Strengthening Migration Statistics

Side Event - 49th Session of the UNSC
Statistical Institute of Jamaica

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Background

- International migration has always been an integral part of the development of Jamaica
- Importance of migration to its development is reflected in Jamaica’s National Development Plan – Vision 2030 Jamaica
- Among the strategies under the Plan is the *Maintenance of a Stable Population*
- *The development and strengthening of systems and mechanisms to measure international migration flows for monitoring demographic statistics* is seen as important in achieving this strategy
Background

- Emigration of managerial, technical and highly skilled persons which results in:
  - loss of critical human resources
  - add to the large Diaspora stock
  - source of large amounts of remittances. Remittances account for a significant portion of foreign exchange flows into Jamaica

- Seasonal labour migrants to USA and Canada – ease unemployment
Jamaica developed a draft policy on International Migration

Policy seeks to
- ensure that international migration is adequately measured
- develop policies to limit the negative impact of migration
- garner possible benefits – from the large diaspora population and from remittances. Areas of possible benefits are in investment and in the reduction of poverty
Development of Migration Statistics

- A Mainstreaming Migration Project was developed with assistance from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and UNDP.
- Critical output was the development of a migration database.
- Provide a repository for migration data to facilitate research and provide statistics for the Migration Profile of Jamaica.
- An oversight committee made up of Government agencies who have links with international movements of Jamaicans was established.
Development of Migration Statistics

- Outcome was below expectations, as the project experienced difficulties in accessing data from the agencies
- A significant amount of the data was in paper format
- Data was available only as tables and not disaggregated
- Some agencies did not see themselves as data providers
- No common identifier among data sets to allow for linking
- Issues with quality as the data are not always compiled for statistical purposes
Strategies for Improvement

- Issues associated with the provision of Migration statistics are not unique.

- Same issues affecting the production and dissemination of statistics generally including the SDGs.

- Development of a National Statistics System (NSS) is critical.

- Area of assistance from the International Development Partners (IDP).
Strategies for Improvement

The NSS will allow for:

- Coordination among data producers and users
- Standardisation in classifications and ensure methodology conforms to international standards
- Reduction in costly duplication of efforts across agencies
- The integration of statistics into national planning
Strategies for Improvement

- Need to establish legal and Institutional frameworks for guiding the development of statistics
- Improvement in the production processes including the use of technology to make processes more efficient
- Capacity Building is critical but must go beyond simple training. This must be sustainable. Encourage south/south cooperation. Collaboration with local universities
- Need political commitment
Thank You