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## Statistical Commission

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**Items for discussion and decision: regional  
statistical development**

## Report of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean on cooperation for regional statistical development

### Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2019/210 and past practices, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) on cooperation for regional statistical development. In the report, the importance of collaborative work among countries and between countries and the United Nations system to overcome the different challenges for statistical development is highlighted, with particular reference made to the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC and the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians.

The results achieved by collaborative mechanisms, such as thematic working groups, the Statistical Coordination Group for the 2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean and the joint activities between the statistical and geospatial communities, have contributed to the strengthening of national statistical capacities in the region and provided inputs for processes and the setting of standards at the global level. These mechanisms offer the possibility of bringing together the experiences and knowledge of national statistical offices and international organizations to address issues of regional concern, while contributing to better coordination of activities among those actors.

The Statistical Commission is invited to comment on the work undertaken in the Latin American and Caribbean region and to identify possible opportunities for the interregional exchange of experiences.

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\* E/CN.3/2020/1.



# Report of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean on cooperation for regional statistical development

## I. Introduction

1. In the report of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean on statistical activities in Latin America and the Caribbean: recent achievements and next challenges (E/CN.3/2015/19), presented at the forty-sixth session of the Statistical Commission, in March 2015, some of the work undertaken in the region towards statistical progress was described and the statistical challenges that were expected to derive from the post-2015 development agenda were discussed.

2. In November of that year, the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) approved a strategic plan to set out the values, mission, vision and strategic and specific goals for the next 10 years. That period was considered to include the major challenges that national statistical systems in all countries would face, such as the follow-up to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the execution of the 2020 round of population censuses and the implementation of the 2008 System of National Accounts (SNA), the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting and the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics.

3. Since then, Latin American and Caribbean countries have made progress on different aspects, although many significant challenges lie ahead. The status of the follow-up to the Sustainable Development Goals provides some evidence of both situations. Taking into consideration the number of countries that have presented voluntary national reviews or have expressed an interest in submitting reports, by 2020 the region will likely have 34 reports submitted by 23 countries. Nevertheless, on average, only 31 per cent of the indicators included in the global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda are being produced by countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, with large differences between countries, ranging from less than 15 per cent to slightly above 50 per cent.<sup>1</sup>

4. Recent evaluations on the status of implementation of the Code of Good Practice in Statistics in Latin America and the Caribbean and of national legislation also offer clear indicators of the obstacles to achieving fully functional national statistical systems, namely, that most national statistical legislation does not adhere fully to the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, that less than half of the countries in the region have national statistical development plans in place, and that most countries have reported a decrease in the budget assigned to the national statistical offices.

5. Different initiatives at the national and regional levels have been implemented in recent years to overcome these challenges and support statistical development. The present report is focused on the main results that have been attained by some of those initiatives through the cooperation among countries and between countries and the United Nations system in the context of statistical governmental bodies, in particular the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC and the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians. In the report, the importance of collaborative work among countries and in close cooperation and coordination with the United Nations system to overcome the different challenges for statistical development is highlighted and the

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<sup>1</sup> See ECLAC, *Quadrennial report on regional progress and challenges in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean* (LC/FDS.3/3/Rev.1).

experience of Latin America and the Caribbean in this regard is presented for the consideration of other regions.

6. In section II of the present report, the basic characteristics of the Statistical Conference of the Americas and its recent meetings are described. Section III is focused on the achievements with regard to the cooperation for the follow-up to the Sustainable Development Goals and the coordination within the United Nations system in the context of the United Nations reform process led by the Secretary-General. In section IV, some results of the working groups of the Statistical Conference of the Americas are described. In section V, a description of the main milestones of the integration between the statistical and geospatial communities is provided. In section VI, the activities undertaken within the framework of the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians are presented.

## II. Statistical Conference of the Americas

7. The Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean is the intergovernmental body for the coordination of statistical activities in the region, with the purpose of improving national official statistics and their international comparability. It is composed of the 46 member countries of ECLAC, which include 33 countries of Latin America and the Caribbean and 13 North American, European and Asian countries, and 14 associate members.

8. At its eighth meeting, held in Quito in November 2015, the Conference established a decennial strategic plan for the period 2015–2025, with three strategic goals: to strengthen the organizational and management practices of the national statistical offices and the integration and coordination of national statistical systems; to foster the development of technical and methodological capacities in order to generate high-quality statistical information; and to foster coordination and cooperation between the member countries of the Conference and subregional and international organizations.

9. The working groups of the Conference constitute a means of collaboration between countries that contributes to the implementation of the strategic plan of the Conference. Through the design of a biennial programme of regional and international cooperation activities, each working group proposes the realization of a set of objectives and goals with regard to the development of a particular statistical issue or area. For its operation, the member countries of each group designate a coordinating country and a technical secretariat.

10. Between 2015 and 2019, there have been working groups on 16 topics: administrative records, agricultural statistics, censuses, disability measurement, environmental statistics, gender statistics, household surveys, indicators related to disaster risk reduction, institution-building, international classifications, labour market indicators, measurement of information and communications technologies, national accounts, poverty statistics, statistics on childhood and adolescence, and statistics on public security and justice.

11. In addition, at the fifteenth meeting of the Executive Committee of the Conference, held in June 2016, a group was created to coordinate the formulation of indicators and to support the building of national capacities for the follow-up to the Sustainable Development Goals. The Statistical Coordination Group for the 2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean comprises the 10 regional members of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators and the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

12. One of the main goals set by the member countries of the Conference in recent years was to increase the relevance and effectiveness of the working groups, given their central role as a mechanism for collaboration among countries and between countries and the United Nations system. To that end, during 2019 the Executive Committee conducted a consultation process with member countries to identify the regional priorities for statistical development and then prepare work programmes that were consistent with those priorities. As a result of that process, at the tenth meeting of the Conference, held from 19 to 21 November 2019, 11 working group proposals were discussed and approved, each of them with a clearly defined output that will be developed within a two-year period and submitted for approval at the eleventh meeting of Conference, in 2021.<sup>2</sup>

13. The tenth meeting of the Conference also marked the start of a new geographical representation of its Executive Committee, consistent with the geographic and linguistic distribution of the countries. Each of the three subregional groups (South America; North America, Central America and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean; and the English-speaking Caribbean) has two representatives, while members from outside the region have one. As previously, a seat on the Committee is reserved for the country that served as Chair in the preceding biennium. While the number of Executive Committee members remains at seven, the new composition increases the representation of the English-speaking Caribbean.

14. Several high-level seminars have been held in the context of the meetings of the Conference and its Executive Committee. In 2016, a seminar on the statistical framework for the follow-up to the Sustainable Development Goals was aimed at addressing some recent initiatives related to the monitoring of the Goals, such as the creation of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, the consolidation of regional and national statistical coordination mechanisms for the Sustainable Development Goal indicators and the development of statistical planning tools. In 2017, at a seminar on the theme “Towards the integration of statistical and geospatial information”, a road map for the integration of both sources of information was discussed and several experiences in the use of geospatial information for the production of statistics were analysed. In 2018, at a high-level seminar on the integration of non-traditional data sources in national statistical systems, successful experiences in the use of such data sources and the challenges concerning quality control, data access, institutional coordination and capacity-building, among other things, were addressed. In 2019, at a high-level seminar on the future of economic statistics, it was noted that a collaborative regional response to the demand for economic statistics needed to be pursued to support the formulation of evidence-based policymaking in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to contribute to improving the organization and management of national statistical systems. That seminar formed part of a global consultation to inform the Friends of the Chair group on economic statistics formed at the fiftieth session of the Statistical Commission, in March 2019.

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<sup>2</sup> See resolution 11 (X) of the tenth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas, available from <https://cea.cepal.org/10/sites/cea10/files/cea.10-resolution.pdf>.

### III. Statistical coordination for the Sustainable Development Goals

#### A. Statistical Coordination Group for the 2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean

15. One particular achievement of the Latin American and Caribbean region in recent years has been the consolidation of a group that coordinates the work at the regional level on the statistical aspects of the follow-up to the 2030 Agenda. The composition of the group brings together different countries that represent the different subregions, as well as a group of United Nations agencies that represent the United Nations system, together with ECLAC as technical secretariat.

16. The Statistical Coordination Group for the 2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean was created in June 2016, at the request of the member States of ECLAC at the eighth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas, in November 2015, to define a governance scheme and generate a regional plan of implementation to gradually cover the information requirements derived from the 2030 Agenda. The Group is composed of the five regional members of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators and five regional members of the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with two additional countries as observer States. In addition to the Statistics Division of ECLAC as technical secretariat, the Group includes the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Children's Fund as representatives of the regional statistical coordination mechanism for Latin America and the Caribbean of the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system. As explained below, this framework has contributed to the coordination of statistical activities across the United Nations system in the region and to the harmonization of strategic support for strengthening national capacities for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which is of particular relevance in the context of the United Nations reform process under way.

17. The Statistical Coordination Group produced an overview of the region's statistical capacity for the follow-up to the 2030 Agenda. It conducted a survey of the region's national statistical systems with a view to identifying the extent to which data on the global Sustainable Development Goal monitoring indicators were being produced, as well as the causes of non-production, the national institutions responsible for collecting and producing them, the frequency with which they were being produced, the level of disaggregation and the statistical event or instrument being used to gather the information, among other subjects. Following its implementation in 2016, two updates have been completed. The main results by Goal are summarized in the *Quadrennial report on regional progress and challenges in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean*.<sup>3</sup>

18. Another key product of the Statistical Coordination Group has been the definition of a regional framework of indicators for monitoring the 2030 Agenda. Following a request by member States at the ninth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas, the Group worked on a framework that should take into account regional specificities, thereby complementing the global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals, contribute to prioritizing measurement

<sup>3</sup> See ECLAC, document LC/FDS.3/3/Rev.1, figure III.3.

efforts and coordinate capacity development activities. The selection of indicators for the regional framework was based on several criteria, including the regional relevance of the indicator, its inclusion in other monitoring frameworks and the feasibility of its production at the regional and national levels. Although the availability of information was an important consideration, the prioritized list included indicators for which information might not be currently available. The outcome of the process was a prioritized set of 150 indicators (122 indicators from the global framework and 28 complementary or proxy indicators).<sup>4</sup> It is expected that the regional framework will be useful for reporting the progress of the region towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and will allow for better coordination of bilateral, regional and international cooperation to move towards closing the gaps in statistical capacities.

19. On the basis of the regional statistical capacities for the production of Sustainable Development Goal indicators and the set of prioritized indicators, the data group of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group for Latin America and the Caribbean and ECLAC implemented a mapping exercise of all support actions with regard to technical assistance relating to the Goals and statistical cooperation of the United Nations system in the region. The exercise provides relevant inputs for planning capacity-building activities in the immediate future and for the regional Sustainable Development Goal Gateway, described below.

## **B. Sustainable Development Goal Gateway and inter-agency coordination for supporting the achievement of the Goals**

20. The coordination of statistical activities between ECLAC and the United Nations system has been particularly relevant in the context of the development of a regional web-based platform for the Sustainable Development Goals, the Sustainable Development Goal Gateway. This platform, developed by ECLAC and the United Nations Development Programme in its capacity as Chair of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group for Latin America and the Caribbean, in close consultation with the agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system and the regional office for Latin America and the Caribbean of the Development Coordination Office, represents a first step towards the establishment of a regional knowledge management hub, which is one of the proposals by the Secretary-General for restructuring regional assets of the United Nations in support of the 2030 Agenda (see [A/74/73-E/2019/14](#)).

21. The Sustainable Development Goal Gateway is intended to serve as a one-stop shop for all Goal-related information, including the United Nations offer of services, regional Goal-related data collected and specific analytic and policy tools provided by the United Nations in response to member countries' needs. It will be closely linked to the data available through the United Nations global platform being developed under the leadership of the Development Coordination Office and to the data and information available from all United Nations entities, avoiding duplication of efforts. The Gateway will provide up-to-date information on the global, regional and national implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the progress towards the achievement of the Goals, including links to relevant information on the institutional processes carried out and the monitoring mechanisms used by the countries themselves. Member States, United Nations country teams and the general public will have access to the Gateway, allowing for wide dissemination and day-to-day

<sup>4</sup> See the report on the activities of the Statistical Coordination Group for the 2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC document LC/CEA.10/6), presented at the tenth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas.

planning, based on reliable and up-to-date information, to respond to specific regional and subregional or transboundary demands and to coordinate United Nations development system support in the field.

22. The proposed regional portal on the Sustainable Development Goals was presented at the tenth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas, at which countries recognized it as a key tool for supporting the implementation of and follow-up to the 2030 Agenda and for strengthening the capacities to that end, and requested that it be presented at the fourth meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development as a regional contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

#### **IV. Selected areas of international cooperation in the context of the Statistical Conference of the Americas**

23. The working groups of the Statistical Conference of the Americas are organizational arrangements that allow member countries to jointly address different issues that are relevant for the statistical development of the region. Some of their results have contributed to the definition of processes, mechanisms and standards at the global level. Their main outcomes, such as documents, methodological materials and meeting reports, are disseminated through the Conference's knowledge transfer network (see <https://rtc-cea.cepal.org>).

##### **A. Administrative records**

24. In the field of administrative records, cooperation activities have been carried out to encourage their use in the production of statistics. A regional seminar on enhancing the use of administrative records for statistical purposes for the follow-up to the 2030 Agenda offered the possibility to share experiences, methodologies and techniques for obtaining high-quality statistics from administrative records and to analyse the situation of the statistical use of administrative records in the region. The working group also used the responses to questionnaires to assess the quality of administrative records and to evaluate the operating capacity of the statistical records system.

##### **B. Agricultural statistics**

25. The working group on agricultural statistics carried out cooperation activities through a project on the development of a methodology for the implementation of agricultural statistical systems in Latin America and the Caribbean, with the support of the Regional Public Goods Initiative of the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB). In this context, workshops and courses addressed the implementation of agricultural statistical systems, the use of satellite images in the delimitation of sampling frames, the use of administrative records and evaluation of data sources and the use of electronic devices for collecting agricultural information, among other things.

##### **C. Censuses**

26. The working group on censuses has focused on assessing and identifying lessons learned from the 2010 round of population and housing censuses and making recommendations for the preparation of the 2020 round. It has provided support in

making improvements to the calculation of population estimates and projections and has encouraged exchanges of knowledge and experiences among the region's countries.

27. The document "Conceptual aspects of population and housing censuses: challenges for the definition of inclusive content in the 2020 round" contains a series of recommendations that will be developed and complemented in a new report to be issued in 2020.<sup>5</sup> The document "State of the art of strategic aspects of an institutional cartography for censuses and surveys: situation analysis" summarizes the results of the self-assessment survey for institutional cartography with a view to the 2020 census round.<sup>6</sup>

#### **D. Disability measurement**

28. The working group on disability measurement has promoted the design and inclusion of questions on disability in the 2020 round of population and housing censuses in the region. It prepared a joint proposal with the working group on censuses and conducted a training seminar on the subject. In addition, regional training seminars and workshops were held on the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health and its implementation in the collection and analysis of disability data for national statistical offices according to the census round. A regional workshop on the measurement of child disability in Latin America and the Caribbean was also held.

#### **E. Environmental statistics**

29. The working group on environmental statistics has sought to strengthen the capacity to produce statistics and environmental indicators in a sustained and systematic manner, as well as to strengthen inter-institutional work in the countries of the region. One of the events held under this objective was the regional seminar and workshop on the theme "Development and strengthening of environmental statistics and indicators in Latin American countries, the joint path of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development". Likewise, the regional workshop for Latin America on energy and environment indicators was important as part of efforts to improve the capacity of the national statistical systems of the region in the areas of energy and environmental statistics, especially in relation to Sustainable Development Goal and green economy indicators.

30. In addition, during the period under review the Regional Network of Environmental Statistics for Latin America and the Caribbean was launched to bring together experts, technicians and managers who work on environmental statistics, indicators and accounts in the region. Regular webinars in different thematic areas in the field of environment statistics and the organization of a side event on climate change indicators at the twenty-fifth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Madrid in December 2019, have been important highlights of the work of the Network.

<sup>5</sup> ECLAC, *Aspectos conceptuales de los censos de población y vivienda: desafíos para la definición de contenidos incluyentes en la ronda 2020* (LC/TS.2019/67, available in Spanish only).

<sup>6</sup> ECLAC, "Análisis de situación: estado del arte sobre aspectos estratégicos de una cartografía institucional para censos y encuestas" (August 2019, available in Spanish only).

## **F. Gender statistics**

31. At its eighth meeting, the Statistical Conference of the Americas adopted the Classification of Time-Use Activities for Latin America and the Caribbean, responding to the need for an instrument with a gender approach and appropriate to the regional context which allows for the harmonization and standardization of time-use surveys, as well as the production of statistics on this topic. The Classification offers the possibility of having a comprehensive and orderly vision of the activities that people carry out and the time they devote to them, evidencing the different time assignments of women and men and providing inputs for public policies for equality in the social and economic fields.

32. The working group has also been instrumental in the organization of meetings of information specialists on time use and unpaid work, which have been held periodically for 17 years, and the discussions and experiences shared are a fundamental input for moving towards greater harmonization of time-use measurements in the region. The experience from Latin America and the Caribbean with time-use surveys, where 19 countries have carried out at least one measurement, has provided key contributions to the development of standards at the global level.

## **G. Household surveys**

33. The working group on household surveys has focused on the identification of best practices regarding the implementation of income and expenditure surveys. A regional workshop was held to identify the common challenges in relation to the production processes and uses of expenditure and income surveys, and a document summarizing the presentations and discussions was prepared. In addition, the group is preparing a document on best practices with regard to expenditure and income surveys on the basis of a regional consultation at which information was gathered on the processes of statistical design, questionnaire construction, recollection, processing and analysis.

## **H. Indicators related to disaster risk reduction**

34. The working group produced a document on the conceptual framework for indicators related to disaster risk reduction, with the purpose of improving the quality of the information and data collected to monitor the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 and disaster risk reduction and management initiatives in the countries. In the document, the working group presents the terminology on disaster risk reduction and statistics management, the relevant global agreements, the availability of data in the field and a set of recommendations. In addition, a seminar was held on the situation of statistics and indicators on extreme events, disasters and disaster risk reduction, the objective of which was to identify the statistical needs to measure those events and review the availability of sources and statistical series to address those needs.

## **I. Institution-building**

35. The Code of Good Practice in Statistics in Latin America and the Caribbean, adopted by the Statistical Conference of the Americas at its sixth meeting, in 2011, constitutes a technical and regulatory instrument with the objective of contributing to the improvement of national statistical activity and the independence of national statistical offices. Until 2015, the working group on institution-building conducted

peer reviews to evaluate the implementation of the Code. More recently, the working group used the responses to a questionnaire to update the evaluation of the implementation of the Code in 22 countries.<sup>7</sup> In addition, the group established a regional bank of statistical good practices in Latin America and the Caribbean, which contains a selection of actions that have contributed in innovative ways to the improvement of statistical processes and the quality of information, in coherence with the Code (see <https://sitios.dane.gov.co/visor-brbp>).

36. Following the discussions held at the regional workshop on legal frameworks for the production of official statistics, held in 2018, the working group prepared the adaptation and translation into Spanish of the Generic Law on Official Statistics for Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, published by the Economic Commission for Europe in 2016, with the purpose of providing a regional model for countries in the region that are interested in formulating or reformulating the legal basis for the functioning of their national statistical systems and the production of official statistics. The Statistical Conference of the Americas adopted the Generic Law at its tenth meeting, in November 2019.

## **J. International classifications**

37. The working group on international classifications prepared a report on the situation of countries in the implementation of the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities, the Central Product Classification, the International Standard Classification of Occupations and the Standard International Trade Classification. It has also developed training videos to support the implementation of those classifications and has contributed to the translation into Spanish of version 2.1 of the Central Product Classification.

## **K. Labour market indicators**

38. The working group on labour market indicators implemented a project for the regional adaptation of new international guidelines for measuring work statistics through the design of questionnaires and methodological guides, as part of the Regional Public Goods Initiative of IADB. The project undertook an assessment of countries' harmonization gaps and supported the implementation of cognitive tests to validate and develop household survey questionnaires. As a result, the working group published a harmonized household survey questionnaire and methodological guidelines to implement the most recent international standards from the International Conference of Labour Statisticians of the International Labour Organization.

39. The working group has been instrumental in systematizing the regional contributions to global processes, such as the revision of the International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-93) and its impact on labour force surveys. In addition, the group undertook an analysis of the availability of information for the production of work-related Sustainable Development Goal indicators, considering their link with the measurement of decent work.

## **L. Measurement of information and communications technologies**

40. The working group on the measurement of information and communications technologies has contributed to the exchange of experiences and good practices in

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<sup>7</sup> Results for 14 countries are available at <https://rtc-cea.cepal.org/es/documento/estado-de-implementacion-de-los-principios-del-codigo-de-buenas-practicas-estadisticas>.

measuring such technologies in the dimensions of education, government, households and companies. The group prepared a regional diagnosis of the process of creating harmonized statistics on information and communications technologies in national statistical offices. In addition, it contributed to the production of the 2019 version of the methodological reference framework for the measurement of access to and use of information and communications technologies in education of the Regional Centre of Studies for the Development of the Information Society under the auspices of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

## **M. Poverty statistics**

41. The working group on poverty statistics has focused on the measurement of non-monetary indicators of poverty and the relevant indicators for Sustainable Development Goal 1. A regional seminar was held to discuss the feasibility of improving and incorporating new indicators on the various dimensions of poverty in household surveys. A document was prepared in which the availability, comparability and adequacy of a set of non-monetary indicators commonly used in household surveys in 17 countries in Latin America was analysed.

42. With the support of the statistics and data programme of the tenth tranche of the United Nations Development Account, the working group held a regional seminar to address the challenges of accounting for missing dimensions and indicators, the possible innovations in measuring income and the ECLAC methodology for income poverty measurement,<sup>8</sup> the use of small area estimation methodologies for data disaggregation and the contribution of poverty measurements to the formulation of public policies.

## **N. Statistics on childhood and adolescence**

43. The working group on statistics on childhood and adolescence has held several virtual conferences for knowledge-sharing on topics such as the dissemination and visualization of statistical information on childhood and adolescence and sampling techniques for children under 5 years of age. The group produced a document on the use of censuses in monitoring the situation of children and adolescents in Latin America and the Caribbean, in which the potential of censuses for that purpose was analysed and recommendations were made for their improvement. The group also contributed to the translation into Spanish of the questionnaires for the measurement of disability in childhood and adolescence prepared by the Washington Group on Disability Statistics and the United Nations Children's Fund.

## **O. Statistics on public security and justice**

44. Cooperation activities in the field of public security and justice have focused, among other things, on promoting the questionnaires and methodologies developed within the framework of the Latin America and the Caribbean Crime Victimization Survey Initiative, as well as the inclusion of statistical information on crimes and criminal justice in national statistical programmes. A technical meeting was held on the topic of security, violence and justice indicators to monitor the Sustainable Development Goals, to exchange good practices in the production of 10 of the 23 indicators for Goal 16 and to identify possible official sources for the monitoring of Goal 16.

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<sup>8</sup> See *Income poverty measurement: updated methodology and results* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.18.II.G.17).

## V. Progress in the integration between statistics and geospatial information

45. One of the priorities for regional development has been the integration of statistical and geospatial information communities. At its thirty-sixth session, in May 2016, ECLAC adopted resolution 712 (XXXVI) on the regional integration of statistical and geospatial information, opening the space for dialogue between the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC and the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Americas.

46. The process of integration between statistical and geospatial communities has been actively encouraged through several joint meetings. A first meeting between the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas and the Board of Directors of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Americas was held in June 2016, at which some steps were taken to define a joint agenda. The sixteenth meeting of the Executive Committee, in April 2017, included a joint session with the Regional Committee to bring together the authorities of national statistical and geospatial organizations. In November of that year, the ninth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas included a seminar on the theme “Towards the integration of statistical and geospatial information”, with the participation of the Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information of the United Nations, among other speakers. In the context of the fifth session of the Regional Committee, in November 2018, a regional workshop on the theme “Integration of geospatial and statistical information for sustainable development: from dialogue to action” was held. In 2019, two meetings were held between the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas and the Board of Directors of the Regional Committee: in October, on the margins of the sixth session of the Regional Committee, and in November, under item 5 of the agenda of the tenth meeting of the Conference. As a result of those meetings, the declaration on the integration of geospatial and statistical information between the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Americas was approved.<sup>9</sup>

47. To support the process of integration of geospatial and statistical information, functions in the area of geospatial information were created within the Statistics Division of ECLAC in July 2017 through the recruitment of a regional expert in geospatial information management. ECLAC has provided support to the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Americas in the implementation of the Statistical and Geospatial Framework for the Americas project by fostering dialogue between national statistical offices and national geospatial agencies and organizing a regional consultation on a document on that project relating to the standardization of geospatial and socioeconomic information, addressed to the authorities and technical focal points of the national statistical offices.

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<sup>9</sup> See <https://cea.cepal.org/10/sites/cea10/files/cea.10-declaration-integration-geospatial-information.pdf> for the text of the declaration.

## **VI. Statistical activities in the context of the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians**

### **A. Continuation of the modernization and transformation process**

48. Since the previous report to the Statistical Commission submitted by ECLAC (E/CN.3/2015/19), progress has continued in countries of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) towards the modernization and transformation of the national statistical systems. This process was stimulated by the political commitment to statistics at the highest level of CARICOM, through the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community.

49. At its thirty-seventh regular meeting, in 2016, the Conference of Heads of Government of CARICOM endorsed the action plan for statistics in the Caribbean, which comprised specific actions stimulated by the need to produce the more than 230 indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals. At the meeting, Heads of Government also agreed that, for the purposes of statistical work at the international level of the United Nations statistical system, CARICOM should be viewed as an undividable grouping within the Latin American and Caribbean area.

50. After having endorsed the preparation of the CARICOM Regional Strategy for the Development of Statistics at its thirty-eighth regular meeting, in 2017, the Conference of Heads of Government of CARICOM, at its thirty-ninth regular meeting, in July 2018, endorsed the strategic framework for the Regional Strategy as prepared by member States with the support of the CARICOM secretariat, the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century and contributions from a number of stakeholders.

51. The region also benefited from the convening in Barbados in 2016 of the Caribbean Conference on a Transformative Agenda for Official Statistics, the outcome of which included recommendations relevant to the modernization of the statistical systems in CARICOM that incorporated the action plan for statistics approved by the Conference of Heads of Government of CARICOM at its thirty-seventh regular meeting.

52. A number of countries continued to work on the development of national strategies for development statistics, including through the conduct of an assessment and review of the statistics legislation and consultations with stakeholders. Those countries included Belize (2017 and continuing), Grenada (in progress), Guyana (in progress), Jamaica (2017) and the Bahamas (in progress, soon to be finalized). The work on the design of national strategies for development statistics has been supported by the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century and/or IADB.

### **B. Statistical capacity-building**

53. Statistical capacity-building continued in a number of areas supported by the Caribbean Regional Technical Assistance Centre, mainly in the area of national accounts. The CARICOM secretariat provided support in a number of areas through funding received under the tenth European Development Fund and from IADB. IADB provided support under two regional public goods projects, the first to continue the work from the 2010 census round on a common census framework to enable the production of harmonized census results grounded in international and regional principles and recommendations, and the second focusing on the areas of gender, environment and agricultural statistics. The latter project is complementing support

being received from the Government of Italy in those three areas of statistics, as well as training in the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange. Canada, through the Project for the Regional Advancement of Statistics in the Caribbean, is focusing on the four core areas of national accounts, household survey infrastructure, business survey infrastructure, and communication and advocacy. A number of other activities were conducted on the basis of requests by the CARICOM secretariat or by countries, such as in leadership and management training, the anonymization of microdata, and census support and training in information management and communication. Support from the European Union included a pilot activity undertaken on statistics on the international trade in services as well as support on national accounts, social/gender and environment statistics.

### **C. International Comparison Programme**

54. CARICOM countries continued their participation in the 2017 cycle of the International Comparison Programme, led by ECLAC with collaboration from the CARICOM secretariat. The CARICOM countries, with coordination by the secretariat, undertook a review of the Latin American and Caribbean list and recommended a short list of additional items thought to be highly relevant to the region, which were accepted by ECLAC as part of the regional list of items for Latin America and the Caribbean. In June 2019, the CARICOM secretariat, in collaboration with ECLAC, hosted a meeting for countries to enable their completion of prices on the special surveys, including construction, rental and education, and other requirements. CARICOM countries have also embraced the new approach of continuous activities of the Programme, and some have commenced data collection for the 2020 cycle. More concrete support, including a train-the-trainers workshop, has been requested in the past to develop experts in the CARICOM region who can better support participation in the future process of the International Comparison Programme.

### **D. Preparatory work for the 2020 round of population and housing censuses**

55. The region is preparing for the conduct of the 2020 round of population and housing censuses, with countries scheduled to undertake enumeration in 2020, 2021 and 2022. Continuous meetings of the Regional Census Coordinating Committee, which reports to the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians, were held. A census symposium on the 2010 round was also conducted in 2014. In 2017, CARICOM countries convened the first meeting of the technical working group for the 2020 censuses, which served to review the common census questionnaire and methodologies and key census activities, such as census management and mapping/geospatial information systems. The key result was the production of the common census questionnaire for the 2020 round of censuses, along with metadata. Since the 2017 meeting, a third version of the common census questionnaire has been produced, as well as a guidance note on key concepts and definitions. As is traditional, a regional census strategy has been prepared to support countries in the conduct of their census, to enable the sharing of best practices and to find common solutions to challenges, as well as ensuring that high-quality and comparable data are produced from the census. The CARICOM secretariat, in collaboration with other partners, held two midyear Regional Census Coordinating Committee and census workshops side by side in 2018 and 2019. It has also prepared an online census resource to facilitate networking and the exchange of information.

## **E. Support in the processing of merchandise trade statistics**

56. In collaboration with the European Union, the CARICOM secretariat provided training at a regional workshop on the processing of merchandise trade statistics using the new EUROTRACE software.

## **F. Continuation of collection and compilation of core areas of statistics and other initiatives**

57. Core Sustainable Development Goal indicators were developed and approved at the political level. An assessment of the availability of data on the Sustainable Development Goal indicators was also completed. Work continued on the compilation of statistics in core areas, as well as on the indicators for the Goals. Work also continued on a number of projects, including on a crime and security project named “CariSECURE: strengthening evidence-based decision-making for citizen security in the Caribbean” and a project supported by the Government of Italy on capacity-building in the areas of gender, environment and agriculture statistics, and a project funded by the Caribbean Development Bank to support the 2020 round of population and housing censuses is about to commence.

## **VII. Action to be taken by the Statistical Commission**

58. **The Statistical Commission is invited:**

(a) **To note the progress made in the Latin American and Caribbean region on statistical development through the different modalities of collaborative work among countries and between countries and the United Nations system;**

(b) **To comment on the synergies and opportunities for the exchange of experiences across regions;**

(c) **To discuss the global relevance of the progress made in the coordination within the regional United Nations system to develop a Latin American and Caribbean web-based platform on the Sustainable Development Goals (Sustainable Development Goal Gateway);**

(d) **To take note of the declaration on the integration of geospatial and statistical information between the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Americas, adopted by the Statistical Conference of the Americas at its tenth meeting,<sup>9</sup> and support the call to establish governance mechanisms to facilitate the joint work of national statistical offices, national statistical systems and national mapping agencies to consolidate national spatial data infrastructure.**