



Statistical Capacity Needs in the Caribbean

Leveraging lessons learnt for statistical capacity development (SCD) for effective Environment Information Systems

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Reflections from the UN Data Forum 2021

Have we been going about
capacity development **the
wrong way?**

Where to start first? Identifying
the **leverage points** of **effective**
capacity development

SCD in the Caribbean: *the wrong way?*

- **Definition:** capacity was interpreted as training;
- **Target recipients:** always the NSO;
- **Approach:** transactional rather than strategic; not linked to multi-year plan or NSDS; or a capacity development plan;
- **Identifying needs:** requested during regional meetings; tied to a partner-initiated statistics project (*e.g UNICEF's MICS*); timed with a statistical undertaking (*e.g population census*);

SCD in the Caribbean: *the wrong way?* cont'd

- **Focus:** used to be narrowly focused on data collection and compilation for surveys and censuses (*economic and social dimensions*); and included supply of IT equipment and software;
- **Modality:** in-person regional events; one to three weeks duration; facilitated with consultancies and TA from IDPs; south-south sometimes used;
- **Effectiveness:** low ROI: trainees not appropriate; budget mostly travel costs; little or no application on the job; no assessments and peer reviews;

Rethinking SCD in the Caribbean: *leverage points*

- **SDGs**: the structure of the 2030 Agenda (*domains, tiers, partnerships*) and SAMOA Pathway espoused the imperative for **holistic approach** for data production and dissemination;
- **COVID 19**: the pandemic highlighted the weak elements in the NSS; and demonstrated the importance of **communication, advocacy, format and use of data**;

Rethinking SCD in the Caribbean: *leverage points cont'd*

- **Big Data:** the prominence of voluminous and high frequency, high velocity unstructured data in the ecosystem, portend for a threat to structured official data; but also offers **many opportunities**;
- **Rise of the “data scientist”:** posing as a threat to the official statistician and ushers the imperative to **rethink skills, knowledge, tools, techniques and partnerships**;

Rethinking SCD in the Caribbean: *leverage points cont'd*

- **SCD frameworks:** definition, performance measures (*e.g WB SCB index*); assessment tools (*e.g TASC; FDES:ESSAT*); guidelines (*e.g PARIS21*), pointing to need for **coordination, consultation, compliance**;
- **National development plans:** now more than ever countries are responding to the imperative for **national development plan or strategy** (*esp. SDG mainstreamed*), a companion NSDS is necessary;

Summary of capacity needs

- **Institutionalise** foundational high-level elements – laws, policy; including for freedom of information;
- **Design** national development strategy (*SDG mainstreamed*), with a sub-strategy for environment sustainability;
- **Produce** an NSDS and companion capacity development programme (see *PARIS21 Capacity Development 4.0*);
- **Establish** a national arrangement for environment statistics (*public, private, NGOs, CSOs*);

Summary of capacity needs *cont'd*

- **Create** a professional development and training programme for environment statisticians and subject matter specialists;
- **Undertake** a programme of continuous capacity assessment of the NSS (ESSAT);
- **Publish** knowledge products that use environmental statistics and indicators;
- **Design** an advocacy and communication plan that promotes and educates the importance of measuring environment sustainability – children youth, women; businesses and so on;



SCD implications for a strong EIS

- **Data producers** (MDAs) should receive the support to improve the **quality and comparability of** their respective data and information (e.g *survey, census, administrative; spatial*);
- **Data providers** (e.g *individuals, households, NGOs, businesses*) should be provided the **purpose, assistance and means** to participate in the availability of environmental data and information;



SCD implications for a strong EIS *cont'd*

- **Capacity to produce disaggregated data** by **(vulnerable)** groups/cohorts and location (*geographical; rural/urban*) so that interventions give *voice to the voiceless, leaving no one behind*;
- **Capacity to disseminate data and information:** all relevant MDAs have an obligation to contribute to an EIS by allowing **equal access to information** in several formats (*written, visual, audio, electronic*);



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