article includes:

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Davidson, P (2003), Financial Markets, Money and the Real World, Edward Elgar, Northampton.

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CONFRONTING THE HIV/AIDS EPIDEMIC *(continued from page 6)*

Reliable information regarding the relationship between migration processes and patterns, and the spread of HIV/AIDS should therefore be made widely available.

- Mobile populations are difficult to target with preventive and protection measures since they are likely to comprise groups of migrants, each of which is at a different stage in the migration process.
- With increasingly tighter immigration controls and fewer opportunities for semi-and unskilled workers to move legally, increasing numbers of such persons will seek and gain illegal access to more promising labour markets. Such unprotected labour forces will be particularly at risk to become infected.
- Since many migrants are involved in low-paid and low-skilled jobs, which provide few health benefits, such persons are particularly vulnerable to HIV infection.

- Official immigration policies (such as the denial of a visa for an accompanying spouse and HIV/AIDS testing as a condition for the granting of work permits) may directly or indirectly contribute to the further spread of the disease.
- With growing numbers of mobile women accessing various sectors (from prostitution to health services) of the labour-market at the destination, the risk of infection differs considerably between men and women.

Recognizing the urgency of these issues, the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean is currently seeking to integrate aspects of population mobility into its current and upcoming studies on HIV/AIDS. This Subregional Headquarters is also working in close collaboration with the United Nation's Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNAIDS and PANCAP (Pan American Partnership Against HIV/AIDS) to identify areas of research that are of utmost importance in providing Caribbean governments with the information needed to

counter the further spread of the disease in their countries. ■

Material discussed in this article is contained in the following:

CAREC (Caribbean Epidemiology Centre) (2000), *HIV/AIDS and Migration in the Caribbean*.

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UNAIDS (Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS) (2002), *Report on the Global HIV/AIDS Epidemic*, UNAIDS, Geneva.

UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund) (2002), *The Government of Jamaica/UNICEF Country Programme (2002-2006)*, Briefing List, UNICEF Jamaica Country Office.

World Bank (2000), *HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean: Issues and Options*, Report No. 20491 - LAC, June 1998.

Snapshot Moment



Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan, with staff of the United Nations Port of Spain duty station on 2 January 2004, during his visit to Trinidad and Tobago.

ECLAC/CDCC STATISTICS OFFICER MOVES ON



Lancelot Busby

Economic Affairs Officer, Lancelot Busby, retired from ECLAC in March 2004 after 27 years with the Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean.

Lance was already an experienced statistician – coming directly from the Trinidad and Tobago Central Statistical Office – when he was appointed to the ECLA (Economic Commission for Latin America) Port of Spain office in 1977. He brought to the ECLAC system an extensive knowledge of the Latin America and Caribbean region and its economic challenges, which was complemented by his impressive skills in most of the languages of the subregion.

During his time at ECLAC, Lance became recognized throughout the subregion for his contribution to research and development in the field of statistics, as well as for his support of country statistical offices and their staff. Through direct technical assistance, he has contributed to the development of the data collection and analysis infrastructure in the majority of CDCC member countries. His publications reflect the breadth of his interests and his eagerness to apply statistical expertise in as many other disciplines as possible. He has written in such areas as tourism, agriculture, trade and social development. This, in addition to more theoretical applications of his expertise – to issues of methodology and statistical infrastructure building, for example.

For much of his time at ECLAC, Lance participated in the planning and execution of subregional, including population and household, censuses. Through his involvement in these exercises, he contributed to the growth of statistical expertise within the Caribbean (as a member of the CARICOM Statisticians Council) and across the wider Latin American region (as a participant in the work of CELADE, the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre). In overseeing the implementation of the new System of National Accounts of the United Nations System, he also directly supported the modernisation of country statistical offices. Most recently, he supervised the establishment of the CARIBTRADE Merchandise Trade and Transportation Database, which is an important negotiating tool for all countries of the subregion as it provides information and analysis on trade trends.

Lance has shepherded the work of the Statistics Unit while contributing to the development of statistics facilities throughout the subregion. The ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean is grateful for his contribution to the work of the United Nations System and his service to the people of the Caribbean. ■



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ABSTRACTS OF SELECTED ECLAC/CDCC PUBLICATIONS

JANUARY TO MARCH 2004

Issues, effects and implications of the FTAA for CARICOM economies

*ECLAC. Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, 2004
LC/CAR/G.773*

This document assesses the implications of the Free Trade of the Americas Agreement (FTAA) for Caribbean Community (CARICOM) economies. It examines patterns of intra and extraregional trade in goods and services, and market access conditions for the major export products of CARICOM. It also considers the relationship between imports and tariffs in order to determine the extent to which CARICOM Caribbean governments are dependent on trade taxes and how import liberalisation will affect them. Since a primary effect of liberalisation will be a reduction in import tariffs, some governments will be forced to widen their tax base by reducing the range of tax deductions granted. Among the conclusions of this study, is that such policies could undermine the freedom of governments to pursue domestic policy objectives.

Challenges in meeting the monitoring requirements of the MDGs: An examination of selected social statistics for four Caribbean SIDS

*ECLAC. Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, 2004
LC/CAR/G.776*

The collection and analysis of sound statistical data is needed to fulfil the monitoring requirements of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This document discusses the challenges faced by Caribbean countries in producing and managing such data. It examines and analyses infrastructural capacity and key data issues, and also explores requirements for capacity building in the field of social statistics in the subregion. The selected social indicators presented are accompanied by definitions, technical notes and explanations. The sources of data are the 1990 and 2000/2001 population census of The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize and Saint Lucia, and social statistical sets drawn from databases of subregional and international agencies.

Population Ageing in the Caribbean: An Inventory of Report of the ECLAC/CDCC Fourth Caribbean Ministerial Conference on Women: Review and Appraisal of the Beijing Platform for Action

*ECLAC. Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, 2004
LC/CAR/L.1*

The Fourth Caribbean Ministerial Conference on Women convened in St. Vincent and the Grenadines from 12 to 13 February 2004 to review the objectives of the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action (POA) and assess their implementation. While addressing all 12 of the "critical areas of concern" identified in the Beijing POA, the meeting focused on the themes of economic empowerment, gender equality and equity, institution building, and health - particularly sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS - issues. This report summarises the presentations that addressed these issues as well as the discussions that they generated. The recommendations and conclusions that emerged from the Conference are recorded in the document, "*The Kingstown Way Forward*", which is annexed to the report. ■



The Newsletter of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee
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