



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
13 December 2024

Original: English

Statistical Commission

Fifty-sixth session

New York, 4–7 March 2025

Item 3 (s) of the provisional agenda*

**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 2024/312 and past practices, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean on cooperation for regional statistical development, which is submitted to the Commission for discussion and decision.

* [E/CN.3/2025/1](#).



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

I. Introduction

1. In its report on recent achievements and upcoming challenges in statistical activities in Latin America and the Caribbean, presented to the Statistical Commission at its fifty-first session ([E/CN.3/2020/20](#)), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) focused on the key areas of regional cooperation in the context of the Statistical Conference of the Americas and the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians.

2. Latin American and Caribbean countries have made significant strides in statistical development but continue to face challenges. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic disrupted traditional data-collection methods and reduced resources for statistical operations. Although several countries have made advances in reforming their statistical legislation, many still fall short of fully aligning with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics. Most countries implemented the 2020 round of the population census, introducing innovations in data collection while contending with lower response rates and coverage issues. Progress has been made in utilizing administrative records to enhance indicator timeliness and availability, and countries have adopted new methodologies and modernized dissemination platforms. However, further strengthening of national capacities and the role of national statistical offices is essential to effectively leverage emerging data sources and methodologies in an increasingly complex data ecosystem where official statistics often compete with other priorities.

3. In the present report, ECLAC highlights key achievements of cooperation among countries and with the United Nations system within the framework of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management Regional Committee for the Americas and the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians. It also includes essential support activities provided by ECLAC and the secretariat of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) to member countries.

II. Collaboration in the context of the Statistical Conference of the Americas

4. The Statistical Conference of the Americas is the main statistical forum that promotes the development of national statistical systems in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Conference plays a crucial role in enhancing the production, dissemination and use of high-quality statistical information. The work of the Conference is organized through a structured framework that includes biennial conferences, where Member States convene to set priorities and approve work programmes. Between these conferences, the Conference operates through various working groups and task forces focused on specific statistical areas. Those groups facilitate collaboration, knowledge exchange and technical assistance among member countries. In addition, the Conference coordinates with international organizations to align regional statistical practices with global standards, fostering consistency and comparability of data across nations.

A. Regional collaboration through virtual exchanges and high-level seminars

5. The knowledge transfer network is a virtual platform established under the framework of the Conference to expand the latter's activities and enhance their impact across the regional statistical community.¹ Initially conceived as a space to showcase products developed by various working groups, the platform quickly evolved into a dynamic mechanism for collaboration and knowledge-sharing among countries. A key feature of the platform is its “*Conectados RTC*” section, which hosts regular virtual meetings on regionally relevant statistical topics. Those sessions, organized with the support of the ECLAC Statistics Division and the National Institute of Statistics of Chile, were launched during the COVID-19 pandemic to address the disruption to statistical operations caused by mobility restrictions. They proved instrumental in sharing practices and tackling challenges during that critical period. Since then, the platform has gained significant recognition, hosting 83 webinars between 2020 and 2024, each attended by an average of over 100 participants. The sessions have become an invaluable resource for exchanging experiences, best practices, methodological tools and insights among regional statistics experts.

6. To address topics beyond the scope of working groups of the Statistical Conference of the Americas, the knowledge transfer network introduced a new collaborative space comprising closed groups of national statistical offices in the region. Each group operates within a dedicated area on the ECLAC communities platform, enabling members to share information and collaborate on specific topics. Since its inception, six thematic communities have been established, focusing on population and housing censuses, the Sustainable Development Goals, women leaders in national statistical offices, care society measurement, race and ethnicity, and sexual orientation and gender identity measurement. The communities have strengthened regional expertise and fostered deeper connections among national statistical offices.

7. High-level seminars have also been organized in the context of Statistical Conference of the Americas meetings and its Executive Committee sessions. Notable examples include “Beyond GDP: statistical challenges of measuring development”,² in 2022, which explored challenges in enhancing the measurement of gross domestic product (GDP) and producing complementary indicators that reflect economic, social and environmental progress; and “Innovations in the population and housing censuses of the 2020 round: looking towards the 2030 round”,³ in 2024, where directors and managers of national statistical offices shared innovations from the 2020 census round, discussed lessons learned and focused on strategies for planning and preparing the next round of censuses.

B. Institutional strengthening and data governance

8. Between 2020 and 2024, significant progress has been made in strengthening statistical institutional capacity in Latin America and the Caribbean. In 2020, the Generic Law on Statistics for Latin America⁴ was published, approved at the 10th meeting of the Conference, with the goal of providing a regional model for Latin

¹ See <https://rtc-cea.cepal.org/en>.

² See www.cepal.org/en/events/seminar-beyond-gdp-statistical-challenges-measuring-development.

³ See www.cepal.org/en/events/regional-seminar-innovations-population-and-housing-census-2020-round-looking-towards-2030.

⁴ Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, *Generic Law on Official Statistics for Latin America* (LC/CEA.10/8) (Santiago, 2020). Available at <https://hdl.handle.net/11362/45254>.

American countries interested in establishing or reformulating the legal framework for their respective national statistical systems and the production of official statistics. The document is an adaptation of the Generic Law on Official Statistics for Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia, published by the Economic Commission for Europe in 2016. In addition, at the 11th meeting of the Conference, held in 2021, the “Guide for the implementation of a quality assurance framework for statistical processes and outputs”⁵ was approved to guide Latin American and Caribbean countries in the adoption and application of the United Nations National Quality Assurance Framework Manual for Official Statistics.⁶ The guide document provides recommendations and a self-assessment tool for countries to apply quality principles.

9. Furthermore, in 2023, the “Code of good practice in statistics for Latin America and the Caribbean 2023”⁷ was updated and approved as a standard at the 12th meeting of the Conference, in 2023. The new version includes a new principle on leveraging secondary data sources, along with additional best practices. For the period 2024–2025, a revised peer review mechanism is being developed for implementation in Latin America and the Caribbean, further strengthening cooperation and statistical quality across the region.

10. Regarding the role of national statistical offices in the changing landscape of national data ecosystems, in 2023 the Conference produced an assessment on the current state of data stewardship and how it is defined by countries at the regional level.⁸ Furthermore, during its 12th meeting, the Conference endorsed the “Statement on the use of data held by the private sector for the purposes of official statistics”.⁹ The statement builds on the foundation laid by the “Position statement on the access to data held by the private sector for purposes of official statistics” adopted by the Conference of European Statisticians in 2022, as well as the statement on the importance of access to data held by the private sector for statistical purposes, issued during the 23rd specialized statistical meeting of the Southern Common Market, in 2022.

C. Population censuses

11. In the regional seminar on innovations in the population and housing census of the 2020 round looking towards the 2030 round,¹⁰ participants reviewed the challenges in recent census operations, including higher omission rates in some cases compared with the 2010 round. In response, the agreements of the 23rd meeting of the Executive Committee strongly encourage countries to adopt continuous improvement practices in census, leveraging lessons learned and international recommendations, as well as enhancing access to and use of administrative records.¹¹

⁵ Working group to develop a guide to implementation of a quality assurance framework for the production of official statistics, *Guide for the implementation of a quality assurance framework for statistical processes and outputs* (LC/CEA.11/19) (Santiago, 2022). Available at <https://hdl.handle.net/11362/48006>.

⁶ Available at [1902216-UNNQAManual-WEB.pdf](https://hdl.handle.net/1902216-UNNQAManual-WEB.pdf).

⁷ Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), *Code of Good Practice in Statistics for Latin America and the Caribbean 2023* (LC/CEA.12/4), Santiago, 2023. Available at <https://hdl.handle.net/11362/80478>.

⁸ Available in Spanish at <https://hdl.handle.net/11362/68039>.

⁹ See <https://hdl.handle.net/11362/80788>.

¹⁰ See www.cepal.org/es/eventos/seminario-regional-innovaciones-censos-poblacion-vivienda-la-ronda-2020-cara-la-ronda-2030.

¹¹ See https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/events/files/ce23-agreements-adopted_29aug2024.pdf.

12. The document “General guidelines for census data collection: review of data collection methods for the 2020 census round”¹² was published in 2022 as part of the biennial programme of the working group responsible for this subject. The aim of this publication was to provide a practical and general guide to assist Latin American and Caribbean countries in decision-making regarding data collection methods for future censuses, considering the extensive and complex nature of preparing and conducting population and housing measurements. Furthermore, for the period 2024–2025, a working group is preparing a diagnostic on technologies and methodologies for census mapping, aiming to identify lessons learned in preparation for the 2030 census round.

D. Gender mainstreaming

13. Incorporating a gender perspective in statistical production has been a major focus for the Conference in recent years. In 2021, the “Methodological guide on time use measurements in Latin America and the Caribbean”¹³ was approved during the 11th meeting of the Conference. This document shares country experiences, a variety of tools used and lessons learned to guide decision-making in national statistical offices. In addition, in 2022 and 2023, the “Guidelines for Mainstreaming the Gender Perspective in Statistical Production”¹⁴ was developed and later approved by countries as a regional standard at the 12th meeting of the Conference. This publication provides conceptual and methodological tools for incorporating a gender perspective in official statistical production across the region, including concepts, guidelines and recommendations. Currently, work is under way to develop a virtual platform offering tools to mainstream gender perspective in the statistical production process. This work has received support from the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and ECLAC Gender Affairs Division.

E. Administrative records

14. In the area of administrative records, a significant advancement was achieved during the period 2020–2021 with the approval at the 11th meeting of the Conference of the “Methodological document on statistical use of economic administrative records”.¹⁵ This publication provides recommendations for generating innovative and timely economic statistics and maximizing the benefits of statistical use of economic administrative records.

F. Statistical processes and metadata documentation

15. For the biennium 2024–2025, the creation of a working group was approved to develop guidelines on metadata management when implementing the Generic Statistical Business Process Model, which will help to ensure the interoperability, comparability and reuse of data over time. To that end, the aim is to promote the exchange of good practices and the incorporation of innovations in countries that allow the identification of a set of recommendations to be replicable.

¹² Available in Spanish at <https://hdl.handle.net/11362/48022>.

¹³ Available at <https://hdl.handle.net/11362/48020>.

¹⁴ Available at <https://hdl.handle.net/11362/80636>.

¹⁵ Available at <https://hdl.handle.net/11362/48067>.

G. Economic statistics

16. In economic statistics, several noteworthy milestones have been reached recently. One of these was the publication in 2021 of the document “Measurement of prices and volumes in the services sector: experiences from selected Latin American countries”,¹⁶ aimed at improving the quality and comparability of data in this sector, while also sharing best practices and references to guide countries in implementation. In addition, in 2024, the “Guide for the compilation and use of input-output tables with a gender perspective”¹⁷ was published, offering a user-friendly manual to support countries in constructing input-output tables based on the process of building supply and use tables within the System of National Accounts (SNA).

H. Household surveys

17. At the 12th meeting of the Conference, the document “Methodological recommendations on the measurement of the quality of household survey figures”¹⁸ was endorsed. This document provides a regional assessment and a conceptual framework regarding the quality measurement of estimates derived from household sample surveys. It proposes a flow of criteria application, intended to serve as a reference for evaluating the statistical quality of estimates from national statistical offices. Currently, a working group is developing a document on data imputation methodologies applied in household surveys and population censuses, aiming to provide a standardized regional procedure and lay the groundwork for the establishment of a regular publication on the subject.

I. Environment and climate change statistics

18. In 2021, the document “Recommendations for the generation of environmental statistics and indicators using geospatial information and non-conventional sources”¹⁹ was published, providing an assessment of the use of environmental administrative records and geographic information by countries in the region, as well as the challenges they face in leveraging administrative records for the generation of environmental statistics. In addition, during the biennium 2024–2025, the establishment of a working group was approved to develop a document on recommendations to strengthen official environmental statistics systems. This initiative aims to update information on the status and governance of environmental statistics in the region, as well as to share experiences and best practices for implementation. These efforts received the support of the United Nations Environment Programme.

J. Indicators related to disasters

19. At the 21st meeting of the Executive Committee, held in 2022, the document “Institutional and methodological recommendations for the measurement of indicators for the disaster-related Sustainable Development Goals indicators and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction”²⁰ was approved. This document proposes six methodological steps for measuring relevant indicators and outlines

¹⁶ Available in Spanish at <https://hdl.handle.net/11362/47494>.

¹⁷ Available in Spanish at <https://hdl.handle.net/11362/80600>.

¹⁸ Available at <https://hdl.handle.net/11362/80648>.

¹⁹ Available in Spanish at <https://hdl.handle.net/11362/47485>.

²⁰ Available at <https://hdl.handle.net/11362/48167>.

several global, regional and national criteria and instruments. The text is supplemented with a requirements matrix that serves as a diagnostic tool to identify needs in statistical processes that require greater precision and support from national statistical offices and involved stakeholders. In addition, in 2023, the virtual platform for the measurement and recording of disaster risk reduction indicators in the Americas and the Caribbean²¹ was launched. This platform offers tools and reference materials to strengthen the development of Sendai Framework and Sustainable Development Goals indicators related to disasters in Latin American and Caribbean countries. The site includes products developed by the working group, as well as virtual resources, training sessions, webinars and links of interest. In both cases, support was provided by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction.

K. Labour force statistics

20. In the past five years, significant initiatives have been implemented to improve labour statistics in Latin America and the Caribbean. In 2021, the document “Best practices for adopting the new international standards of the International Labour Organization (ILO)”²² was published, accompanied by two regional virtual workshops to train relevant stakeholders on the topic. In addition, in 2023, the “Diagnostic on labour relations and informal employment statistics”²³ was published, presenting the results of a survey conducted with countries on the measurement of labour relations and the adoption of the twentieth International Conference of Labour Statisticians, as well as information on measuring employment in the formal and informal sectors. Furthermore, for the period 2024–2025, a working group was formed to develop a diagnostic on measuring dependent contractors and the informal economy. These activities have received the support of ILO.

L. Forced displacement and migration

21. In the field of forced displacement and international migration, significant progress has been made in strengthening regional statistical production through various publications. During the biennium 2020–2021, four documents on the subject were developed and published: “Methodological recommendations for including information on the international migrant population in the calibration of expansion factors in household surveys: the case of Chile”;²⁴ “Methodology for the establishment of the international migration statistical register”;²⁵ “Diagnostic of national data production capacity on international migration”;²⁶ and “Priority initiatives, methodological resources and existing dissemination platforms in Latin America and the Caribbean for international migration”.²⁷ Furthermore, for the 2024–2025 biennium, the publication of a practical guide for the production of harmonized statistics on forced displacement and migration is planned. This guide will provide tools to standardize and improve the quality of data on this phenomenon across the region. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration are supporting these efforts.

²¹ Available in Spanish at <https://www.undrr.org/es/datos-estadisticos-marco-de-sendai>.

²² Available in Spanish at <https://hdl.handle.net/11362/47486>.

²³ Available in Spanish at <https://hdl.handle.net/11362/68043>.

²⁴ Available in Spanish at <https://hdl.handle.net/11362/47973>.

²⁵ Available in Spanish at <https://hdl.handle.net/11362/47972>.

²⁶ Available in Spanish at <https://hdl.handle.net/11362/47971>.

²⁷ Available in Spanish at <https://hdl.handle.net/11362/47970>.

M. Security and justice statistics

22. At the 11th meeting of the Conference, the document “Reference framework for security and criminal justice statistics in Latin America and the Caribbean”²⁸ was approved. This document aims to guide countries in creating standardized information on security and criminal justice, in line with international standards, and to contribute to enhancing statistical project management capabilities to measure crime and manage related records. In 2023, the document “Compilation of experiences for the generation of statistics on prison systems”²⁹ was published, providing an assessment of institutional capacities for generating statistical information in this area. In addition, for the biennium 2024–2025, the publication is planned of a reference guide on police administrative records that will offer clear guidelines to improve the management and use of these data for the benefit of public safety. This work has been supported by the Centre of Excellence for Statistical Information on Government, Public Security, Victimization and Justice of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

N. Statistics on childhood and adolescence

23. The Conference has demonstrated a commitment to strengthening statistics on childhood and adolescence through several outputs produced by the corresponding working groups. At the 11th meeting of the Conference, the “Protocol for the collection and dissemination of data on children and adolescents participating in studies”³⁰ was approved, providing a set of elements that research teams should consider and apply based on the specific context and purpose of each research project. This tool takes into account regional specificity, cultural and gender norms and ensures the protection of such data. In addition, during the 2022–2023 biennium, work on new information sources resulted in the publication of the document “Recommendations for the integration of administrative records related to childhood”³¹ aimed at improving the quality and coherence of available information. Work is under way in the biennium 2024–2025 on developing a manual for the integration of administrative data related to childhood and adolescence, which will provide practical tools to optimize the use and management of these records in the region. This work has benefitted from the continuous support from the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).

O. Well-being indicators and measurement of perceptions

24. The Conference has made progress in implementing initiatives that contribute to measuring progress beyond economic aspects, through various topics addressed by the working groups. At the 12th meeting of the Conference, the document “Recommendations for measuring perceptions in household surveys”³² was approved. This document, through an analysis of international experiences in perception measurement and the identification of perception-based well-being indicators in various thematic areas, proposes a set of questions that countries may consider for their own measurements. In addition, during the biennium 2024–2025, a working group was formed to develop a guide on an integrated system of well-being indicators,

²⁸ Available at <https://hdl.handle.net/11362/47929>.

²⁹ Available in Spanish at <https://hdl.handle.net/11362/68045>.

³⁰ Available at <https://hdl.handle.net/11362/48074>.

³¹ Available in Spanish at <https://hdl.handle.net/11362/68680>.

³² Available at <https://hdl.handle.net/11362/80536>.

aiming to support the integration of different types of data sources for Latin American and Caribbean countries within a multidimensional framework.

P. Small-area estimation

25. In its commitment to advancing data disaggregation to leave no one behind, the Conference approved the formation of a working group for the biennium 2024–2025 aimed at developing recommendations for incorporating small area estimation methodologies in statistical production. Through this group, a regional assessment is expected to be conducted, followed by the provision of necessary tools for implementing these methodologies.

Q. Agricultural statistics

26. For the biennium 2024–2025, the creation of a working group was approved to conduct an analysis of area frames in agricultural surveys that will help to define a road map to support the countries of the region in improving this type of instrument. This group has the support of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) as technical secretariat. In addition, at the 12th meeting of the Conference, it was agreed that the working group on agricultural and livestock statistics for Latin America and the Caribbean of FAO, the Organization of American States and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture should report on a regular basis to the Conference, to receive feedback from delegations and ensure the greatest possible synergy between programmes of work.

III. Statistical coordination for the Sustainable Development Goals

27. During the reporting period, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean strengthened their commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and, with it, the interest in having more and better information to monitor their progress towards its targets. In 2024, eight countries presented their voluntary national review at the high-level political forum on sustainable development, adding to previous presentations of voluntary national reports at this global instance. Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, 32 countries in the region have presented their voluntary national reviews, of which 20 have done so more than once. In addition, various local governments have prepared voluntary local reviews, increasingly evidencing the need for subnational statistical information to implement policies that contribute to achieving the 2030 Agenda goals in the territory.

28. In response to the countries' demands for capacity-building to produce the Sustainable Development Goals indicators, the Sustainable Development Goals Data and Statistics Group of the Regional Collaborative Platform for Latin America and the Caribbean has been consolidated during the reporting period. The group promotes the synergy of various cooperation and technical assistance tasks implemented by the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in the region regarding the production, dissemination, monitoring and use of the Sustainable Development Goals indicators. This coordination mechanism provides specialized support to both Member States and the network of data officers of the United Nations country teams and reports its activities through the "Information system of support activities to countries for monitoring and reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals".

29. Meanwhile, the Statistical Coordination Group for the 2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean has continued its tasks of reviewing the statistical challenges derived from the production of the Sustainable Development Goals indicators, with the support of ECLAC as technical secretariat, constituting a fundamental liaison between the global actions and workplan of the Inter-Agency Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goals indicators and the High-level Group for Partnership, Cooperation and Capacity-Building and the particularities of the countries in the region.

30. In particular, the Statistical Coordination Group has promoted the implementation of an information system on national statistical capabilities for the production of Sustainable Development Goals indicators, developed by ECLAC, which was designed to follow up and monitor the capacities for the production of data and statistics of the countries in the region in order to calculate the 2030 Agenda indicators at the national level, to identify data gaps and design strategies to address them.

31. The information system allows national statistical offices to implement a monitoring scheme of the production chain, its actors, information availability and dissemination, not only concerning the global Sustainable Development Goals indicator framework, but also including the additional indicators chosen for regional monitoring and the indicators defined in the national monitoring frameworks of the 2030 Agenda.

IV. Integration of statistical and geospatial information

32. In recent years, the region has taken significant steps in incorporating the geospatial component into areas related to statistical information. The consolidation of the group of experts in geospatial information management in the region, the United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management Regional Committee for the Americas, has promoted the creation of spaces for dialogue, interaction and cooperative work for the development of spatial data infrastructures at both the national and regional levels, as well as the dissemination and implementation of international frameworks and standards defined by experts in global forums.

33. The decision of the Member States to invite ECLAC to be the technical secretariat of this regional expert group has facilitated interaction with the Statistical Conference of the Americas, fostering spaces for meetings between the statistical and geospatial communities, thereby promoting dialogue and collaborative work.

34. With that background, the region has begun to develop statistical geoportals that allow the visualization of statistical information in the territory, composing geographic statistical layers according to the user's online query. The implemented solutions, based on open-source code and open data standards, promote the interoperability of statistical and geographic data banks, allowing the development of dissemination and visualization platforms that integrate these data, increasing the relevance of the available information.

35. In some countries in the region, national statistical offices and national geospatial agencies have jointly defined road maps and institutional agreements to advance in a coordinated and collaborative manner in the processes of integrating statistical and geospatial information. These work agendas are established following the guidelines provided by the United Nations through the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework, developed by the group of experts in this field, including the geocoding of statistical data and its dissemination through the use of common geographies.

36. In addition, the national statistical offices of several countries in the region, in collaboration with the national geographic institutes, have already implemented this type of development, which, although still in an incipient state, promises high scalability in its use for the dissemination of official statistics. In some cases, it has become a central tool for the dissemination of the territorialized results of national population and housing censuses, complemented by other statistical operations and geospatial information that allow the contextualization of the georeferenced statistical data available.

37. The establishment of processes for integrating geospatial and statistical information in the regional and national agendas has opened valuable spaces for cooperation beyond the Statistical Conference of the Americas. Other regional organizations and initiatives, such as the Pan American Institute of Geography and History, the AmeriGEO programme and the geodetic reference system for the Americas, are coordinating and articulating efforts to strengthen the management of geostatistical information on the continent.

38. To complement this, following the convening of the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework Workshop in Saint Lucia in April 2023, the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians established a technical working group on the integration of statistical and geospatial information, with the support of the secretariat of CARICOM. This group will facilitate work aimed at enabling the integration of a variety of data from the statistical and geospatial communities, as well as the production of geospatially enabled statistical data in a harmonized and standardized manner to inform and facilitate evidence-based decision-making.

V. Selected regional support activities

A. 2020 round of population and housing censuses

39. The 2020 census round in the Latin American and Caribbean region has been characterized by both unprecedented challenges and remarkable adaptations. The COVID-19 pandemic caused widespread delays, requiring many countries to reschedule their census operations and rethink methodologies. It also amplified the challenges that countries normally face in executing censuses, including issues with the recruitment of adequate enumerators, high attrition rates and the low response to the census questionnaire, all of which continue to affect the coverage of persons and housing units in the countries. Many national statistical offices shifted from conventional in-person approaches to mixed-method and digital collection techniques, such as computer-assisted personal interviewing and computer-assisted web interviewing. Some countries also adapted the population count approach from *de facto* to *de jure*, which facilitates logistical work and captures the usual residence of the population. These innovations were often deployed at remarkable speeds, sometimes without sufficient testing, reflecting the agility and responsiveness of census teams but also assuming significant risks.

40. Population censuses were conducted across various countries over a span of years. In 2020, Mexico and Aruba carried out their censuses. The following year, censuses were carried out in Barbados and the Cayman Islands. The year 2022 was notably active, with censuses taking place in Argentina, the Bahamas, Belize, Brazil, Costa Rica, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Paraguay, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Anguilla. In 2023, censuses were conducted in the Panama, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Uruguay, the British Virgin Islands, Montserrat and the Turks and Caicos Islands. In 2024, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Chile, El Salvador, Nicaragua and Suriname conducted their

censuses. Cuba and Honduras are expected to conduct theirs at the beginning of the 2030 census round.

41. As usual, the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE) – the Population Division of ECLAC – provided support to national statistical offices of the region in the planning, execution, processing, dissemination and evaluation of population and housing censuses. In some countries, technical assistance is provided in a comprehensive manner at all stages of the census process, while in others it is provided in specific matters. Furthermore, CELADE – in collaboration with countries, the ECLAC Statistics Division, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Inter-American Development Bank – offers regional workshops that promote the systematization and dissemination of lessons learned, the exchange of innovations and the development of methodological and conceptual standards for each census round. Drawing on this accumulated experience, CELADE has developed guides, manuals and methodological documents that strengthen its support role and enhance capacity-building and maintenance within statistical offices during census and inter-census periods.

42. The secretariat of CARICOM implemented a technical consultancy to strengthen capacity in census data cleaning, analysis and dissemination, incorporating the use of geographic information system and infographics to address some of the challenges faced during this round. The consultancy is also assessing the quality and usability of CARICOM countries' census data compiled from the 2020 round. In November 2024, a Caribbean subregional census symposium was held to further ventilate issues and challenges experienced during the round, garner support for their remaining census activities and plan and prepare for the 2030 round. The Caribbean subregion has also activated centres of excellence in statistics to support census enumeration.

B. Statistical dissemination

43. Several actions have been implemented to enhance the dissemination and use of information for sustainable development. These efforts aim to provide broader and better access to data for informed decision-making and enable comparative analyses across the region. In line with the strategic areas outlined in the Cape Town Action Plan, the focus has been on promoting innovative solutions for the dissemination of regional statistics, on the basis of a regional data ecosystem that expands the traditional domains addressed by statistical systems. Considering the principles of interoperability, open data, open-source code and international standards, a regional agenda has been promoted for the development and implementation of platforms that incorporate new technologies, integrate diverse types of data and establish effective statistical communication strategies.

44. A key milestone in this road map is the suite of regional data platforms developed at ECLAC, including a database and statistical publications portal,³³ a geospatial data infrastructure³⁴ and a Sustainable Development Goals gateway³⁵ for monitoring the Goals. Those platforms, built on open-source technologies, ensure interoperability between statistical information, geospatial data, satellite imagery and qualitative and documentary datasets. They offer users a diverse range of web applications tailored to various needs and profiles, integrating visualizations and tools that are often scattered across traditional data portals.

³³ <https://statistics.cepal.org/portal/cepalstat/index.html?lang=en>.

³⁴ <https://geo.cepal.org/cepalgeo/home/?lang=en>.

³⁵ <https://agenda2030lac.org/>.

C. Environmental and climate change statistics

45. ECLAC has conducted various capacity-building activities to enhance the region's environmental and climate change statistics. These activities, including workshops, webinars, online courses and conferences, have left a lasting mark, underscoring the significance of the stakeholders' contributions. The key activities included workshops in Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay. Online courses and remote support were provided to the Dominican Republic and Panama between 2020 and 2021 to strengthen administrative records use and build new indicators. From 2021 to 2023, ECLAC concentrated on the project "Caribbean SIDS relevant climate change and disasters indicators for evidence-based policies", supported by the twelfth tranche of the Development Account, along with Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Suriname, emphasizing data-sharing and modern technologies. The main partners for this project were the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, CARICOM, the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States and Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21).

46. In 2022, an online workshop was held in Ecuador to generate indicators of climate change and disasters. This initiative is part of broader efforts to enhance the capacity of Latin American and Caribbean countries to produce relevant indicators and metrics, supporting evidence-based policymaking and resilience to climate-related disasters. In addition, an e-learning course on the Disaster-Related Statistics Framework was launched in October in collaboration with ESCAP and the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific and attended by participants from Latin American and Caribbean countries. Early 2023, a regional meeting in Uruguay was focused on exchanging experiences for implementing the Sendai Framework and featuring activities on statistical data and geospatial information for disaster risk reduction. These activities highlight the collaborative efforts across multiple countries to enhance disaster-related statistics and promote resilient, evidence-based policymaking.

47. With funding under the 11th programme of the European Development Fund, in 2024, Saint Lucia, the Bahamas and Dominica, through in-country South-South cooperation missions, received technical assistance from the secretariat of CARICOM and Suriname in environment and climate change statistics. Those countries benefitted from practical experiences and exchanges on how to fill data gaps using the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics. CARICOM supported the leveraging of innovation in statistics in order to fill data gaps through the involvement of Belize and Jamaica at the eighth International Conference on Big Data and Data Science for Official Statistics, held in Bilbao, Spain. This participation allowed the Statistics Division Development Account project to be presented in collaboration with UNCTAD, emphasizing the need for timely, data-driven climate policies.

D. System of Environmental-Economic Accounting

48. The region has significantly advanced in implementing the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting – Ecosystem Accounting. In February 2021, the high-level webinar on the System for Latin American countries, including Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica and Mexico, aimed to inform national statistical offices about the System revision process and its importance for policy decisions. In 2022, ECLAC developed and launched an online course in Spanish about the System, supported by the German International Cooperation Society (GIZ) and the Statistics Division, that

focused on the conceptual framework and its implementation, featuring expert presentations and interactive activities.

49. Regarding the central framework, in 2023, Ecuador benefitted from an introductory and practical workshop on environmental economic accounting. In early 2024, the International Monetary Fund, the Statistics Department of the Regional Technical Assistance Centre for Central America, Panama and the Dominican Republic and ECLAC participated in a virtual workshop on the introduction to macro-relevant environment and climate change statistics, in which representatives from several countries of the region received capacity-building training on the statistical frameworks relevant to the initiatives on climate change statistics, national emissions inventories, air emissions accounts, energy statistics and energy balances, including a set of climate-related physical risk indicators and climate finance. In July 2024, the Global Ocean Accounts Partnership marked a significant milestone for the Latin American and Caribbean region. The event established the Latin American and Caribbean Community of Practice for Ocean Accounting to enhance regional collaboration on ocean sustainability. By fostering capacity-building and promoting South-South cooperation, the Partnership could have an impact on policy discussions and contribute to equitable economic development and poverty alleviation in the region. At the regional level, in August 2024, ECLAC delivered the first national training on the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting – Ecosystem Accounting to staff of the Guatemala Bank.

E. Economic statistics

50. ECLAC technical cooperation activities in economic statistics focus on national accounts and price statistics, through direct assistance and by sharing knowledge and best practices through workshops and the annual national accounts seminar. After being held virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic, the seminar resumed in-person meetings in 2023, with the latest regional seminar in September 2024 gathering 35 in-person participants from 25 countries and regional and international organizations, along with virtual participation from national teams and international experts. Technical cooperation in economic statistics was also conducted through on-site and remote technical assistance. The main areas of focus were national accounts, prices and the implementation of the International Comparison Programme. In national accounts, work included updating reference years (Bolivia (Plurinational State of) and Cuba), compiling accounts by institutional sectors (Argentina, Paraguay) and developing supply and use tables and input-output tables in Córdoba Province, Argentina. Additional support was provided to the Dominican Republic, Chile, Guatemala and Paraguay on satellite accounts for culture, and in the Caribbean region on implementing expenditure-based national accounts for the Programme. On prices, activities included updating the base year of the consumer-price index and other indices (Ecuador, Guatemala), increasing the availability of indices (Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Ecuador), integrating statistical operations (Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Dominican Republic, Guatemala) and supporting price collection and validation for various sectors within the Programme framework. Capacity-building activities included courses and workshops on national accounts (Uruguay, 2022) and price indices (Argentina, 2023), implementation workshops on the Programme (2020–2023) and webinars on price statistics innovation (April 2023, March 2024).

51. During the reporting period, the Statistics Division supported the statistical records system project as its technical secretariat. This initiative focused on utilizing administrative data from the national statistical offices of Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Chile, Colombia and Peru. Key results included the preparation of methodological

documents with recommendations for managing administrative data providers for statistical purposes, a virtual course on leveraging administrative records for statistical production and a technological tool for managing administrative data providers. In the area of administrative record utilization, the Statistics Division also supported capacity-building initiatives, such as a workshop organized by the Division in the Dominican Republic in February 2023.

52. ECLAC harmonizes and disseminates information on national accounts, external sector statistics and prices. This information is published regularly in a database and on the statistical publications portal and serves as an input for the flagship reports of ECLAC and its capacity-building efforts in economic statistics across the region. During the reporting period, the reference year for Latin American and Caribbean statistical series published by ECLAC was updated to 2018. Alongside this work, the Division made progress by incorporating new statistical topics. In 2022, a repository of supply and use tables and input-output tables, containing updated and official data and metadata from countries in the region, was added to the portal. In addition, available subnational accounts data for Latin American and Caribbean countries were also integrated into the platform. The Statistics Division also developed an economic survey microdata base in collaboration with national statistical offices. This initiative aims to collect basic annual statistics for calculating indicators on manufacturing and service industries for 10 countries of the region. Those statistics are disseminated through the portal.

F. Implementation of the International Comparison Programme

53. ECLAC coordinated the implementation of the International Comparison Programme for Latin American and Caribbean countries, an activity it has officially developed since 2011, although its involvement dates back to 2005, following the methodological guidelines of the Global Office of the Programme, led by the World Bank and in coordination with other regional implementing agencies (Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development-Eurostat, Asian Development Bank, African Development Bank and Commonwealth of Independent States). During the reporting period, ECLAC published the 2017 Programme cycle results for 33 Latin American and Caribbean countries. In the recent comparison cycle for 2021, the Statistics Division worked with 32 countries in the region, with the support of CARICOM in the implementation of the Programme for Caribbean countries. Participating countries compiled price data for household consumption, special surveys (education, rentals, machinery and equipment, construction and government compensation) and national accounts. ECLAC processed and validated this information and collaborated with participating countries through regional workshops, seminars and bilateral meetings to support implementation of the Programme in the region. On the basis of that data, ECLAC calculated regional purchasing power parities and price-level indices for each participating country. This information was integrated by the Global Office along with data from other regions to compute purchasing power parities and price-level indices for the 176 participating economies. This made it possible to measure the real size of those economies, per capita expenditure indicators and price-level indices for GDP and its detailed components. Regional data was updated in the database and the statistical publications portal on the basis of the 2021 cycle results, and two documents were published covering methodological aspects and key findings from the latest comparison cycle. The recent cycle faced significant challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2020 census round, which affected resource and priority competition in participating countries. In addition, a methodological challenge persists as some countries do not compile national accounts based on the expenditure

approach, a fundamental input for computing parities, requiring estimation efforts using supplementary data.

54. Currently, ECLAC is working on implementation of the 2024 cycle in the region with the collaboration of the CARICOM secretariat. In May 2024, a meeting was held between the CARICOM secretariat and ECLAC to discuss ongoing collaboration for the new International Comparison Programme cycle, in which it was recommended that the Programme be included as a potential topic for the CARICOM technical working group on national accounts and trade in services, and to strengthen the development of experts within the CARICOM region who can better support participation in future Programme processes. CARICOM also assisted ECLAC in obtaining responses from Member States regarding their participation in the new comparison cycle and provided feedback on the challenges countries face that impede effective participation in the Programme. As a result, 35 Latin American and Caribbean countries are committed to implementing the 2024 cycle. The process has involved working with countries to define the regional products and services list for which price data will be collected. Price collection began in the second quarter of 2024, and ECLAC is processing and validating the information with each country before conducting regional validation. In addition, ECLAC is collaborating with countries to support the integration of their statistical operations and to enhance their data collection methods and processes to improve Programme implementation efficiency.

G. Social statistics and household surveys

55. During the reporting period, the ECLAC Statistics Division continued to provide technical assistance to Latin American and Caribbean countries in social statistics and household survey implementation, and their integration with other data sources. In the area of household surveys, efforts have concentrated on developing and updating sampling frames based on the latest population censuses, refining sample rotation techniques and coordinating survey samples. This work has been particularly significant in supporting countries that have transitioned to a unified continuous survey system, integrating employment and multi-purpose surveys. This approach enables the production of monthly labour statistics and the accumulation of annual samples for poverty and other living conditions statistics, and the enhancement of data disaggregation. In addition, ECLAC has continued to support countries in the estimation of basic food baskets and the measurement of household income, as well as income and multidimensional poverty indicators.

56. The integration of household surveys with other data sources has been a key priority during the period, pursued through multiple approaches. The first involves generating complementary measures of income inequality by integrating household surveys with tax records and national account aggregates. In collaboration with the World Inequality Lab, ECLAC has supported countries in developing complementary inequality indicators and facilitated regional exchanges to share methodologies for producing distributional national accounts. The second approach focuses on the methodological development and application of small area estimation techniques to disaggregate indicators to smaller geographical levels (first- and second-level administrative divisions), through the combination of household surveys, population censuses and satellite data. Supported by UNFPA and the Development Account thirteenth tranche, ECLAC has worked with countries to apply this methodology to a range of social indicators, including those related to poverty, employment, reproductive health, food insecurity, undernourishment and access to justice, among others. A third area of work leverages geospatial information through models to estimate population at disaggregated geographical levels. These models have proven

instrumental in several Latin American and Caribbean countries for evaluating population census coverage.

57. To complement technical assistance, ECLAC has developed new online courses on sampling for household surveys and data disaggregation using small area estimation methods. The English version of the latter was developed jointly with the Statistics Division and UNFPA, available as the “Global Training on Disaggregated Estimates Using Small Area Estimation Methods in R”, available on the United Nations Learning Management System. A virtual course on the construction of basic food baskets and poverty lines was also developed in collaboration with the Central American Integration System. The courses are complemented by several methodological publications available on the ECLAC website and regional seminars on small area estimation,³⁶ data integration³⁷ and innovations in household surveys.³⁸

58. In addition, ECLAC continues to update annually its household survey data bank, comprising microdata sets for different types of household surveys from Latin American and Caribbean countries, and produce a large set of regionally comparable indicators that are disseminated through the database and statistical publications portal and several publications. Two new web portals have been developed to further disseminate statistics: “Portal of inequalities in Latin America”³⁹ and “Statistics based on small area estimation models in Latin America”.⁴⁰

H. Continuation of the modernization and transformation process in Caribbean Community countries

59. Building on the political commitment to advancing statistics in the Caribbean, progress continues on the modernization and transformation of national statistical systems within CARICOM, under the guidance of the Regional Strategy for the Development of Statistics. Endorsed by the Conference of Heads of Government of CARICOM, the Strategy has been supported by the development and approval of three key frameworks: the implementation plan, the resource mobilization strategy and the communications and advocacy plan.

60. Efforts are now focused on completing the monitoring and evaluation framework, the final component of the Regional Strategy for the Development of Statistics support structure. This includes the development of a monitoring and evaluation template and a compliance scorecard to evaluate progress on the five strategic priorities of the Strategy: standards and harmonization; governance; integrated statistical systems; innovation; and communications and advocacy.

61. Across the region, several countries are advancing their national strategies for the development of statistics. The Bahamas and Guyana have moved into the implementation phase after successfully developing their strategies, while Belize, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines are currently in the design phase. These initiatives are expected to enhance statistical capacity significantly, supporting informed decision-making and improved development planning across CARICOM.

³⁶ Available in Spanish only at www.cepal.org/es/eventos/seminario-regional-metodologias-estimacion-areas-pequenas-desagregacion-datos.

³⁷ Available in Spanish only at www.cepal.org/es/eventos/seminario-integracion-fuentes-datos-estadisticas-oficiales.

³⁸ Available in Spanish only at www.cepal.org/es/eventos/seminario-regional-innovaciones-desafios-encuestas-hogares.

³⁹ See <https://statistics.cepal.org/portal/inequalities/index.html?lang=en>.

⁴⁰ See <https://statistics.cepal.org/portal/sae/index.html?lang=en>.

62. The CARICOM secretariat regional statistics programme, with support from international development partners, continues to advance the implementation of the Regional Strategy for the Development of Statistics. Key initiatives funded by the European Union under the 11th programme of the European Development Fund, UN-Women, PRASC of Canada and other partners include capacity-building in areas such as national accounts, Sustainable Development Goals indicators, and gender statistics, as well as advancements in statistical production through tools like the e-CISTAR platform and the CARICOM quality assurance framework. In addition, technical assistance and funding from partners like the Caribbean Development Bank, the Caribbean Regional Technical Assistance Centre of the International Monetary Fund, FAO, the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank have supported projects ranging from census modernization and data quality improvement to the development of a framework for measuring vulnerability. Those collaborative efforts aim to enhance statistical systems, fill data gaps and strengthen decision-making across CARICOM.

63. The declaration of 2024–2025 as the Year of Statistics in CARICOM marks a pivotal moment, coinciding with the fiftieth anniversary of the inaugural meeting of the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians. Launched on Caribbean Statistics Day (15 October 2024) under the theme “Improving lives through statistics: strengthening and innovating together”, the year-long celebration highlights the critical role of statistics in regional development. A key milestone was the fourth High-Level Advocacy Forum for Statistics, held on 4 November 2024, aimed at operationalizing the CARICOM Regional Strategy for the Development of Statistics. Participants at the Forum emphasized the integration of statistics as a priority in national, regional and international development agendas to secure greater investment. Panel discussions featuring chief statisticians and senior policymakers explored strategies for funding statistical systems and advancing implementation of the Strategy. In addition, a special session commemorated the thirtieth anniversary of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and the tenth anniversary of its endorsement by the General Assembly, reinforcing the principles’ relevance to modern statistical practice.

VI. The road ahead for statistical development and cooperation

64. The Statistical Conference of the Americas has implemented two strategic plans, each spanning a decade (2005–2015 and 2015–2025). Those plans established the objectives, mission, vision and guiding values for each 10-year period, and outlined the main challenges that national statistical systems in the region face. As the current plan approaches its conclusion in 2025, the Executive Committee of the Conference is actively developing a new strategic framework for the period 2026–2035. As part of the process, the 23rd meeting of the Executive Committee, held in August 2024, addressed key elements of the current context for statistical production and emerging challenges. Discussions were organized under three thematic areas: the organization and management of national statistical offices within the evolving data ecosystem; technical and methodological capacities amid rapid technological developments; and regional coordination and cooperation.

65. Several key elements identified in those discussions include the following: (a) regulatory and governance challenges – modernizing legal frameworks is essential to enable the secure and efficient use of data, ensuring privacy and maintaining trust among stakeholders; strengthening interoperability and coordination across entities is vital for building cohesive statistical systems, and robust data governance models are needed to guarantee data quality and confidentiality; (b) the use of administrative records – leveraging the potential of administrative records remains a critical

challenge across the Latin American and Caribbean region; these records offer a strategy to complement or even replace traditional methods like censuses and surveys, enabling more detailed, timely and cost-efficient data, yet integrating administrative records requires investment in technology, legal reforms to facilitate access and the development of human capital with the necessary expertise; (c) innovation and technology – the adoption of advanced technologies, such as artificial intelligence and machine learning, and non-traditional data sources represents a transformative opportunity to improve the efficiency and accuracy of data collection and analysis; (d) training and adaptation of human resources – addressing technological and methodological changes requires comprehensive capacity-building for current staff and the recruitment of professionals skilled in data science, analytics and artificial intelligence; this effort also involves revising career incentives, training programmes and professional development opportunities to meet the evolving demands of statistical production; (e) communication and data dissemination – high-quality data production must be complemented by effective communication and dissemination strategies; national statistical offices need to implement proactive dissemination policies and initiatives to promote statistical literacy, ensuring that data is both comprehensible and actionable for decision-makers and the public; and (f) international collaboration and best practices – collaboration with international peers, academia and the private sector is crucial for keeping methodologies up-to-date and adopting innovative practices.

VII. Actions to be taken by the Statistical Commission

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

(a) **To acknowledge the significant progress made in statistical development across Latin American and the Caribbean, such as modernizing national statistical systems, enhancing the use of administrative records, integrating geospatial data and improving the production of gender-sensitive and environmental statistics, as well as the innovative approaches adopted during the 2020 census round and the integration of new technologies, through the expansion of collaborative efforts among countries and regional and international entities;**

(b) **To explore mechanisms for strengthening interregional collaboration to promote the exchange of best practices, methodologies and innovations, building on successful initiatives, such as the knowledge transfer network, that contribute to foster dialogue and capacity-building;**

(c) **To reflect on the challenges that the Latin American and Caribbean region statistical systems face over the next decade and how they can be addressed through sustained regional and international cooperation, innovative approaches to data production and a continued commitment to the principles of official statistics.**