UN OFFICE OF THE HIGH REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, LANDLOCKED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES (UN-OHRLS)

SIDS NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS MEETING-MONITORING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SAMOA PATHWAY AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDG)

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OVERVIEW

CONTEXTUAL ISSUES

KEY CHALLENGES

SOLUTIONS
KEY CONTEXTUAL ISSUES

NATURAL DISASTERS

Aftermath of Hurricane Maria-Dominica devastated.

It is difficult to address these challenges when they do occur, if the magnitude of the impact on the population and housing stock and country in general cannot be accurately measured.
KEY CONTEXTUAL ISSUES
AFTERMATH OF HURRICANE MARIA

- Coming together of Member Countries to support Dominica
  Spirit of the Community

- Regional Response-CARICOM countries coming together to support one another in time of need.
KEY CONTEXTUAL ISSUES

- Plymouth Montserrat, Caribbean
- Before and After the Volcanic Eruption-1997.
- Destruction of capital, Plymouth
KEY VULNERABILITIES

1. Natural disasters
2. External economic and financial shocks
3. Narrow resource base
4. Climate Change
5. Domestic mis-management
KEY CONTEXTUAL ISSUES

6. Crime/Violence
7. Non-Communicable Diseases e.g. Diabetes Mellitus, Hypertension, Cancer
8. High Indebtedness
9. Unemployment

MANIFESTATION OF COUNTRY LEVEL CHALLENGES/OTHER KEY ISSUES
Some of the key challenges faced by NSOs/NSS include:

- Small size - lack of capacity difficulty in getting staff with the relevant skill set, element of staff turnover due to attrition or other causes may impact some offices;
- Low ratio of professional to other/technical and administrative staff is one issue;
- ICT Infrastructure outdated, in need of continuous upgrading in addition to the threats posed by centralizing the IT staff within the public service that has implication for lack of dedicated attention being paid to the Statistics which impact timeliness;
- Increased demand for statistics in an environment of declining financial resources, resulting in critical data gaps;
- Outdated Organisational Structure – impact focus on new and expanded data demands;
- Outdated legislative frameworks (being addressed through use of CARICOM Model Statistics Bill);
Some of the key challenges faced by NSOs/NSS include (continue):

- Uncoordinated national statistical systems (NSS)/impact data exchange/quality;

- Inadequate Investment and Reduced Budget Allocations:
  
  • Inadequate investment to boost growth and development imply that investment in statistics that can sustain capacity building is not realized.
  
  • Reduced budget allocations to undertake basic statistical operations resulting in major data gaps;
SOLUTIONS TO THE DATA CHALLENGES

Suggested Solutions to the Statistical Challenges:

1. DOMESTIC SUPPORT TO STATISTICS:

- Funding and Investment in Statistics at the National level from Domestic Sources, in the National Statistical System and specifically the National Statistical Offices should be adequate and sustained;

- Budget allocated to Statistics from this source should not be static or declining but it should take into consideration evolving requirements for statistics by users/decision-makers and the cost of producing these new data requirements. In fact when countries are experiencing Financial and Economic Challenges that leads to Bretton Woods intervention- that is the time that statistics are required and therefore budget cuts to statistics should not be undertaken;

- Funding should include Staffing Requirements including for specialised areas of Statistics e.g. Demography, Environment, Sampling, Gender, National Accounts, Merchandise Trade., Services specifically Tourism Statistics and IT support staff;

- Domestic Support to Statistics should also address non-traditional/new areas/skills acquisition – Coordination, Advocacy and Communication, Data Science; Innovation, Leadership/Management; Results-based Management.
2. STRATEGIC APPROACHES TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF STATISTICS

- NATIONAL LEVEL

- At the national level strategic approaches to the development of Statistics should be followed;

- A template for this is the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) of PARIS21 which considers NSDS for SIDS.

- In the absence of an NSDS, the NSO should take the leadership role and embark on a piecemeal strategic approach which can then be followed by an overall strategy;

- In CARICOM a few countries are undertaking the NSDS process including Grenada, Belize, Guyana and Jamaica. In some cases countries would have been undertaking strategic planning outside of NSDS initiatives;
2. STRATEGIC APPROACHES TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF STATISTICS:

- **REGIONAL LEVEL**
- Given the small size of countries - a Regional Strategy for the Development of Statistics is also recommended;
- However, strategic approaches can take place outside of the RSDS. Some of these strategic initiatives in CARICOM prior to the overarching RSDS include:
  - Development of Sectoral Statistical programmes across the region e.g. Social/Gender and Environment Statistics:
  - Development and approval by the Community Council of Ministers of a common Regional Statistical Work Programme (RSWP);
  - Development of CARICOM Model Statistics Bill;
  - Data Policy, Data Management and Data Warehousing Framework
- There must be alignment between the various NSDS’s and the overarching Regional Strategy - RSDS;
SOLUTIONS TO THE DATA CHALLENGES

2. STRATEGIC APPROACHES TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF STATISTICS

• RSDS/NSDS

• The Challenges that negatively impact improvement in Statistics and its availability are not just the technical work but are also Institutional/Organisational in Nature.

• An overarching strategy RSDS properly implemented as well as NSDS’s that are effectively aligned to the RSDS can produce better results including:
  • Strengthening the National Statistical System, addressing coordination, that could stimulate the sharing of administrative data for statistical purposes, reviewing of the data sources including the quality;
  • Assess the capacity of the NSS;
  • Review the needs of Users/Statistics Legislation, develop MOUs/SLAs
  • Develop a Roadmap/determine milestones;
  • Having a Vision a Mission and Overarching Goal for the improvement and harmonisation of Statistics.
The CARICOM REGIONAL STRATEGY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF STATISTICS (RSDS) was endorsed by the Thirty-Ninth Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government (HGC) of CARICOM in July 2018 and some next steps, including an Implementation Plan, a Resource Mobilisation Strategy and an Advocacy and Communication Plan were also endorsed:

**OVERARCHING THEME**

“BUILDING RESILIENCE OF THE CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY”

**ULTIMATE OUTCOME:**

AN EFFICIENT CARICOM STATISTICAL SYSTEM (CSS), THAT IS RESPONSIVE TO THE NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT AGENDA, ENABLING A RESILIENT COMMUNITY WITH SUSTAINED ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT
VISION

A CARICOM STATISTICAL SYSTEM (CSS) THAT IS RECOGNISED FOR PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE AND IS THE PREMIER SOURCE OF HIGH-QUALITY, HARMONISED STATISTICS ON THE COMMUNITY

MISSION

TO PROVIDE CARICOM AND THE GLOBAL COMMUNITY WITH HIGH QUALITY, HARMONIZED STATISTICS FOR EVIDENCE-BASED DECISION-MAKING, RESEARCH, THE EMPOWERMENT OF THE PEOPLE AND FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SUSTAINED ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT
SOLUTIONS TO THE DATA CHALLENGES
EXCERPTS FROM CARICOM RSDS

FIVE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES
STANDARDS AND HARMONISATION; GOVERNANCE; INTEGRATED STATISTICAL SYSTEMS;
INNOVATION; and ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATION

DRIVERS/ENABLERS
IT INFRASTRUCTURE, 2030 AGENDA/SAMOA PATHWAY, SUSTAINABLE CAPACITY BUILDING,
AND GENDER MAINSTREAMING

CORE VALUES
PROFESSIONAL INDEPENDENCE, TRANSPARENCY, INTEGRITY, CONFIDENTIALITY, QUALITY,
ACCESSIBILITY AND USER ORIENTATION/CUSTOMER FOCUS
2. STRATEGIC APPROACHES TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF STATISTICS

DRIVER-MAINSTREAM THE 2030 AGENDA/SAMOA PATHWAY- KEY ELEMENTS:

• **Exploit** the opportunities of the 2030 Agenda for the modernisation and transformation of the CARICOM Statistical System (CSS);

• **Mainstream** the 2030 Agenda framework across the entire CSS to make available the production of indicators to monitor all 17 Goals and 169 targets and the corresponding monitoring of the SAMOA Pathway;

• Specifically, with reference to the above:

• **Mainstream** statistics on environmental issues and concerns inclusive of Climate Change, Disasters/Natural Disasters and on Green Economies.
2. STRATEGIC APPROACHES TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF STATISTICS

DRIVER-MAINSTREAM 2030 AGENDA/SAMOA PATHWAY-KEY ELEMENTS (continued):

- **Build** and **strengthen** strategic partnerships, to optimise the use of scarce resources and to achieve efficiency gains in facilitating the production of the indicator framework that can guide, monitor and underscore the achievements of the 2030 Agenda framework/SAMOA Pathway;

**Undertake** a baseline assessment in the context of the 2030 Agenda of the capacity of countries to produce the 230+ indicators, assessing at the same time the institutional, organisational and technical readiness of the CSS to move to the next level of maturity in building the relevant data ecosystem.
2. STRATEGIC APPROACHES TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF STATISTICS:
   DRIVER -SUSTAINABLE CAPACITY BUILDING-KEY ELEMENTS (Continued):

- **Undertake** a gap analysis to determine the skills and competencies that are required to sustain the current and planned programmes and to identify the statistical capacity needs of countries;

- **Assess** the institutional, organisational and technical readiness of national statistical systems to move to the next level of maturity with regards to modernisation, making use of available assessment tools;

- **Enable** the development of a systematic programme of capacity-building for successful transformation of the CSS and which should have a clear and direct link to succession planning;
2. STRATEGIC APPROACHES TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF STATISTICS:

• SUSTAINABLE CAPACITY BUILDING-KEY ELEMENTS (Continued)

• Explore opportunities for pooling skilled human resources for establishing a formal system of South-South cooperation/Attachment Programmes;

• Provide support to the Caribbean Association of Professional Statistics (CAPS) for enabling the professionalisation of statistics in the CSS;

• Develop closer collaboration with universities in the region to enable short-term training courses in statistics for the CSS;
- SUSTAINABLE CAPACITY BUILDING- (continued)

- **Enhance** the capacity of the CSS to produce quality statistics on a sustainable basis;

- **Formally establish** and make operational the Centres of Excellence in Statistics;

- **Develop** and **advance** a system of training, capacity-building and knowledge base through the establishment of the virtual CARICOM Institute for Statistical Training and Research (e-CISTAR), inclusive of an **Online Knowledge Base** and **accredited training courses** in collaboration with universities and existing statistical institutes to complement traditional technical training methods and by leveraging existing and establishing new e-learning platforms;
2. STRATEGIC APPROACHES TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF STATISTICS

- CARICOM RSDS- NEXT STEPS

  - Preparation of a Regional Implementation Plan which is to be costed – work in Progress by the CARICOM Advisory Group on Statistics (AGS);

  - Development of a Resource Mobilisation Strategy through a Third High Level Advocacy Forum on Statistics- Work in Progress;

  - Preparation of a Communication and Advocacy Strategy for the RSDS – Work in Progress;

  - Preparation of a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework with Scorecard;
3. SDG Indicator Production - Focused attention to the data needs of the Samoa Pathway- Building an INTEGRATED Statistical Framework.

- Using the SDG Indicator framework as a “master plan” derive a framework for the Samoa Pathway monitoring as well as from work put in place on the Vulnerability Resilience Country Profile (VRCP);

- Reconcile the Indicators of the SDGs relative to identifying those SDG indicators needed to monitor the Samoa Pathway either for the 230 + Indicators or for the Core List in the Case of CARICOM and determine the adequacy of the former relative to the Samoa monitoring

- Identify relative to bullet 2, any additional indicators not reflected in the SDGs. i.e. paragraphs in the Samoa Pathway document not aligned to the targets of the SDGs;

- The pre-determined order of priority for the elements of the Samoa Pathway should be used in the above exercise.
3. SDG Indicator Production - Focused attention to the data needs of the Samoa Pathway

- CARICOM based on a decision of the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians set about the identification of core SDG Indicators - the Technical Working Group developed the Criteria for selection below.

- **CRITERIA FOR SELECTION OF INDICATORS**

- The goals should be linked to the national and regional planning program and priorities for development and provide a robust measure of progress as it relates to development for CARICOM countries.

- The ability of the indicator to measure the SDGs in the context of the diverse population groups in CARICOM [leaving no one behind].

- **The core indicators must reflect the unique vulnerabilities of CARICOM SIDS.**

- They must allow for comparability at the National, Regional and International level.
3. SDG Indicator Production - Focused attention to the data needs of the Samoa Pathway

- **WORK ALREADY IN PLACE IN DERIVING THE SAMOA PATHWAY INDICATOR FRAMEWORK IN CARICOM**

  - Core Indicators have already been identified through a participatory process at meetings held by the CARICOM Secretariat or collaboratively. Statisticians, and representatives from Gender, Environment, various ministries including, the Economy/Planning, Education contributed to this core;

  - A CARICOM Technical Working Group was also formed to review the outputs from the various meetings and identified 109 unique core SDG Indicators (114 including 5 repeats);

  - At the level of the Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD), Ministers approved 125 core indicators including 109 identified by the CARICOM TWG-SDG and 16 recommended by the Member State of Suriname;

  - During the process of deliberations on the indicator Barbados produced and presented a Correlation between the SDG targets and the pertinent paragraphs of the SAMOA Pathway document. This document was used in the identification of the Core SDG Indicators, which therefore took into consideration the requirements for the Samoa Pathway. The CARICOM TWG can continue the process and work with other SIDS in determining the Indicator Framework for the Samoa Pathway.
4. DO WHAT YOU CAN NOW / LEADERSHIP

- The NSO needs to take the lead and despite the resource constraints, identify what they can do given this situation;

- Greater inter-agency collaboration—specifically NSO/Other Producer of Statistics in the NSS and other key stakeholders

- Greater sensitization on the Indicators required for SDGs/Samoa Pathway within the National Statistical System;

- NSO should work with the Other Statistics Producing Agencies to make the data available starting in the case of CARICOM the Core list of Indicators approved by the Council for Human Development;

- There should be a Cross-Regional Process that can be used to compare the Core from across the various SIDS and to come up with a common Core [and General] Indicator Framework for the Samoa Pathway.
5. INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS/LEADERSHIP

- **Genuine Collaboration**: Avoidance of duplication of efforts, wastage of scarce resources - need to work together and avoid a “Divide and Rule” approach - process should be transparent in terms of approaches by various IDPs to countries, regional/sub-regional organisations
- Act in the best interest of developing of Statistics in SIDs;
- Identify and continue the best practices in providing support
- UNOHRLLS and UNDESA SIDS Division are well-poised to take the leadership role in monitoring and evaluating the Samoa Pathway;
- The above does not preclude contributions by other IDPs but coordination should be undertaken by the two organisations mentioned that should be *well-resourced* to undertake this responsibility. It is expected that there would be engagement with organisations such as CARICOM Secretariat and the South Pacific Community that work closely with SIDS at the sub-regional level;
- Fundamentally – the voices of SIDS must be heard and must be listened to - moving forward.
The End