



Concept note

Seminar on Developing a Programme on Integrated Statistics in support of the Implementation of the SNA for CARICOM countries

Integrated Business and International Statistics Programme

3-5 February 2014, Castries, Saint Lucia

Background

The idea of developing and achieving an integrated system of international statistics has long history among national and international governing bodies of economic statistics. The motivating source of this work has been the policy and statistical benefits of integrated economic statistics for nationally and internationally coordinated economic policy in the interconnected global economy.

Integrated economic statistics bring many benefits for data users, producers and providers, which include but not limited to the following:

- A common standardized information management framework that governs the statistical production process over time and across countries
- Demand for evidence based Mutually reinforcing stories and the descriptions of the sequence of events that are obtained from coherent statistics covering business statistics, short term statistics, national accounts and international statistics
- Statistical production process of collection compilation and dissemination that are cost effective and integrated, including their institutional arrangements and managements, and are explained in a transparent manner to the data user and data provider
- The integration of the data collection procedures that reduce response burden on respondents
- The opportunity to seek collaboration in the development and application of common methods and IT tools for data processing, documentation and exchange through the adoption of standardized information management model

The Statistical Commission at its 37th session endorsed the concept of an integrated approach to economic statistics and recommended its operational use in national economic programmes. Critical to the integration of economic statistics are the elements of conceptual framework and statistical production, including its institutional arrangements and management culture. The Statistical Commission at its 40th session affirmed the role of the System of National Accounts (SNA) as the integrated framework in economic statistics; as such the implementation of the 2008 SNA is critical for the integrated economic statistics programme. Institutional arrangements at both the national and international levels are also important for the management of integrated economic statistics and should be part of the corresponding reform programmes.

Purpose

Most countries who have attended the SNA implementation workshop in early 2013 have submitted to UNSD and CARICOM Secretariat a final version of their respective Statement of Strategy. As a next step, the seminar will discuss a way forward to translate their statements of strategy into a national implementation programme.

The seminar also aims to build capacity to develop national and regional programme for the implementation of the integrated business and international statistics in response to policy needs for integrated economic statistics and adopting a standard information management framework for statistical production process of statistics related to the business sector.

The seminar is expected to reach a broad agreement on the actions to be taken at the national, sub-regional and international level to ensure that mutually reinforcing actions will advance the formulation and implementation of a multi-year national and sub-regional programme for development of integrated economic statistics in support of the implementation of the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics.

Organization of the programme

The 3-day seminar will be organized around four themes:

- i) Policy needs, benefits and challenges of integrated business and international statistics programme at the national and international level
- ii) Components of the integrated business and international statistics programme in support of 2008 SNA
- iii) Self-assessment concerning the implementation of national programmes on integrated business and international statistics
- iv) Regional and national initiatives in developing and implementing programmes of work for the integrated business and international statistics programme

The seminar will first set the policy context and needs for an integrated business and international statistics programme. Policymakers and other users need statistics at different points in time and levels of aggregation from structural business statistics, short term statistics to national accounts and international statistics that are coherent in providing consistent indicators at national, regional and international level for evidence based policy making. These policy needs and analytical uses of statistics should be the basis for a country's plan for developing better integrated economic accounts and statistics that are designed to be consistent with macroeconomic concepts and theories for accounting for growth, productivity and sustainable development.

The seminar will provide an overview of the integrated economic statistics programme that covers the underlying conceptual organizing framework, institutional arrangements and statistical production process. The integration of economic statistics is about statistical reconciliation; that is to ensure the messages that statistics deliver are coherent. Reconciliation covers primary economic statistics and macroeconomic accounts,

short and structural economic statistics, and national and international economic statistics. It involves in dealing with conceptual, statistical production and institutional issues. Human resources issues and information technology issues also play a role. The integrated business and international statistics programme covers all aspects of institution arrangements and standard statistical production process, which include but not limited to the following components: governance and project management, statistical business registers and frames, integrated economic sampling and surveys, use of administrative data sources, data processing, data dissemination and communication

The seminar will discuss in greater detail the scope of integration and selected domains as primary targets for integration. Particular focuses will be on the integrated collections, statistical business register and data processing. It will also discuss the relevance and utility of the integrated economic statistics programme in support of the implementation of the 2008 SNA, including macroeconomic statistics and tourism satellite accounts.

The seminar will provide opportunity for countries to carry out a self-assessment concerning their implementation of integrated economic statistics programme and to determine which domains of the programme are to be prioritized depending on demands and data availability.

The final part of the seminar will call for the establishment of a regional and national institutional mechanism for the formulation of a programme of work on the implementation for the integrated business and international statistics in support of the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics, and seek commitments from all stakeholders in the countries and international donors.

Expected outcome

The seminar is expected to reach consensus among participants on the formulation of national programmes of work on integrated business and international statistics in support of the implementation of the 2008 SNA. These national programmes of work will also be the input in the formulation of the regional programme of work on integrated business and international statistics for the Caribbean countries. More specifically the seminar will seek:

- i) Commitments from participating countries to develop a national programme of work on integrated business and international statistics outlining the priorities, institutional framework and production issues along the statistical production process in support of the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics;
- ii) Commitments from participating countries, regional and international agencies to develop and support a regional programme on integrated business and international statistics based on national priorities.