



**MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL,
CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY (CARICOM)
AMBASSADOR IRWIN LAROCQUE**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE
OBSERVANCE OF CARIBBEAN STATISTICS DAY
15 OCTOBER 2015**

It is my pleasure to mark the **Seventh Observance of Caribbean Statistics Day on 15 October 2015**.

This observance seeks to raise the profile of statistics in the Community in order to create more awareness of its production, dissemination and use in decision-making. This year also marks the Second Observance of **World Statistics Day on 20 October 2015**. In a way one can say that the stimulus for World Statistics Day was the first celebration of Caribbean Statistics Day in 2009.

This year the theme of World Statistics Day, “**Better Data, Better Lives**” has been adopted by the Community. As usual throughout the Region, Statisticians will be interfacing with persons such as policy-makers, students, members of the academia and the wider public to heighten their appreciation of the value of data collection.

The National Statistical Systems in Member States are being called upon to provide statistics in non-traditional areas or greater details in traditional areas. This is being geared towards assisting in monitoring the goals and targets of the United Nations Post-2015 Development Agenda which will place great demands on the already over-stretched National Statistical Systems in CARICOM. Statisticians in the Community must be commended for their efforts amidst the resource constraints that are being faced regionally.

Statisticians in Members States produce a number of data series, but there are critical data gaps. Also, in many instances users may not even be aware of what data are available from the statistical agencies. There is need to fill those gaps but also to treat with issues of communication with respect to the availability and use of statistics

International Developmental Partners (IDPs) such as Canada, the European Union (EU), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Women, and the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century have supported the production of statistics at the regional and national levels. These initiatives range from Legislation, the common Regional Statistical Work Programme and common frameworks such as on the Population and Housing Census and Literacy Surveys.

The Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians (SCCS) and its subsidiary Group continue to work with the CARICOM Secretariat towards increasing the range and quality of statistics in the Region. Arising out of the Second High-Level Advocacy Forum on Statistics, the SCCS has endorsed an Action Plan that identifies the support required in national statistical agencies to produce and disseminate the statistics required by users and citizens.

At the CARICOM Secretariat, proposals such as the development of Centres of Excellence, permanent attachment programmes and a CARICOM Regional Strategy for the Development of Statistics (RSDS) have been initiated to support the production of statistics in the Community.

Statistics is recognised by all as a vital part of the development agenda. On this, the Seventh commemoration of Caribbean Statistics Day, Member States are urged to provide the investment required to improve the production of statistics to support and guide sustained economic and social development of our Community.

It is my wish that the theme of *“Better Data, Better Lives”* for this year’s observance can assist in demonstrating that statistics is an integral part in ensuring an improved quality of life of the peoples of our Region.

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