

CARIBBEAN COMMON MULTI-COUNTRY ANALYSIS (CMCA)

2021



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DECADE
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ACTION



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List of abbreviations

ACM	Annual Coordination Meeting
ACS	Association of Caribbean States
AIDS	Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
AOSIS	Alliance of Small Island States
CAHFSA	Caribbean Agricultural Health & Food Safety Agency
CPI	Country Plan of Implementation
CAPRI	Caribbean Policy Research Institute
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CARICOM IMPACS	CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security
CARIFORUM	Caribbean Forum
CARIFTA	Caribbean Free Trade Association
CARPHA	Caribbean Public Health Agency
CAT	Convention Against Torture
CCA	Common Country Analysis
CCCCC	Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre
CCREEE	Caribbean Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency
CCRIF	Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility
CDEMA	Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CEP	Caribbean Environmental Programme
CF	Cooperation Framework
CGE	Computer General Equilibrium
CMCA	Common Multi-Country Analysis
CO	Country Office
CO2	Carbon Dioxide
COP	Conferences of the Parties
COVID	Coronavirus Disease
CPDC	Caribbean Policy Development Centre
CRC	Convention on the Rights of Child
CRFM	Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism
CRI	Climate Risk Index
CRIS	Caribbean Risk Information System
CRVS	Civil Registration and Vital Statistics
CSCM	Caribbean Single Market and Economy
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
CSS	Caribbean Statistical Service
CTO	Caribbean Tourism Organization
DCO	Development Coordination Office

DDO	Deferred Drawdown Option
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ESC	Eastern and Southern Caribbean
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development
ECEU	Eastern Caribbean Economic Union
EVI	Economic Vulnerability Index
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FO	Field Office
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GCED	Global Citizenship Education
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GFDRR	Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery
GHSI	Global Health Security Index
GMSL	Global Mean Sea Level
GPEDC	Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank Group)
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICERD	International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
ICRMW	International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
IEA	International Energy Agency
IDA	International Development Association (World Bank Group)
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IFI	International Financial Institutions
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IRENA	International Renewable Energy Agency
ITC	International Trade Centre
ITU	International Telecommunications Union
JNSC	Joint National/UN Steering Committees
JWP	Joint Work Plan
LAC	Latin American and the Caribbean
LDC	Least Developed Country

LECZ	Low Elevation Coastal Zones
LGBTQI+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transexual, Queer, Intersexual
MAPS	Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support
MCO	Multi-Country Office
MDB	Multilateral Development Bank
MSDF	Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework
MSME	Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises
NDP	National Development Plans
NEET	Not in Employment, Education or Training
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSO	National Statistical Offices
NSS	National Statistical Systems
NTB	Non-Tariff Barriers
OAS	Organization of American States
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OECS	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OOSC	Out of School Children
OT	Overseas Territories
PA	Paris Agreement
PAHO/WHO	Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization
PLWHIV	Person Living with HIV
PANCAP	Pan Caribbean Partnership Against HIV/AIDS
PDA	Peace Development Advisors
PoA	Programme of Action
PrEP	Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis
PWD	Person with Disability
RC	Resident Coordinator
RCO	Office of the UN Resident Coordinator
RIA	Rapid Integrated Assessment
R&D	Research and Development
RFNSP	Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy
RMETT	Regional Monitoring and Evaluation Task Team
RO	Regional Office
ROPAN	Regional Office for Central America and the Caribbean
RRB	Regional Resilience Building
RSDS	Regional Strategy for the Development of Statistics
RSPCT	Regional Strategic Planners Coordinating Team
RSS	Regional Security Systems
SAMOA	SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action
SPS	Sanitary and Phytosanitary

SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SDR	Sustainable Development Report
SELA	Latin America and Caribbean Economic System (Acronym in Spanish)
SERP	Socio-Economic Response Plan
SIDS	Small Island and Low-Lying Coastal Developing States
SPR	Strategic Planning Retreat
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
SRO	Sub-Regional Office
SST	Sea Surface Temperatures
STZC	Sustainable Tourism Zone of the Greater Caribbean
TVPA	Trafficking Victims Protection Act
UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNAIDS	United Nations AIDS
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNFPOS	United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees/ UN Refugee Agency
UNIC	United Nations Information Centre for the Caribbean Area
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNLIREC	United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNPD	United Nations Population Division
UNS	United Nations System
UNSD	United Nations Statistics Division
UNSDG	United Nations Sustainable Development Group
UNST	United Nations Subregional Team
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
UPU	Universal Postal Union
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
VA	Value Added
VNR	Voluntary National Review
WFP	World Food Programme
WTO	World Trade Organization
ZOSO	Zones of Special Operation

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1. Executive summary

The purpose of this Common Multi-Country Analysis (CMCA) is to provide an objective assessment of the progress of the Caribbean region towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and its commitments to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This analysis will also focus on the identification of challenges and opportunities for the development of innovative shared solutions for the 22 independent states, constituent countries, and overseas territories of the English- and the Dutch-speaking Caribbean that will be included in the next Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework (MSDF) 2022-2026. These are An-

guilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Curaçao, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, Sint Maarten, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands.

The CMCA covers a subregion within the Caribbean region which is home to 7,972,988¹ inhabitants distributed across 437,320² square kilometres. The sub-region is diverse in size, population, political status, government structure, official and other languages, economic and social development,

1. United Nations Population Division (UNPD). Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA). World Population Prospects 2019.

2. United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD). Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Environmental Indicators. Total Surface Area as of 19 January 2007.

3. Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahama, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad, and Tobago.

United Nations membership status, and geographical landscape. All 22 countries and territories are members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), are classified as Small Island Development States (SIDS) under the Accelerated Modality of Action (SAMOA Pathway) and 13³ belong to the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).

The United Nations System (UNS) in the Caribbean includes five United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs), one United Nations Sub-Regional Team (UNST), and five Resident Coordinator Offices (RCO). They encompass all organizations of the UNS in the Caribbean, dealing with operational activities for development.

Agencies, Funds, and Programmes which have Country Offices (CO) in the Caribbean are FAO, ILO, IOM, PAHO/WHO, UNHCR, UNFPA, UNDP, UNICEF, UPU, WFP, and the World Bank. In addition, entities with operational regional offices in the Caribbean are FAO, UNAIDS, UNEP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNIC, UNOPS, UN Women, and WFP.

Other Agencies, Funds and Programmes have regional offices covering Caribbean countries and territories include IOM, ITC, OHCHR, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNLIREC, UNODC, UNSDG. With regional offices in the Caribbean are ECLAC and the World Bank, and with projects in the Caribbean with regional partners is IAEA.

The desk review for the CMCA consisted of a systematic data collection and analysis of information relevant to United Nations programming in the Caribbean and to the Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework (MSDF) 2017-2021 in particular. UN Common Country Analyses (CCAs) for multiple countries conducted in 2020, reports on Rapid Integrated Assessments (RIA), and Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS) commissioned to determine the

multi-dimensional challenges and opportunities for countries in the Caribbean, and for the Caribbean as a region were also reviewed. Human rights standards and principles were integrated and articulated throughout the CMCA, which is evidence-based, data-driven, and participatory, centred on a consultative process that engaged stakeholders to reflect on regional and cross-border dimensions of national priorities. Regional information was also reviewed which included policies, strategies, reports, and other related documents from regional stakeholders, as well as data on important development indicators and progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development from UN agencies, multilateral organizations, and International Financial Institutions (IFIs).

Contextual information included an analysis of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Caribbean region that suffered an economic contraction worse than any other region. This exposed the need for policy actions on effective support to protect the most vulnerable, and ensure participatory growth, and the UNS action developed in six socio-economic response plans (SERP). Challenges facing the region before COVID-19 were identified as slow productivity, stagnant economic growth, high debt, rising inequality, socioeconomic vulnerability, limited institutional capacity to effectively respond to strategic development challenges, the need for disaster prevention and preparedness, and reconstruction relief and rehabilitation efforts due to climate change.

Key lessons learned from the process of elaboration of the CMCA include the need to foster a consensus for the UNS to work better together based on a unified UN vision that includes empowering leadership of the RCs in support of a joined-up UN system response at the regional and country levels. Interagency collaboration in the process

of elaboration of the CMCA was based on the recognition that good team work and joint action is fundamental to reach a consensus on national commonalities with the potential to be addressed regionally.

According to the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) Guidance for the elaboration of the CMCA, the progress towards the 2030 Agenda in the region was addressed in terms of the regional vision vis-à-vis the global framework. Analyses were conducted in the areas of political and institutional, economic transformation, environment and climate change, social exclusion, compliance with international human rights norms and standards, development - humanitarian - peace linkage, multidimensional SDG risk, and financial landscape. Finally, conclusions were presented in terms of the key challenges and opportunities identified for advancing the 2030 Agenda and the groups of persons left furthest behind.

Gaps identified include long-term growth depressed for over a decade, limited fiscal space because of high debt service payments, regressive tax system, lack of economic diversification, declining Official Development Assistance (ODA) and reduced foreign direct investment. In addition, logistics, transportation, and supply chains need to be incorporated into efforts at strengthening intra-regional (and extra-regional) trade and economic integration to address issues of economies of scale and competitiveness. Also, there are shortfalls in innovative and creative capability, generally far behind in investment in Research & Development (R&D) and innovation, shown, for example, by the disappointing performance of the broader region in comparable statistics.

Climate change is a challenge because the Caribbean region is hazard-prone and experiences

impacts such as rising sea levels, increased sea and air temperatures including heatwaves, and changes in rainfall patterns including persistent drought. Disaster displacement is a recurrent phenomenon across the region, affecting livelihoods and disrupting development trajectories. Additional challenges include weak institutional capacity, limited availability of information, lack of long-term environmental planning, inadequate policies, and incoherent governance, as well as the insecurity of access to resources. Challenges within the wider Caribbean also include overfishing, degradation of the system, acidification of the water, lowering of the water levels, floods, seasonal sargassum, and the impact of climate change on marine ecosystems and reefs. Furthermore, energy-related measures are poorly considered in the early stages of the disaster risk management cycle.

COVID-19 intensified the inequality that already existed where the poor and vulnerable are most affected. Efforts to address poverty and other vulnerabilities continue to be reduced while the constant threat of high impact climatic events creates a situation of compounded risks that further threaten the lives, livelihoods, and food security of those who need it most. Existing social and political structures sustain patterns of discrimination and inequality that hinder certain groups of people in overcoming poverty, accessing quality education and healthcare, work opportunities and housing, as well as participation in political life.

Patterns of exclusion in terms of justice, health, employment, education, liberty of movement, and an adequate standard of living are linked to age (with children and older persons being most vulnerable to poverty), place of residence (people living in rural areas, indigenous peoples living in remote/hinterland areas or persons living in underserved urban areas), sex (women, adolescent

girls, young boys, and the LGBTQI+ community), health status (PLWHIV), a minority or marginalized status (PWD, migrants, refugees) and occupation (sex work). Gender inequality remains a challenge in the Caribbean region, throughout the formal and informal economies and workforce, state institutions, service delivery, political participation, as well as health and security, with gender stereotypes prevailing across the countries on the role and place of women in relation to men.

The increasingly complex migration phenomenon includes refugees, victims of human trafficking, stateless persons, and asylum-seekers, among other categories of vulnerable persons. The threat of transnational crime is common to all island states and territories in the Caribbean, and there are a disparity in the independent countries and dependent overseas territories abilities to engage in border security to confront the myriad of challenges under transnational organized crime. Lack of maritime security has acted as a risk multiplier in the vulnerable Caribbean communities.

Concerning compliance with international human rights, most CMCA Caribbean countries constitutions, do not provide guarantees for economic, social and cultural rights and domestic legislation in the region does not sufficiently reflect the social and economic rights espoused in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. None of the countries has a National Human Rights Institution that meets the Paris Principles, thus, there is a lack of available legal remedies and mechanisms to demand the protection and fulfilment of human rights. Laws regarding discrimination do not include sex, disability, and sexual orientation.

Most countries in the region struggle with high levels of violent crime and an increasing number of countries are passing legislation strengthening

state powers of arrest and detention. There are reports from reliable sources of excessive use of force by the police during arrests and interrogation, extrajudicial executions, and torture. Significant case backlogs hinder the judicial due process, primarily owing to the slow pace of investigations. Prisons and detention centres fall well below international standards. There is a prevailing weight of the availability and presence of firearms in the dynamics of violence that characterize the region, small arms and ammunition are the main tools used in many of today's conflicts and are the cause of most deaths from armed violence in the region.

There is a need for policies to transform food systems to reduce the cost of nutritious foods and ensure the affordability of healthy diets. COVID-19 brought about a notable increase in the levels of food insecurity in the Caribbean. Urgent rebalancing of agricultural and fisheries incentives for food nutritional production in alliance with the private sector is necessary to ensure investments, as well as more efficient trade and marketing mechanisms aimed at reducing the cost of food to both urban and rural consumers to lower the impact of barriers to international trade (including non-tariff measures).

Additional challenges identified include inefficient management of water resources and services, and inadequate investment in health, failure to implement financial protection mechanisms. In terms of education, government expenditures are declining and learning outcomes and equal educational opportunities need to improve by modernization of curricula, teachers' professional development, and closing the digital divide to ensure access to distance learning.

Multidimensional risk analysis concluded that there are challenges in terms of climate change

because the intensity of hurricanes and tropical storms will increase when they occur. There are also risks associated with the economic vulnerability of Caribbean countries due to the size of domestic markets, reliance on imports, and dependence upon a few exports products (oil, gas, and tourism). The economic activity and substantial reduction in government revenues have meant a considerable increase in the fiscal deficits in order to maintain the pre-COVID-19 provision of public goods and services. Other challenges include the patterns of foreign direct investments distorted by political risks.

Findings from the CMCA going forward to the next Cooperation Framework indicate that SDGs are not on track in Caribbean countries. While progress has been achieved by some countries, for the region as a whole, only 5 per cent of SDGs have been reached and more than half of countries face 'stagnating' or 'decreasing' progress with respect to SDGs 2 (End Hunger), and two of the key 'Planet' SDGs, namely 14 (Life Below Water), and 15 (Life on Land), while for the rest of SDGs countries in the region face significant or major challenges.

The initial key issues highlighted as common between 13 of the 22 countries in the Dutch- and the English-speaking Caribbean can be summarised in the topics of data, jobs/the economy, climate emergency; corruption; human capital development; food security; citizen security; inequality; and clean and cheap energy. Additional opportunities from the regional assessment for the CMCA to tackle these development challenges include the identification of financial resources to support SDG progress, data collection and statistics and knowledge production to inform policy and monitoring SDGs, development of human capital and institutional capacity building, climate change adaptation and natural hazards resilience, economic

integration and diversification, including green, blue and orange economies initiatives. Opportunities in the areas of food security, water security, citizens security and the Rule of Law, energy resilience, finance for development and partnerships, and mainstreaming of vulnerable groups at risk of being left behind were also identified. (see list below).

1. (GOVERNANCE AND) DATA

Governing blind: Because of the standardized approach, both the CCA and CMCA offer a valuable (if partial) snapshot of statistical coverage and data availability for regional development issues. They show major data gaps, and that even basic datasets (like civil registration and vital statistics [CVRS] and censuses) are missing. This translates into a major governance issue, for governments, the UN and other development stakeholders. In short, how can states govern equitably for their people (through evidence-based decision-making) if they do not have robust sources of data on a range of SDGs?

2. HUMAN SECURITY

Crime at the regional level: a combination of the Caribbean's geography, international recreational drug consumption, and proximity to Venezuela (around 5 million people have felt impelled to leave the country since 2015) mean that Caribbean countries are exposed to increased risk of narcotics trafficking, trafficking in people, and trafficking of arms. Geography and the costs of maritime security have enabled increases in the number of attacks of vessels at sea. Crime as a national challenge: in several countries, the circulation of small arms and light weapons compounds violent criminality, which is experienced at high rates. Law enforcement and justice institutions struggle to deal with crime:

there are lengthy case backlogs, respect for human rights during arrest and detention is highly uneven, and standards at prisons and detention centres is below international standards.

Crime as it is experienced by women and girls: Sexual and gender-based violence is high. Femicide levels are high. Women and girls are more likely than men and boys to be beaten, raped, sexually, physically, or mentally abused. In some settings, people face dynamics of 'criminogenic local governance' managed by gangs.

3. FOOD SECURITY (AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR NUTRITION AND HEALTH)

Eating, but not healthily: the CMCA indicates that the configuration of food systems in the region is not supporting optimal (or even adequate) nutritional and health outcomes, a pattern compounded by distortions in markets introduced by COVID-19 disruption. Levels of acute food insecurity, though still low, are rising. Even under normal (non-COVID) circumstances, a combination of factors (including, but not limited to trade/tariff barriers) mean that incentives (including the costs) are lacking for consumers to adopt nutritious and healthy diets.

4. WATER SECURITY

Water infrastructure resilience and effective management: the CMCA addresses several challenges in terms of water security (supply, demand, and infrastructure) affected by exposition to increasing climate-related variability and the lack of effective management.

5. INEQUITY, INEQUALITY, AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Because of who you are, where you are... not because of what you can do: the life chances (or

'life outcomes') of people in the Caribbean are determined by who they are, where they live, and not because of what they can do. The study describes how identity (sex, ethnicity, age, sexuality, health/HIV status, disability, migration, specific occupation), and location (those living in rural areas; those without internet access) play major roles in people's economic and social prospects. The distribution of public goods (health, education, social protection, justice etc.) is currently not sufficient to reverse these features of inequity and inequality, assessed to be worsening. Women are better educated than men but paid less. Tax policy is not optimised to be 'pro-poor', and there remain significant imbalances in progressive versus regressive tax regimes.

Because rights are not upheld, people discriminate against other people: the CMCA indicates that a number of constitutions do not guarantee economic, social, and cultural rights (ESCR), in particular with respect to sex, disability, and sexuality. Domestic legislation is not reflective of the International Covenant on ESCR, and the absence of the Paris Principle national human rights institutions (NHRI) undermines rights protection. Even where rights exist in law, too often they are not upheld by 'duty bearers.'

6. HUMAN CAPITAL

Health systems and health outcomes: the CMCA argues that states are not investing sufficiently (or carefully enough) in the achievement of better health outcomes. Health systems struggle, they are not properly staffed or fully professionalised. For citizens, whilst models of health provision vary from country to country, incomplete health insurance (combined with prohibitive expenses for health services) means significant minorities do not receive the healthcare they want or require. Lacking the education to participate in economic transformation: the CMCA argues that govern-

ment expenditures on education are declining, suggesting that (a) limited access; (b) outdated curricula; (c) poor teaching, and (d) the digital divide combine to result in sub-optimal learning outcomes. 'Brain drain' is a well-documented and perpetual 'drag' on national economies: some of those with the highest potential and greatest opportunity to enhance their economic prospects seek to do so outside the region (truer in some countries than others).

7. THE ECONOMY/JOB

Flatlining, even before COVID: many economies in the region had experienced a decade of comparative economic stagnation even before COVID. Growth in the Caribbean does not match growth rates in other emerging economies. The impacts of COVID have been very significant, with parts of the tourism/services economy grinding to a standstill for months.

Not enough decent work: high rates of youth not in employment, education, or training (NEET) are characteristic of economies that are not generating sufficient decent work. Economic migrants (notably from Venezuela, but also Haiti) find it particularly difficult to find good work but represent only a small minority of the unemployed/ under-employed. Informal sector jobs in the expanding services sector are particularly precarious. Social protection and labour markets: the inadequacy of social protection systems precipitates the wrong kind of flexibility in labour markets: incentives to boost skills are reduced by the precarity of work. In turn, where people don't have access to decent work, they are more likely to experience lower health, nutritional, educational, and other social outcomes.

Lacking dynamism, diversification, or networked-ness: economies seem to be characterized by small domestic markets, trade imbalances (deficits), apparently low productivity, and

sub-optimal positioning on 'value chains' (i.e., difficulties in adding value to economic inputs). Other features include comparatively low productivity, un-competitiveness, low levels of research & development investment, and low levels of innovation and creativity. Enablers of communications and trade (digital, transportation, logistics infrastructure) are insufficient to match emerging opportunities in intra-regional and international trade. Policy/ tariff barriers to trade are further obstacles. Combined, these same structural features dissuade foreign direct investment. In many cases, exports are highly concentrated into a few sectors or sub-sectors, resulting in vulnerability. Financing and fiscal space: a direct result of the above, fiscal space in most countries in the region is limited. Changes in tax administration and tax policy could somewhat increase fiscal space, but more broadly, economies are not sufficiently prosperous to boost government revenue streams significantly. It is not immediately obvious how many Caribbean states can finance their development. Official Development Assistance (ODA) revenues are falling as countries graduate towards Upper-Middle-Income or High-Income status. ODA is small and declining. High levels of debt and debt servicing mean governments are reluctant/ unable to make the major investments required.

8. VULNERABILITY AND RISK'

Climate and environment (1) – natural hazards: rising sea levels and more intense precipitation will threaten communities in low-lying coastal areas and a significant number of major urban centres across the region. Food production is threatened, with knock-on effects on food security, especially in coastal areas. Increasing temperatures will heighten the intensity of storm/hurricane fronts. They will also increase the frequency of heatwaves, drought, and, paired with reduced net levels of precipitation, will even raise the risks

of fires in the rainforests of Guyana, Suriname, and Belize. Climate change likely to have a net negative impact on GDP.

Climate and environment (2) – environmental degradation and unnatural hazards: Water acidification as a result of increased atmospheric carbon. Over-fishing risks biodiversity and hurts livelihoods. Land use practices presently unsustainable, and mining/timber operations in Suriname and Guyana risk the release of carbon. Oil and gas production off the coasts of Guyana, Suriname, Venezuela, Trinidad & Tobago poses the risk of a major environmental disaster.

Climate and environment (3) – adaptation and mitigation: the capacity of national institutions to adopt national policy frameworks for (a) climate change mitigation; (b) climate change adaptation; (c) sustainable land use, and (d) disaster

risk requires further strengthening. States require support to access climate finance for adaptation and mitigation. certainty about access to disaster recovery resources.

Economic vulnerability: See 'The Economy/Jobs', above. Vulnerability as a result of small domestic markets, limited export diversification, and reliance on imports for many goods.

Health vulnerability: as highlighted in the Global Health Security Index [now outdated], few countries are well prepared to cope with a major health emergency.

Political risk: generally low, with democracy, freedom of speech and civil society relatively well protected. Only Guyana, Suriname and Belize appear to have higher levels of residual political risk. In these cases, political risk can dissuade FDI.



2. Introduction

The purpose of this Common Multi-Country Analysis (CMCA) is to provide an objective assessment of the progress of the Caribbean region towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and its commitments to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The analysis will also focus on the identification of challenges and opportunities for the development of innovative shared solutions for the 22 English- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean independent and constituents' countries, and overseas territories (OT) that will be included in the next Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework (MSDF) 2022-2026⁴. Caribbean countries and territories are considerably diverse comprising 19 islands, 2 countries located in South America and 1 in Central America.

The United Nations System (UNS) in the Caribbean covers the English- and Dutch-speaking countries. There are five United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs): (i) Belize; (ii) Guyana; (iii) Jamaica, which covers the Bahamas, Bermuda, the Cayman Islands, and Turks and Caicos Islands; (iv) Suriname; and (v) Trinidad and Tobago, which covers Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten. In addition, there is one United Nations Sub-Regional Team (UNST) for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean, which includes Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, the British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, the Federation of Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. All 22 countries and territories are members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), are classified as Small Island Development States (SIDS)

4. Countries and territories in this CMCA: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Curaçao, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, Sint Maarten, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands.

under the Accelerated Modality of Action (SAMOA Pathway),⁵ and 13⁶ belong to the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).

There are five Resident Coordinator Offices (RCO) that encompass all organizations of the UNS in the Caribbean, dealing with operational activities for development, regardless of their formal presence in the country. RCOs cover:

1. Barbados, also for the OECS;
2. Belize;
3. Guyana;
4. Jamaica, also for the Bahamas, Bermuda, Cayman Islands and Turks and Caicos Islands;
5. Trinidad and Tobago, also for Suriname, Aruba, Curacao, and Sint Maarten.

Agencies, Funds, and Programmes which have Country Offices (CO) in the Caribbean are FAO, ILO, IOM, PAHO/WHO, UNHCR, UNFPA⁷, UNDP, UNICEF, UPU, WFP, and the World Bank. In addition, operational regional offices in the Caribbean are FAO, UNAIDS, UNEP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNIC, UNOPS, UN Women, and WFP. Other Agencies, Funds and Programmes have regional offices that cover Caribbean countries and territories: IOM, ITC, OHCHR, UNHCR, UNIDO, UNLIREC, UNODC, UNSDG. Those with regional offices in the Caribbean are ECLAC and the World Bank, and with projects in the Caribbean with regional partners is IAEA.

The desk review for the CMCA consisted of a systematic data collection and analysis of the available information significant to the United

Nations Caribbean programming and implementation of the Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework (MSDF) 2017-2021. A literature review analysed secondary development data, which included policies, strategies, reports, and other related documents, as well as data on important development indicators and progress towards the 2030 Agenda. The review included global publications and official documents and reports from United Nations Systems (UNS) agencies, funds, and programmes, as well as contributions from major regional and international partners. Information was collected based on initial research and review of Common Country Analyses (CCAs), conducted in 2020 by UNCTs in consultations with governments and national stakeholders in Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean States, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago, the Bahamas, Bermuda, Cayman Islands and Turks and Caicos Islands. For other countries included in the CMCA, Aruba, Sint Maarten and Curaçao, analysis was based on reports on Rapid Integrated Assessments (RIA) and Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS) that supported inclusion of SDGs into national and subnational planning.

The CCAs and the present CMCA have been commissioned to determine the multi-dimensional challenges and opportunities for countries in the Caribbean, and for the Caribbean as a region. The CMCA draws from those national and subregional CCAs and includes an assessment of regional and cross-border dimensions of potential transformative changes needed to achieve SDGs. The result of the CMCA is the understanding of common key challenges and opportunities identified by countries at the national level and their perspectives to

5. UN General Assembly. Resolution adopted at the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS). UN document: A/69/15. 14 November 2014.

6. Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad, and Tobago.

7. Liaison Office

be targeted regionally in terms of the Caribbean region priorities and trends.

Human rights standards and principles are integrated and articulated throughout this document, which is evidence-based and data-driven, as well as participative centred on a consultative process that engaged stakeholders to reflect on regional and cross-border dimensions of national priorities. The development of this CMCA was supervised by the Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework (MSDF) Steering Committee and operationalized by the MSDF Regional Strategic Planners Coordinating Team (RSPCT). Special inputs and guidance were provided by RCO Economists, Partnerships and Financing Officers, Data Management and Results Monitoring and Reporting Officers (RMETT), Human Rights and Peace and Development Advisors, and the Caribbean representation of the Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

Contextual information included an analysis of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Caribbean region that suffered an economic contraction worse than any other region, exposing the need for policy actions for effective support to protect the most vulnerable, and ensure participatory growth. The onset and continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly exacerbated the existing challenges in the region including slow productivity, stagnant economic growth, high debt, high youth unemployment, rising inequality, unequal access to inclusive quality education, socioeconomic vulnerability, limited institutional capacity to effectively respond to strategic development challenges, and the need for disaster prevention and preparedness and reconstruction relief and rehabilitation efforts. For children and young persons of migrant or refugee status, their lack of legal status as well as their arrival at different points of the year posed difficulties, along with

the challenge of language of instruction, e.g., for learners from Venezuela.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is presenting new RCOs and scaled up MCO systems with the challenge of meeting the expectation of positioning the UN system to better support the Caribbean in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda through leadership and tailored UN support to each country and territory; stronger regional and global support and synergies; effective engagement support; and resources to address development needs and coordination.

The UNS in the Caribbean has developed six socio-economic response plans (SERP) to confront the socio-economic impact of the pandemic. These response plans were meant to be an interim tool (up to 18 months) to enable the UN development system to address the impact of COVID-19 in countries, with the expectation that these should be folded into the MSDF. DCO has issued guidance to support UN teams to anchor their COVID-19 response plans into national development plans and in the Cooperation Frameworks. To do so, Cooperation Frameworks require well-developed Joint Work Plans (JWP). Common strategies across country-specific SERPs identified by UNCTs to be considered in the design of the MSDF included: health first, protecting people, economic response and recovery, macro-economic recovery and multilateral collaboration, and social cohesion and resilience.

This CMCA presents an analysis with substantive inputs from agencies, funds and programmes in the Caribbean and complemented by a consultation with selected regional stakeholders to assess priorities in the areas identified as common among the countries and that can be addressed regionally in the next four years: CARICOM, CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and

Security (IMPACS), Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ), Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCC), Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), Regional Security Systems (RSS), Caribbean Policy Research Institute (CAPRI), Association of Caribbean States (ACS), and the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism (CRFM) Secretariat. Priorities for other regional stakeholders were assessed through the revision of documentation, such as the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA), Caribbean Agricultural Health and Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA), Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), Caribbean Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (CCREEE), Pan Caribbean Partnership Against HIV/AIDS (PANCAP). The CMCA weighs preliminary findings of the MSDF 2017-2022 evaluation being undertaken simultaneously, which included consultations with United Nations agencies, funds and programs, governments and civil society organizations, as well as focus groups representatives of vulnerable and marginalized groups at the national level.

Key lessons learned from the process of elaboration of the CMCA include the need to foster a consensus for the UNS to work better together based on an integrated UN vision that includes empowering leadership of the RCs in support of a joined-up UN system response at the regional and country levels. In this regard, a common understanding of the methodology for the elaboration of the CMCA to efficiently target the contents to be included will not only add clarity to the process but it will make it more effective in terms of compliance with roadmap dates and the expectations from all agencies, funds and programmes. This understanding should reflect the differences in scope between programming instruments

(e.g., CCA, CPI, CMCA, MSDF) of the UN for the national and regional levels, and the roles and responsibilities of RCOs and agencies, funds, and programmes COs in their elaboration. Monitoring and evaluation of the MSDF will benefit from a homogeneous methodology for the elaboration of both, the CMCA and the CCAs.

Given the new CMCA guidelines, a repository of basic development information has been collected to be updated regularly for the Caribbean countries included in the CMCA. Regional and subregional aggregates collected by development partners (e.g., World Bank, CDB, IADB, IMF) include additional countries and territories that are not relevant to the CMCA Caribbean subregion, thus it is important to build on data from the 22 countries and develop a specific average for the CMCA subregion.

Interagency collaboration in the process of elaboration of the CMCA based on the recognition of good teamwork and joint action is fundamental to reach a consensus on national commonalities with potential to be addressed regionally. It is important for the UN to present to governments and regional partners a cohesive and coherent response to address development challenges at the regional level, effectively streamlining efforts and generating efficiencies across the UNCT as embodied in the UN Reform. Joint programming to tackle complex development challenges in integrated ways can bring UN agencies together in genuine long-term collaboration at the regional level to complement national programming.

Finally, comparative advantages and development cooperation value added by the UN are missing in the analyses of the CMCA. Likewise, even when some preliminary findings of the evaluation of the previous MSDF were available, lessons learned, and best practices were not accessible to be examined before the formulation of the CMCA.



3. Progress towards the 2030 agenda in the region

Assessing the collective progress towards the 2030 Agenda in the Caribbean is challenging. There are substantial constraints in official data availability across the region, making it difficult to assess progress evenly among countries. Several jurisdictions are not independent countries⁹ making it harder to assess progress. Lastly, there are globally shared difficulties with tracking of SDG-related progress as the number of indicators included in the SDGs is very large, so it can be

challenging to summarize such quantities of information into sensible progress reports on the 2030 Agenda. This is further exacerbated by the fact that while some indicators (136) are conceptually clear and have internationally established methodology and standards available with data regularly produced by countries, for others (107) with the methodology and standards available, data is not regularly produced by countries¹⁰.

9. Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat and Turks and Caicos Islands, are Overseas Territories of the United Kingdom; and Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten are Constituent Countries of the Kingdom of Netherlands.

10. UNSTATs. Tier Classification for Global SDG Indicators. Last update: 29 March 2021. Four indicators with (a) and (b) components have a mixed Classification Tier I/Tier II, with data availability reviewed by one parts of the indicators.

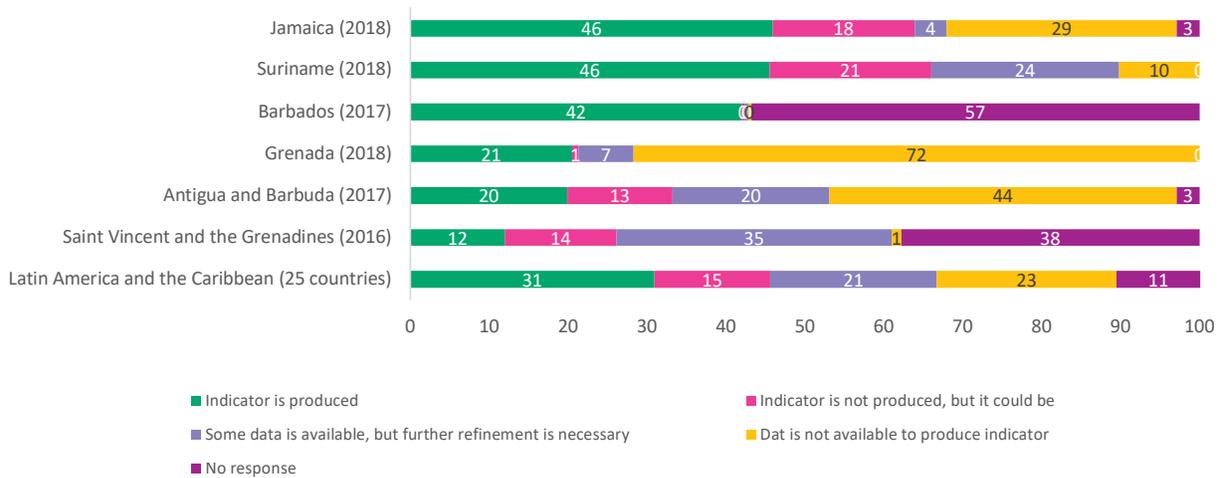
Nevertheless, there are several useful sources that attempt to provide overviews of the progress towards the 2030 Agenda for some of the countries. On the national level, many of the countries of the region have published Voluntary National Reviews (VNR), which aim to facilitate the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, with a view to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The VNRs also seek to strengthen policies and institutions of governments and to mobilize multi-stakeholder support and partnerships for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. In recent years, a number of countries in the Caribbean have completed VNR exercises including Belize (2017), the Bahamas and Jamaica (2018), Guyana and Saint Lucia (2019) and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago (2020). Both the Bahamas and Antigua and Barbuda are scheduled to publish VNRs during 2021. A challenge is that several jurisdictions have not recently published VNRs or are (theoretically) included in their administering Powers' VNRs without having disaggregated data available to assess their individual progress.

At a regional level, ECLAC collects national data and collates it to give a useful representation of the most up-to-date data.¹¹ ECLAC's work primarily provides information on a regional level. Several of the Caribbean jurisdictions are not included in the data collection efforts. One particularly interesting piece of analysis is the ECLAC

interpretation of national statistical capacities. FIGURE 1 below shows the availability of different SDG indicators in the Caribbean, as reported by the national statistics agencies to ECLAC. Two things stand out from this figure: First, the statistics departments of Jamaica and Suriname (and to a more limited degree Barbados) appear further ahead compared to other national offices. The second observation is that many countries did not provide information on their capacity to produce SDG indicators. The challenges faced by territories in producing and disseminating data constitute added regional challenges to data availability. The global approach to the data for the 2030 Agenda relies on the statistics produced nationally, where such data exist. The UN Statistics Department collates data from each of the agencies, funds, and programmes with custodianship over an SDG area at the global level. These custodians base their data on national sources, but in a more comprehensive and detailed way, and supplement data from national sources with data from international sources, including proxies generated through modelling and estimation. This provides an exhaustive set of data that is used throughout the current report to show progress on the different indicators. A major advantage of this dataset is that, to a limited degree, it includes the different overseas territories (OTs), even if data availability may be limited for those jurisdictions. A major disadvantage is that it is still difficult to summarize the underlying data in a simple progress report.

11. <https://agenda2030lac.org/en>.

Figure 1. Selected caribbean countries and lac average: Availability of sdg indicators, different years (in percentages)



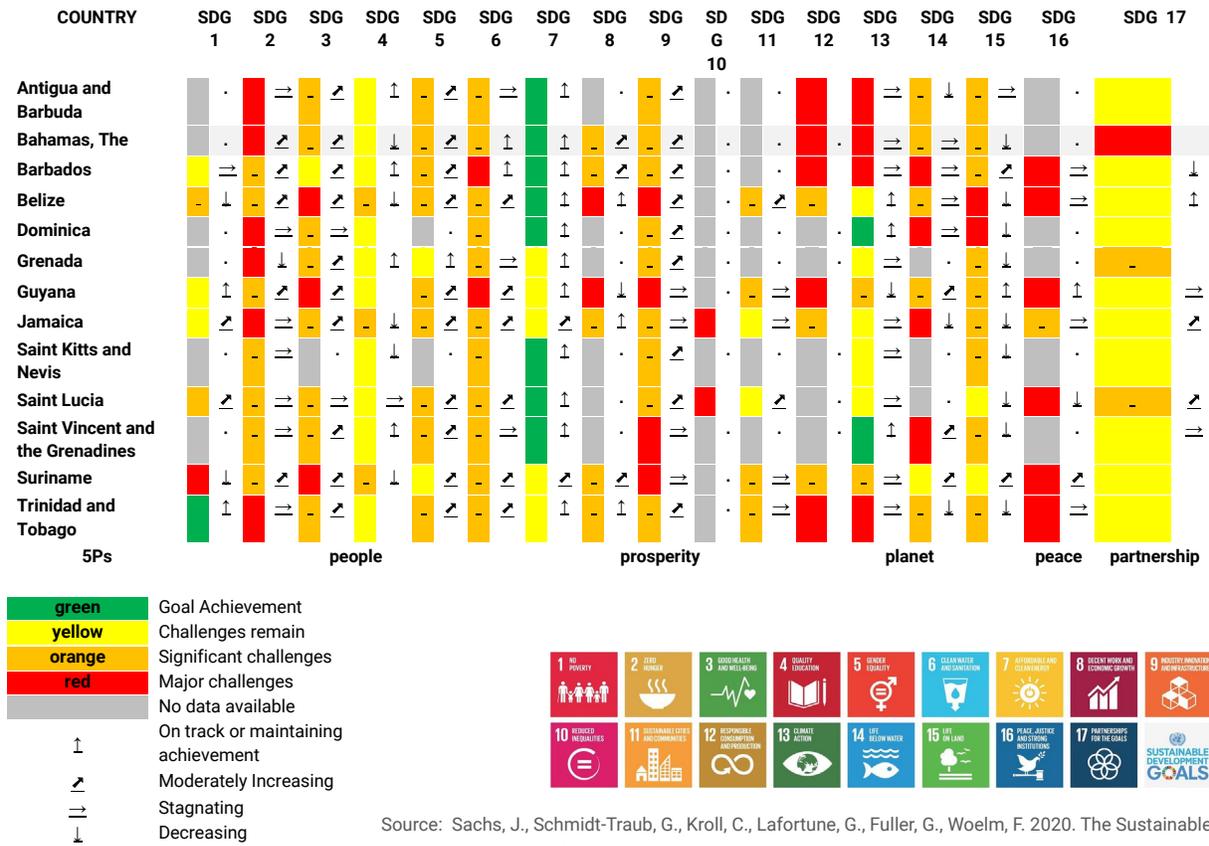
Source: <https://agenda2030lac.org/estadisticas/national-statistical-capacities-produce-sdg-indicators.html>.

The final alternative for considering SDG progress is the Sustainable Development Report (SDR) 2020,¹² which reports data for 13 of the CMCA countries, overseas territories are not included. SDR uses a limited number of indicators (85, and 30 only for OECD countries).¹³ Progress towards the achievement of a certain SDG is reported, as a trend indicator with a score and a rank that indicate how close a country is to achieving 100 per cent of the SDGs. There are some substantial drawbacks to using these indicators, outweighed by their advantages. First, the indicators are not equal to the SDG indicators and some can in fact be quite distant from the original indicators, though often with the advantage of greater availability. Second, the SDR only includes independent countries, so no progress can be reported for any of the OTs. Finally, as always, there are challenges with some of the specific underlying data that may contain structural errors and challenges (indicated where possible).

12. Sachs, J., Schmidt-Traub, G., Kroll, C., Lafortune, G., Fuller, G., Woelm, F. 2020. The Sustainable Development Goals and COVID-19. Sustainable Development Report 2020. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

13. Not all officially approved indicators.

Table 1. Caribbean progress towards the sustainable development goals, 2020



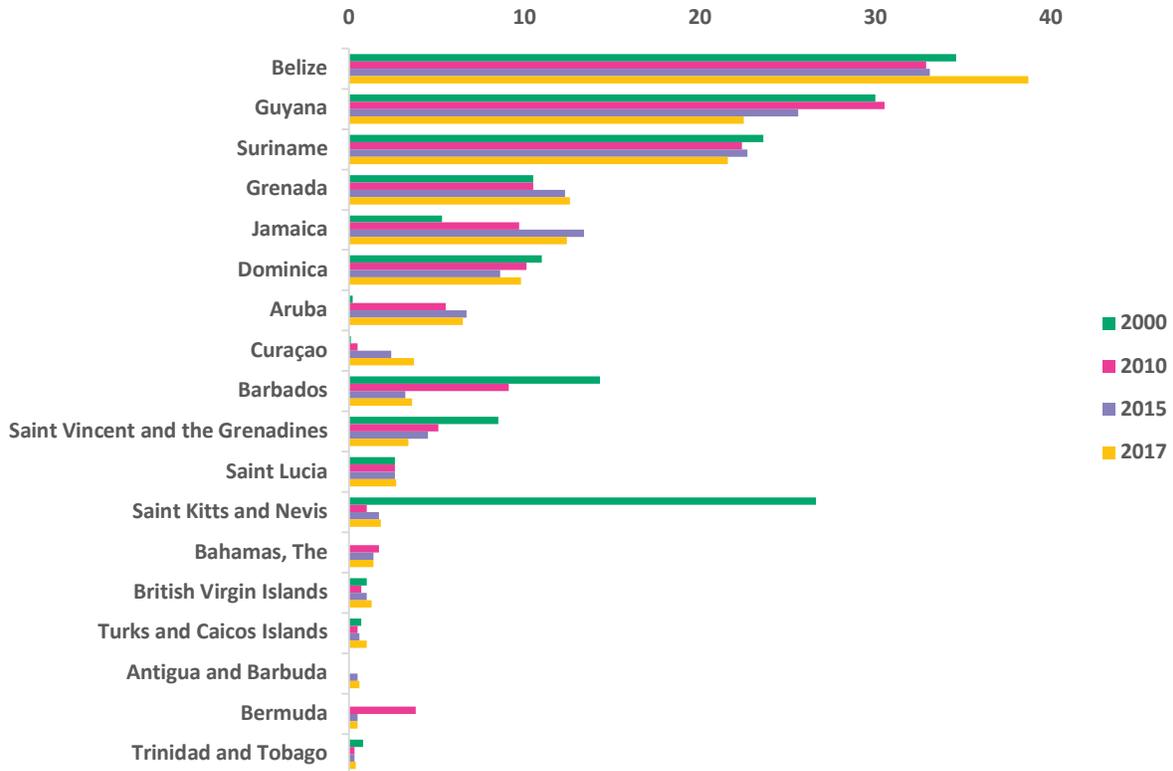
Source: Sachs, J., Schmidt-Traub, G., Kroll, C., Laforune, G., Fuller, G., Woelm, F. 2020. The Sustainable Development Goals and COVID-19. Sustainable Development Report 2020. Cambridge University Press.

Notwithstanding the weaknesses in the data TABLE 1 shows the reported SDR results, displaying the great level of heterogeneity in the region. The single area that appears to report most progress is SDG 7. However, it should be noted that, in the SDR context, two of the three indicators used merely refer to access to energy (electricity and energy for cooking), both of which are reporting the positive results that one would expect from the upper-middle income countries in the Caribbean. The third indicator is related to the CO2 intensity of energy, but it is only available

in Jamaica, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago, where it draws down the overall score. Also, it is relevant for Guyana with the significant oil finds and the recent flaring that is occurring offshore. Looking at the complete set of SDGs¹⁴, one can look at the share of renewable energy in the Caribbean. FIGURE 2 shows that progress in this area is substantial in Belize, Guyana¹⁵ and Suriname, although for Guyana and Suriname the trend indicates a reduction pattern over the years. Other jurisdictions are lagging behind substantially, including most of the OTs.

14. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/>.
 15. Estimates of the current power mix indicate that between 90 and 95% of energy is produced from non-renewable sources. Guyana has a renewable electricity production capacity of closer to 20% (official national statistics in the VNR put it at 16.6%). Note that 'capacity to produce renewables' is always higher than 'consumption of renewables', thus, at best, and assuming that all of the renewable capacity was operating at any one time, 20% of Guyana's energy production capacity is renewable, not 23%. At worst, only 5% of it is renewable.

Figure 2. Caribbean countries: renewable energy shares in the total final energy consumption, 2000,2010,2015,2017 (in percentages)



Source: Tracking SDG 7: The Energy Progress Report 2020, with data from the UN Statistics Division Energy Balances (2019) and the IEA World Energy Balance (2019).

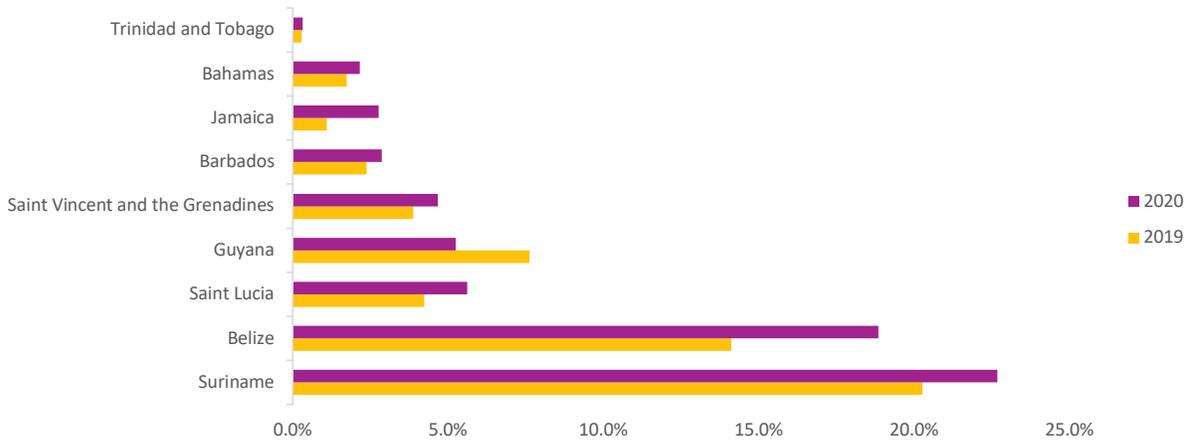
Another important commonality observable in TABLE 1 is the weak data availability in SDG 1, SDG 8, SDG 11, SDG 16 and especially SDG 10. SDG 10 is based on a single SDR indicator, (the Gini coefficient adjusted for top incomes).¹⁶ The UN SDG database, on the other hand, provides data on 18 different indicators in this area, though the data availability is also scattered.

Despite these limitations, two main messages are clear: there are substantial challenges with respect to data availability for some of the countries and for all of the overseas territories¹⁷ and there still is a long way to go to achieve the SDGs in the Caribbean.

16. <https://www.brookings.edu/opinions/how-much-do-we-really-know-about-inequality-within-countries-around-the-world/>.

17. Human Development Index is calculated only for 12 of the countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago). In HDI 2020 Multi-Dimensional Poverty Index was only calculated for Barbados (2012), Belize (2015/2016), Guyana (2014), Jamaica (2014), Saint Lucia (2012), Suriname (2018) and Trinidad and Tobago (2011), with reference data from the years indicated.

Figure 3. Selected countries in the Caribbean: extreme poverty (people living of less than 1.90 Usd /day), 2019-2020 (in share of the population)



An important addendum to the results reported above is the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The quarantine measures and closure of borders implemented by governments to contain the spread of the virus heavily impacted commodity prices, tourism receipts, foreign direct investment, and remittances. Micro, and Small Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) were heavily impacted, with many forced to permanently close. Informal workers were amongst the most affected, as well as women that usually bear the burden of care and are over-represented in certain sectors of front-line workers. The impact of the pandemic is going to be felt in all socioeconomic outcomes but is not yet reflected in the SDR data reported for 2020. It should thus be expected that many indicators are going to show worsening outcomes. To provide a simple illustration of the scale of the changes, FIGURE 3 shows early estimates for the rate of

extreme poverty in some of the countries with available data. All but Guyana¹⁸(an outlier because of the commencement of oil production in 2019) see substantial increases in the rates of extreme poverty, with the rate almost tripling in Jamaica and increasing by almost five percentage points in Belize. In total, excluding Guyana, more than 87,000 men and women are expected to have fallen into extreme poverty during 2020 in these countries.

The existence of a legal framework that adequately responds to the challenges of the data revolution for sustainable development is a critical enabling factor for National Statistical Systems (NSS) to meet the 2030 Agenda’s demand for data. A first step in that direction is a national statistics law that incorporates and promotes the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (UNFPOS)¹⁹.

18. Guyana has seen a substantial increase in GDP per capita income and a national sustained commitment to poverty reduction through the proportion of government expenditure directed to education, health, and social protection. In addition, the beginning of oil production in 2020 means that notwithstanding COVID-19, the country enjoys widening fiscal space, with a rise in international investment and international debt paid.

19. Principle 1: relevance, impartiality and equal access, Principle 2: professional standards and ethics, Principle 3: accountability and transparency, Principle 4: prevention of misuse, Principle 5: Sources of official statistics, Principle 6: confidentiality, Principle 7: legislation, Principle 8: national coordination, Principle 9: use of international standards, and Principle 10: international cooperation.

This fact is reinforced in the Global SDG indicator 17.18.2, which reports on the number of countries with national statistical legislation that complies with UNFPOS. CARICOM's Statistics Model Bill serves as a template for new national statistical laws in the Caribbean, however, the Bill does not require that a National Statistical Institutes be professionally independent or impartial, use international standards, compile statistics in a transparent and scientific manner, comment on erroneous interpretation and misuse of statistics, work on improving data quality or timeliness, or have a quality management framework for its statistical outputs, all requirements of the 10 UNFPOS principles. There are disparities in terms of statistical systems capacities among Caribbean countries, for example, while Belize fully incorporated UNFPOS principles 1, 2, 3 and 10, Trinidad and Tobago principles 2, 8 and 10, Grenada principles 2 and 10, Antigua and Barbuda principle 10, and British Virgin Islands Principle 8, the rest of the CMCA countries either partially incorporate or do not incorporate the UNFPOS principles.²⁰

Likewise, Caribbean countries present disparities in terms of data availability for SDG indicators, while Jamaica has no data available to produce 11 SDG indicators, Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, and Grenada do not have data to produce 65, 45 and 41 indicators, respectively. Lack of prior need for the data, lack of financial resources and technical capacity are cited as obstacles to official data production in the Caribbean.²¹

Moving forward, given the limited national capacities of the countries, regional efforts will need to be devised to deliver effective solutions for common cross-border national issues to achieve critical SDGs and issues highlighted in the San Pedro Declaration (which internalises the regional implementation of the SAMOA Pathway), such as, on climate change and disaster risk management, oceans and building genuine partnerships for mobilisation of international public and private resources. Post-COVID-19, promotion of functional regional integration to promote economic growth and mobilisation of resources within the region will be essential for creating employment opportunities and reducing poverty and inequality.

3.1 Regional vision VIS-À-VIS the 2030 agenda

This subchapter addresses the important question of the regional vision vis-à-vis the 2030 Agenda, but it is not clear whether a single regional vision exists. After all, these are 22 separate countries and territories that each have National

Development Plans (NDPs) and visions about key priorities for the future. Using a key tool by ECLAC and its Regional Observatory on Planning for Development²², it is possible to do a comparative analysis of the different national plans. ECLAC

20. Bleeker, Amelia and A. Abdulkadri, Abdullahi. 2020. A review of Caribbean national statistical legislation in relation to the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, Studies and Perspectives series-ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, No. 86 (LC/TS.2020/1-LC/CAR/TS.2019/9).

21. Abdulkadri, Abdullahi. 2017. Addressing capacity gaps in the production of the SDG indicators in the Caribbean. ECLAC Project Document. Policy Brief. December.

22. <https://observatorioplanificacion.cepal.org/en>.

has performed a convergence analysis on each of the development plans analysed²³ and this data is graphically represented in figure 4. The SDGs most prevalent in the NDPs of the countries analysed were SDG 8 (15 percent of all the individual objectives in the average country were related to it) and SDG 16 (13 percent), while importance of SDG 6 (1.9 percent) and SDG 5 (2.2 percent) needs to be better addressed in the NDPs. There is substantial variation between the different countries included, with the Bahamas prioritizing SDG 16 (26 percent of its objectives) and Barbados prioritizing SDG 8 (24 percent). Amongst the more uncommon prioritizations, Belize places great importance on SDG 3 (10 percent) and SDG 4 (17 percent), while Dominica and Guyana each give high priority to SDG 13 (11 percent each).

Current MSDF 2017-2021²⁴ presents an amalgamation of the priorities the UN system identified in the previous MSDF exercise in four key priorities for the region to address the 2030 Agenda, as shown in TABLE 2, with their associated SDGs.

Table 2. Priority areas and associated sdgs in msdf 2017-2021

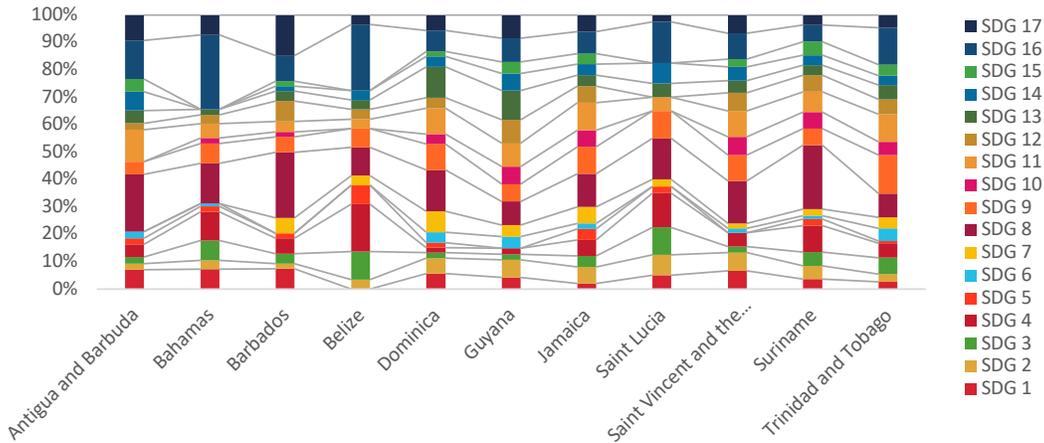
PRIORITY AREAS	RELATED SDGS							
An inclusive, equitable & prosperous Caribbean								
A healthy Caribbean								
A safe & just Caribbean								
A sustainable and resilient Caribbean								

Source: <http://www.2030caribbean.org/content/unct/caribbean/en/home/resources.html>.

There is a notable difference to the prioritization as presented by the MSDF compared to the one presented previously in FIGURE 4. SDG 1 comes back throughout the MSDF, yet it is not prioritized by many of the countries in their NDPs. SDG 8, on the other hand, is not as present in the MSDF as it is in the NDPs. Nevertheless, the four key strategic areas identified in the first MSDF process continue to be highly relevant, and they also tend to coincide with external analyses by other development partners.

23. Plans for OTs were not analysed. The NDP of Grenada has only preliminarily been submitted and has not been analysed. No NDP for Saint Kitts and Nevis has been found.
 24. The preceding MSDF iteration did not include the Bahamas, Bermuda, the Cayman Islands or the Turks and Caicos Islands, so those jurisdictions' points of view are not included.

Figure 4. Selected countries in the caribbean: alignment of ndps with specific sdgs, most recent plans available (in percentages)



Source: <https://observatorioplanificacion.cepal.org/en>.

Note: The plans analysed were long-term plans in all cases, except for Antigua and Barbuda (mid-term 2016-20), Saint Lucia (mid-term 2020-23) and Suriname (mid-term 2017-21).

CARICOM is the organization with the strongest regional presence. CARICOM’s most recent strategic plan covers the period 2015-2019 Strategic Plan,²⁵ with a new framework under development.²⁶

While the CARICOM plan does not link its key outcomes to the SDGs, it is important to recognize that strategic priorities had been identified to achieve greater economic, social, technological and environmental resilience. In terms of COVID-19 response, CARICOM is developing the Caribbean Economy Recovery and Transformation (CERT) Plan to stimulate economies in the region in the context of high debt and limited fiscal space, climate change, trade barriers, the decline of oil prices, impacts to the tourism sector, and increased migration.

The CARICOM strategic direction, putting aside the objectives related to the internal governance, is framed around building resilience in areas that largely coincide with the SDGs and with the objec-

tives of the MSDF 2017-2021. The only possible exception is that the CARICOM strategic direction does not identify health as a separate area, though it is included in its social resilience area.

CARICOM has completed a Regional Strategy for the Development of Statistics (RSDS) for the period 2019-2030²⁷. This plan strategy is based on four main drivers that power the effort to strengthen Caribbean statistical capacities:

1. Information and communications technology.
2. The 17 SDGs and the associated 169 targets of the 2030 Agenda
3. The SAMOA Pathway
4. Sustainable Capacity Building and Gender Mainstreaming

25. <https://caricom.org/documents/strategic-plan-caribbean-community-2015-2019/>.

26. Presentation of the new Strategic Plan is expected in July 2021.

27. <https://caricom.org/documents/caribbean-community-caricom-regional-strategy-for-the-development-of-statistics-rsds-2019-2030/>.

The ultimate outcome is an efficient Caribbean Statistical Service that is responsive to the national, regional, and global development agenda, enabling a resilient Community with sustained development, equality, and wellbeing. The RSDS provides a regional approach among CARICOM member States for implementation and monitoring of the SDGs that is maintained through national and regional statistical strengthening efforts, including the CARICOM gender equality indicators, with official statistics as a central element of the statistics architecture.

With regards to the SDGs, CARICOM has identified a set of 125 core indicators that it aims to monitor with extra attention. The objective is to address systematic gaps in areas such as the environment

(specifically losses of biodiversity and ecosystem services), natural and man-made hazards and crime (specifically human and drug trafficking and GBV and gang-related violence). The selection of core indicators was based on work done by key international development partners, including many from the UN system.

Another strategic document is the CARICOM Human Resource Development 2030 Strategy²⁸, released in 2017. The four strategic priorities of the strategy are based on access, equity, quality and relevance to address the significant inefficiencies and expenditure in education and training systems throughout the Caribbean Community and aim to ensure that the members can respond to the demands of the SDGs.

3.2 Regional political integration

Regional integration in the Caribbean emerged as a tool for political emancipation in the 1950s,²⁹ leading to a short-lived, federalist West Indies Federation that lasted from 1958 to 1962. Subsequent attempts, via the Caribbean Free Trade Association (CARIFTA), and CARICOM, focused on trade and economic integration, have not been matched by the desire for closer political integration although there has been notable success in both areas at sub-regional level through the OECS. In the context of integration, 'the lack of a regional body with powers and accountability that can help transform community decisions to binding laws in individual jurisdictions is a key impediment, a

decision-making process based on unanimity principle, where each member retains its sovereign authority, also hinders progress'³⁰ and means that CARICOM countries need to work on alignment between national and multinational goals in order to deepen cooperation.

This is compounded by 'potential benefits perceived by some as uncertain, potentially uneven, and only materializing over a long horizon'³¹ and thus, not compatible with government priorities established within electoral cycles. This sentiment has been eloquently voiced by the late Professor Norman Girvan, a figure of Caribbean

28. <https://caricom.org/documents/16065-caricom-hrd-2030-strategy-viewing.pdf>.

29. Regional Integration – What is in it for CARICOM?, Moreira and Mendoza, 2007, IDB – It is also argued that the Caribbean integration process initially did not contain common political motives for integration, namely to reduce political and military tensions among member countries (e.g., European integration), reduce the political or military threat of countries outside of the agreement (e.g., ASEAN) or to increase their bargaining power in international negotiations.

30. Strengthening Caribbean Regional Integration', Ding and Okter, 2020, IMF

31. Ibid.

regionalism, who notes that 'there is an absence of political will to complete the integration project in CARICOM and the social forces do not perceive benefits from the amount of effort that would be required.'³²

The reasons for this situation have been discussed by numerous Caribbean scholars and academics. The focus is on the primacy of national sovereignty over regionalism among political elites³³ which results in regional integration attempts, including the launch of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) in 2006, being slowed down and delayed. However, the ambition and the declared commitment to the CSME continues to represent an opportunity to positively re-shape the region and deepen integration.

While this approach has seen integration move at a slower pace, it has also reaped political benefits at the international stage. Caribbean countries have displayed strong functional cooperation on foreign policy,³⁴ establishing a solid negotiating and voting bloc in international forums³⁵ and establishing principles which have held firm across decades and changing political circumstances.³⁶ Regionally, it has played a significant role in resolving political deadlock, most notably in Guyana.³⁷

The political will for integration, if not political integration itself, remains a key ingredient if closer functional cooperation in development is to be achieved. Crises like COVID-19 have exposed

the limited ability Caribbean states have to deal with its effects on their own and could provide fresh impetus to seek joint solutions to common problems. Given that strategies, departments, and experts for such endeavours already exist in most cases³⁸, it is more a question of advocacy, impetus, and prioritization. It is also important to increase and improve coordination between scientific institutions across the subregion, enabling them to provide policy advisory to support evidence-based decision-making. There are few entities with a regional scope (such as the Caribbean Academy of Sciences and the University of the West Indies) and no relevant intergovernmental body is in place within CARICOM or OECS to coordinate and integrate national science policies within a regional strategic framework.

At a more granular level, the countries and territories that make up the Caribbean region have similar challenges in relation to corruption and good governance. While the region enjoys free and fair elections, with mostly smooth transfers of power, sporadic electoral violence and deadlocks have taken place.³⁹

Freedom of expression is considered as a fundamental human right in most Caribbean countries, including the freedom to receive and communicate information. The right to access public information is established by law which in many cases, must be updated and effectively implemented.

33. Caribbean Regional Governance and the Sovereignty Problem, Bishop and Payne, 2010, Caribbean Paper No. 8, Centre for International Governance Innovation.

34. CARICOM at thirty: New and Old Foreign Policy Challenges, Byron, 2004, Social and Economic Studies Vol. 53, No. 4, Special Issue on Government and Politics.

35. The Political Economy of Caribbean Regionalism in the Twenty-first Century: Rebirth or Resuscitation?, Raynold, 2012, Harvard University

36. Policy towards Cuba and Venezuela are two such examples.

37. CARICOM played a key role in diffusing electoral deadlocks in 1997 (Herdmanston Accord) and 2020 (CARICOM supervised election recount).

38. Not to mention the existence of close networks that are the result of successful and globally recognized academic integration epitomized through the University of West Indies.

39. The Caribbean Court of Justice was established in 2005 and is based in Trinidad and Tobago. Although initial fears were about how its strong English law background would accommodate the Dutch and French legal traditions that are found in the Caribbean, the major issue remains the fact that only four countries (Dominica, Barbados, Guyana and Belize) have accepted the CCJ as their final instance court.

Table 3. Averages worldwide governance indicators (wgi) 2019

Country	Voice and Accountability	Political Stability No Violence	Government Effectiveness	Regulatory Quality	Rule of Law	Control of Corruption	AVERAGE
Antigua and Barbuda	72.41	81.9	51.92	68.27	65.38	63.46	67.22
Aruba	92.61	95.24	80.29	75.96	86.54	85.10	85.96
Bahamas, The	76.85	74.76	69.71	52.88	56.73	84.13	69.18
Barbados	86.21	80.00	73.56	66.83	63.94	88.46	76.50
Belize	63.55	50.00	26.92	31.73	22.12	48.56	40.48
Bermuda	NA	87.98	75.48	78.85	87.50	83.58	88.10
Cayman Islands	62.56	96.67	85.10	78.85	77.40	67.79	78.06
Dominica	74.88	87.14	40.87	59.13	75.00	69.71	67.79
Grenada	71.43	81.90	46.63	40.38	59.62	64.90	60.81
Guyana	56.16	38.57	37.50	28.85	36.54	51.92	41.59
Jamaica	68.47	59.52	70.67	62.02	44.23	54.33	59.87
St. Kitts and Nevis	73.89	70.95	72.60	69.23	67.31	66.35	70.06
St. Lucia	76.35	79.52	62.02	62.98	71.63	69.23	70.29
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	75.86	81.90	62.02	62.50	65.87	77.88	71.01
Suriname	61.08	51.90	30.77	25.48	51.44	40.38	43.51
Trinidad and Tobago	67.49	49.05	57.21	49.52	49.52	49.04	53.64
CMCA COUNTRIES	71.99	72.95	59.74	56.88	60.76	66.80	64.97
LAC REGION	59.98	55.44	51.5	52.94	49.25	52.86	50.33

Source: <https://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/>

World Governance Indicators (WGI)⁴⁰ are a useful assessment tool to evaluate the quality of governance and may contribute to improve public policy making by identifying measures capable of addressing problems evidenced in the indicators that can complement the approaches to target SDG's. The average rank of Caribbean countries and territories⁴¹ for WGI indicators is 64.97 per cent. TABLE 3 indicates large gaps between countries regionally, across all categories and as overall averages. Key areas that deserve mentioning in this variability include government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law and control of corruption all of which have the lowest scores by countries, reflected on the Caribbean countries regional average.

40. Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI)¹⁶ is a collection of data aggregated based on stakeholder's perception of the quality of governance reported on six dimensions of governance, voice and accountability, political stability/no violence, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law and control of corruption. Aggregates are reported in percentile rank terms from 0 (lowest) to 100 (highest).

41. Data is not available for Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Curaçao, Montserrat, Sint Martin, and Turks and Caicos Islands.

3.3 Economic transformation analysis

The economic landscape of the Caribbean is highly heterogeneous, notwithstanding the perception of pervasive similarities. Commonalities do exist with regards to a heavy dependence on services (especially tourism, but also financial services), but the Caribbean also includes economies that also feature significant contributions from other industries such as agriculture, forestry and fisheries, which accounts for 18 percent of Value Added (VA) in Guyana in 2019, and Trinidad and Tobago, where manufacturing made up almost 20 percent of VA during that year. The heavy reliance on the services sector cannot be ignored, particularly in the case of smaller economies such as Bermuda and the Cayman Islands, where the sector represented 89 per cent (2019) and 86 per cent (2018) of VA respectively.

Figure 5. Selected economies in the caribbean: shares of services and industry in value added, 2000 and 2019 (in percentages)

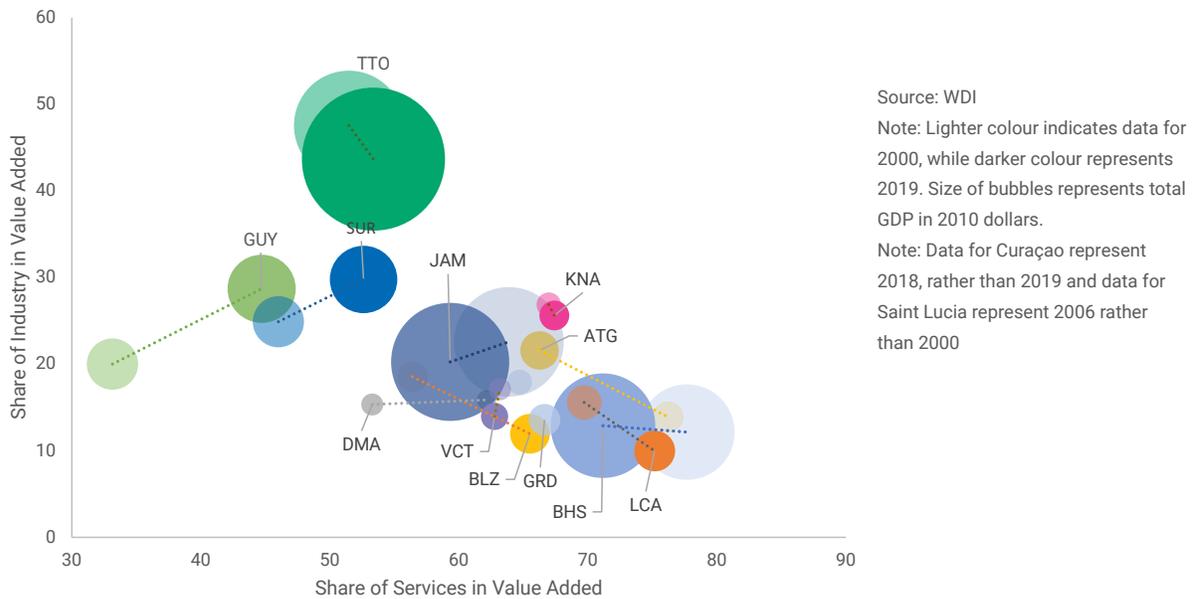
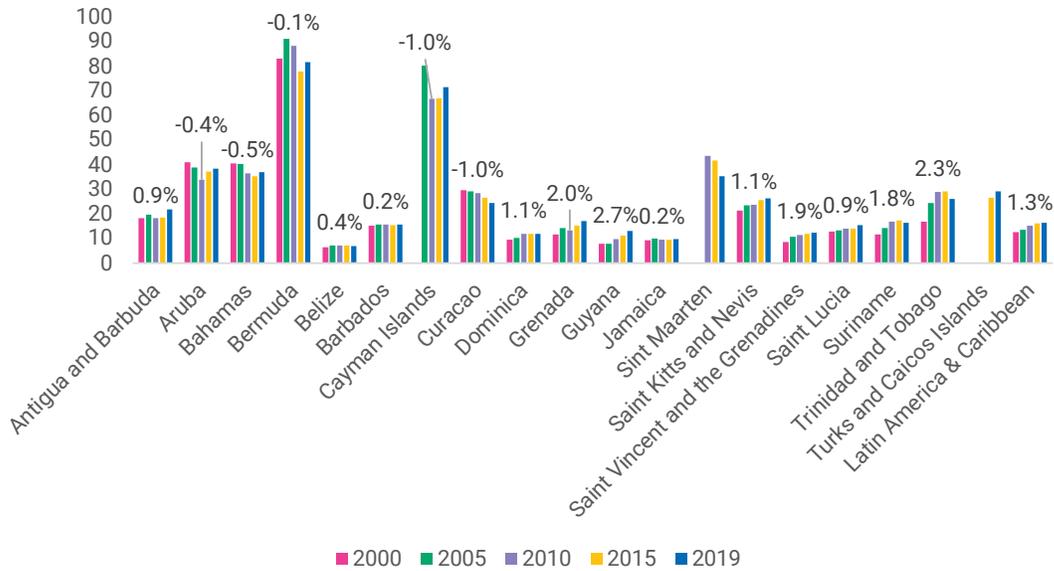


FIGURE 5 shows the dynamics of structural change between 2000 and 2019 through the changes in the shares contributed by services and industry (including construction) over that period, where data is available. While on average, country shares of services and industry have stayed mostly equal, countries such as Guyana, Suriname and Belize saw large increases in the service sector, while in others, such as The Bahamas, Dominica and Jamaica, the sector has declined⁴².

FIGURE 5 also illustrates the economic dichotomy of the Caribbean in the highly volatile service and industry sectors. While Guyana, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago are growing economies that depend mostly on natural resources and industry, many of the smaller economies towards the bottom-right of the figure are indeed highly dependent on tourism, which is also based on natural resources (e.g., natural features, ecosystems services, and heritage). As the region’s second-largest economy, Jamaica has a slightly more broad-based economy and during 2000-2019, it saw decreases in both services and industry.

42. WDI.

Figure 6. Selected economies in the caribbean: gdp per capita level and long-term growth rate, 2000-2019
(in constant 2017 dollars and percentages)



Source: WDI

Note: GDP levels are for years indicated except in the Cayman Islands, where 2006 replaces 2005 and 2018 replaces 2019. In Sint Maarten, 2018 replaces 2019 and in Aruba, 2017 replaces 2019. Average growth rates are calculated 2000-2019 (or latest year available), except in the Cayman Islands, where it reflects 2006-2018.

Knowing the structure of these economies is important when considering their long-term growth prospects and their potential vulnerability to climate change. FIGURE 6 shows the GDP per capita of countries at several moments in time and the long-term rate of growth of real GDP per capita. The natural resource-dependent economies of Guyana⁴³, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago clearly show higher rates of growth than many of the more service-oriented economies. It should be noted that a clear conditional convergence effect is visible with the wealthiest economies (Aruba, The Bahamas, Bermuda, Cayman Island and Sint Maarten) all showing long-term declining rates of

GDP per capita, while lower-income jurisdictions grow faster. Belize and Jamaica are the most important exceptions, each with very low rates of growth.⁴⁴

In many Caribbean economies, it is clear that long-term growth has been depressed for a substantial period already. The current COVID-19 crisis has worsened this situation, and forecasts of growth potential, including as presented by the IMF, do not show much improvement. For there to be a structural improvement in the rate of economic growth, structural challenges need to be addressed.

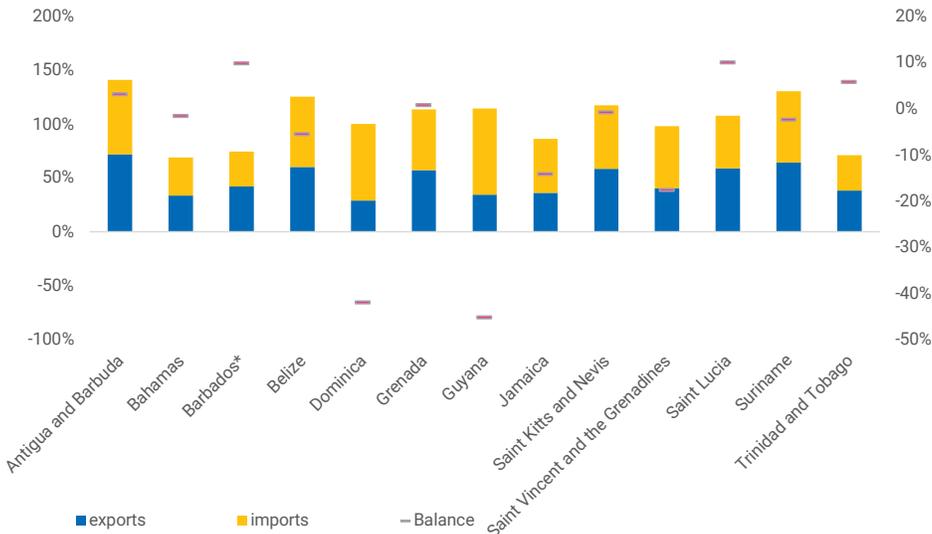
43. It should be noted that with the discovery of petroleum in Guyana and the 2020 start of production and export, that country's economic growth trajectory is quite distinct from the rest of the Caribbean. During 2020, real GDP growth was estimated at 26.2 per cent (IMF, 2020), incomparable to any other country.

44. WDI.

FIGURE 7 shows trade in goods and services is important for Caribbean economies, with total trade exceeding GDP in most countries. Furthermore, it shows the level of heterogeneity, with trade in Antigua and Barbuda reaching a total of more than 140 percent of GDP. Some of the outcomes with respect to the balance of trade

is more worrisome, where Dominica and Guyana are seeing trade deficits equal to 42 per cent and 45 per cent respectively. While this may have been understandable in the case of Guyana, with the data from 2019 reflecting the year before oil production was scheduled to begin, the case of Dominica is more curious.

Figure 7. Selected caribbean economies: exports, imports and trade balance, 2019 (in percentages of gdp)



Source: CEPALStat. Note: Barbados data is 2017 rather than 2019.

To boost economic growth, the Caribbean must pursue further economic integration. The individual economies in the region are small and may not be sufficiently appealing for external trading partners and investors. The result can be observed in many of the Caribbean economies, with high market concentration common in sectors as varied as beer, telecommunications, and banking. The CSME has been a stated goal of CARICOM since signing the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas in 2001, but progress has been slow⁴⁵. By 2017, only 57 per cent of the required policy actions had

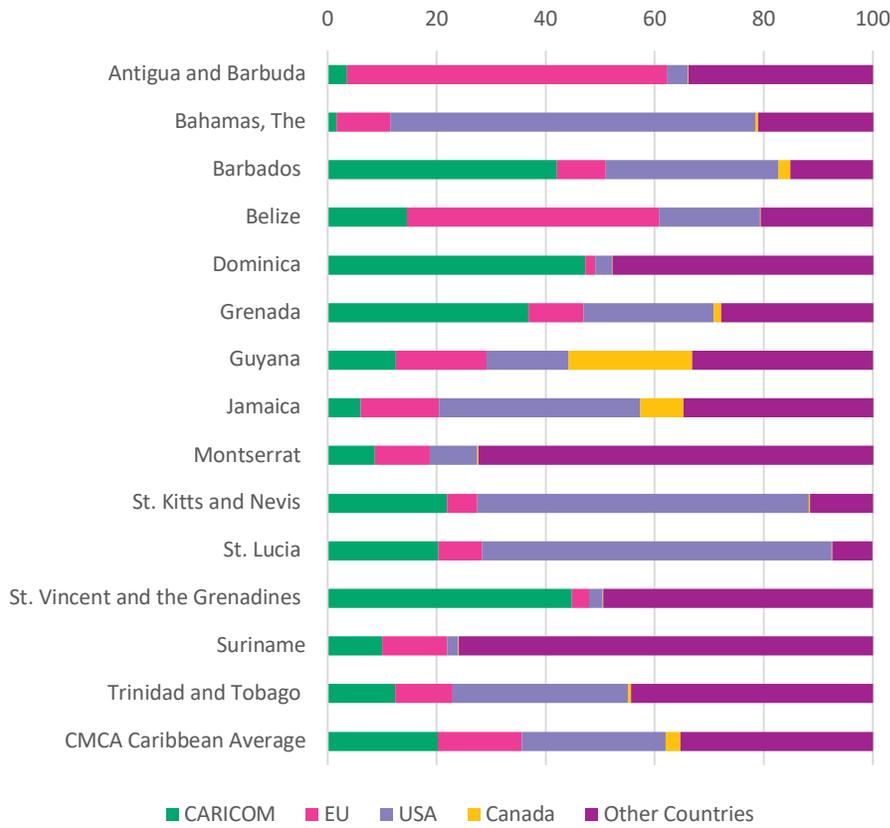
been undertaken to support full CSME establishment. The economic integration of CARICOM is substantially behind comparable regional organizations, such as OECS, European Union and the Central American Common Market. Tariff reduction is one of the areas where a certain level of success has been achieved. However, whereas internal tariffs have indeed mostly disappeared, Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) continue to be in place, putting severe limits on the growth of regional trade. Currently, there are also no common external tariffs.

45. IMF, 2020: <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WP/Issues/2020/01/17/Is-the-Whole-Greater-than-the-Sum-of-its-Parts-Strengthening-Caribbean-Regional-Integration-48930>.

An important element to consider is the lack of intraregional trade. Recent IMF research shows, FIGURE 8, that Caribbean intraregional trade continues to be minimal. It made up around 2 per cent of GDP in the 1980s and has only nominally increased to around 4 per cent where it has seem-

ingly stagnated for a decade. Close to 80 percent of CARICOM goods exports go to non-CARICOM states (the US, Europe, and Canada). The average for Dominica, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Barbados, intra-CARICOM trade makes up more than 40 per cent of the total.⁴⁶

Figure 8. Selected caribbean countries intra-regional and extra-regional goods trade 2017 (in percent)



Source: IMF, 2020: <https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WP/Issues/2020/01/17/Is-the-Whole-Greater-than-the-Sum-of-its-Parts-Strengthening-Caribbean-Regional-Integration-48930>

The comparison with other trading blocs such as the European Union 28 and the European Union 12, Mercosur and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), in terms of intra-bloc goods trade between 1985-2017, in percentage of GDP shows that trade integration within CARICOM has

been ongoing, but not at the levels of more integrated regional blocks.⁴⁷ Intra-CARICOM tourists, for example, make up less than 10 percent of the total. Conversely, the Caribbean diaspora is a driver for the tourism sector in many countries such as Guyana with their diaspora representing

46. Ibid

47. Ibid

an estimated 70 per cent of total arrivals, and Jamaica, where diasporic tourism is estimated to represent 30 to 35 per cent.⁴⁸

Caribbean export of goods suffers from a combination of poor international competitiveness and limited resilience driven by low diversification of products and markets. Limited and stagnant intra-regional trade is both a consequence of these factors while at the same time limits the real opportunities (strongly influenced by lack of economies of scale, similar economic structures, and distance to markets) for the emergence and consolidation of regional clusters or value chains to process, add and capture value. The share of processed products in CARIFORUM exports is well below the world average (around 50% vs 72%). While raw products only account for 7 percent of world exports, they represent a larger share of CARIFORUM exports (around 18%). Thus, both aspects, competitiveness and resilience of the region, individual countries, sectors and MSMEs should be addressed together to achieve results. This requires in many instances a better horizontal coordination among MSMEs in selected sectors across the region to work complementarity while at the same time reinforcing the regional support ecosystem in critical areas such as quality compliance, food safety and Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) measures.

The lack of success in regional integration is a key actionable item that needs to be addressed and can help to strengthen local economies and the region's capability to build back better during the recovery from COVID-19. The share of intra-region-

al in total exports has only slightly increased since 2001, nonetheless, exports from the region have underperformed as compared to world exports, for both goods and services, suggesting that poor overall trade performance is the challenge, rather than poor intra-regional trade performance.

Another key element on the regional integration agenda for CARICOM is financial integration, where some important steps have been taken. Several cross-listed enterprises exist that share two or more of the stock exchanges in Barbados, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. Similarly, financial integration is leading to convergence of some financial indicators, such as interest rates (with Suriname a notable exception). Overall, integration has increased, but it has gone relatively slowly. While institutional integration is generally moving forward, though at an irregular speed, the degree of economic integration has regressed during specific periods.⁴⁹

A look at incentives shows a better understanding of what has been holding back economic integration because of the effort required to pursue economic integration (in terms of drafting legislation, securing public support and implementing reforms), which may have long-term beneficial impacts, but in the short run can come at the cost of already limited public resources.⁵⁰ In many cases, this resembles a public-goods problem, or even a prisoners' dilemma, where it may be possible to benefit without effort, or even to see greater individual benefits if others cooperate but an individual country does not.⁵¹ IMF Computed General Equilibrium (CGE) modelling shows the benefits of

48. Nurse, Keith. (2016). The Diasporic Economy, Trade, and Investment Linkages in the Commonwealth international trade Working paper. 10.14217/24133175

49. IMF, 2020.

50. Ibid.

51. In the reduction of investment incentives, an individual country is best off if all others agree to stop the race to the bottom, which makes that negotiation particularly challenging.

pursuing further integration. While trade costs are high in the Caribbean, tariffs generally are low or absent within the Caribbean though not with other countries. The results of the CGE model show that Belize would see an increase of around 7.0 per cent of GDP with advanced trade liberalization, followed by Jamaica with 4.7 per cent. Trinidad and Tobago would experience an expansion of 3.6 per cent and Guyana and Suriname (here considered as a single block) would gain 3.4 per cent. The rest of the Caribbean (as a single block) would see a 3.2 per cent increase in GDP.

Interestingly, the simulated impact on employment is equally positive in each of these countries and country groups. Unskilled labour would benefit especially strongly, thus negating some of the expected objections against trade liberalization and economic integration.

Furthermore, any efforts to improve regional integration must be accompanied by improvements in external competitiveness. Trade-based industrial policies and production environments must be stimulated to promote export diversification and upgrading of traditional sectors. National policies towards free movement of persons can contribute to regional integration. Overcoming competitive limitations of Caribbean economies in terms of technical capacity, quality standards, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and transportation infrastructure for maritime and air transport is a key challenge, as well as the need to simultaneously ensure workers' rights, and prevent and respond to exploitation and abuse of migrant workers in particular, including human trafficking.

Caribbean countries and MSMEs need to improve their resilience by diversifying the products they sell and the markets to which they export. Intra-regional trade should play a larger role in the region's efforts to diversify products and markets. The region's export basket is very concentrated on a couple of products with only 9.5 equivalent products exported. To compare the average, the world exports 22.6 and developing countries export 16.1 equivalent products. The vulnerability of regional's exports could be clearly observed with the short and long-term impact of COVID-19 on exports. During the pandemic, CARIFORUM exports decreased more than world exports and took longer to recover.⁵² Export potential calculations also show that the COVID-19 pandemic will have some long-lasting effects with world export potential down by 5.4 per cent in 2025 as compared to pre-COVID-19 estimates, CARIFORUM's export potential is also down by 8.8 per cent.⁵³

In the Caribbean sub-region, the rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is of no exception. Its rapid introduction and uptake give it great potential to address some of the Caribbean's most pressing development challenges, and support SIDS in the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway. For example, its introduction into different commercial aspects of tourism – one of the most important economic drivers for SIDS – can significantly impact the relationship between tourists, destinations and ultimately profitability. Furthermore, AI could be employed to make quality health services more accessible, enhance agricultural productivity, while also contributing to understanding climate change, reducing marine pollution, and contributing to large-scale action aimed at preserving the environment. On the other hand,

52. Calculations based on data from ITC Export Potential Map (2021), exportpotential.intracen.org.

53. Calculations based on data from ITC Trade Map (2021), www.trademap.org.

increased use of AI systems and technology may cause a disruptive effect to the Caribbean labour market, with automation impacting employment. The Caribbean SIDS currently lack comprehensive strategies that take into consideration these challenges.

Fiscal Challenges

The fiscal situation of many of the Caribbean countries and territories illustrates additional forms of heterogeneity. There are several low-tax jurisdictions, where the role of the state is relatively limited. In other regional contexts, it is difficult to see the state expanding its role to a meaningful degree, because it is already relatively sizeable. In these jurisdictions, investing in SDGs achievement could, theoretically, come from increases in sovereign debt. Unfortunately, this leads to a crucial issue in the Caribbean, which is that of the already high levels of debt. FIGURE 9 shows the debt levels of different Caribbean countries. With the exception of Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago, the level of debt was above the recommended 55 per cent of GDP even before the impact of COVID-19⁵⁴, which is the rate above which an increased debt actually reduces economic growth. Until 2019, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados and Jamaica had been making good strides at reducing their debt levels, but due to the impact of the pandemic, progress has been veered off course.

Exceptional fiscal and monetary packages have been put in place in all Caribbean countries and territories to fight the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic: higher spending on the health sector, transfers to affected individuals, tax credits and deferral programmes, and funds/ stimuli for affected sectors such as tourism, agriculture, culture and sports. As shown above, the estimated debt-to-GDP ratio at the end of 2020 was above 100 per cent in six different jurisdictions. This challenge renews attention for the possibility of debt relief for Caribbean economies. While temporary high levels of liquidity relief can help mitigate the lack of policy space, for some countries it may not be enough in situations where the debt level is structurally unsustainable. In such instances, eligible countries should work with creditors to restructure their debt under the new Common Framework agreed by the G20. More generally, improving the international debt architecture to support orderly debt restructuring would benefit not only these countries but the system as a whole.⁵⁵ ECLAC has also proposed substantial debt restructuring

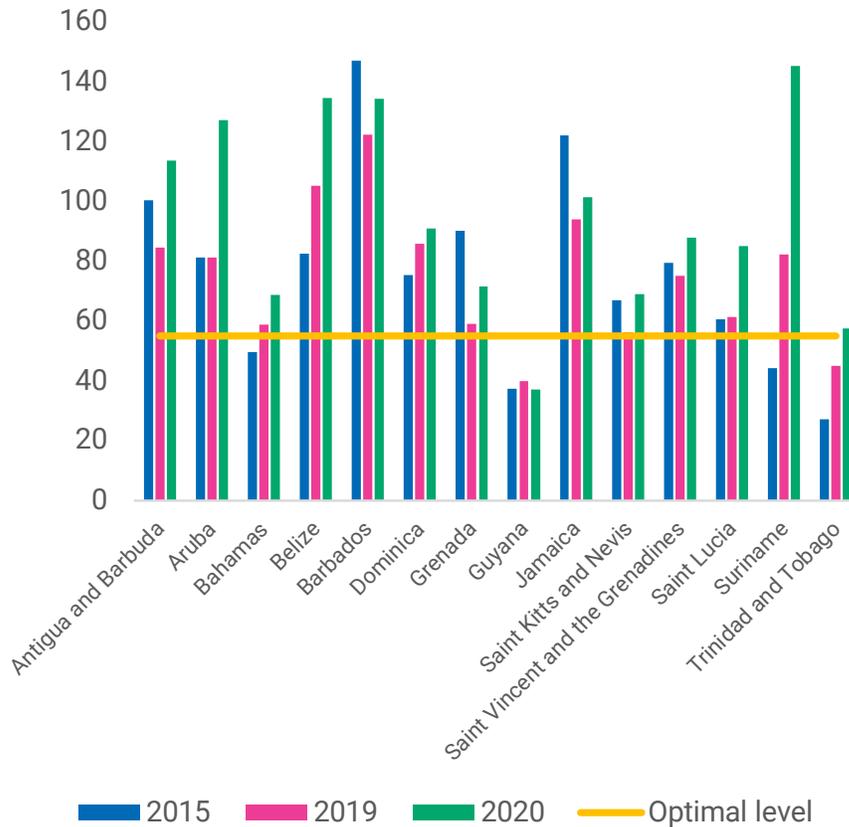
54. <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/2012/wp12157.pdf>.

55. IMF. World Economic Outlook Update. January 2021.

for Caribbean economies to help them deal with the challenges posed by COVID-19.⁵⁶ Gathering further support for such initiatives can be import-

ant to support those economies that are facing unsustainable levels of debt.

Figure 9. Selected caribbean economies: national debt as a share of gdp, 2015, 2019 and 2020 (in percentages)



Source: IMF, World Economic Outlook October 2020

It is important to link this to other elements as well, such as the importance of action on climate change and disaster risk reduction. The establishment of a Caribbean Resilience Facility (CRF) including Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Suriname, with

the support of the Government of Canada, and the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) will help generate required resources to address climate change and environmental risks, would be useful in the short- to medium-run, and could continue to help emphasize the importance of debt reduction.⁵⁷

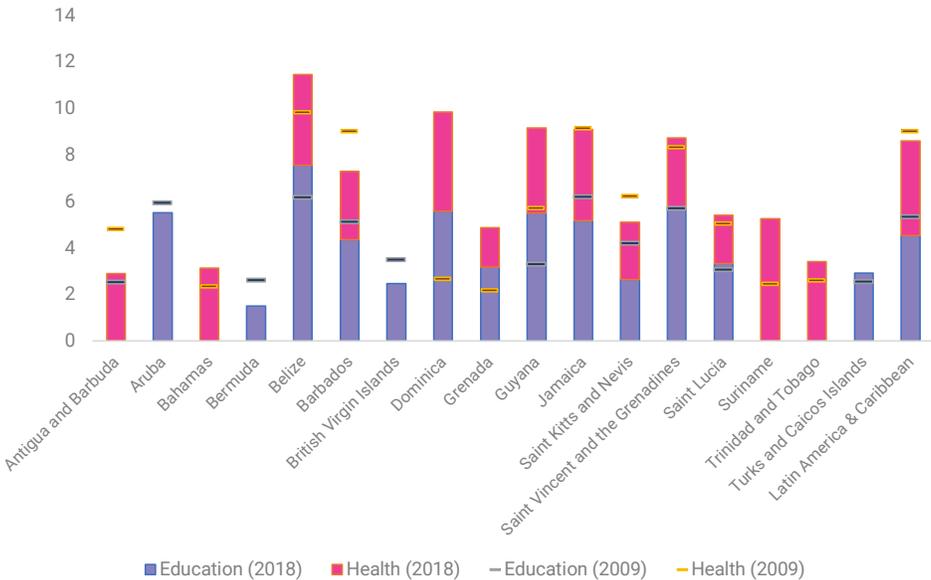
56. https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/presentation/files/final-finalsids_session_at_hlpf_2020_abi9_1.pdf.

57. <https://www.gfdr.org/en/crf>

The challenges to fiscal space also severely limit governments' capacities for productive investment. For example, economic growth can only be improved if sufficient resources are invested in both education and healthcare. Unfortunately, as shown in FIGURE 10, government expenditures on education are declining. Especially large declines are observed in Saint Kitts and Nevis (from 4.2 per cent of GDP to 2.6 per cent) and Bermuda (from 2.6 per cent to 1.5 per cent of GDP). On the other hand, Guyana saw a major increase from 3.3 per-

cent to 5.5 per cent of GDP. With respect to health expenditures, even before the COVID-19 pandemic, government budgets had increased by an average of 0.7 percentage points of GDP between 2009 and 2018. The increases in Suriname (from 2.4 per cent to 5.3 per cent of GDP) and Dominica (2.7 per cent to 4.3 per cent of GDP) are particularly notable. The decrease in Barbados (from 3.9 per cent to 2.9 per cent of GDP) is a negative exception. In 2020, countries have increased their expenditures on health notably.

Figure 10. Selected economies: government expenditures on health and education, 2009 and 2018 (in percentages of gdp)



Source: WDI

Note: With respect to education expenditures, Saint Kitts and Nevis data are from 2007 and 2015. Rather than use data from 2018, Aruba data is from 2016. Data from Bermuda, Barbados, Grenada, and Latin America & the Caribbean are from 2017. Data from Dominica and Jamaica are from 2019.

The implications of these government expenditures in education⁵⁸ and health⁵⁹ are important to reiterate. With health being a core issue for Caribbean socioeconomic development, the atten-

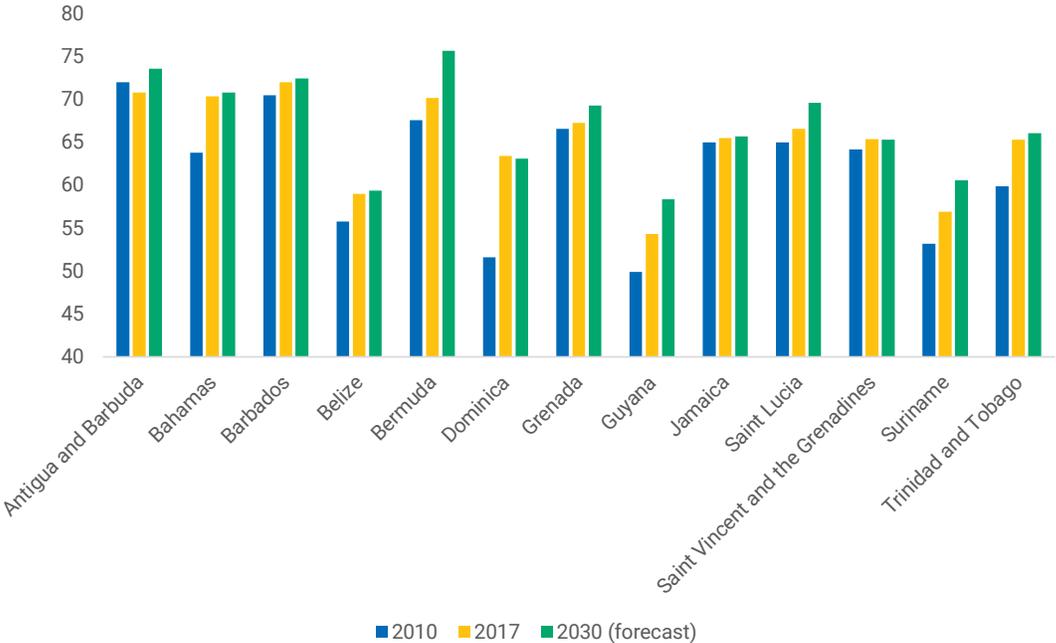
tion to this area was increasing, even before the COVID-19 pandemic. During 2020, the relevance of the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) was also highlighted, as were the benefits of

58. The Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action 2015 constitute de commitment of the education community to the 2030 Agenda and the implementation of SDG 4 to ensure an inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

59. Who has established a set of 12 indicators that include socio-economic conditions, health outcomes, and inputs, as well as at least 5% of GNP spent on health to achieve universal coverage?

a common Caribbean approach. Looking beyond the COVID-19 pandemic, it is important to note that the health-related SDG outcomes in the Caribbean are disappointing. FIGURE 11 shows the index of health-related SDGs, where 100 is the optimal level of health outcomes across 25 of the health-related targets set in the 2030 Agenda⁶⁰. As can be seen, some jurisdictions, such as Dominica and the Bahamas have made substantial progress over the 2010-2017 period, but the forecast progress until 2030 is highly varied, with some economies making little to no progress.

Figure 11. Selected caribbean economies: health-related sdgs, 2010, 2017 and 2030 (forecast) (index)



Source: GBD, 2017.

If governments are not able to establish the right conditions for major improvements in health (and education) outcomes, is going to have long-term effects on the capacity of the economies of the region to improve competitiveness and to overcome existing vulnerabilities. After all, health and education outcomes, which are highly prioritized by many countries in the region, as well as both long-term CARICOM objectives and the MSDF 2017-2021, are key for improving productivity and, by extension, competitiveness, and to challenge the efforts for reduction of inequalities.

60. Global Burden of Disease Collaborative Network. Global Burden of Disease Study 2017 (GBD 2017) Health-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Indicators 1990-2030. Seattle, United States: Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), 2018.

Productivity

From national CCAs and common Caribbean analysis, one of the most pressing challenges to the region is stagnant productivity growth, which is hurting progress on socioeconomic indicators (poverty, inequality) and limiting the availability of funds for investment in achieving the 2030 Agenda during the coming Decade of Action.

As addressed earlier, the challenges to productivity can be related to the small size of Caribbean economies, which can be addressed by furthering regional integration while ensuring protection and promotion of human rights. On top of that, the region also suffers from shortfalls in innovative and creative capability. Latin America and the Caribbean is generally far behind in investment in Research and Development (R&D) and innovation, shown, for example, by the disappointing performance of the broader region in comparable statistics⁶¹. In the Caribbean, this is even more complicated due to the extremely limited availability of data. Only Bermuda and Trinidad and Tobago have recent data on expenditures on R&D, for example, where they spend 0.3 per cent (2018) and 0.1 per cent (2017) of GDP respectively⁶². Internationally comparable data about the share of firms that perform R&D is from 2010 and shows that this is notably high in Guyana (46 per cent), Barbados (34 per cent) and Saint Kitts and Nevis and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (30 per cent in both)⁶³. The only Caribbean country included in the Innovation Index is Jamaica, which is considered to perform above its income level (ranking

72nd worldwide in 2020), especially due to its good performance in the creative sphere.⁶⁴ One potential source of innovation is from the Caribbean diaspora, an estimated 80 per cent of which completed tertiary education, with 41 per cent having a master's degree and 11 per cent a PhD.⁶⁵

As R&D and innovation require the right infrastructure to be able to take place, it is possible to consider the broad availability of such infrastructure by looking at the access to digitalization. This also links to the fact that in 2020, digitalization took enormous strides throughout the region, with much of the education going digital by necessity and governments making substantial progress in increasing access to digital services.

FIGURE 12 demonstrates how access to the internet differs across the region. The Cayman Islands, with full 4G coverage and 49 broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants, leads the way, also reporting that 81 per cent of the population uses the internet. Bermuda and Antigua and Barbuda have the highest share of internet users, with 98 per cent and 97 per cent of the population respectively. As part of a regional digitalization strategy, it is pivotal that access to the internet is facilitated for all parts of the population, leaving nobody behind.

A Caribbean digitalization strategy will not only facilitate access to services by those at risk of being left behind, it will also help to improve

61. <http://uis.unesco.org/apps/visualisations/research-and-development-spending/>.

62. WDI.

63. Ibid.

64. https://www.wipo.int/edocs/pubdocs/en/wipo_pub_gii_2020.pdf.

65. World Bank. 2013. *Diaspora Investing: The Business and Investment Interests of the Caribbean Diaspora*.

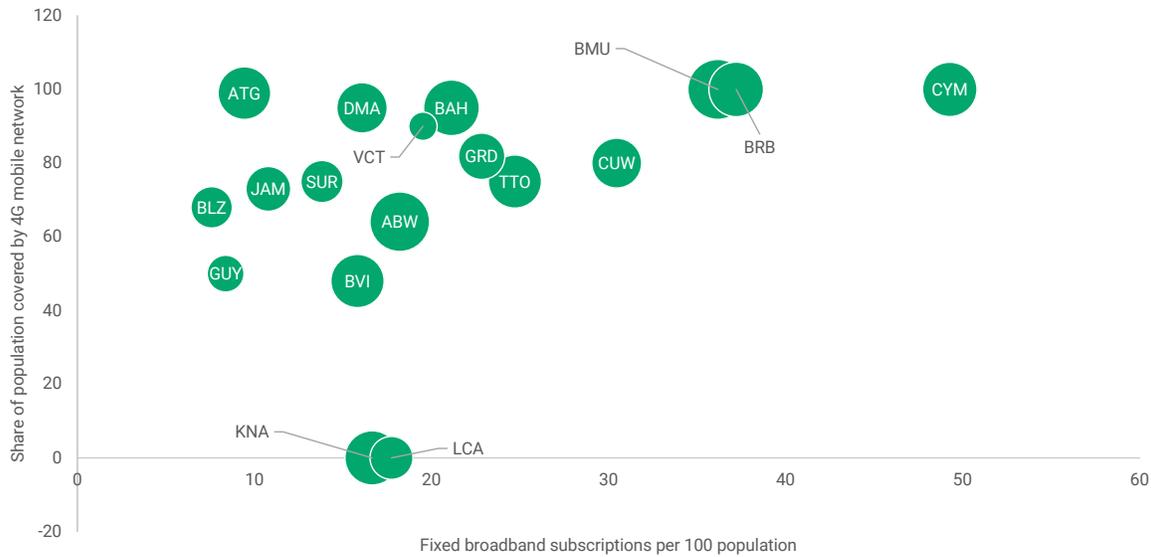
communication and service access to diaspora populations and eventually facilitate their contribution to the development of their communities of origin. Furthermore, it can create new economic opportunities, such as in the creative (orange) economy and other digital services. Digital technologies could also expand access to markets and transform agricultural production. However, this means that the Caribbean must not only have digital infrastructure policy, it must also facilitate the development of such commercial digital services. And also, be advancing efforts to ensure technology is being used by law enforcement and other key actors and not just criminal networks – issues like online sexual abuse and exploitation of children are critical (linked to SDG 5 and 8). A great advantage of strengthening the digital economy is that it removes the known challenge of costly transportation of goods in the Caribbean, which diminishes Caribbean competitiveness in other areas. However, the current rules on trade and taxation were not written with a digital economy in mind, making this a key area of policy attention. In addition, there is an opportunity for digitization services in the education sector, which will also contribute to closing the gap in access to technology, especially for the most vulnerable populations. Efforts must also be made to ensure that policy responses to prevent online sexual exploitation and abuse, including of children, move ahead and provide support to key actors, such as law enforcement, to prevent the misuse of digital spaces by criminal networks.

In addition, the Caribbean needs to focus on supporting productivity in some of its core strengths.

One of the reasons why the Caribbean was particularly vulnerable to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic is due to the high dependence on tourism by several economies. With tourism and tourism income all but disappearing for much of 2020, and industry predictions holding it unlikely to recover until 2022, the region should be rethinking what kind of tourism it needs. Cruiseship, for example, is a type of tourism that has relatively small economic spill overs in local economies, but a large environmental footprint, thus rethinking the generous incentives provided to operators is opportune. Upgrading stayover tourism to include more customized and authentic tourism experiences integrated into the natural environment and local communities' culture has greater potential for economic spill overs and a lower environmental impact, without overexploiting the same natural resources. There is still space for mass tourism, but careful consideration should be given to balancing countries' complete impact on tourism. On the other hand, it should be recognized that tourism is a great provider of employment, especially for women, which is an important consideration for any economic activity, as well as any proposed changes to the structure of the sector. The potential vulnerability of the Caribbean tourism sector to climate change should also be acknowledged, with projections indicating that 1-meter sea level rise could partially or totally inundate 29 per cent of Caribbean coastal resorts, with more exposed to related coastal erosion.⁶⁶ Efforts must continue to fight human trafficking in the context of tourism and hospitality industries in the region.

66. IPCC. Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change. An IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5oC above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty [Masson-Delmotte, V., P. Zhai, H.-O. Pörtner, D. Roberts, J. Skea, P.R. Shukla, A. Pirani, W. Moufouma-Okia, C. Péan, R. Pidcock, S. Connors, J.B.R. Matthews, Y. Chen, X. Zhou, M.I. Gomis, E. Lonnoy, T. Maycock, M. Tignor, and T. Waterfield (eds.)].

Figure 12. Selected caribbean economies: access to 4g mobile networks, fixed broadband subscriptions and internet users, most recent years (in percentages and per 100 population)



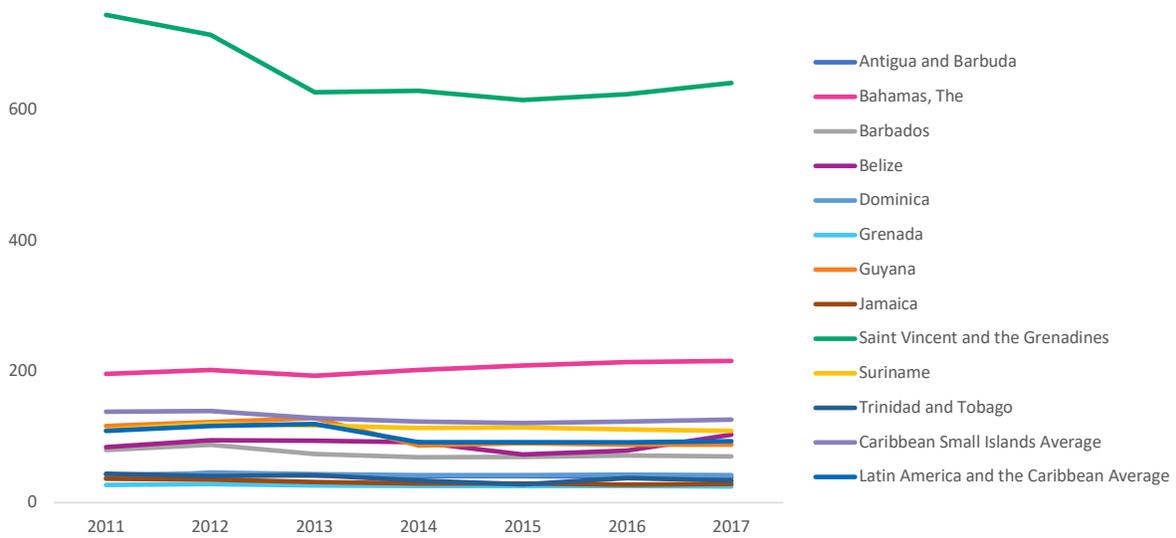
Source: WDI and <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/>

Note: Size of bubbles reflects number of internet users. Data for fixed broadband subscriptions and internet users is from 2019, while data on 4G mobile networks is from 2017-2018.

Caribbean countries and territories also need to give due consideration to the way that value chains can be developed in relationship with tourism. Agriculture, for example, lends itself to advanced value chain integration with the tourism sector, although only when the quantity and quality of local produce can meet the standards set by the hospitality industry. Agricultural productivity is highly heterogeneous in the Caribbean. As shown in FIGURE 13, productivity in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and The Bahamas are 641 per cent and 216 per cent above the global average respectively. At the other extreme, productivity in

Grenada and Jamaica is 25 percent and 29 percent below the global average. While most agricultural productivity issues are likely to be locally dependent, this opens the door to increased regional cooperation and South-South or triangular cooperation in which Caribbean countries support each other in improving agricultural productivity. This is especially important considering the role that agriculture still plays in employment creation. In addition, there is the opportunity to more easily and efficiently facilitate South-South cooperation outside the region, with other potential clusters of countries or in collaboration with other SIDS.

Figure 13. Selected caribbean economies: cereal yield (as share of global average)



Source: WDI

As shown in TABLE 4 the agriculture sector is still responsible for more than twenty percent of men’s employment in three different countries. There is also informal employment in the sector, and active individuals who do not qualify as full-time farmers.

Other issues are important for supporting productivity in the Caribbean context, such as improving the Doing Business score, increasing access to finance for MSMEs, encouraging women participation in the labour market, improving security outcomes that may affect investment, and ensuring there is no trafficking in persons within supply chains. However, these are issues that are generally best addressed at the country level, rather than from a Pan-Caribbean approach. The CCAs prepared for the different countries highlight the national issues in more detail.

Table 4. Selected caribbean economies: employment in the agriculture sector, by sex, 2010 and 2019 (in percentage of working population)

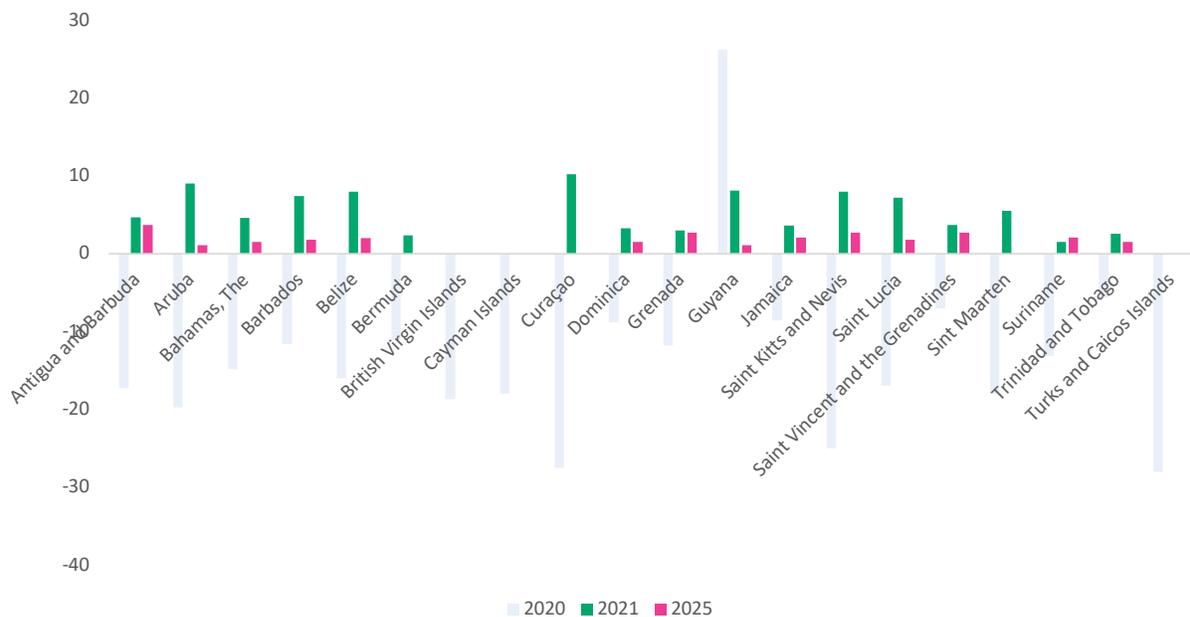
COUNTRIES	WOMEN		MEN	
	2010	2019	2010	2019
Bahamas	0.5	0.3	4.7	3.9
Belize	3.9	4.7	27	24.1
Barbados	1.9	1.6	3.8	3.7
Guyana	9	7.9	25.8	20.1
Jamaica	8.1	8.2	25	20.9
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	5.8	4.3	17	14.2
Saint Lucia	8.1	2.9	19.9	15.6
Suriname	4.8	4.5	9.8	10.1
Trinidad and Tobago	1.9	1.3	5.1	4.3

Source: WDI

Outlook

The economic outlook is extremely uncertain, because in the short term, it depends strongly on the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic and its ongoing impacts on sustainable development. That is why, in this section, more attention has been paid on the long-term growth opportunities that have been realized and the structural conditions for growth in the future. Nevertheless, with the caveat that current forecasts are surrounded by particularly high levels of uncertainty, the growth forecasts for 2020, 2021 and 2025 are shown in FIGURE 14. There are two key observations: first, the rebounds forecast for 2021 are nowhere close to compensating for the major economic downturns experienced in 2020; and second, the predicted long-term (steady state) growth rates for 2025 are expected to be low, ranging from 1.1 per cent in Aruba and Guyana to 3.7 per cent in Antigua and Barbuda.

Figure 14. Caribbean economies: estimated rates of real gdp growth, 2020, 2021 and 2025 (in percentages)



Source: IMF and EUI

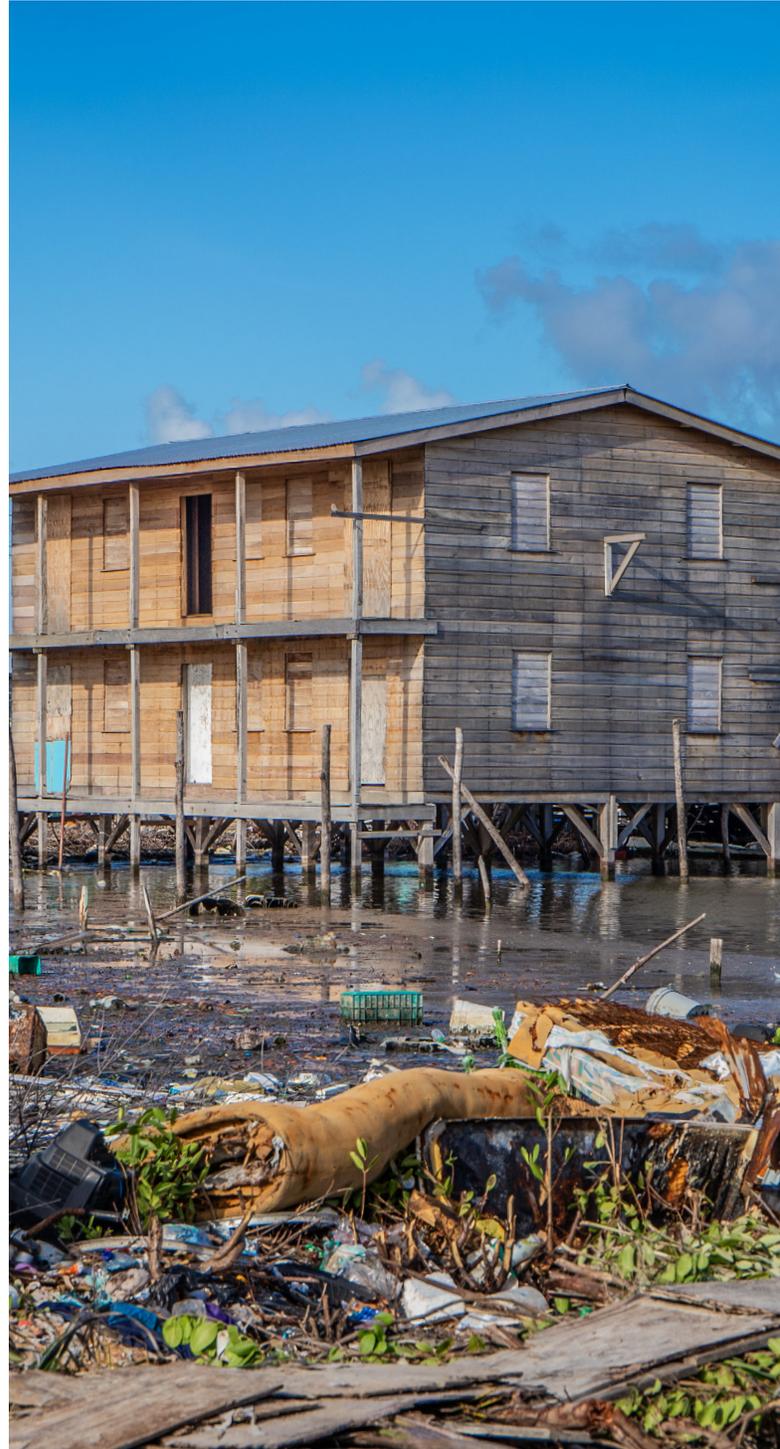
Note: Countries with an asterisk have EUI as data source. No long-term growth forecasts are provided by EUI.

3.4 Environment and climate change analysis

The Caribbean is the second most environmental hazard-prone region in the world, with climate change impacts such as rising sea levels, increased sea and air temperatures including heatwaves, changes in rainfall patterns including persistent drought conditions, expected to result in an estimated annual cost of roughly 2-4 percent of the region's GDP by 2050.⁶⁷ On a global scale, the need for climate action was recognized at the 15th Conference of the Parties (COP) in 2009, when the Copenhagen Accord committed US\$100 billion to be made available annually by 2020 in an effort to help developing countries reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address climate change impacts. By 2020, most of the UN MSDF countries had signed the Paris Agreement (PA),⁶⁸ signalling a strong commitment to achieve the PA's goals.

Because of their size and location SIDS are particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts and exposed to more intense natural hazards. Development in particularly vulnerable Caribbean SIDS is already complicated by a number of factors:⁶⁹

1. A large portion of the islands are resource-poor (from a land-based perspective), with tourism as a volatile primary industry, and bearing heavy costs for infrastructure and transportation to external markets;
2. Production costs are high due to the absence of economies of scale; and
3. Shortage of trained human resources due to the small resident population size and high training costs.



67. IDB.

68. The PA aims to: (i) limit the global temperature rise this century to well below 2°C—aiming for 1.5°C—above pre-industrial levels; (ii) reduce vulnerability and increase climate resilience; and (iii) make finance flows consistent with a pathway toward low-GHG emissions and climate-resilient development.

69. IDB

Climate change has made development in SIDS even more complicated as the region is impacted by both gradual impacts and increasingly intense climate related shocks.⁷⁰ Rising sea levels, salinization of freshwater resources, and natural hazards (such as increasingly frequent hurricanes) continue to threaten livelihoods and both natural and built infrastructure. Furthermore, erratic rainfall and eroding coastlines severely impact food security in the region.⁷¹ Amazon-based CMCA countries such as Guyana and Suriname face forest degradation as well as biodiversity loss, which threatens vulnerable indigenous and tribal communities. The traditional and indigenous knowledge systems on climate change adaptation are often marginalized but play a critical role to inform adaptation strategies. Climate change has made the protection of natural assets in Caribbean SIDS critical, particularly for forests, wetlands, oceans, and coastal environments.

The multiple impacts of sudden-onset disasters and slow-onset processes on different forms of human mobility have been recorded. Disaster displacement is a recurrent phenomenon across the region, affecting livelihoods and disrupting development trajectories. Recent examples include internal and international movements during the 2017 hurricane season,⁷² but also 2019 hurricane Dorian⁷³ and other impactful events. Slow onset

processes related to water scarcity and sea level rise also include human mobility, although data and evidence is scarcer. Finally, countries across the Caribbean are discussing the potential need to relocate settlements and infrastructure to adapt to sea level rise.⁷⁴ The gendered impacts of these forms of mobility should be put at the forefront of public policy.⁷⁵

The UN defines water scarce⁷⁶ countries to be those with less than 1000 cubic meters per capita of renewable water resources a year. Data from the World Bank indicates that four of the CMCA countries, Antigua, and Barbuda (545), Barbados (279), Saint Kitts and Nevis (461) and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (911), are water scarce. Barbados with less than 300 cubic meters per capita is particularly grave as are Antigua and Barbuda and Saint Kitts and Nevis that have reduced its scarce water resources by 35.3 and 21.13 per cent, respectively in the last 30 years. FIGURE 15 reflects that countries like Belize and Suriname with considerable water resources have lost 53.6 and 33.2 percent respectively over the last 30 years. The Bahamas, Saint Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago have lost each 36.3, 27.7, and 13.7 over the last 30 year. The global average was 5,732 cubic meters per capita in 2017 with a 30.3 percent loss since 1987.

70. IPCC 2014b.

71. FAO: Global Action Programme on Food Security and Nutrition in Small Island Developing States.

72. DMC, 2018.

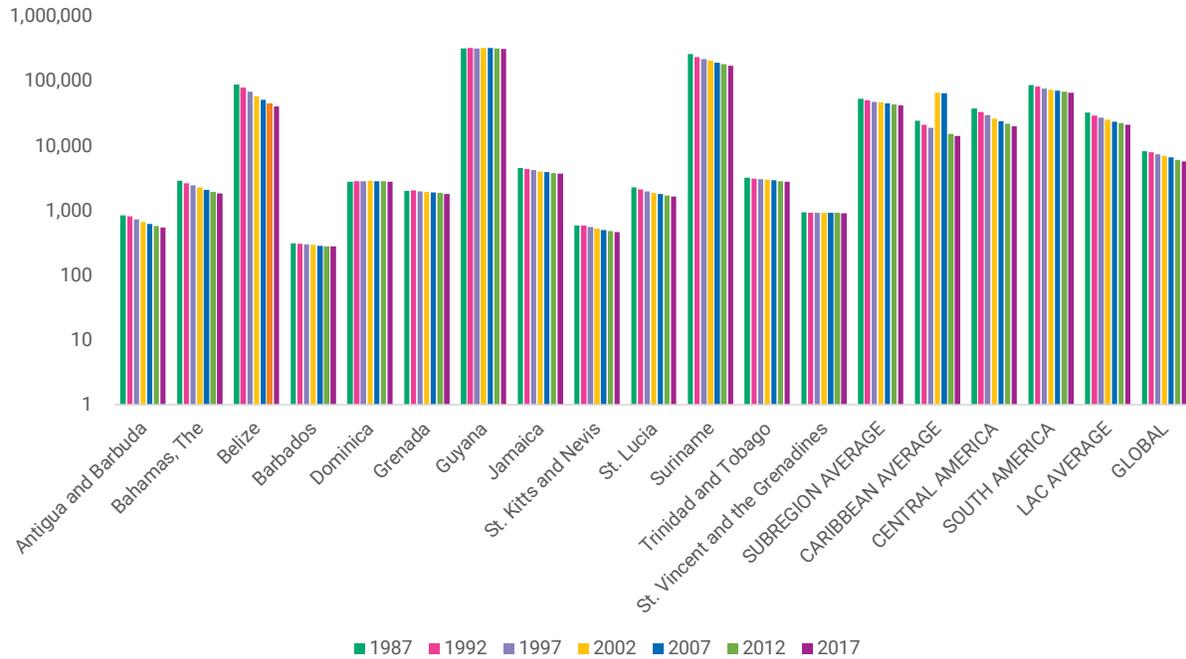
73. IDMC, 2019.

74. IPCC, 2019.

75. ECLAC and IOM, 2021.

76. Water scarcity can happen due to physical shortage, to the failure of institutions to ensure a regular supply or to lack of adequate infrastructure.

Figure 15. Caribbean countries renewable internal freshwater resources per capita (cubic meters)



Source: https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/ER.H2O.INTR.PC?name_desc=false

Despite the challenges posed by climate change on SIDS, there are ample opportunities to adapt. For example, improved understanding of climate change impacts on oceans ⁷⁷ and the role that oceans and coastal resources can play in building resilience and addressing these impacts presents a significant opportunity for islands (i.e., islands may be limited in land-space, but their ocean space, if sustainably managed, is resource-rich).⁷⁸ In addition, adequate waste management is crucial in economic terms, since Caribbean economies are mainly natural resource-based, with tourism, mining, agriculture and fisheries being

the dominant sectors.

The Caribbean is the second most plastic-contaminated sea in the world after the Mediterranean Sea. Estimations of the volume of plastic waste in this area range from 600 to 1,414 plastic items per square kilometre in different locations. Plastic waste makes up a large proportion of debris reaching the sea from sources on land. In the ocean it harms marine life, threatens ecosystems, health, and the region's tourism-based economy. Plastic pollution diminishes the natural beauty for which the Caribbean is known and compromises the role of the ocean as a provider of food,

78. Hoegh-Guldberg O., et al. 2019

79. UNEP Report on Status of Styrofoam and Plastic Bag Bans in the Wider Caribbean. May 2019.

other resources, and livelihoods.⁷⁹ Fifteen CMCA countries⁸⁰ have banned Styrofoam and plastic bags, still discussing the ban are the British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Curaçao, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Sint Maarten and Suriname.

Under the Disposal of Obsolete Pesticides Project 319 tonnes of obsolete pesticides stocks from 11 Caribbean countries were safeguarded and exported for destruction since 2016 (FAO, 2021). Improved understanding of the role that agriculture, land use, and forestry play in regional decarbonization pathways is critical. Almost 50 per cent of emissions in the region⁸¹ are in land use, land-use change, and forestry, compared with 19 per cent globally. The dynamics underlying land-use changes and conversion of forests to agricultural lands are complex, touching on poverty, inequality, land rights, indigenous and tribal communities, technical capacity, food security, ecosystem services, markets, environmental governance, and trade, among others.⁸² In addition, this conversion also happens because of population pressures for housing, infrastructure and industrial needs, as well as, due to pressures for food at the local and non-local levels. Systems and policy frameworks are critical to drive a more sustainable use of land. In 2019, seven Amazon countries (which included one CMCA country, Suriname) signed the Leticia Pact⁸³ to strengthen coordination on the sustainable development of the Amazon.

Throughout Barbados and the OECS there has been an average decrease of 15 per cent agricultural lands due to competing land use demands since 1998. The only exception has been Dominica which showed an increase of 11 per cent in land allocated to agriculture. Regulatory land management and administration tools were ineffective in protecting the island's fragile, though rich biodiversity. The political will to implement regulatory tools is lacking, and alternative instruments to reduce environmental degradation are underutilized. An environmental governance framework including behavioural change, new technologies, land tenure reform, and human capacity building aimed at mitigating natural resources degradation, and combined with robust political will is necessary.⁸⁴ Like most SIDS, OECS Member States face challenges originating from their small size and geographical location: small economies, limited infrastructure, and high vulnerability to natural disasters such as hurricanes. These characteristics, in association with prevailing land tenure systems, fragile soil types, physiographic and climatic variation, and limited land area available for development, create intense competition between the land use options, which include urban settlement, agriculture, tourism and other infrastructure. The land management policies in the region are a common national level constraint that jeopardizes efforts towards a sustainable development resilient to the impacts of

80. In Trinidad and Tobago ban only includes Styrofoam.

81. LAC region.

82. IDB Climate Action Plan 2021 – 2025.

83. The Leticia Pact seeks the integration of countries that share the Amazon biome to generate joint responses to disasters that can occur in the region by strengthening regional action to tackle deforestation, selective logging, and illegal exploitation of minerals; accelerating restoration and reforestation initiatives in degraded areas; strengthening the mechanisms that support and promote the sustainable use of forests, value chains, and other sustainable production approaches; and enhancing the strong leadership of local communities in the sustainable development and conservation efforts of the Amazon region, among other commitments. The initiative is devoted to mobilizing public and private resources, including from the multilateral banks, to implement this initiative. Its signatories are Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Perú, and Suriname.

84. Mycoo, M.A., Griffith-Charles, C. & Lalloo, S. Land management and environmental change in small-island-developing states: the case of St. Lucia. *Reg Environ Change* 17, 1065–1076 (2017).

climate change. Notwithstanding previous intentions and efforts, the weak institutional capacity and resource framework shows limited progress. The result is a region willing but not having the capacity to enforce climate change adaptation policies in relation to land management.⁸⁵

On the subject of climate change resilience, while significant progress has been made to systematically integrate disaster and climate change risk assessment, it still needs to be addressed and increase the inclusive preparedness to cope with emergencies and its short- and medium-term impacts. As there are ample gaps in both social development and climate change resilience within SIDS, there exist opportunities to address them simultaneously and jointly.⁸⁶ Regional priorities for the mainstreaming of environmental considerations into the economic and social dimensions of development implicitly include climate change because of its direct and indirect impacts on national economies and the well-being of communities, particularly women, as first responders of these communities, and especially in terms of the

burden of care aggravated during emergencies. Before the Caribbean can adapt effectively to climate change, it is critical to highlight that the region must overcome several deep-seated issues. These include weak institutional capacity, limited availability of data and information, lack of long-term environmental planning, inadequate policies, and incoherent governance, as well as insecurity of access to resources. Mounting climate and environmental challenges add to the urgency of policy action, including debt reduction and an improved investment framework. As countries formulate policies for COVID-19 recovery, they have a chance to embark on a greener, smarter, and more equitable development path. Prioritizing investment in green infrastructure projects, with high economic returns, phasing out fossil fuel subsidies, and fostering the widespread adoption of environmentally sustainable technologies, can also support higher growth levels in the long-run, lower carbon output, and create jobs, while contributing to adapt to the effects of climate change.⁸⁷ Lessons from COVID-19 also suggest the need for a multi-hazard risk approach.

85. <https://www.gcca.eu/programmes/climate-change-adaptation-and-sustainable-land-management-astern-caribbean>

86. IDB Group Climate Change Action Plan 2021–2025.

84. World Bank Group. Global Economic Prospects. Flagship Report. January 2021.

85. <https://www.gcca.eu/programmes/climate-change-adaptation-and-sustainable-land-management-astern-caribbean>

86. IDB Group Climate Change Action Plan 2021–2025.

87. World Bank Group. Global Economic Prospects. Flagship Report. January 2021.



3.5 Social exclusion analysis

The social sector impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was addressed in Caribbean countries through social protection policy interventions measures such as cash and food transfers and guaranteed access to basic services (water and electricity). To deliver educational content to students, schools transitioned to online learning tools and television broadcasts, accompanied by the procurement of tablets and other necessary equipment for distance education. However, lack of access to digital tools and connectivity disproportionately affected families who come from disadvantaged background because they have fewer educational opportunities beyond school and also rely on school services for nutrition and other basic services. In the health sector of Caribbean countries, ECLAC estimates the total economic impact of COVID-19 during the first

quarter of 2020 to be US\$260.2 million to address the four-pronged response: prevention, testing, treatment, and infrastructure, that stretched the already limited capacities of countries' health systems. There is, therefore, evidence of the need to adequately invest in the health sector to ensure effective prevention in countries vulnerable to environmental and economic external shocks. In addition, the pandemic has disrupted the food supply and damaged household incomes critical to food security, aggravated by the vulnerability to climate change extreme events that can further damage agricultural crops, trigger food shortages, and increase prices.⁸⁸

The pandemic intensified the inequality that already exists where the poor and vulnerable are most affected, efforts to address poverty and other vulnerabilities continues to be reduced

88. FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP, WHO. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World. Transforming Food Systems for Affordable Healthy Diets. Rome. 2020.

while the constant threat of high impact climatic events creates a situation of compounded risks that further threaten the lives, livelihoods and food security of those who need it most.

In the last five years, Caribbean countries have made progress in improving the quality of life and socioeconomic status of its people, nonetheless, there are persons who are constrained from accessing their basic social, economic and cultural rights. Geography is one of the key factors of social exclusion due to the centralization of services in urban centres and the lack of developed physical infrastructure in rural areas with qualified staff. As a result, where people live tend to determine access to basic social services, economic opportunities and environmental resilience. Persons living in rural districts are also more vulnerable to higher rates of poverty, violence and digital marginalization.

The common historic, economic and social backgrounds shared by Caribbean countries also account for a legacy of institutional and structural discrimination and inequality which has not been systematically addressed since the independence movements of the 1960s and 1970s. Existing social and political structures sustain patterns of

discrimination and inequality that hinder certain groups of people in overcoming poverty, accessing quality education, healthcare, work opportunities and housing, as well as participating in political life. The varying ways in which different population segments are 'left behind' result from limitations in investment, policy, institutional and capacity challenges which are exacerbated by geographic, ethnic and economic factors.

Patterns of exclusion are linked to age (with children and older persons being most vulnerable to poverty), place of residence (people living in rural areas, indigenous peoples living in remote/hinterland areas or persons living in underserved urban areas), sex (women, adolescent girls, young boys, and the LGBTQI+ community), health status (PLWHIV), a minority or marginalized status (PWD, migrants, refugees) and occupation (sex work). Many populations are also constrained from exercising their economic and social cultural rights as job opportunities, especially those in the traditional sectors, agriculture and tourism, that have been affected by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, political and governance spaces are not adjusting fast enough to accommodate equal representation that enable representation, participation and inclusion of men and women.



Women

Gender inequality remains a challenge in the Caribbean region. Gender stereotypes prevail across the Caribbean on the role and place of women in relation to men. Gender inequality permeates the formal and informal economies and workforce, state institutions, service delivery, political participation, as well as health and security. Positive redefinitions of social norms of masculinity and the meaningful engagement of men and boys,

alongside women and girls, in the global movement for gender equality are pertinent to address gender-based exclusion.

Gender inequality in the workforce persists throughout the region. Women are overrepresented in lower-waged occupations and are overrepresented in unpaid labour and informal jobs which makes them vulnerable to falling or remaining

in poverty, as well as being agents of intergenerational poverty and inequality. Women are also more likely to be unemployed and underemployed, and they are underrepresented in the labour force and in senior level management positions. Women's low participation in the workforce, however, does not reflect their educational achievement and their investments in attaining credentials and qualifications. However, the Caribbean maintains a strongly gendered workforce and job market. Women in CARICOM are more likely than men to work in low-wage jobs, and without social protection, despite shouldering a disproportionate burden of unpaid care work as they attempt to balance the demands of their reproductive and productive roles.⁸⁹ Men are more likely to work in the industrial and agriculture sectors. In the Caribbean, the trend of non-standard employment (such as contract labour) – associated with greater insecurity – is found particularly in the hotel

and food industries, which employ a significant number of women. Also, women are underrepresented in the most senior positions in the private sector.

Data, where available, confirm that men continue to earn more than women, particularly when controlling for education. In contrast to labour market gender gaps, women have higher secondary school enrolment, tertiary enrolment is almost twice the men enrolment rate, and they have better performance in CSEC subjects. Nevertheless, women unemployment rates are higher. Women are over-represented in tourism, service and care industries (areas highly susceptible to economic shocks) which are driven by negative gender stereotypes on the role and place of women, including in the labour market. Additionally, employed women are at risk to sexual harassment in the workplace.

89. UNWOMEN. 2019. Status of Women and Men Report: Productive Employment and Decent Work for All <https://caribbean.unwomen.org/en/materials/publications/2019/10/status-of-women-and-men-report-productive-employment-and-decent-work-for-all>

Persons with disabilities (PWDs)

Despite some progress, discrimination and barriers to equal participation are deeply entrenched. Even those countries that have some legislation providing legal protection for the rights of persons with disabilities, legal and regulatory enforcement is inadequate and persons with disabilities generally do not yet have access to mechanisms which would enable them to make complaints and to seek redress. Furthermore, consistent, quality data on persons with disabilities in the Caribbean is lacking; much of the physical environment is inaccessible; and access to public and social services are limited for persons with different types of disabilities; and stereotypes, negative attitudes and mindsets regarding PWDs persist - all of which serve as obstacles that often prevent PWDs from enjoying their full rights to justice, health, employment, education, liberty of movement, and an adequate standard of living. Although signatories to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Caribbean lags behind its reporting commitments for this treaty.

Thus far only five countries in the Caribbean region have passed comprehensive legislation addressing disability: Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Cayman Islands, Guyana, and Jamaica, although some legislation is outdated or not yet fully implemented. While not disability-specific, in

2008 Trinidad and Tobago established an Equal Opportunities Commission and passed an Equal Opportunities Act which addresses multiple types of discrimination (sex, race and disability among others). Other countries have legislation that addresses specific forms of discrimination against persons with disabilities, such in the employment sector. However, in the Eastern Caribbean subregion few countries have officially adopted policy on the rights of persons with disabilities and fewer countries have developed disability-specific legislation. Data on persons living with a disability is not routinely and comprehensively collected to inform policy decisions and program implementation.

In 2019, UNFPA conducted a broad review of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) legislation in the Caribbean and found that few countries in Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean have such legislation in place to guarantee access to sexual and reproductive health services and information for the population, including persons with disabilities. Consequently, the SRH needs and rights of persons with disabilities, including for family planning, prevention and treatment of HIV and other Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), are not adequately addressed.

LGBTQI+ People

LGBTQI+ persons, especially those affected by multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination (including based on age, sex, ethnicity, disability and social and economic status), suffer from the lack of access to their economic, social, and cultural rights, including the rights to health care, housing, employment, education and safety. Such infringements, coupled with an overall culture of social exclusion, result in LGBTQI+ persons effectively being left behind.

The Shared Incidence Database (SID) of the Caribbean Vulnerable Communities Coalition, a regional umbrella civil society organisation that works with a wide cross section of vulnerable populations, recorded some 2,599 incidents of human rights violation in 2019 since the launch of the SID in 2017. The homophobic climate in the Caribbean is such that people are willing to openly and publicly acknowledge their homophobia as justification for refusing services or employment to LGBTQI+ people.

The majority of Caribbean⁹⁰ countries criminalise sexual contact between same sex consenting adults, penalties range from 10–50 years depending on each country's laws. Although these laws are rarely enforced, anti-homosexual legislation legitimises a homophobic social environment sustained by religious leaders, politicians and popular culture, that criminalizes consensual same-sex activity. Although such laws purport to regulate conduct and not status, the reality is that criminalizing consensual sexual conduct between partners of the same sex has the effect of marking individuals as criminals on the basis of their sexual orientation. In addition, PAHO reports

that discrimination and stigma are major barriers to accessing health care for LGBTQI+ individuals in the Caribbean region. Discrimination can result in outright refusal to provide health care, poor quality care and disrespectful or abusive treatment. Health care providers may also have a poor understanding of the specific health care needs of LGBTQI+ people.

Human Rights Watch (HRW) carried out a survey of the situation of LGBTQI+ persons in seven Eastern Caribbean countries in 2017 and documented the legal, social and economic barriers that LGBTQI+ persons face that serve to marginalise the community. Accounts were also made of human rights offenses against the LGBTQI+ community that include violence and abuse from private citizens and government officials. As captured in a 2018 report *Trapped*, LGBTQI+ persons experience forms of discrimination, violence, and stigmatization on a daily basis and, are at risk of being trapped in a life cycle of violence and discrimination. The report describes some of the challenges experienced in accessing education, employment, health care and treatment, workplace harassment, threats in public spaces, and access to justice. Working age LGBTQI+ adults encounter challenges in accessing employment in the formal sector and those who are employed experience forms of discrimination and harassment. In the health sector, in Guyana for example, although the Ministry of Health has a zero-tolerance policy for stigma and discrimination, there are still reports of LGBTQI+ persons being denied treatment or treated differently by healthcare workers. LGBTQI+ persons who are HIV positive encounter more barriers in seeking treatment and

90. With the exception of the Bahamas, Belize, Anguilla, Montserrat and the British Virgin Islands.

lapses in confidentiality at hospitals deter persons from seeking and/or continuing treatment.

While the political environment in many parts of the Caribbean remains challenging concerning the protection of the rights of LGBTIQ+ people, there are also positive development such as when the Anti-Sodomy law was judicially struck down in 2016 in the Caleb Orozco v. Attorney General of Belize case. In Trinidad and Tobago, a High Court of Justice ruled in 2018, that the country's laws criminalizing same-sex intimacy between consenting adults are unconstitutional, although that

ruling is now under appeal, and in 2018 the Caribbean Court of Justice struck down the Guyana cross dressing law declaring it as unconstitutional. Four cases challenging the anti-sodomy laws in Eastern Caribbean countries are pending.

Even with positive development, respect for the human rights of LGBTIQ+ persons remain a challenge in the region. Nine Caribbean countries continue to criminalize same sex relations resulting in pervasive stigma, discrimination and violence. Violations of civil and political, as well as economic, social and cultural rights continue.

Persons living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHIV)

In the last ten years, the Caribbean has made noteworthy progress in the HIV and AIDS response. Advancements have been achieved in the reduction of new HIV infections and AIDS-related deaths, with the incidence: prevalence ratio of the region declining steadily from 6.1 per cent in 2010 to 3.9 per cent in 2019. Progress towards the elimination of mother-to-child HIV transmission has also been made in some with seven countries attaining revalidation. In five of the nine countries in the region that reported 2019 data to UNAIDS, more than 90 per cent of pregnant women living with HIV knew their status.

However, despite some gains, the sub-region still has the highest incidence rate of reported AIDS cases in the Americas and is the second most-affected region in the world after Africa, with an HIV prevalence of 1.6 per cent.⁹¹ Inequalities exist and it must be noted that in order to guarantee timely presentation for antenatal care and continuity of

treatment for pregnant women living with HIV, scale-up of effective strategies is required especially for those furthest behind including those in poverty, migrants, refugees, and survivors of gender-based violence. Among countries in the Caribbean with recent survey data, HIV prevalence among transgender women exceeds that of female sex workers. More than half of transgender women surveyed by a study in Jamaica were found to be living with HIV. The vulnerability of transgender people to HIV infection and other health threats is exacerbated by the intersecting factors of transphobia, social exclusion, gender-based violence, and stigma and discrimination. In 2019, key populations and their partners (including sex workers, gay men and other men who have sex with men, and transgender people) accounted for 60 per cent of HIV infections in the region and only half of PLWHIV in the region are virally suppressed.⁹²

91. UNFPA. Newsletter. 1 June 2020.

92. UNAIDS. 2020. Global AIDS Monitoring 2020 <https://www.unaids.org/en/global-aids-monitoring>

According to 2018 data from the Pan-Caribbean Partnership Against HIV/AIDS (PANCAP), almost half of Caribbean young people ages 15–24 do not have adequate HIV knowledge and two in five did not use condoms the last time they had sex. Discriminatory attitudes of workers in healthcare and other sectors result in poor health-seeking behaviours of persons living with HIV, which in turn drives the increase in the HIV infection rate, including among the youth population.

Countries in the sub-region continue to grapple with the incomplete agenda of ending HIV transmission and achieving the 90-90-90 targets and large gaps persist across the HIV testing and treatment cascades. In 2019, 77 per cent of all people living with HIV in the Caribbean knew their HIV status. The slowdown in progression across the testing and treatment cascade emphasizes the imperative to scale up evidence-based methods of active case-finding and linkage to (and retention in) care, including through community-based programmes. Many PLWHIV are diagnosed several years after they acquire the virus decreasing the likelihood of favourable treatment outcomes.⁹³

The implementation of comprehensive prevention interventions is also not complete in the region. The only countries that have national programmes offering pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) through the public health sector are Barbados and The Bahamas and Barbados. In the Dominican Republic, PrEP is provided by non-governmental organizations and in Jamaica and Suriname it is available through the private sector and pilot studies.

The HIV responses in the region are plagued by the persistent challenge of elevated levels of migration that negatively impact health-care systems, education systems, and labour markets. Government health systems are also struggling to absorb programmes that have been traditionally funded by international donors, including HIV prevention and key population-focused initiatives. Innovative financing strategies are needed to ensure sustained progress.

HIV funding in the Caribbean has witnessed decreases each year since 2011. Much of the Caribbean is now classified as high and middle-income economies in spite of the inequalities in the distribution of wealth, economic disparities, human development deficiencies and limits in health system capacity. The vulnerabilities of the Caribbean – many classified as SIDS - have also been exacerbated by public health threats from chikungunya, Zika virus and yellow fever. With climate change, devastating hurricane seasons result in long-enduring effects and protracted recovery in several countries. In addition, the sub-region still struggles with contending urgencies for financing, high incidence of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs), increasing crime and violence against women, and poor performance of men in education.

Moreover, even before the advent of COVID-19, the Caribbean was not in line to achieve the 90-90-90 Fast Track targets that were due at the end of 2020. Research is required to assess the impact of COVID-19 on HIV in the Caribbean but COVID-19 may impact negatively on the operation

93. UNAIDS. 2019. Global AIDS Update 2019: Communities at the Centre. <https://www.unaids.org/en/resources/documents/2019/2019-global-AIDS-update>

of HIV prevention programs. It may also exacerbate HIV risk. Key and vulnerable populations and adolescent girls and young women and their partners are likely to be disproportionately affected. Sex workers are especially vulnerable to shocks and risk fluctuations of this kind and often lack alternative livelihood strategies to support them-

selves or to access food. Stay at home and curfew orders can exacerbate HIV and other risks such as gender-based violence for women and girls living in violent or abusive households. Increases in the incidence of HIV among newly out of school girls, sex workers, and others are therefore increasingly expected.

Indigenous Peoples

Indigenous communities are mainly present in Belize, Guyana, Suriname, and Dominica and are among the most marginalized communities in the region. Indigenous peoples in these countries tend to have limited access to justice and economic, social and cultural rights, suffer from discrimination and are at increased risk of the impacts of climate change and the economic regression from COVID-19. Food insecurity, stunting among children, family violence, climate-related vulnerabilities, insufficient health care and basic services contribute to include diminishing standards of living that is lower than that of most citizens. Little reliable data exists regarding the situation of women and girls in indigenous communities, although indigenous women tend to face three-fold discrimination and vulnerability on the basis of sex, ethnicity, and reduced economic status.⁹⁴

According to the Guyanese Organization of Indigenous Peoples (GOIP), females of indige-

nous descent, some as young as 12 years old, are highly vulnerable to trafficking for the purpose of prostitution, particularly to mining camps. Teenage boys, on the other hand, involved in child labour often drop out of school to work in the mines and other sectors to also provide support to the family. Child labour in the hinterland areas were double than of the coastal areas in Guyana (37.1 per cent vs 14.2 per cent).⁹⁵ The GOIP claims that the Guyanese government has ignored and failed to address the problem.⁹⁶ In Guyana, land titling and the role of extractive industries in indigenous territories (particularly mining and oil and gas), coupled with actions from law enforcement agencies, constitute major concerns. Incidences of gender-based violence and femicide among indigenous populations also recorded an increase in 2019 in Belize. In addition, despite the implementation of some administrative and legal measures, indigenous peoples have limited participation in public and political life.

94. <http://www.minorityrights.org/?lid=4198>

95. ILO (2017) Assessment of Child Labour in Guyana

96. Submission of the Guyanese Organization of Indigenous Peoples (GOIP) to the Ethnic Relations Commission (ERC), 8 July 2008



Youth

Youth not in education, employment or training (NEET) is an acute problem in the region, with statistics⁹⁷ varying from 27.3 per cent in Belize, 35.8 per cent in Guyana, 30 per cent in Saint Lucia, to 52 per cent in Trinidad and Tobago.⁹⁸ There are several contributing factors to NEET, including school dropout, low wages, teenage pregnancy, disconnect between the education and labour sectors, and forms of social exclusion.⁹⁹

Youth unemployment is an acute problem in the region. Before the pandemic, the youth rate was at 26 per cent, almost 3 times higher than the adult rate of 9 per cent, and more than twice the overall unemployment rate of 12 per cent.¹⁰⁰ Adolescents (15–18 years old) have much higher unemployment rates than young adults (20–24 years

old). For countries where information is available, the majority of youth had been unemployed for 6 months or more. Prolonged unemployment increases the risk that the well-being of young people can be adversely affected: a deterioration of mental health, low self-esteem, financial pressures, substance abuse, delinquency and anti-social behaviour. It could also affect the ability of youth to achieve their full economic potential and result in the loss of productive potential for the country. Joblessness among young women notably reached nearly 30 per cent compared to 24 per cent for men.¹⁰¹ In the context of building back better in response to the health crisis, youth participation in the workforce needs to be prioritized. This is especially critical as the Caribbean is defined by a youthful population.

98. World Bank. Share of Youth not in education, employment or training, total per cent of youth population – Latin America and Caribbean. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SL.UEM.NEET.ZS?locations=ZJ>

99. Caribbean Development Bank. 2015. <https://www.caribank.org/sites/default/files/publication-resources/Youth-Study-Imperative-of-Employment-CDB-2015.pdf>

100. UNICEF, OECS Commission, and ILO. 2020. Youth Unemployment in Barbados and the OECS Area. A Statistical Compendium.

101. UNICEF, OECS Commission, and ILO. 2020.

Older persons

Population ageing is one key current demographic trend with multidimensional impacts for societies and communities, and is occurring at a faster pace in the Caribbean than in other regions. Average population 65 and older for CMCA Caribbean countries is 10.2 per cent, with Curaçao, Barbados and Aruba having the highest percentages, 17.2 per cent, 16.2 per cent and 14.1 per cent, respectively.¹⁰² Estimates indicate that the share of the population aged 65 years and older will double between 2019 and 2050.¹⁰³ Dependency ratios (population aged 15-64 per population 65+) in the past 30 years has decreased from 8.8 (1990) to 6.3 (2020) while for the Latin America and Caribbean region decreased from 12.2 (1990) to 7.5 (2020).¹⁰⁴

Older persons face a significantly higher risk of mortality, severe disease and longer recovery time following COVID-19 infection, and have seen their economic challenges exacerbated as a result of the pandemic. Older persons have long been the subject of inadequate protection of their human rights and overlooked in national policies and programmes, which, together with the absence of a dedicated internationally agreed legal framework, contributes to the vulnerability of older persons and may have contributed to inadequate responses to the COVID-19 crisis.¹⁰⁵

Most older persons in the Caribbean live in extended family households, which may include relatives such as grandchildren, nieces and nephews, families often act as primary caregivers because home-care services and nursing homes tend to be limited or absent. Skip-generation households are common also in the Caribbean due to rural-to-urban and international migration. These households often benefit from remittances sent home by migrant parents or adult children.¹⁰⁶



102. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SPPOP65UP.T0.ZS>

103. https://population.un.org/wpp/Publications/Files/WPP2019_10KeyFindings.pdf

104. United Nations Population Division. 2019. Department of Economic and Social Affairs. World Population Prospects 2019. Estimates 1950-2020. Online Edition. Rev.1.

105. United Nations. 2020. General Assembly. Follow-Up to the International Year of Older Persons: Second World Assembly on Ageing. 22 July. A/75/218. Countries included: Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, The Bahamas, Barbados, Curaçao, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago.

106. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2020). World Population Ageing 2020 Highlights: Living arrangements of older persons (ST/ESA/SER.A/451).

Migrants and refugees

Migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers, especially those who have an irregular status, or who work informally, are often vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, or even trafficking in persons. As many displaced abroad and their communities face increased situations of vulnerability due to the impacts of COVID-19, challenges to identify and support the most vulnerable will likely increase. Amid growing influx of migrant, refugees and asylum seekers' populations to Eastern and Southern Caribbean (ESC) countries, especially from Venezuela and Haiti, discrimination against migrants and refugees in the region has seen rapid increase during the last 12 months. Xenophobia, incitement to hatred and discrimination directed towards migrants and refugees, in particular spikes amid the impact of COVID-19 (Jamaica, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago) and in the context of humanitarian emergencies, such as for example during and post Hurricane Dorian in The Bahamas (2019). The influx also sheds light on a lack of institutional preparedness of countries in the region to respond to increased vulnerabilities of these populations.

The Southern Caribbean (Aruba, Curacao, Guyana, and Trinidad and Tobago, along with the Dominican Republic due to language and cultural affinity), has been a sub-region particularly affected by the outflows of refugees and migrants due to the humanitarian situation in Venezuela, with UNHCR and IOM estimating 150,000 Venezuelans hosted in these five countries by the end of 2020.¹⁰⁷ Although Trinidad and Tobago and Aruba have acceded to the 1951 Refugee Convention, the countries did not pass domestic legislation

to implement its international obligations on the matter. Curaçao and Sint Maarten, do not consider themselves bound by the 1951 Convention/1967 Protocol and do not have domestic legislation in place to address the international protection needs of refugees and asylum-seekers.

Due to the lack of or conflicting domestic legislation, asylum seekers and refugees face major hurdles in protection of their civil and political rights and in accessing economic, social and cultural rights, including education, health care and employment. For instance, although Belize has a functioning asylum system, asylum seekers and refugees encounter many challenges to attain full access to their rights. Most asylum seekers in Belize who have been able to register their claim remain in prolonged limbo due to a protracted adjudication process. Asylum seekers in Belize cannot work while they await their adjudication process, as is the case for some of the other countries in the Caribbean. Poor conditions, overcrowding and deficient screening mechanisms to identify vulnerable persons in migrant detention centres are of increasing concern, particularly in light of COVID-19. In Guyana and the Bahamas, countries affected by high volumes of migrants and refugees fleeing Venezuela and Haiti, there have been reports of violence, abuse and discrimination from law enforcement authorities. The ILO has noted that migrants in the Caribbean are oftentimes subject to discrimination in workplaces, especially during periods of high unemployment or economic recession. Government officials in various countries indicate that many migrants and refugees do not report grievances

107. www.r4v.info

in fear of adverse immigration consequences, especially if they have an irregular status. This leaves them at risk of falling victim to continued discrimination and exploitation in the workplace. [No Eastern Caribbean] country has anti-discrimination legislation regarding migrant populations. This has the potential to increase incidences of exploitation. Language barriers also contribute to social exclusion of migrants in Caribbean receiving countries.

In Caribbean countries, access to social security benefits (such as sickness benefits, maternity benefits, or pensions) is usually only available when a migrant is working legally within the country and contributing to the social security scheme. Language barriers and work permit processes limit migrants' employment in the formal economy. In the informal economy, migrants, especially those without a legal status, tend to be underpaid and without protection. In this sense, further efforts are required around the mainstreaming of contingent rights to the free movement process under the Eastern Caribbean Economic Union (ECEU). As parties to the Convention of the Rights of Children (CRC), all Caribbean states are required to make primary education compulsory and available free to all. In practice, most Caribbean countries abide by this agreement, however not all legislation reflects the right for non-nationals to access primary education through public systems without payment. The Education Acts of some countries specifically mention the prohibition of discrimination due to "place of origin", yet also state that fees may be incurred for non-nationals from states outside of CARICOM accessing the education system. These challenges often see migrants and refugees, in some of the countries, being coerced into various forms of exploitation, including human trafficking.

Data from the UN's interagency Refugee & Migrants Response Plan indicates that Venezuelan displaced abroad are vulnerable in a wide range of ways, particularly in the context of COVID-19. Migrants and refugees from Venezuela are more likely than non-migrants to lack access to clean and safe water and hygiene products. At least 40 per cent of this migrant and refugee population is estimated to be experiencing food insecurity of some degree. They have reduced access to reproductive health services, mental health services and psychosocial support. Notwithstanding comparatively benevolent government attitudes with respect to migrants as contrasted to refugees, many face challenges with formal registration and securing official documentation, in turn further restricting their access to basic services. Migrants and refugees in general, and Venezuelan migrants and refugees in particular, are at heightened risk of gender-based violence, human trafficking to a third country, and migrant and refugee women are more likely to engage in transactional or survival sex given their situation of economic precarity. Persons moving in the framework of natural hazards, environmental degradation and climate change, both within their countries and across international borders also require a specific attention to meet their needs and ensure their protection. Evacuations and displacement and regular occurrences when disasters strike, and efforts are required to protect the well-being and livelihoods of affected populations, including from a gender perspective. Planned relocation processes are becoming increasingly relevant for the Caribbean as the impacts of climate change worsen, which requires adapted efforts to protect relocated communities and individuals. Data and evidence remain a priority to identify solutions and address the situation of these groups.



3.6 Analysis of compliance with international human rights, norms and standards

Caribbean countries are generally supportive of the protection and promotion of human rights as evidenced by the region's moderate record of signature and accession/ratification to the basic international human rights instruments. All independent countries of the English-Speaking Caribbean have ratified the CRC and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Most have ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), and the International Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (ICERD). Dutch-speaking are constituent countries of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and as such have ratified all of the human rights conventions. For the British Overseas Territories in the Caribbean UN human rights treaties are extended by the United Kingdom, the British Virgin Islands, Cayman

Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands have all six extended to them, CEDAW was extended to Anguilla and Cayman Islands.

Other core international human rights treaties such as the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW), the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR, and the Convention against Torture (CAT) and its Optional Protocol have a lesser rate of acceptance. Most of the English-Speaking Caribbean countries are parties to both the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol. In 1997 and 1998, Jamaica, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago withdrew as a State party to the first Optional Protocol on ICCPR. Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana simultaneously deposited an instrument for re-accession with reservations relating to the treatment of cases brought by people under death sentences. The Human Rights Commission

(HRC) rejected Trinidad and Tobago's reservations as being incompatible with the object and purpose of the Optional Protocol.

There is also a very low ratification of inter-American instruments as well as international conventions: Barbados, Grenada, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago withdrew from the American Convention on Human Rights, while Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Belize, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines did not ratify it. Only Dominica and Suriname are currently parties to the Convention, and only Barbados and Suriname recognise the jurisdiction of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Belize maintains an active role in the Inter-American Human Rights system and is a party to key instruments, including the Convention of Belem do Para or the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women; the Inter-American Convention on Support Obligation; and the Inter-American Convention against Corruption. All countries in the Commonwealth Caribbean¹⁰⁸ are parties to the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol Against Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children and have largely modelled their national counter-trafficking legislation on the document.¹⁰⁹ According to the Trafficking in Persons Report 2020,¹¹⁰ the governments of The Bahamas and Guyana fully meet the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. The governments of Antigua and Barbuda, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines,

Sint Maarten, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago do not fully meet the TVPA's but are making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance, while the governments of Aruba, Barbados, Belize and Curaçao, in spite of making significant efforts, the number of victims of severe forms of trafficking is significant and they are failing to provide evidence of proportionate efforts to combat trafficking. Dutch-speaking Caribbean countries are under the European Convention on Human Rights. Barbados, Bermuda, Grenada, Guyana, and Saint Lucia have not signed the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol.

All Caribbean constitutions include fundamental rights and freedoms enshrined in the constitutions that generally reflect political and civil rights. These include the right to life, to not to be deprived of property without due process or adequate compensation, to liberty, to freedom of speech, and to freedom of association. Unfortunately, constitutional amendments reflecting recent changes in society have not yet been entirely enacted, particularly in light of the many countries' requirement of a referendum to effect constitutional amendments. Most Caribbean constitutions, however, do not provide guarantees for economic, social and cultural rights and domestic legislation in the region does not sufficiently reflect the social and economic rights espoused in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. More recently there have been calls to protect the right to environment and to review the existing laws regarding discrimination to include sex, disability and sexual orientation.

The majority of Caribbean countries are common

108. Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago.

109. IOM. Migration Governance in the Caribbean. Report on the island states of the Commonwealth Caribbean. International Organization for Migration (IOM). Regional Office for Central America, North America and the Caribbean. 2018.

110. Trafficking in Persons Report 2020. United States of America Department of States. Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. June 2020.

law, dualist jurisdictions that do not allow for human rights treaties to self-execute on ratification. Therefore, treaty provisions must be introduced through national legislation. Most Caribbean countries have not sufficiently reformed their legislation to meet human rights standards to consistently reflect the core principles of these instruments. Further, some pieces of legislation, from the pre-independence era, are in clear contrast with human rights obligations but saved from legal challenge due to constitutional provision.

The lack of enacting enabling domestic legislation and policy and the lower level of ratifications of international and regional human rights instruments has been the subject of many recommendations from treaty bodies and the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). The Concluding Remarks of the HRC on Belize's initial report on the ICCPR put forth that Belize should guarantee that the provisions of this particular Covenant have full legal effect in its domestic legal system. However, the Constitution also sets out that such changes must be put forth by a Bill that is supported by the votes of not less than two-thirds of all the members of the House of Representatives. This means that to guarantee full implementation of the UN Conventions, the capacities of national governments need be strengthened to ensure that these are fully integrated in the domestic legal system to secure the rights of its citizens. Recommendations from two, in some countries, three UPR cycles also include combating violence against women and children, introducing measures to improve law enforcement and the administration of justice, addressing discrimination against marginalized groups, sexual and reproductive rights, establishing national human rights institutions in compliance with the Paris Principles, abolishing the death penalty or establishing a moratorium, adopting domestic legislation for the protection of refugees, human rights education, and promoting the right to education, and the right to health.

While Caribbean governments have generally supported and made commitments to implement UPR recommendations relating to the promotion of economic and social rights, as well as the rights of women, children, and persons with disabilities, countries have been too reticent to support recommendations regarding ratifying additional human rights agreements, establishing national human rights mechanisms, criminal justice reform, sexual and reproductive rights, and the rights of LGBTQI+ persons. Commitments were made, albeit voluntary, to the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and its Programme of Action (PoA), further reaffirmed in the Montevideo Consensus. Governments indicate the main reason for the lack of implementation of recommendations regarding strengthening the human rights infrastructure is the shortage of human and financial capacity to establish the necessary institutions to make the reforms required. Governments also state they do not have a public mandate to take action on more socially controversial issues recommendations relating to sexual and reproductive rights and criminal justice due to the region's conservative and religious culture.

In addition, reporting to international and regional mechanisms is an ongoing concern. Treaty reporting is one of the obligations to derive from ratification and can be indicative of a country's commitment to implement the provisions of a treaty at the domestic level. Most countries in the region, with few exceptions, are late in submitting multiple periodic reports to treaty bodies. In some cases, reports are decades overdue, including many initial reports. Caribbean countries have consistently cited a lack of human, financial and technical capacity that hinders the commitment of the States parties to comply with their reporting obligations.



COVID-19 and emergency legislation

Many countries declared a state of emergency or enacted emergency legislation in response to the pandemic. In some cases, state of emergency legislation did not meet the standards of article 4 of the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights but for the most part emergency measures were generally accepted as a necessary, proportional response to the health crisis. Measures include restrictions on movement for essential services only, evening curfews, and limitations on public, sporting, religious, and social gatherings to ten persons or fewer. In some countries, such as Trinidad and Tobago, the borders have been closed to commercial flights for just over a year, leaving

some nationals stranded abroad. Those stranded abroad faced financial hardship, evictions and concerns about their irregular status. However, incidents of excessive force by police in enforcing COVID-19 protocols are of on-going concern. The economic impact of the restrictions on movement owing to COVID-19 has led to losses of income and livelihoods, combined with reduced access to social services, especially for the population who are most vulnerable to economic downturns and the negative impacts of natural hazards. These groups have required humanitarian assistance in form of food assistance and monetary support for survival during the pandemic.

Right to life, liberty and security of person

All Caribbean constitutions protect fundamental rights and freedoms and generally reflect political and civil rights including the rights to life, liberty and security of person. However, the Caribbean region is also a death penalty retentionist region, contrary to the increasing international trend of abolition. The majority of countries have historically voted against General Assembly resolutions calling for a moratorium on the use of the death penalty. However, in December 2018, Dominica lifted the historical opposition to the 7th Resolution calling for a universal moratorium on executions, voting for the first time to support it, while Antigua and Barbuda and Guyana moved from opposition to abstention.

Most countries in the region struggle with high levels of violent crime and an increasing number of countries are passing legislation strengthening state powers of arrest and detention. The concern regarding citizen security contributes to the widely held public belief that the death penalty must be retained as a deterrent to violent crimes. Of particular concern, Trinidad and Tobago maintains the mandatory death penalty for certain crimes (although there has been a moratorium since 1999). In 2018, the Caribbean Court of Justice unanimously declared the mandatory death penalty unconstitutional in Barbados. Some populations in Belize can be at greater risk of detention and incarceration but there is need for further analysis of the relationships between ethnicity, geography, age-group, incarceration and the types of crime committed to establish if any correlations

exist between these factors and detention and/or incarceration. The result of this analysis can support the design of targeted, evidence-based policies to strengthen the rule of law and protect vulnerable populations. In terms of ethnicity, Afro-descendants are the largest group in the men prison population. At the end of 2019, youth between the ages of 18 and 30 accounted for 45 per cent of Belize's prison population, although that group represents only 28 per cent of the population.¹¹¹

Across the Caribbean region, executions are extremely rare. The last execution was carried out in St Kitts and Nevis in 2008, before the defendant exhausted the appellate process. Aside from this isolated case, no executions have been carried out in any Caribbean country for more than 20 years. A regional status quo has emerged, whereby the death penalty remains on the statute books but is hardly ever imposed and executions almost never carried out.

In addition, one of the mayor gaps in the ESC countries is the lack of available legal remedies to demand the fulfilment of human rights. For the majority of the population is very difficult to afford a lawyer to go into courts and civil society organizations have a very limited capacity to provide legal aid. Although the countries have in place the institution of the Public Defender or Ombuds-person, these institutions do not have a full human rights mandate and do not comply with the Paris Principles.

111. Belize Post-Cense National Population Estimates 2010 to 2020, Statistical Institute of Belize.

Use of force by law enforcement

Across the Caribbean region there have been reports from reliable sources of excessive use of force by the police during arrests and interrogation, extrajudicial executions and torture. There are frequent complaints from low-income citizens and Rastafarians against the police alleging unprofessional conduct, intimidation, beatings and assault. Police occasionally were accused of beating and torturing suspects to obtain confessions, which suspects often recant at trial. In many cases the only evidence against the accused was a confession. In Jamaica, the declaration of a public emergency in Zones of Special Operation (ZOSOs) raises human rights concerns about arbitrary arrests and the conduct

of its security forces. In Belize, members of the security forces have been accused of: excessive use of force, discrimination against the members of the LGBTQI+ community, sexual harassment, abuse, exploitation and corruption. Prison data indicates that a disproportionate number of youth and persons of afro descendant, 70 per cent, are incarcerated. In Trinidad and Tobago, the security forces detain individuals, including children, in immigration detention centres for indefinite periods from which they are deported without access to asylum screenings. Compounding this is the lack of independent oversight of immigration detention centres.

Administration of justice

Despite recent positive developments, judicial systems in the Caribbean still face several challenges. The majority of Caribbean countries experience significant case backlogs that hinder judicial due process, primarily owing to the slow pace of investigations,¹¹² while legal aid services for people in need of assistance still require further development as well as greater human and financial resource allocation. Local legal professionals attribute the delays particularly to inadequate

prosecutorial and police staffing and to the lack of resources for investigations, antiquated rules of evidence, and poor case and court management.

Persons living in rural areas and remote locations, such as indigenous peoples, are more likely to encounter challenges in accessing justice given the geographical distributions of courts.¹¹³ For some people, it would require lengthy and costly travel to access the court system.

112. UNDP 2020. CARIBBEAN JUSTICE: a needs assessment of the judicial system in nine countries. https://www.latinamerica.undp.org/content/rblac/en/home/library/democratic_governance/caribbean-justice--a-needs-assessment-of-the-judicial-system-in-.html

113. UNDP 2020. CARIBBEAN JUSTICE: a needs assessment of the judicial system in nine countries. https://www.latinamerica.undp.org/content/rblac/en/home/library/democratic_governance/caribbean-justice--a-needs-assessment-of-the-judicial-system-in-.html

Prisons

Most Caribbean prisons and detention centres fall well below international standards. Prison conditions in the region have been described as “antiquated”, “unsanitary”, “unacceptable”, “appalling” and “inhumane.” Many countries have one prison which houses a large number of detainees (including indigent people accused of minor offenses, or those accused of serious crimes) being held on remand for years before going to trial, resulting in severe overcrowding.¹¹⁴ Prison conditions in Caribbean countries are character-

ized by significant shortfalls in prison conditions including, physical and sexual abuse, dangerous and unhygienic facilities, the absence of access to basic necessities and medical treatment, and guarantees for prisoners’ rights. Prison reform is much needed not only to improve conditions and reduce incarceration rate, but also to strengthen rehabilitation and reintegration programmes for inmates, especially for youth population, the poor and certain ethnicities that are heavily impacted, as well as refugees.

Human rights infrastructure

Although all Caribbean countries have legal systems that largely protect civil and political rights, and legislation and policy that speaks to many economic, social and cultural rights, there is a lack of available legal remedies and mechanisms to demand the protection and fulfilment of those rights. No country in the Caribbean has a National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) that meets the Paris Principles. Belize is preparing to undertake consultations on an NHRI model that is compliant with these principles. In the Caribbean, most people cannot afford a lawyer to go to court and civil society organizations have a very limited capacity and resources to provide legal aid. Even

for those who can afford legal representation, court backlogs result in litigation matters taking many years to come to resolution. The weakness of the human rights infrastructure at the country level is partially due to the region’s small populations which present substantial human, technical and financial resource constraints. The Caribbean is very distinct from Latin America, and as such needs tailored approaches to the sub-region due to its history, diversity and unique characteristics, but also because international human rights must be understood and realized in differing political, social and cultural contexts.

114. For example, in Antigua and Barbuda the prison populations are held in facilities that were built to hold half the number of prisoners. Grenada’s only prison holds 441 prisoners in a facility designed for 98. U.S. State Department Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for [2019]

Fundamental freedoms

The majority of Caribbean countries have enacted legislation governing the disclosure of information in the public interest and to guarantee every person the right to access public information. However, obstacles to effective implementation of such legislation includes low levels of knowledge of information officers and the inaccessibility of complaints procedures and, in some countries, concerns from civil society organizations who indicates an analysis is needed of the utilization

and implementation of this Act to ascertain its efficacy in improving transparency and accountability.

Caribbean countries need to take measures to enhance full implementation of freedom of information legislation including training of officers, conducting public information campaigns and establishing accessible complaint mechanisms.

Prohibition of all forms of exploitation

Most Caribbean countries have recently enacted anti-human trafficking legislation. However, in some cases, the current legislation is inadequate. Even in countries with adequate legislative frameworks, enforcement remains lacking with very few convictions. In 2010, the International Organization for Migration published an Exploratory Assessment of Trafficking in Persons in the Caribbean Region. The assessment indicated that the victims of human trafficking included men, women, boys and girls from within and outside the region. While women and girls were found to

be vulnerable to falling victim to human trafficking due to gender-based violence, discrimination and sexual exploitation, boys were increasingly found to be at risk. Men were most typically found to be at risk of falling victim to human trafficking for labour exploitation in the industrial sector. Unfortunately, the frustrating reality about human trafficking in the Caribbean is that reliable data is scarce and the magnitude of the issue is largely unknown. There is need for more serious empirical studies to determine the scope of human trafficking in the region.

Equality and non-discrimination

Although all Caribbean constitutions contain anti-discrimination language, and there is an increasing number of countries are enacting anti-discrimination legislation, most do not provide

protections against discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, disability, and health status.

Right to work

In 2006 the CSME came into effect, created to stimulate economic growth and enhance international competitiveness through the utilization of human resources, and other factors of production available in the region. One of the main objectives of CSME is the full use of labour (full employment) and full exploitation of the other factors of production (natural resources). Among the key elements of the CSME is the free movement of labour. The Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas, establishing the Caribbean Community including the CSCM, puts in place the legal framework for

implementation of the CSME and has been enacted into domestic law by all countries participating in the CSME.

A handful of countries in the region have effective laws or policies which permit refugees and migrants to work. However, in countries where this is absent, this population is excluded from the formal work force and at greater risk of sexual and labour exploitation in the workplace. Thus, precluding inclusive economic growth of the country.



Right to an adequate standard of living

Caribbean countries have used social protection as a powerful tool for alleviating poverty, reducing inequalities and building resilience against shocks and crises over a person's lifecycle. However, further review to economic policies is required and examining its disproportionate impacts on discriminated groups, including through participatory consultations. Ringfencing public spending to guarantee minimum essential levels of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights should be a first priority.

Social protection systems are also an important tool to prevent and respond to natural hazards and climatic shocks. Countries in the Eastern Caribbean have used social protection systems to respond to crises such as Hurricanes Maria and Irma in 2017 and to the impacts of COVID-19. The most frequently adopted social protection measures are unemployment benefits, payroll subsidies and social assistance. Only a handful of national programmes have provided support to documented and undocumented migrant and refugees workers and refugees who are typically excluded from accessing social protection instruments. Under SDG Target 1.3, countries have committed to implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030, achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable. As many as 38 per cent of total workers in Latin America and the Caribbean, including 61 per cent of vulnerable informal workers do not have access to social protection, and among the latter very few can work remotely.¹¹⁵

In the region, there are different types of social protection instruments. These include non-contributory social assistance programmes (such as school feeding and unconditional cash transfer programmes targeting poor households or specific vulnerable groups such as persons with disabilities), as well as contributory social insurance programmes (such as unemployment benefits, pensions and health insurance). Single mothers with children represent a significant proportion of beneficiaries of income support programmes through cash transfers to poor households. However, these programmes do not actually serve the majority of persons eligible for support for various reasons, including resource (financial and human) constraints.¹¹⁶ When implemented in an integrated fashion, social protection has the potential to tackle the multiple vulnerabilities faced by people during their lives, while also strengthening inclusive social development and economic growth.

Further investment is needed in social protection systems to ensure that poverty, other social factors or discrimination do not force people into situations of precarious labour migration and promote decent work opportunities for people at home. Sufficient financial, organizational and socio-emotional support should be provided to families so that children can stay with their parents and not be placed in institutions in order to get access to education, food and shelter.

115. OECD. 2020. COVID-19 in Latin America and the Caribbean: Regional socio-economic implications and policy priorities. <https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/covid-19-in-latin-america-and-the-caribbean-regional-socio-economic-implications-and-policy-priorities-93a64fde/>

116. Xavier, J. 2015. Final Report: Gender Aware Beneficiary Analysis of Saint Lucia's Public Assistance Programme. UNWOMEN AND UNICEF. <https://caribbean.unwomen.org/en/materials/publications/2016/06/gender-aware-beneficiary-analysis-of-saint-lucias-public-assistance-programme>



Right to food

Food security and good nutrition are both important for participation in the labour force, school attendance, healthy behaviours and practices. Prior to the COVID-19 crisis lower income families and households had limited capacity and public institutional support to remain food secure. However, as the purchasing power of many families has been further reduced by the COVID-19 pandemic, households are increasingly unable to meet their minimum daily food requirements. Across the region, high rates of food insecurity are a result of existing vulnerabilities in lower income households that are compounded by frequent exposure to natural and economic shocks which hamper efforts to advance food security and nutrition in the region.

Declining reliance on local agriculture for national food production means the majority of food in the region is sourced through imports. Over 80

per cent of food in the Caribbean is imported (FAO). With the exception of Belize and Guyana, all English-speaking CARICOM countries import at least 50 per cent of their food, with over half of the countries importing over 80 per cent of the food consumed. The role of the agriculture sector has largely been diminished in place for tourism and hospitality, which are extremely vulnerable to economic shocks. The interruptions to the flow of goods and services caused by evolving transport and travel protocols in response to the COVID-19 pandemic have exacerbated food prices, impacted market access and most importantly interrupted people's livelihoods, which has a large impact on their ability to ensure the basic needs and meet the minimum daily food requirements for their households.

The CARICOM Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security and Livelihoods Impact Survey¹¹⁷ conducted in

117. World Food Programme (WFP) Caribbean COVID-19 Food Security and Livelihoods Impact Survey – Round 3 -February 2021. https://docs.wfp.org/api/documents/WFP-0000125496/download/?_ga=2.253584138.24429727.1617712135-306561560.1537803013

February 2021 found that a third of respondents across the Caribbean were skipping meals, eating less than usual, and in the most severe cases going a full day without eating. This was most frequently reported by those who experienced job loss or reduced household income, which made up 63 per cent. Respondents who depended on sectors such as construction and tourism, which were largely halted by the pandemic, more frequently reported income losses, and more severe impacts to their diets. In addition, households with self-perceived well below and below average income, and mixed households were most challenged to provide for their households. Consequently, these households were more likely to resort to negative coping mechanisms, including selling of assets and neglecting other priorities such as education and health. Decreasing household stocks was also frequently reported by poorer households, with seven out of 10 reporting reduced food stocks, which may be a concerning factor as the region enters the approaching hurricane season.

Based on the CARICOM survey results and population data, it is estimated that 2.7 million out of the 7.1 million people in the English-speaking Caribbean were food insecure in February 2021, a 57 per cent increase compared to 1.7 million during the first round of the survey in April 2020. Severe food insecurity has increased with each survey round from 403,000 in April 2020 to 407,000 in June 2020 to 482,000 in February 2021.

Fisheries employ over 180,000 people in CARICOM countries, or 10 per cent of the Community's population.¹¹⁸ Small-scale fisheries are also considered a social safety net for the poorest,

providing seasonal employment when other sectors are less busy or employment of last resort in times of need.¹¹⁹ Complementing this survey, further analysis was conducted on farming and fishing sectors by CARICOM and FAO between August and December 2020. Fisherfolk reported decreases in the time allocated (41 per cent) to fishing and in the number of fish caught (52 per cent). COVID-19 led to disruptions in supply chains of seafood and fish products and respondents highlighted challenges related to difficulties in marketing fish, decreased prices of fish and restrictions related to COVID-19.

During the 2020 agricultural season, crop and livestock producers have also experienced shocks but seemingly of a different nature. Interviewed extension officers indicated dry spells/drought (42 per cent) and heavy rains/flooding (26 per cent) as the most important shocks affecting crop production compared to normal, while lack of perspective and the difficulty to sell products was mentioned only by 5 per cent. At the same time, economic disruptions (28 per cent) and concerns/restrictions related to COVID-19 (25 per cent) are among extension officers' most commonly cited shocks affecting livestock production, followed by lack of pasture or water (17 per cent).

Prior to COVID-19, hunger and undernourishment in the Caribbean had generally been on a slight decline over recent years, however Belize and Dominica were increasing over the past five years. Other countries, such as Jamaica have been decreasing in recent years, however undernourishment is above 2000-2002 levels. Consistent decreases have been seen in the levels of undernourishment in countries such as Barbados,

118. FAO and CDB. 2019. Study on the State of Agriculture in the Caribbean. Rome.

119. Waite et al. (2011). The Economic Value of Jamaica's Coral Reef-Related Fisheries.

Guyana, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago.¹²⁰

Stunting and wasting in children under five years also shows mixed progress. While Caribbean countries tend to be below Latin America in terms of stunting, Belize and Guyana both have a prevalence above 10 per cent (15 per cent and 11 per cent respectively). Wasting or acute malnutrition, on the other hand, is concern in several countries. Compared to a Latin America and Caribbean average of 1.3 per cent prevalence of stunting and a global average of 6.9 per cent, countries such as Barbados, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago and Suriname are all above 5 per cent, while Jamaica and Saint Lucia are above 3 per cent. Given that wasting is more sensitive to sudden or temporary changes in access to food, there could be significant variations in some population groups due to the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19.¹²¹

Child overweight in the Caribbean has shown a sustained increase since 1990 and it is increasing at a greater rate than other sub-regions of Latin America and the Caribbean. Barbados (12.2 per cent) prevalence, Trinidad and Tobago (11.4 per cent) have the second and third highest rates in LAC, only below Paraguay. In addition, Jamaica, Dominica and Belize are all above sub-regional averages in prevalence of overweight in children under five. Overweight and obesity in adults in Latin America and the Caribbean are well above global levels. Furthermore, both overweight and

obesity in the Caribbean have increased significantly between 2000 and 2016, as is the case for adolescents (aged 5-19 years). In all countries in the Caribbean, the prevalence of obesity in adult women exceeds that of men.¹²²

There is an opportunity for governments in the region to galvanise public policies to promote sustainability in food systems, strengthen social protection systems and to ensure that social protection is shock responsive. Implementation of sustainable practices, school feeding and early nutrition programmes can strengthen food security in many countries in the region. Diversification of livelihoods and income opportunities can also improve and advance food security and nutrition for the Caribbean.

The CARICOM Regional Food and Nutrition Security Policy (RFNSP)¹²³ and the corresponding CARICOM Regional Food and Nutrition Security Action Plan (2012-2026)¹²⁴ recognize the various structural challenges for food and nutrition security in the region, including climate change, migration and urbanization, water scarcity, changing diets, poverty and barriers to food access, and increasing difficulty for traditional agricultural production to compete on global markets with imports displacing small farmer production. The RFNSP and RFNSAP also both propose solutions to address these issues which remain largely relevant today to reduce consumer and producer vulnerabilities.

120. FAO, PAHO, WFP, UNICEF and IFAD. 2021. Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition in Latin America and the Caribbean 2020 – Food security and nutrition for lagged territories – In brief. Santiago

121. *ibid*

122. *ibid*

123. https://caricom.org/wp-content/uploads/9820-regional_food_nutrition_security_policy_oct2010.pdf

124. <http://www.fao.org/3/bs907e/bs907e.pdf>

Right to health

Healthcare infrastructures in the Caribbean were fragile prior to the COVID-19 crisis. Inadequate investment in health particularly at the first level of care and failure to implement financial protection mechanisms presents a major risk to the attainment of SDG 3. Most states experience significant challenges recruiting, training, and retaining health care professionals. The geographic expanse of non-island Caribbean states can pose a major challenge for sustained health care and services leading to inequity in the delivery of health services especially among rural and indigenous populations. Undocumented migrants and refugees are amongst the groups potentially excluded from all or segments of the public healthcare system.

Overall, the Caribbean region has one of the highest adolescent fertility rates in the world: 60.2 births per 1,000 girls aged 15-19 (2010-2015). The general lack of access to autonomous sexual services constitutes a violation of the human rights of children, guaranteed pursuant to international law, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It is particularly harmful given the regional context of high rates of adolescent pregnancies and early sexual debuts. Further, the absence of specific legislation and the consequent refusal to service adolescents below eighteen years, creates an irrational incongruence where, adolescents are free to autonomously consent to sex at sixteen years in most instances, but are precluded from autonomously consenting to receive sexual repro-

ductive health (SRH) medical services. Rural women and girls, persons of diverse gender identity and/or sexual orientation and persons living with disabilities and sex workers are those that face greater barriers to accessing quality SRH services.

Caribbean countries and territories have made significant progress in social development and in the process, important opportunities are identified to collectively address the establishment of socially cohesive and community resilient universal social protection policies integrated into a system-wide approach to face common challenges such as the change in the epidemiological profile of the region with a growing number of people suffering from NCD and their risk factors and upscaling of social services and expanding social protection systems.

With the onset of the COVID-19 crisis health ministries across the region worked with PAHO and CDEMA to procure medical supplies and strengthen medical facilities. On-going support to Caribbean must work to build health systems that provide universal, accessible, and sustainable quality healthcare that not only focuses on mobilising resources and capacity building for the provision of health services but also addresses the underlying social, structural, and political determinants of illness and health inequity. It is critical to improve access to comprehensive and integrated SRH information and services, including family planning.

Right to education

COVID-19 pandemic has further exacerbated loss to learning with protracted school closures and inequitable access to blended and distance learning opportunities in the Caribbean. Ministries of education need to ensure safe return to schools and utilize learning assessment data for planning to improve quality and minimize loss to learning. Modernization of curricula, teachers' professional development, pre-service and in-service, and closing the digital divide to ensure access to distance learning are key to improving learning outcomes and equal educational opportunities.

Caribbean countries have largely achieved universal access to primary and secondary education services. However, they continue to struggle to ensure equitable access to a continuum of inclu-

sive quality learning from early childhood through to primary, secondary and post-secondary levels particularly for learners with disabilities (including learning challenges), migrants, refugees and other learners with special support needs.

Past access to preschool services in Barbados was reported at 90 per cent,¹²⁵ while OECS Member States averaged 73 per cent of children aged 3–4 years (preschool) enrolled in early childhood services in 2016–2017.¹²⁶ Girls and boys were about equally enrolled in early childhood education (ECE) across relevant ages. From the 2016 Out-of-School Children (OOSC) Studies, 3.3 per cent of children aged 12–14 is out of school, with boys being disproportionately affected.¹²⁷ The quality and relevance of education were at the top



125. 2012 Barbados MICS.

126. OECS Commission, Education Statistical Digest 2016-2017

127. UNICEF. 2017. Draft Lifelong Learning/Education Strategy Note.

<http://files.unicef.org/transparency/documents/Final%20ECA%20Education%20Strategy%20Note%20January%202017.pdf>

of the reasons noted for dropouts. Less than half of students attain education outcomes to gain entry into tertiary education.

As of March 2020, the closure of all educational facilities, in an effort to contain the virus spread in the Caribbean, has impacted nearly 12 million learners in 29 Caribbean countries (ECLAC, 2021).

One of the critical paths towards recovery and making education inclusive for all is to assess the effects of school closure, including the analysis of access to education and learning outcomes of the most marginalized learners: migrant and refugee students, students with disabilities and indigenous children and young persons. Legal and administrative barriers exist for refugee and

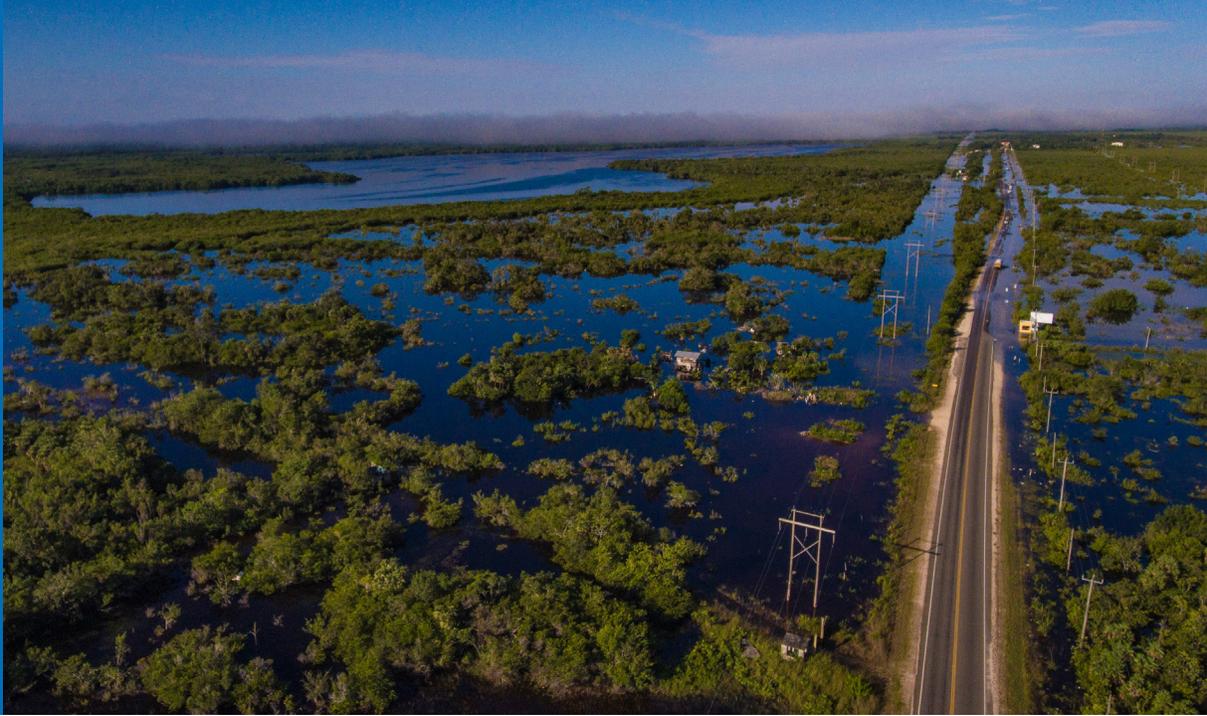


migrant children, with and without a legal status, to access the public education system. In Trinidad and Tobago, UN Agencies and local partners have developed parallel system to ensure these children are not left behind.

Within the framework of SDG4, countries and territories in the Caribbean region have developed a variety of strategies to towards the inclusion of learners with disabilities in their educational systems. For indigenous children and young persons, it is a priority to increase access to quality education due to the distance from schools, and the lack of resources. It will be critical to strengthen national capacities for timely collection, analysis, and utilization of SDG4 indicators to inform inclusive policies and strategies. A sector-wide approach that includes Technical and Vocational Education and skills development for jobs of the future will be critical to prepare learners for employability and to mitigate the risks of the foreseen economic downturn. SDG4 Target 4.7 which covers aspects of education for sustainable development (ESD), global citizenship education (GCED), and competencies for 21st century skills deserve further attention to address issues of Small Island Development States pertaining to disaster risk reduction as well as fostering values, attitudes, and behaviours to enable peace and prosperity. Distance education will serve not only as a strategy to respond to an emergency, but also as an option to reach remote areas and address teacher shortages in order to improve education quality for marginalized populations.

Amidst the pandemic, it is vital for learners to have access to technical and vocational education and training, skills development for entrepreneurship and employability, and jobs of the future. COVID-19 has underscored many weaknesses in the nexus of access and quality, of which access to technological infrastructure and related teacher capacity to facilitate online education is one component. SDG 4 is at risk of regressing for several reasons including (i) a loss of learning due to protracted closures; (ii) the risk of marginalised learners dropping out of school; (iii) reduced financing for education; (iv) the need for the capacity of teachers to be strengthened to continue teaching through remote, hybrid, and face-to-face modalities; and (v) a lack of access to connectivity and devices in some contexts. Governments in the region are facing challenges with limited capacity to respond.

Despite the vulnerability of the region to natural hazards, inadequate attention is given to risk reduction and resilience-building in the education sector. The need to maintain a minimum level of preparedness to ensure necessary emergency response mechanisms and support continuity of learning is integral to overall school access, especially in times of disaster. It is vital to safeguard financing for education especially as education systems need additional funds to respond to the additional expenses arising from the pandemic.



3.7 Development – humanitarian – peace linkage analysis

Crises, whether they manifest as conflicts, climatic or socio-economic shocks often cannot be solved by one set of actions alone. Humanitarian, development and peace actions all have a role to play in many of these crises: humanitarian response to save lives and protect people, development assistance to address multi-dimensional structural challenges, and peace action to ensure that countries can sustain peace, i.e. prevent the outbreak, escalation, continuation and recurrence

of conflict.¹²⁸ In this section, we look at the interplay between several specific factors which are common to the Caribbean region and have significant multiplier effects on all three of these strategic development areas. Climate shocks is integrated into the risk analysis for conflict. In the Caribbean, the hurricanes devastated region and almost entire country with severe implications in address recovery, fuels tensions and potential displacement or migration.

Climate change

In recent years the region has experienced the escalating effect of climate change, characterized by an increasing intensity of storms accompanied by stronger winds, ocean surges, increase frequency of droughts and heavier rains. These

phenomena and their uptick in occurrence and intensity have numerous deleterious effects biological and socioeconomic systems, directly affecting sectors such as health, agriculture, forestry and water resources, as well as natural environments.

128. <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2020-10/Issue%20paper%20-%20Exploring%20peace%20within%20the%20Humanitarian-Development-Peace%20Nexus%20%28HDPN%29.pdf>

In addition, increasing evidence is pointing to significant security-related dimensions to Climate Change which require additional consideration at national and regional levels.

Recent research and analysis provides an overview of how climate change could undermine citizens' security in the Caribbean, identifying risk factors such as economic contraction, violence and criminal activity, disaster impacts and political repercussions, food and water insecurity, damage to livelihoods, and social unrest.¹²⁹ Underlying governance and security challenges in the region have exacerbated these problems, coupled with deterioration in the economies and security of some of the region's neighbours, including Venezuela. Climate change impacts and security threats are likely to interact with and amplify each other and thus must become part of the region's broader security and resilience discourse and contribute to comprehensive risk management planning.¹³⁰

Climate change-induced hazards had a widespread impact on culture sector, including the total or partial destruction of heritage sites and cultural assets, the inability of the affected populations to access and benefit from their cultural resources, the disruption of intangible cultural heritage, endangered traditional knowledge and practices, and foregone livelihoods and economic opportunities associated with culture and creative industries, including those relying on touristic flow.

Current security threats in the region clearly show the impact of climate change, as reflected in the increased engagement of vulnerable populations in transnational organized crime, including arms and drug trafficking, human trafficking, and arms proliferation throughout the coastal regions.¹³¹ The continued use and expansion of special security operations and armed reaction to combat crime and violence has not led to immediate significant improvement or built confidence for longer-term violence reduction in the region. Regional and national plans have been developed to prevent violent crime in the Caribbean, but none has mainstreamed climate-related threats in its design and implementation. However, based on emerging evidence of the need for a regional approach to maritime security, it has become critical to highlight how this phenomenon has acted as a risk multiplier in the vulnerable Caribbean communities along several parameters:

- (I) increased attacks at sea;
- (II) increased trafficking in persons, arms and drugs;
- (III) criminogenic local governance by community leaders and gang activities; and
- (IV) human security, reproductive rights and gender-based violence.

(I) Increased attacks at sea

In recent years, the Caribbean region has witnessed a gradual rise in piracy and armed attacks within territorial waters. In 2017, 71 attacks at

129. Fetzek, Shiloh (2019) Caribbean Policy Brief Draft- Climate Security Drivers in the Caribbean, in https://www.cdema.org/Caribbean_policy_brief_-_Climate_security_drivers_in_the_Caribbean.docx.pdf.

130. UNEP (2019) Climate Change and Security Risks, <https://www.unenvironment.org/explore-topics/disasters-conflicts/what-we-do/risk-reduction/climate-change-and-security-risks>

131. [https://www.undp.org/content/dam/oslocentre/documents/Kehinde%20A.%20Bolaji_v3%20\(1\).pdf](https://www.undp.org/content/dam/oslocentre/documents/Kehinde%20A.%20Bolaji_v3%20(1).pdf)

sea were recorded in the Latin America and the Caribbean region, a drastic 163 per cent increase over 2016. Countries with increasing numbers of incidents include Suriname, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Saint Lucia.¹³²

(II) Increased migrant smuggling, trafficking in persons, arms and drugs

The challenge of human mobility has been a major criminogenic factor in the region. In recent years, economic and political turmoil in parts of Central and South America has caused some movement of migrants and refugees, to the Caribbean. Due to the damage to livelihoods in many coastal communities, local fishermen turned to using their boats with organized criminal groups, which in turn utilized them for smuggling. The humanitarian crisis in Venezuela has also led to Venezuelans increasingly featuring as victims of human trafficking to the Caribbean.¹³³

(III) “Criminogenic” local governance by “community leaders” and gang activities

In vulnerable communities in the Caribbean region, gang leaders use their financial influence and control of the instruments of violence to gain control of local contracting, compromise state institutions and coerce already economically disempowered community members into joining their criminal networks.¹³⁴ Persons who live within such communities are more likely to be victimized through gang attacks and/or threats. Examples of

such communities are Sea Lots and Las Cuevas in Trinidad and Tobago, where in 2019, gang wars led to killings and the destruction of boats belonging to fisherfolk involved with rival gangs.¹³⁵

Dwindling resources and economic opportunities in such communities have largely weakened their ability to resist gang influence. Families with young men often enlist them in a gang to generate illicit income. An IOM report¹³⁶ found that teenagers between the ages of 13 and 17 in those communities were usually involved in illegal activities, including selling drugs, working as a lookout for drug dealers and theft/housebreaking. They were also often subjected to child labour and, at times, commercial sex activities.

(IV) Human security, reproductive rights and gender-based violence

The stress experienced by communities directly exposed to this challenge often aggravates frustration and aggressive behaviours. Women and children may be subjected to sexual violence and exploitation, especially those internally-displaced. In addition, affected communities are exposed to increased risks of opportunistic diseases, such as measles, respiratory infections and malaria. Children are particularly vulnerable. According to a 2019 UNICEF report,¹³⁷ an estimated 761,000 children were internally displaced by storms in the Caribbean between 2014 and 2018. They lack access to essential services, including education, protection and healthcare facilities.

132. <https://nypost.com/2018/05/23/pirate-attacks-are-on-the-rise-throughout-the-caribbean/>

133. The State Department of the United States reports on trafficking in Aruba and Curaçao highlights Venezuelan migrants and refugees as being particularly at risk.

134. <https://newsday.co.tt/2020/05/19/griffith-no-contracts-no-gang-killings/>.

135. <https://www.guardian.co.tt/news/reclaiming-las-cuevas-sea-lots-after-sandman-and-dole-6.2.901056.fe18d7c70b>

136. https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/exploratory_assessment2.pdf.

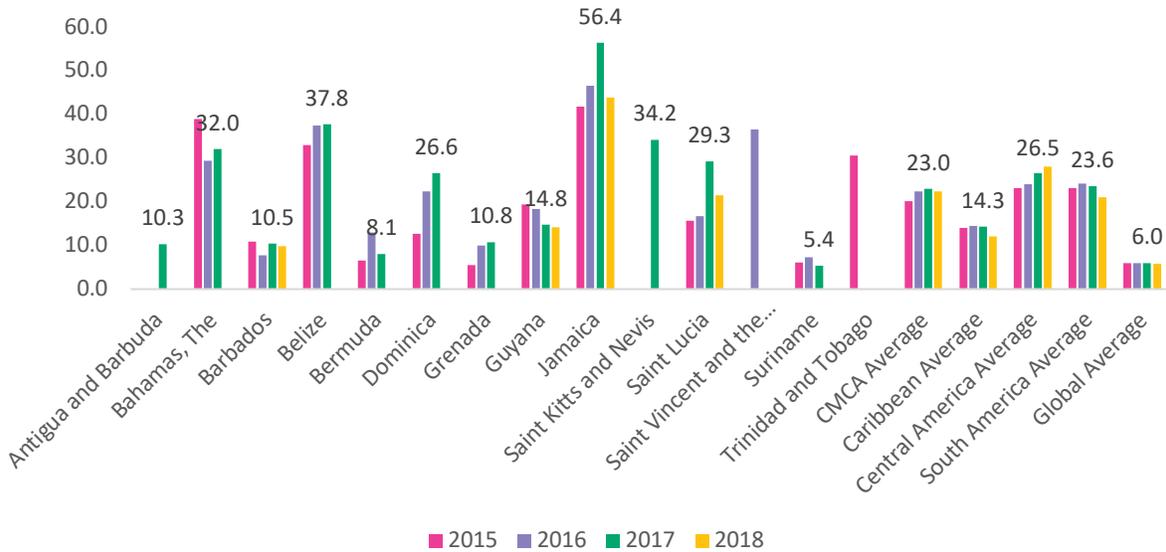
137. UNICEF (2019) Children Uprooted in the Caribbean: How Stronger Hurricanes Linked to a Changing Climate are Driving Displacement, Barbados, UNICEF OECS.

Violence and insecurity in the caribbean

The violence and high incidence of crime across the region has reduced foreign direct investments, increased the cost of doing business and diverted resources from the social sector (health and education, particularly) to crime control and the administration of justice.¹³⁸ The IADB survey further indicated that 23 per cent of firms in the region have experienced losses from crime and 70 per cent paid for private security.¹³⁹ Violence and crime also limit the opportunities for poverty eradication in the so-called “high risk” communities. It is significant to note the impact of interpersonal violence on youth and wellbeing.

In 2017, year for which more recent data is available, the Caribbean subregion had an average homicide rate of 23.0 per 100,000 inhabitants. Central and South America were identified as the subregions with the highest homicide rates in the world, with rates of 26.5 and 23.6 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants, respectively, followed by the Caribbean, which recorded a rate of 15.1 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants. Latin America and the Caribbean is considered the most violent region in the world.¹⁴⁰

Figure 16. Homicide rates per 100,000 inhabitants in the caribbean subregion (2015-2018)



Source: DATAUNODC

138. Jamaica’s National Security Minister indicated that if the country had had a normal crime rate, its GDP growth would have been between three and 10 times greater. <https://www.caribbean-council.org/crime-damaging-caribbean-development/>.

139. IADB, op. cit.

140. <https://dataunodc.un.org/data/homicide/Homicide%20victims%20worldwide>

It should be noted that at the sub-regional level, it is possible to find significant variations between countries. In the Caribbean subregion, Jamaica for example, recorded a rate of 56.4, is 11 times higher than Suriname's rate of 5.4 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants. However, beyond these gaps between countries, all, except Bermuda and Suri-

name have rates above 10 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants, as presented in FIGURE 16 ¹⁴¹ which is considered an epidemic level of violence by WHO. It is significant to note the impact this has on youth in LAC, the only region for which interpersonal violence significantly impact youth health and wellbeing.

Violence against women and girls

Latin America and the Caribbean are among the most dangerous regions in the world for women. 14 of the 25 countries with the highest femicide rates in the world are in this region¹⁴². According to ECLAC, in 2018, at least 3,529 women were killed because of their sex in the region. As shown in the following figure¹⁴³, countries with the highest rates of femicides per 100,000 women include Guyana (8.8), El Salvador (6.8), Honduras (5.1), Saint Lucia (4.4), Trinidad and Tobago (3.4), Bolivia (2.3), Guatemala (2.0) and the Dominican Republic (1.9). In the case of the Caribbean, not all States include provisions criminalizing femicide in their legislation.

Notwithstanding, in some countries, either the Police or other State agencies register the homicide

of a woman killed by an intimate partner and classify this offense as a femicide. Data shown in the table correspond to women's deaths at the hands of their intimate partner or former partner in the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Suriname. ECLAC collects this data annually through national agencies, such as judicial institutions, police or other competent national entities. In the case of some Caribbean countries, the information was provided by: Barbados (Royal Barbados Police Force), Belize (Belize Police Department), Grenada (Royal Grenada Police Force), Guyana (Guyana Police Force), Jamaica (Jamaica Constabulary Force), St Vincent and the Grenadines (Ministry of National Mobilization) and Suriname (Police Corps Suriname). ¹⁴⁴

141. See: <https://dataunodc.un.org/content/data/homicide/homicide-rate>

142. UN Women (2019). Spotlight Initiative. <https://mexico.unwomen.org/es/noticias-y-eventos/articulos/2019/12/spotlight>

143. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). Latin America and the Caribbean Gender Equality Observatory, <https://oig.cepal.org/en/indicators/femicide-or-feminicide>, accessed 10 April 2020.

144. <https://oig.cepal.org/en/indicators/womens-deaths-hands-their-intimate-partner-or-former-partner>

According to ECLAC's Gender Equality Observatory, Caribbean countries ¹⁴⁵ with the highest rates of intimate femicides per 100,000 women in 2018 include Barbados (3.4) Belize (2.6) and Suriname (1.8). For Guyana (8.83) and Saint Lucia (3.29), also in this category, data is from 2017. Rates for Suriname (1.77), Trinidad and Tobago (1.72), are below the average for Caribbean countries (2.43) but above the average rate for Latin America and the Caribbean (1.09). The rate for Jamaica (0.34) is below the LAC region average. ¹⁴⁶ Some of the countries analysed in this study face serious challenges regarding the impacts of armed violence, directly and indirectly affecting women. While reference has only been made to homicide and femicide indicators, which facilitate understanding the context of these countries, as well as the impact of weapons on the dynamics of violence, it is important not to lose sight of the fact that firearms are also present in other manifestations of violence that increase the levels of victimization of women, such as sexual or psychological

violence, or simply any kind of domestic violence. In many cases, these manifestations of violence are perpetrated by partners, ex-partners, or other family members. In these contexts, the mere presence of a weapon in the home exposes women to a high risk of death and domestic violence.

In the Caribbean, women and girls are particularly vulnerable to intimate partner violence, including intimate partner and family-related homicide, non-partner sexual violence, sexual exploitation, human trafficking, and human trafficking for sexual exploitation. The availability and access to firearms are noted to be linked to high per capita homicide rates and to women homicides perpetrated by intimate partners and family members. The ready availability of firearms in the Caribbean region impedes security, democratic processes and economic development capacity of states. The impact is being witnessed predominantly in nations, such as Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago.¹⁴⁷

145. Information is only available for Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

146. Indicators of death of women caused by their partner or ex-partner Intimate. See:

<https://oig.cepal.org/en/indicators/womens-deaths-hands-their-intimate-partner-or-former-partner> 10 April 2020.

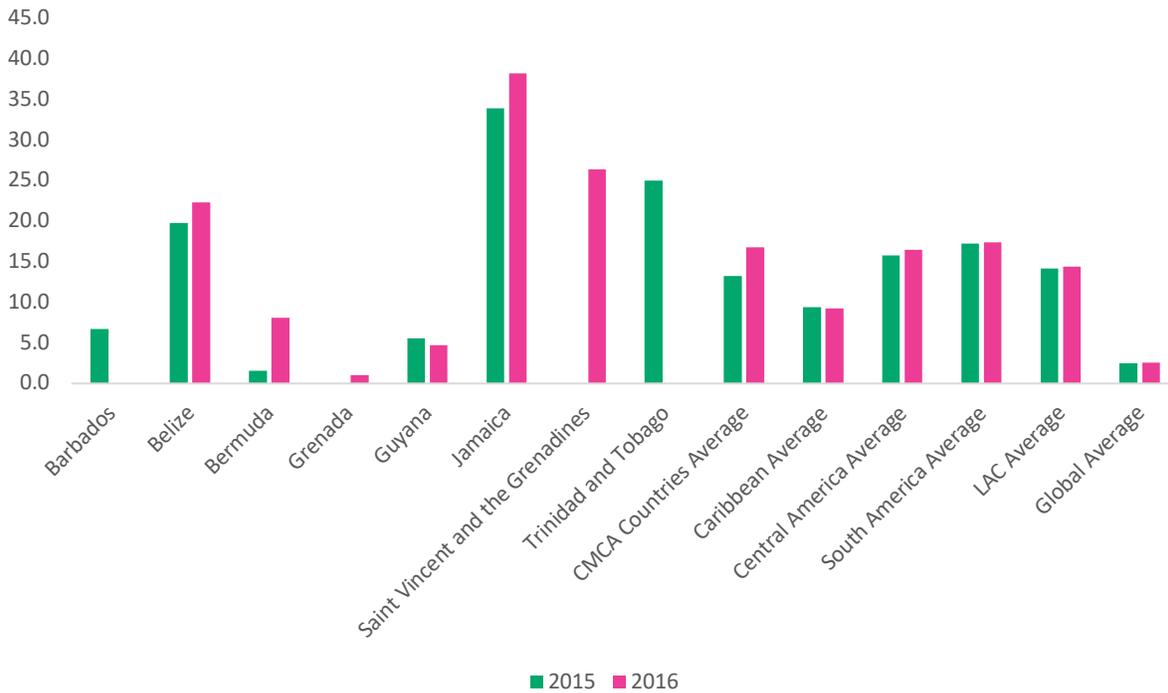
147. <http://unlirec.screativa.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Caribbean-Legal-Study-on-Gender-SALW-Sept.-2020.pdf>

Proliferation of small arms and light weapons

Homicides committed with firearms represent the predominant type of violent death in the Caribbean (51 per cent), the region has the highest number of firearm-related homicides recorded in the world.¹⁴⁸ For countries where information is available within the subregion, FIGURE 17, for 2015, Jamaica (33.9) and Trinidad and Tobago (25.0) had the highest rate of firearms related

deaths. While reviewing the subregion percentages as they relate to the rest of the world, the Caribbean subregion has an average of 13.2 (2015) and 16.78 (2016), higher than the Caribbean averages 9.4 (2015) and 9.2 (2016). The Global rate is 2.5 for both 2015 and 2016. For the Latin America and the Caribbean region, the averages are 14.1 (2015) and 14.4 (2016).

Figure 17. Firearms related death rates for selected caribbean countries (2015-2016)



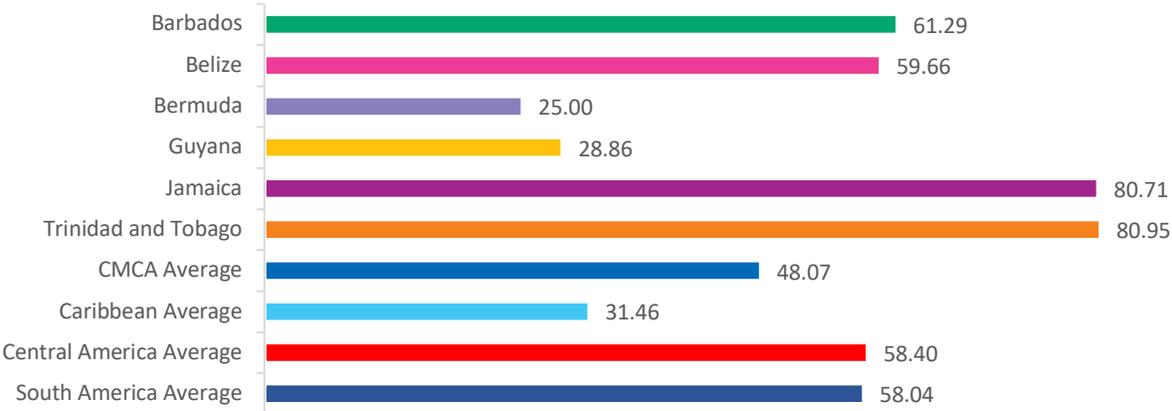
Source: DATAUNODC. Averages are based on information of region/subregion countries available.

148. In 2016, the total number of violent deaths in the Caribbean reached amounted to 6757 while violent deaths by firearm reached 3429. The Small Arms Survey Database on Violent deaths.

In the case of the Caribbean, both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago are considered to have the highest levels of armed violence in the Caribbean,¹⁴⁹ and as depicted in FIGURE 18 also have the highest proportion of homicides committed with firearms in the region. In Barbados and Belize

firearms were used in more than 60 per cent of homicides. The average for the Caribbean subregion is 48.07 per cent of homicides committed with firearms, higher than the Caribbean average (31.46) and lower than the average for Central America (58.40) and South America (58.04).

Figure 18. Percentage of firearm-related homicides, selected countries (2015)



Source: DATAUNODC. Averages are based on information of region/subregion countries available.

While the violence occurring in the region is the product of a number of structural factors and phenomena, such as organized crime, gangs, common crime, as well as interpersonal and community violence, the prevailing weight of the availability and presence of firearms in the dynamics of violence that characterize the region cannot be

ignored. Small arms and ammunition are the main tools used in many of today’s conflicts and are the cause of most deaths from armed violence in the region. Legitimate firearms are purchased from the United States of America (USA) after receiving relevant permissions and/or licences issued by the Commissioner of Police and imported under

149. UNODC (2019). Global Study on Homicide.

special warrants by the Comptroller of Customs at the port of entry. Nonetheless, inadequate border control measures, to include, limited human and physical resources appear to be a significant factor in the interception of illegal arms and ammunition entering member countries.¹⁵⁰ Attention should be drawn to the proliferation of small arms and ammunition for the development of anti-gun crime related policies and strategies, given the fact that the existing legislative framework and current countermeasures, to combat the proliferation of small arms and ammunition, have proven to be insufficient.¹⁵¹

Countries in the region need to review the discretionary granting and cancellation or revocation of firearm licences. Requirements and prohibitions are included in substantive legislation, which provides a major level of juridical security, but countries in the region have not incorporated gender-specific considerations into provisions that state the requirements or prohibitions for the application or revocation of a licence. The grant-

ing of these licences, and -in most cases- their revocation depends upon the concurrence of the concept of restricted person (related to their criminal record) or on another set of requirements. However, some of these requirements and provisions present a difficulty, as there is no indication of how they are to be determined.¹⁵²

In addition, follow up should be given to the implementation of The Roadmap for Implementing the Caribbean Priority Actions on the Illicit Proliferation of Firearms and Ammunitions across the Caribbean in a Sustainable Manner by 2030 (Caribbean Firearms Roadmap) developed by UNLIREC and CARICOM IMPACS to support Caribbean States in preventing and combating illicit proliferation of firearms and ammunition in the region, developed.¹⁵³ The Roadmap was adopted in June 2020 by Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago.¹⁵⁴

150. CFATF. The Proliferation of Small Arms and Ammunition. Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF). October 2016.

151. CFATF. Report: CFATF Risk, Trends & Methods Group (CRTMG)-Rev 1. Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing Cases Update 2020. Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF). November 2020.

152. <http://unlirec.screativa.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Caribbean-Legal-Study-on-Gender-SALW-Sept.-2020.pdf>

153. <http://unlirec.screativa.com/en/publicaciones/caribbean-firearms-roadmap/>

154. The Caribbean Firearms Roadmap also includes Dominican Republic and Haiti.



3.8 Multidimensional SDG risk analysis

CCAs included multi-dimensional risks analysis at the national level, commonalities among countries in terms of threats that could potentially impact the trajectory of SDGs include economic stability, impact of climate change, sustainable energy, public health, availability of adequate physical and communication infrastructure, justice and rule of law, and social cohesion, gender, equality and non-discrimination. In the medium- to long-term, multi-dimensional risk in the Caribbean should be

considered through the dimensions of environmental and climatic risk, political risk, economic risk and health risk.

Over the shorter time horizon, the COVID-19 pandemic has served to demonstrate the sensitivity of SDG progress to unexpected shocks. The risks exposed by the pandemic are considered first, with the subsequent analysis focusing on medium- and longer-term patterns in risk.

COVID-19 and risk

Economic growth for the Caribbean subregion, as with the rest of the world recuperating from COVID-19, represents a risk for the achievement of the SDGs. The region went into the pandemic off the back of several years of sluggish economic performance, with an average of 1.5 between

2015-2019, with projections suggesting that 2020 will see a -10.3 contraction in economic output. The subregion is expected to recuperate during 2021 and 2022, but according to the IMF forecast, TABLE 5, economic growth will start decreasing again in 2023.

Table 5: selected caribbean countries real gdp growth at market prices

COUNTRIES	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Antigua and Barbuda	3.8	5.5	3.1	7.0	3.4	-17.3	4.7	11.0	8.2	4.0	3.7
Aruba	-0.4	0.5	2.3	1.2	0.4	-19.7	9.0	4.5	1.5	1.3	1.1
Bahamas, The	0.2	1.4	3.1	3.0	1.2	-14.8	4.6	5.5	4.0	2.2	1.5
Barbados	2.4	2.5	0.5	-0.6	-0.1	-11.6	7.4	3.9	1.8	1.8	1.8
Belize	2.9	0.1	1.9	2.1	-2.0	-16.0	8.0	5.0	3.0	2.0	2.0
Dominica	-2.6	2.5	-9.5	0.5	8.4	-8.8	3.3	3.2	3.0	1.8	1.5
Grenada	6.4	3.7	4.4	4.1	3.0	-11.8	3.0	5.1	5.0	3.4	2.7
Guyana	0.7	3.8	3.7	4.4	5.4	26.2	8.1	29.5	22.3	2.1	1.1
Jamaica	0.9	1.5	0.7	1.9	0.9	-8.6	3.6	3.8	2.9	2.5	2.1
Saint Kitts and Nevis	1.0	2.8	-2.0	2.9	2.8	-18.7	8.0	6.2	4.7	2.7	2.7
Saint Lucia	-0.2	3.8	3.5	2.6	1.7	-16.9	7.2	5.9	4.6	1.8	1.8
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	1.3	1.9	1.0	2.2	0.4	-7.0	3.7	3.6	3.6	2.7	2.7
Suriname	-3.4	-5.6	1.8	2.6	0.3	-13.1	1.5	2.0	2.8	3.0	2.1
Trinidad and Tobago	1.8	-6.3	-2.3	-0.2	0.0	-5.6	2.6	4.2	1.8	1.5	1.5
CMCA Caribbean Average	1.1	1.3	0.9	2.4	1.8	-10.3	5.3	6.7	5.0	2.3	2.0

Source: IMF World Economic Outlook (October 2020)

With the interruption of exports and tourism, caused by the closure of borders to prevent the spread of the pandemic, the region is likely to experience a very sharp and protracted contraction on the employment, economic and social situation of many households, as well as each one's abilities to meet their most basic needs. In addition, the ongoing hurricane season poses additional risks.

Likewise, the pandemic could increase existing inequalities in societies, as well as the vulnerabilities of certain population groups, and consequently delay the achievement of Goal 10, which seeks to reduce inequalities between and within countries. In this context, migrants, refugees and

asylum-seekers are vulnerable groups that have been particularly affected by the effects of the COVID-19 and that are often left behind or forgotten in social and economic plans, or have restricted access to them, due to their cultural differences (different languages and ethnicity) and lack of legal status.

Negative impacts across key metrics of well-being – job loss/income reductions, market access, livelihoods impact, food security and coping strategies – are most acutely felt by households who perceive their income levels as well below average, who earn income from informal and casual sources or rely on external assistance.¹⁵⁵

155. World Food Program (WFP), CARICOM COVID-19 - Food Security and Livelihoods Impact Survey - Round 3 - February 2021.

Beyond covid-19: environmental and climatic, economic, political and (other) health risks

A number of open-source risk assessment tools can be deployed to consider the comparative vulnerability of countries within the Caribbean sub-regions, and the comparative vulnerability of the sub-region as a whole as compared to global averages.

Environmental and climatic risk

Changing climate and weather

The IPCC projected that Global Mean Sea Level (GMSL) will rise between 0.43 metres and 0.84 metres by 2100 relative to 1986–2005 levels.¹⁵⁶ The Panel anticipates that as a result of these rises, Extreme Sea Level (ESL) events that are historically rare (for example, today's hundred-year event) will become common by 2100 further stating that in the absence of adaptation, more intense and frequent ESL events, together with trends in coastal development will increase expected annual flood damages by 2-3 orders of magnitude¹⁵⁷ by 2100. A specific study of the Caribbean SIDS observes that in the (increasingly likely) event that global increases change exceeds the 1.5 °C scenario, coastal cities in the Caribbean SIDS coastal cities will experience more serious flooding events, noting that four of the world's top ten cities located in the Low Elevation Coastal Zones (LECZ) are in the Caribbean: the Bahamas, Suriname, Guyana and Belize, and that the population concentrated in these cities is as high as 88 per cent and over, for example, the Bahamas (100%), Suriname (76%) and Guyana (55%). In

addition, six of 15 coastal capitals in the Caribbean SIDS contain more than 50 per cent of the country's population' and 'approximately a half of the region's population lives within 1.5 km of the shoreline.'¹⁵⁸

Impacts relating to sea level rise will vary significantly by country within the Caribbean region, and are sensitive to the introduction of well-designed mitigation and adaptation measures. Nevertheless, the projections of sea level rise are likely to transform the lives of several million people in the Caribbean by the end of the century, either directly or indirectly. Other important aspects to consider include erratic rainfall patterns and droughts events.

The effects of climate change on hurricane/tropical storm frequency remain contested. Nonetheless, the balance of evidence suggests that climate change will increase the intensity of hurricanes/tropical storms when they do occur.

156. Oppenheimer, M., B.C. Glavovic, J. Hinkel, R. van de Wal, A.K. Magnan, A. Abd-Elgawad, R. Cai, M. Cifuentes-Jara, R.M. DeConto, T. Ghosh, J. Hay, F. Isla, B. Marzeion, B. Meysignac, and Z. Sebesvari, 2019: Sea Level Rise and Implications for Low-Lying Islands, Coasts and Communities. In: IPCC Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate [H.-O. Pörtner, D.C. Roberts, V. Masson-Delmotte, P. Zhai, M. Tignor, E. Poloczanska, K. Mintenbeck, A. Alegria, M. Nicolai, A. Okem, J. Petzold, B. Rama, N.M. Weyer (eds.)]. In press.

157. An 'order of magnitude' greater is equivalent to a 10x multiplication of effect. Two orders of magnitude are equivalent to a 100x multiplication of effect. And three orders of magnitude are equivalent to a 1,000x multiplication of effect. Author's note.

158. Mycoo, M. (2017) 'Beyond 1.5°C: vulnerabilities and adaptation strategies for Caribbean Small Island Developing States. Regional Environmental Change. November 2017.

Climate change and risk

The World Risk Report (2020),¹⁵⁹ TABLE 6, suggests that (at least) four countries in the CMCA cluster are exposed to very high disaster risk (Dominica, Antigua and Barbuda, Guyana and Jamaica) and that overall, disaster risk across the Caribbean is significantly higher than in the Latin America and Caribbean region as a whole, and very substantially higher than the global average.

Table 6: Selected caribbean countries results, world risk Index 2020

Rank	Name	Category	World Risk Index	Exposure	Vulnerability	Susceptibility	Lack of coping capacities	Lack of adaptive capacity
3	Dominica	Very High	28.47	62.74	45.38	26.12	71.21	38.82
4	Antigua and Barbuda	Very High	27.44	68.92	39.82	23.33	63.31	32.83
6	Guyana	Very High	22.73	44.92	50.6	27.13	77.55	47.13
29	Jamaica	Very High	12.08	26.05	46.39	25.14	74.52	39.5
47	Trinidad and Tobago	High	9.60	23.39	41.05	24.17	64.42	34.57
77	Suriname	Medium	7.40	15.41	48.04	28.66	72.96	42.5
123	Saint Lucia	Low	4.70	10.24	45.88	24.22	75.67	37.74
128	Bahamas, The	Low	4.38	11.77	37.25	18.24	58.45	35.07
176	Barbados	Very Low	1.39	3.66	37.94	20.56	60.62	32.65
178	Grenada	Very Low	0.97	2.21	43.8	26.83	68.9	35.67
179	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Very Low	0.81	1.85	43.79	28.2	71.77	31.39
	CMCA Caribbean Average	Very High	10.91	24.65	43.63	24.78	69.03	37.08
	LAC Average	High	10.15	22.38	45.36	25.50	72.71	37.87
	Global Average	High	7.89	16.47	46.86	29.65	71.88	39.06

Source: Bündnis Entwicklung Hilft and Ruhr University Bochum – Institute for International Law of Peace and Armed Conflict (2019)

Note: Data are not available for Anguilla, Aruba, Belize, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Curaçao, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Sint Maarten, and Turks and Caicos Islands.

Germanwatch's Global Climate Risk Index (CRI) takes a different approach, ranking countries according to the historical socio-economic impact of extreme weather and assigning scores accordingly, TABLE 7 (where lower scores = higher risk).¹⁶⁰ This analysis demonstrates a large spread of impact and loss owing to extreme weather events over the last 20 years (Barbados, Guyana, St. Kitts and Nevis, Suriname, and Trinidad & Tobago recording comparatively lower socio-economic losses in the years since 1999, whilst Dominica, the Bahamas and Belize recorded much higher impacts), but overall finds that the CMCA Country CRI average score is substantially beneath than the global average, confirming the Caribbean region's comparatively higher vulnerability.

160. The indicators considered are (i) number of deaths; (ii) number of deaths per 100 000 inhabitants; (iii) sum of losses in US\$ in purchasing power parity (PPP), and (iv).

Table 7: World climate risk index 1999-2018 - CMCA countries vs. Global average

Country	CRI Score	RANKS				
		CRI	Fatalities	Fatalities per 100 000 inhabitants	Losses in million US\$ (PPP)	Losses per unit GDP in %
Antigua and Barbuda	58.00	47	160	39	98	6
Bahamas, The	39.67	20	122	18	60	10
Barbados	141.67	151	171	159	157	102
Belize	48.50	32	131	25	96	7
Dominica	32.22	10	116	2	72	1
Grenada	39.83	21	128	7	91	3
Guyana	107.17	120	160	142	127	36
Jamaica	64.83	57	112	80	71	23
Saint Kitts and Nevis	113.50	127	172	172	137	14
Saint Lucia	59.33	51	142	24	132	17
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	59.83	52	148	21	139	15
Suriname	166.00	173	164	152	178	175
Trinidad and Tobago	150.17	161	153	137	152	161
CMCA Countries Average	83.13					
Global Average	94.80					

Source: Germanwatch. Global Climate Risk Index 2020

Note: Higher Rank =greater historical losses/ Score: Lower=greater historical losses.

Economic risk

ECLAC's 2011 study is the most ambitious survey of climate and environment-related economic risk in the Caribbean, considering the impacts on economic production of a cluster of high- and low-carbon emissions scenarios.¹⁶¹

ECLAC's analysis is based on the following climate change assumptions:

- By 2050, the mean annual temperature for the Caribbean is projected to reach an estimated 1.78°C – 1.84°C higher than the 1960-1990 baseline.¹⁶²
- The sub-region is expected to experience progressive overall declines in total annual rainfall.

Like the analyses cited above, ECLAC concluded (in 2011) that vulnerability to climate change and economic impact would be unevenly spread across the region. Though dated, their models, which focus on specific high value sectors in specific economies, suggested the following impacts were likely:

- In Guyana and Jamaica, the fortunes of the sugarcane sector will diverge: in the former, initial increases in productivity as a result of temperature change will be followed by reductions in productivity by the middle of the century. In the latter, the reverse pattern is true.

- Changes in sea surface temperatures (SST) were anticipated to cost between US\$8 billion and US\$13 billion in ecosystem services in St. Kitts & Nevis by 2050.
- Barbados was expected to experience losses of US\$14.5 billion by 2050 as a result of coastal erosion owing to exposed assets in low elevation coastal zones.
- Disease incidence (dengue fever, gastroenteritis, malaria, leptospirosis) was expected to be higher in the sub-region by 2050, with Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago and Guyana all facing higher treatment costs as a result of increased disease incidence.
- In the long-term, electricity demand will respond to changes in temperature: a 1 per cent increase in annual average temperature will result in a 9.3 per cent increase in electricity consumption per capita.

Beyond the economic effects of climate and environmental change, alternative dimensions of the Caribbean's economic vulnerability, TABLE 8, such as the small size of their domestic markets, reliance on imports, and dependence upon a few export products [oil & gas, tourism, can be explored through the Environmental Vulnerability Index. Typically, only applied to the world's Least Developed Countries (LDCs), the EVI has been retrospectively applied to 145 developing countries.

161. ECLAC (2011). The Economics of Climate Change in the Caribbean. Summary Report 2011.

162. Recall that the IPCC has since updated its climate change scenarios and projections.

Table 8: Economic vulnerability index (evi) (2018)

Country	EVI Score (High = High Vulnerability)	EVI Rank (Low Number = High Rank = Highly Vulnerable)
Antigua and Barbuda	40	36 (=)
Bahamas, The	37	48 (=)
Barbados	24	113 (=)
Belize	42	31 (=)
Dominica	43	26 (=)
Grenada	46	24 (=)
Guyana	49	18 (=)
Jamaica	30	78 (=)
St. Kitts and Nevis	47	22 (=)
St. Lucia	40	36 (=)
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	40	36 (=)
Suriname	51	15 (=)
Trinidad and Tobago	31	75 (=)
CMCA Countries Average	40	N/A
EVI 145-Country Average	34	N/A

Source: Feindouno S. And Goujon M

EVI scores and data are available for 13 CMCA countries. Of these 13, all but three are featured among the top half of economically most vulnerable countries included in the retrospective EVI.¹⁶³ Six of the 13 CMCA countries feature in the top 25 per cent of most vulnerable countries, with Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Suriname particularly vulnerable to economic shocks owing to a number of structural features of their economies.¹⁶⁴

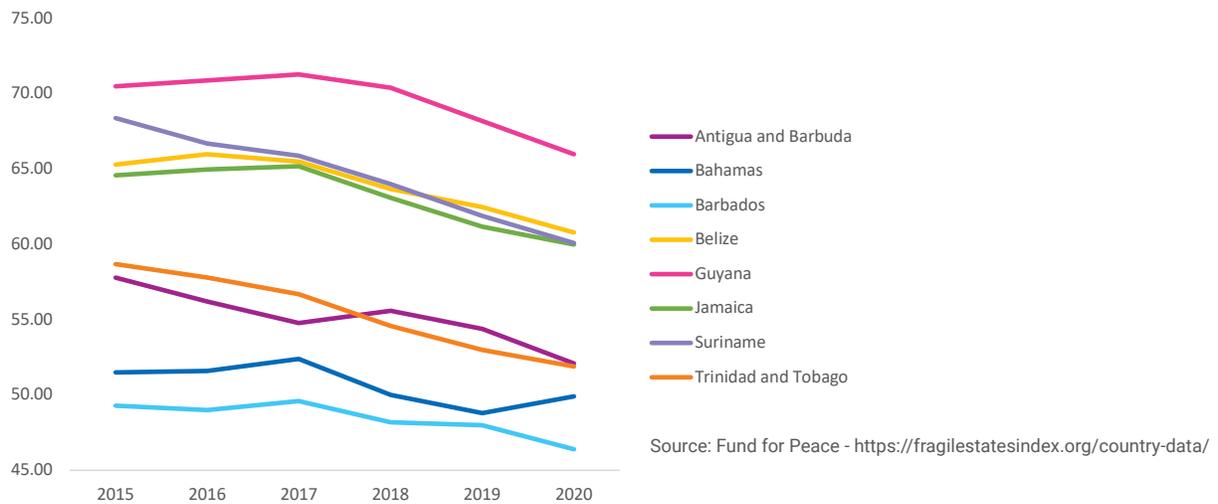
163. When the EVI is applied to 145 developing economies.

164. Feindouno S. and Goujon M. (2016) "The retrospective economic vulnerability index, 2015 update" Ferdi Working Paper P147, March 2016. Updated Data 2020 accessed on <http://byind.ferdi.fr/>

Political (and state fragility) risks

The Fragility States Index¹⁶⁵, FIGURE 19, assesses 12 correlates of political instability or fragility and assigns countries a score out of 120. Data for the period 2015-2020 and covers eight CMCA countries. It demonstrates that overall risks of fragility or instability have tended to decline substantially across all countries included, though with two distinct clusters of countries emerging. Belize, Guyana, Suriname, and Jamaica, are considered of somewhat higher political risk and instability, whilst Antigua and Barbuda, Trinidad and Tobago, the Bahamas and Barbados are considered substantially lower risk.

Figure 19. Fragile states index



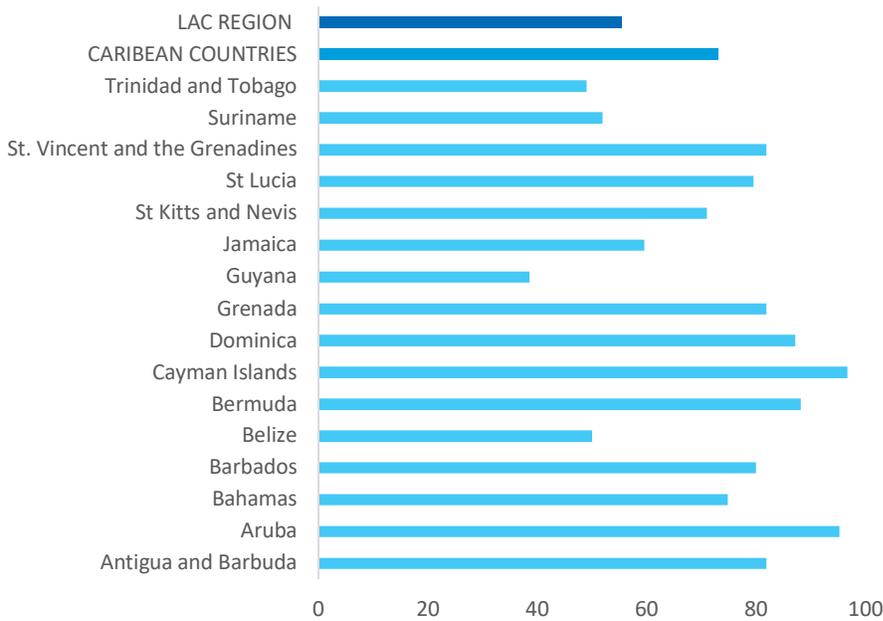
The World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators capture data (2019) for a larger set of CMCA countries, and territories tell a similar story. A number of countries in the Caribbean sub-region (Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, The Bahamas, Barbados, Bermuda, the Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & the Grenadines) are all assessed as carrying risks of political instability, FIGURE 20, that are as low as the average risks for high income (non-OECD) countries globally. These countries also substantially outperform the average for upper middle-income countries worldwide. Jamaica's political risk rating positions it a little above the upper middle-income average, and somewhat below the high income (non-OECD) average.

Belize, Guyana, Suriname, and Trinidad & Tobago are considered of somewhat higher political risk.¹⁶⁶ Political risk in Suriname and Guyana is simultaneously deemed likely to continue to distort patterns of foreign direct investment, and could also be of concern given the effects of substantial new oil revenues hitting their political economies.

165. The Fragility Index is produced by The Fund for Peace. Data is available from 2006-2020 and measures 12 dimensions of: security apparatus, factionalized elites, group grievance, economy, economic inequality, human flight and brain drain, state legitimacy, public services, demographic pressures, refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and external intervention.

166. The Worldwide Governance Indicators measures 'Political Stability and Absence of Terrorism': in 1990, Trinidad & Tobago was subject to an attempted coup led by a violent Islamist group led by Yasin Abu Bakr. In recent years, around 130 Muslim Trinidadians have joined the Islamic State (of a Muslim population of 100,000, and a total population of 1.3 million, meaning that on a per capita basis, Trinidad & Tobago ranks high among Western countries from which foreign fighters have joined IS).

Figure 20. Political stability and absence of violence / terrorism (2019)



Source: Worldwide Governance Indicators

Overall, the Caribbean sub-region has seen improving trends in democratization and openness over the last half-century, paired with reducing levels of political instability, notwithstanding specific episodes of electoral-related tensions and violence, such as in Guyana in 2020.

Humanitarian disaster risk

The joint European Commission/Inter-Agency Standing Committee INFORM, TABLE 9 tool focuses on disaster risk preparedness and risks of humanitarian crisis, assessing countries according to (a) hazard and exposure; (b) vulnerability, and (c) coping capacity. Overall, it suggests that countries in the Caribbean sit largely within the 'low' or 'very low' risk class, with only Belize ranked higher. Out 191 countries ranked on the system, of the 13 CMCA countries for which data is available, only

Belize features in the top half (i.e., of comparatively higher risk countries) worldwide. Five CMCA countries are in the bottom 25 per cent of countries (i.e., those least vulnerable to the impacts of disaster or humanitarian crisis) with the remaining 7 countries (the Bahamas, Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Lucia, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago) somewhere between second and third quartiles.

Table 9: EU inform index for risk management (2021)

COUNTRY	HAZARD & EXPOSURE	VULNERABILITY	LACK OF COPING CAPACITY	INFORM RISK	RISK CLASS	Rank	Lack of Reliability (*)	Number of Missing Indicators	% of Missing Indicators	Countries in HVC	Recentness data (average years)
Antigua and Barbuda	2.0	1.5	3.5	2.2	Low	147	4.9	19	37%		0.18
Bahamas	1.9	2.3	3.2	2.4	Low	135	5.2	16	31%		0.22
Barbados	2.1	1.5	2.5	2.0	Low	153	5.3	12	24%		0.40
Belize	3.3	3.0	5.1	3.7	Medium	92	3.9	11	22%		0.18
Dominica	2.8	2.1	4.2	2.9	Low	120	4.9	21	41%		0.17
Grenada	0.9	1.6	3.8	1.8	Very Low	161	4.9	19	37%		0.18
Guyana	2.2	3.1	5.1	3.3	Low	103	3.7	6	12%		0.39
Jamaica	3.3	2.5	3.6	3.1	Low	108	4.1	7	14%		0.42
Saint Kitts and Nevis	1.5	1.4	2.9	1.8	Very Low	161	5.7	23	45%		0.32
Saint Lucia	1.4	2.1	3.9	2.3	Low	144	5.3	13	25%		0.34
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	1.4	1.7	3.6	2.0	Low	153	4.4	20	39%		0.07
Suriname	2.2	2.7	5.0	3.1	Low	108	3.4	8	16%		0.24
Trinidad and Tobago	1.8	2.8	3.3	2.6	Low	126	5.7	9	18%		0.61
CARIBBEAN AVERAGE	2.1	2.2	3.8	2.6	Low		4.7	14	28%		0.29
LAC AVERAGE	3.7	3.4	4.2	3.6	Medium		3.9	8.9	17%		0.30
GLOBAL AVERAGE	3.6	3.6	4.5	3.7	Medium		3.6	8.0	16%		0.28

Source: <https://drmkc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/inform-index/INFORM-Risk/Results-and data/moduleId/1782/id/419/controller/Admin/action/Results>

Health risk

Global indices such as the Global Health Security Index (GHSI), TABLE 10, have been widely derided in view of COVID-19 and the apparent difficulties that more developed countries have had in controlling and responding to the pandemic as compared to those in the global south. As such, there may be a temptation to discount the results of assessments that have previously highlighted apparent weaknesses in health emergency preparedness.

Nevertheless, GHSI represents one of the most ambitious efforts to assess health risk, and considers six dimensions of health emergency preparedness (prevention, detection, response, healthcare systems, norms, and wider risk environment). Using a scale of 1-100, the GHSI scores 195 countries, and groups them according to the categories 'most prepared', 'more prepared' and 'least prepared'. The global average score is 42.0 (or 51.9 for high income countries). Of 13 CMCA

countries assessed, 3 are considered as 'more prepared' and 10 considered 'least prepared' to respond to major health emergencies. Though a number of Caribbean countries may have experienced lower average caseloads of COVID-19, potential vulnerabilities in their health services require continued scrutiny, given the potential for new health crises that may follow different patterns and/or have different effects by country.

Table 9: EU inform index for risk management (2021)

SELECTED CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES GLOBAL HEALTH SECURITY INDEX (GHSI)			
GHSI Global Rank	Country	GHSI Score (out of maximum 100)	Category (More / Least Prepared)
99	Trinidad and Tobago	36.6	More
100	Suriname	36.5	More
108	St Lucia	35.3	More
123	St Vincent and The Grenadines	33	Least
133	Barbados	31.9	Least
135	Belize	31.8	Least
137	Guyana	31.7	Least
142	Bahamas	30.6	Least
147	Antigua and Barbuda	29	Least
147	Jamaica	29	Least
157	Grenada	27.5	Least
163	St Kitts and Nevis	26.2	Least
172	Dominica	24	Least

Source: Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI); Johns Hopkins Centre for Health Security (JHU); The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU).

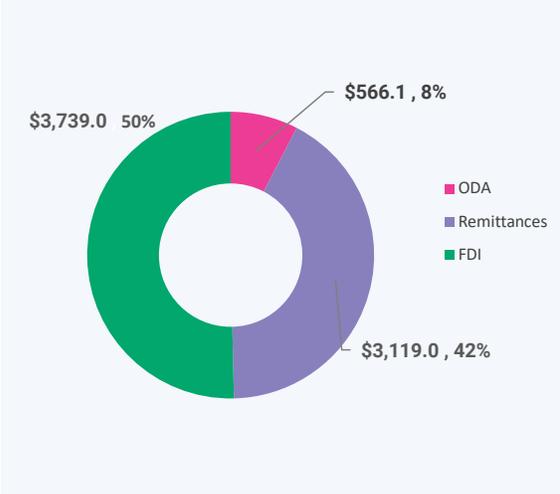
Note: Global Average: 42.0 [Higher Scores = greater preparedness]



3.9 Financing landscape analysis

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda call for member states to use a mix of public and private, national and international funds, to support their sustainable development pathway to Agenda 2030. A favourable regional financial landscape, with adequate national budget allocation is a pre-requisite for successful achievement of the 17 SDGs incorporating the 2030 Agenda.

The major sources of finance that has and continue to be used for the region’s SDG financing include the following: national budgets which by nature have a narrow country focus; Official Development Assistance (ODA), remittances, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), Regional Investment¹⁶⁷ and private donations both domestic/foreign.¹⁶⁸ FIGURE 21 indicates the regional financial landscape in terms of ODA, Remittances and FDI.



167. Regional Investment refers to FDI coming from within the Caribbean region.

168. Differences in national data sources, completeness of data, and level of data disaggregation present challenges in making a comprehensive reporting of financial resources from private donations both domestic/ foreign.

Fiscal space

National budgets will not be included in the regional landscape given their strictly national focus.¹⁶⁹ However, some analysis will be done in terms of understanding how much fiscal space there is for financing the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. For the CMCA countries, the average fiscal imbalance/GDP ratio is -2.9, ranging from 3.7 per cent for Barbados to -17.7 per cent for Dominica, TABLE 11.

Table 11: Selected caribbean countries overall fiscal imbalance/gdp ratio 2016-2019

Overall Fiscal Imbalance/GDP	2016	2017	2018	2019
Antigua and Barbuda	-0.4%	-2.4%	-2.3%	-3.6%
Bahamas (The)	-2.6%	-5.6%	-3.4%	-1.7%
Barbados	-5.4%	-4.5%	-0.3%	3.7%
Belize	-4.4%	-1.3%	-1.2%	-4.6%
Dominica	13.9%	-5.0%	-7.9%	-17.7%
Grenada	1.8%	3.0%	4.9%	4.2%
Guyana	-4.4%	-4.5%	-3.3%	-3.5%
Jamaica	-0.2%	0.5%	1.2%	0.9%
Saint Kitts & Nevis	4.7%	1.9%	3.2%	1.6%
Saint Lucia	-0.5%	-1.2%	-2.0%	-2.7%
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	1.1%	-2.2%	-1.6%	-3.0%
Suriname	-11.2%	-9.7%	-11.7%	-10.3%
Trinidad and Tobago	-5.3%	-8.9%	-3.6%	-2.4%
CMCA Caribbean Average	-1.2%	-3.1%	-2.1%	-2.9%

Source: ECLAC

Government debt/GDP ratio in the region, TABLE 12, was already high prior to COVID-19 with figures for 2019 indicating a range from a low of 41.3 per cent for Guyana to a high of 119.5 per cent for Barbados with the average for the selected CMCA countries being 73.7 per cent.

169. Most of the finance for SDG advance (for example: health, education, rural development, social protection, agriculture, environment etc.) come through the National Government Budgets even though most of the SDGs are not really operationalized in the national budgets.

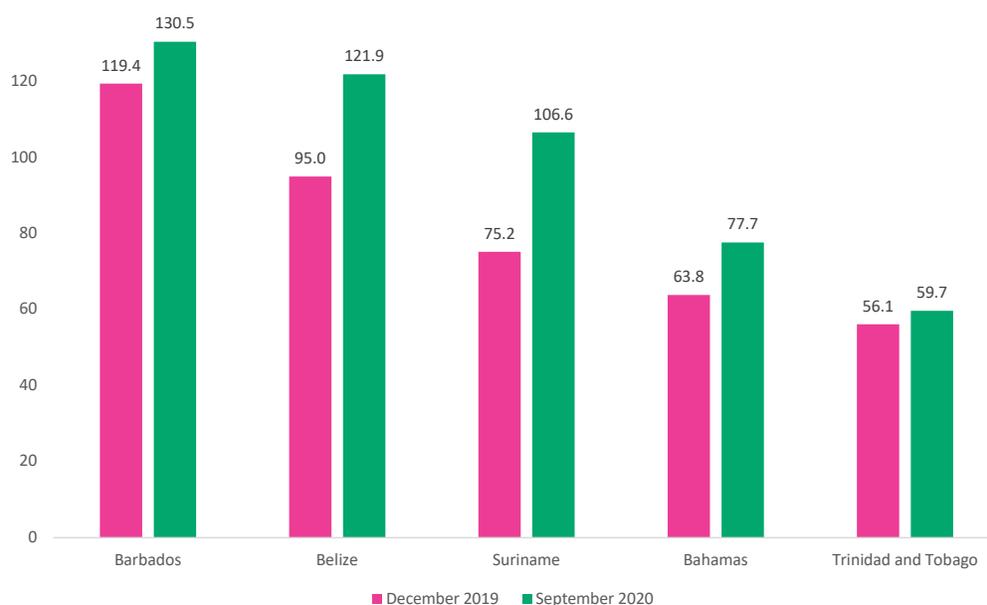
Table 12: Selected caribbean countries total public debt/GDP ratio 2018-2019

Country	2018	2019
Antigua y Barbuda	89.5%	82.0%
Bahamas	63.3%	63.8%
Barbados	125.7%	119.5%
Belize	95.4%	99.0%
Dominica	74.1%	76.7%
Grenada	63.5%	55.8%
Guyana	47.0%	41.3%
Jamaica	94.4%	94.0%
Saint Kitts and Nevis	60.5%	44.6%
Saint Vincent and Grenadines	74.5%	74.6%
Saint Lucia	64.3%	65.9%
Suriname	72.8%	75.2%
Trinidad y Tobago	45.1%	66.0%
CMCA Caribbean Region	74.6%	73.7%

Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/813474/public-debt-gross-domestic-product-latin-america/>

Estimates indicate that public debt has increased substantially in Caribbean countries in 2020, FIGURE 22, for example, Belize’s public debt jumped from 99 per cent (2019) to more than 133 per cent (41% increase) in 2020. A similar trend is expected for the other Caribbean Countries. This will greatly limit the region’s ability to do further borrowing for investing in SDG advancement.

Figure 22. Public debt/GDP (december 2019 - september 2020)



Source: ECLAC, on the basis of official figures.

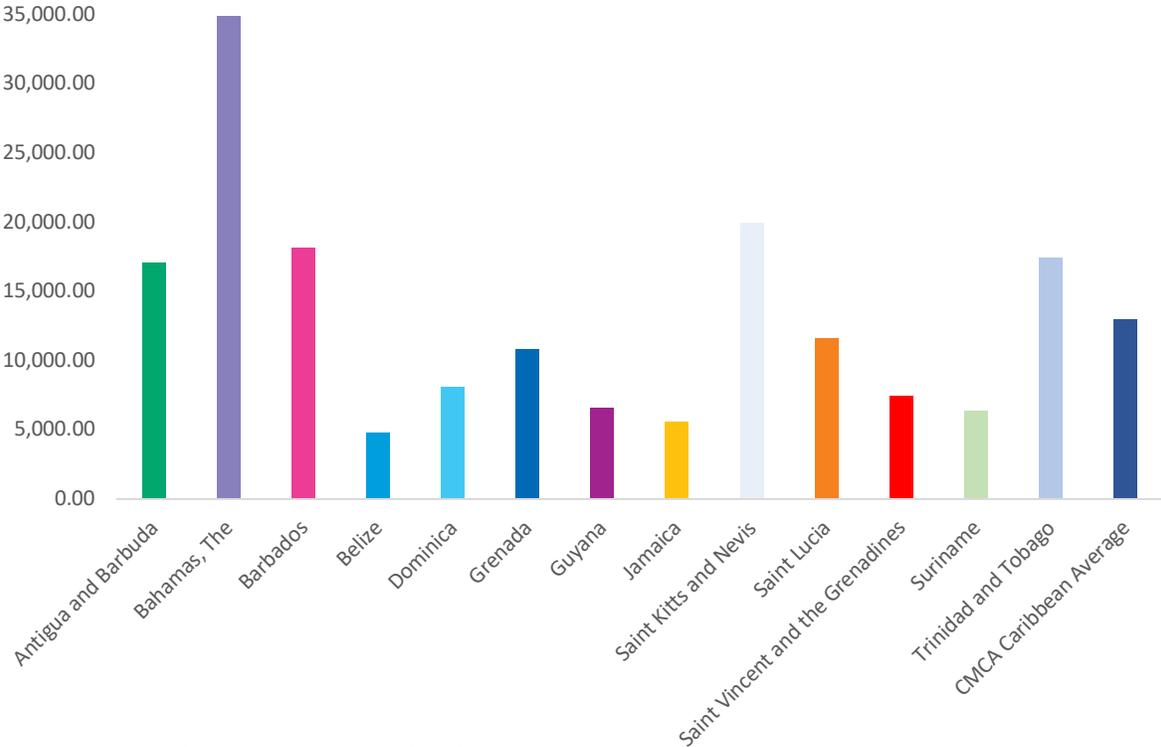
Table 13: Region’s debt/GDP and debt service metric

Country	Debt Service/ Exports	Debt Service/GDP
Belize	9.10%	5.0%
Dominica	16.70%	4.3%
Grenada	8%	4.1%
Guyana	7.40%	1.5%
Jamaica	36.80%	11.9%
Saint Lucia	3.90%	2.1%
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	12.30%	4.1%
CMCA Caribbean Average	13.46%	4.71%

Source: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/DT.TDS.MLAT.CD?locations=S3>, ECLAC, CDB

Pre- COVID-19, the following tables and figures, TABLE 13 and FIGURE 23 illustrate the limited scope for further borrowing by most Caribbean Governments; however, as the metric shows, countries are not homogenous in terms of fiscal space, due to difference in export diversification, level of taxation on the population, wage bill in the Governments budget and interest service as percentage of Government’s budget.

Figure 23. GDP/capita (US\$) 2019



Source: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?locations=S3>

Nevertheless, for 2019 the average metric indicates a region with debt/GDP ratio of 73.7 per cent¹⁷⁰ which is considered high.¹⁷¹ Debt above this ratio is challenging for upper middle-income countries, under which all of the Caribbean countries would fall under, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. For countries such as the Bahamas (GDP/capita of US\$34,863) and others such as Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, and Saint Kitts and Nevis which are classified as high income countries this rate of indebtedness would be more manageable but still risky being Small Island Development States and the accompanying inherent

170. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?locations=S>
 171. Excludes territories of Anguilla, Montserrat and Virgin Islands – See annex IV.

risk environment. ¹⁷² For those countries at the lower end of the classification of upper middle income countries such as Belize (GDP/capita of US\$4,815); definitely, high rate of indebtedness is not sustainable and will constrain the region's ability to move forward in SDG attainment.

The region is an already high tax zone given its development stage has little space for increasing revenues through greater taxation on the population. The average tax revenue to GDP for Latin America stands at an average of 23.1 per cent. ¹⁷³ For the Caribbean region the ratio of tax revenue to GDP stands at 24.8 per cent. TABLE 14.

Table 14: Selected caribbean countries government taxes as a percentage of GDP 2018

Taxes/GDP (Percent)	Indirect Tax	Direct Tax	Total	Indirect Tax /Total Revenue
Antigua and Barbuda	12.40%	2.30%	19.20%	65%
Bahamas (The)	12.90%	1.90%	17.10%	75%
Barbados	16.90%	10.70%	33.30%	51%
Belize	18.30%	9.60%	30.20%	61%
Dominica	23.50%	3.70%	31.20%	75%
Grenada	17.10%	5.80%	25.40%	67%
Guyana	14.00%	10.30%	27.40%	51%
Jamaica	17.30%	9.40%	27.90%	62%
Saint Kitts and Nevis	13.10%	6.60%	23.40%	56%
Saint Lucia	14.60%	5.30%	22.20%	66%
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	14.90%	8.50%	26.20%	57%
Suriname	7.70%	8.30%	16.80%	46%
Trinidad and Tobago	7.10%	12.50%	22.50%	32%
CMCA Caribbean Average	14.60%	7.30%	24.80%	59%

Source: Economic Survey of Latin America & the Caribbean, COVID-19 Response, ECLAC, 2020

172. Low-income economies are those with a GNI/capita of US\$1,035. Lower middle-income economies are those with a GNI/ capita between US\$1,035 and US\$4,045 (None of the Caribbean countries in 2019 possible one in 2020). Upper middle- income economies are those with a GNI per capita between US\$4,046 and US\$12,535. High-income economies are those with a GNI / capita of US\$12,536 (The Bahamas, St. Kitts & Nevis, Trinidad & Tobago and Antigua & Barbuda) and above. (World Bank Definition for 2019)

173. UN CCA Jamaica 2021

Government budget structure in the Caribbean

Other factors that will limit the region's ability to bounce back from the COVID-19 pandemic includes the large portion of its budgets allocated to emoluments ranging from 32.7 per cent for the Bahamas to 52.4 per cent for Belize; this added to debt service payments provides regional governments with very little space for investing in projects with regional linkages and multiplier effect. The other factor that challenges the region is the high rate of Government expense to GDP of 25.6 per cent with the lower range being attributed to The Bahamas with 17.1 per cent and the high range being assigned to Barbados with 33.8 per cent. TABLE 15.

Table 15. Government budget structure in the Caribbean (2018)

Country	ECLAC Source	World Bank Source	
	Government Budget/GDP	Wage/Government Budget	Interest Payments/Government budget
Bahamas (The)	17.1%	32.7%	14.1%
Barbados	33.8%	24.7%	22.5%
Belize	27.6%	52.4%	10.3%
Jamaica	26.6%	37.2%	24.0%
Saint Kitts and Nevis (2010)	24.3%	44.8%	6.2%
Saint Lucia	17.6%	40.4%	16.1%
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	26.4%	49.8%	8.8%
Trinidad and Tobago	31.5%	35.0%	9.4%
CMCA Caribbean Region	25.6%	39.6%	13.9%
High	33.8%	52.4%	24.0%
Low	17.1%	32.7%	6.2%

Source: ECLAC/ <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/GC.XPN.INTP.RV.ZS?locations=S3>

Given the current limited fiscal space and the quantum of resources needed in order for the region to recover from COVID-19 on a sustainable and more inclusive basis, it will require that most of the financing to advance regional development efforts be generated through national and regional resource mobilization efforts, private or public. With respect to public resource mobilization, it will require regional and international cooperation in order to make the tax system less regressive, TABLE 15, close loophole in tax evasion and ensure that tax incentives benefit and contribute to sustainable development.

Official development assistance

Official development assistance, TABLE 16, has been on the decline, and only for the countries still in the recipients list. The following table shows that it constitutes roughly 3.21 per cent (US\$511.6 million) of the regional GDP. This amount will more likely continue its decline given the focus of ODA on assisting low-income countries with a GNI/capita of less than US\$1035. Secondly, given the characterization of some Caribbean countries as high income and others as upper middle-income countries, it is very unlikely that ODA will increase on a regional basis unless the region is able to convince donor sources that other factors (SIDS, vulnerability factors in terms of climate change, undiversified export base etc.) need to be considered in providing more ODA apart from the income threshold.

Table 16: Official development assistance (loans/grants) 2019

Country	US\$'000,000	% GDP	GDP
Antigua and Barbuda	27.4	1.6%	1,662
Belize	37.7	2.0%	1,880
Dominica	51.4	8.8%	582
Grenada	14.7	1.2%	1,211
Guyana	113.3	2.2%	5,174
Jamaica	127.1	0.8%	16,458
Saint Lucia	32.1	1.5%	2,122
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	84.5	10.2%	825
Suriname	23.4	0.6%	3,697
CMCA Caribbean Total	511.6	3.21%	33,611

Source: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/DI.ODA.ODAT.CD?locations=Z>

The region's GDP/capita in 2019 is estimated at US\$10,500. One of the factors that made development challenging for the region, during the past 5-10 years, has been the end of preferential trade with the United Kingdom through the European Union for traditional agriculture commodities (sugar, bananas, rice, rum) of the region and which provided an assured market and income stability for tens of thousands of rural households in the region. Most of the ODA package for that preferential loss has now been completed for the region.

Remittances

Remittance, TABLE 17, is a very important source of revenue for the regional financial landscape. It is almost 8 times bigger relative to the funds coming to the region in the form of ODA. For 2019 it provided the region with more than US\$3.1 billion or 5.5 per cent of the regional GDP. This source of funding continues to grow and as more Caribbean citizens leave the region due to the challenging economic situation, it is likely to continue increasing trend.

Analysis of the data show that more than 46 per cent (US\$1.54 billion) of those funds are likewise leaving the Caribbean countries in the form of remittances being paid. Deeper analysis is required to examine how much of those funds being sent out represents intra-regional remittance and how much is destined for family members of workers

residing outside the Caribbean region. Again, the impact on the region is wide, for example, for countries such as Jamaica it constituted 15.6 per cent of GDP while for Suriname its contribution is negligible and approaches zero. For countries such as Belize, Dominica, Guyana and St. Vincent & Grenadines, remittances represent more than 5 per cent of their Gross Nation Product and thus a very important source of foreign exchange and tool to fight high poverty and inequality in these countries. In Belize, measures implemented by remittance companies, perhaps as anti-money laundering measures imposed by the Central Bank, has been impacting on the amount and frequency of resources which can be sent or received, especially during COVID-19 context where need increases and support is capped.

Table 17: Personal remittances received and paid 2019

Country	Received	% GDP	Paid	Net Remittances
Antigua and Barbuda	24.7	1.50%	91.9	-67.2
Bahamas (The)			261.8	-261.8
Barbados*	108.3	2.10%	180.7	-72.4
Belize	96.8	5.20%	39.7	57.1
Dominica	49.2	8.40%	19.2	30
Grenada	48.5	4.0%	58.6	-10.1
Guyana	380.4	7.40%	256.1	124.3
Jamaica	2574	15.60%	249.1	2324.9
Saint Kitts and Nevis	26	2.50%	43.9	-17.9
Saint Lucia	43	2%	37.7	5.3
Saint Vincent and Grenadines	46.8	5.70%	14.4	32.4
Suriname	0.298	0	54.8	-54.502
Trinidad & Tobago	143.3	0.60%	412.9	-269.6
CMCA Caribbean Total	3,119	5.50%	1,540	1,579

<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.CD.DT?locations=S3>

*Refers to data for 2018.

Foreign direct investment

Foreign direct investment, TABLE 18, in the region is a very important source of funding programs for achieving the 2030 Agenda. For 2019, data for the region shows that it constitutes 4.8 per cent (US\$3.7 billion) of the regional GDP; FDI almost approaches 7 times that of ODA flow into the region for 2019. The importance for the region (excluding Guyana) is varied with the highest rate evident for St. Vincent & the Grenadines at 13.7 per cent and the lowest dependence for Trinidad & Tobago at 0.8 per cent.¹⁷⁴ Countries for which foreign direct investment being received is above the regional mean of GDP (4.8%) include: Antigua & Barbuda, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts

& Nevis and St. Vincent & Grenadines. Given the expected decline or stagnation in ODA and limited fiscal space by most countries in the region, the Caribbean region needs to put greater emphasis in attracting greater investment flows into the region in areas such as infrastructure, and the productive sector. This will allow the region to focus on strategic complementary areas for SDG achievement (social areas & environmental areas) in the region but for which FDI cannot be attracted due to low market return being associated for investment in these areas while operating in what is considered a High-Risk Small Island Developing State Region.

Table 18: Foreign direct investment (2019) in us\$ 000,000

Country	FDI (Net Inflows)	GDP	% of GDP
Antigua and Barbuda	139.5	1,662	8.4%
Bahamas (The)	264.6	13,579	1.9%
Barbados	215.4	5,209	4.1%
Belize	102.9	1,880	5.5%
Dominica	32.6	582	5.6%
Grenada	131	1,211	10.8%
Guyana	1695	5,174	32.8%
Jamaica	665.4	16,458	4.0%
St. Kitts and Nevis	92.3	1,053	8.8%
St. Lucia	30.6	2,122	1.4%
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	113	825	13.7%
Suriname	72	3,697	1.9%
Trinidad and Tobago	184	24,270	0.8%
CMCA Caribbean Total	3,739	77,721	4.8%

Source: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.KLT.DINV.CD.WD?locations=S3>

174. It must be noted that for Guyana the FDI in 2019 constituted 32.8% on account of the oil boom investment taking place over there.

Post COVID-19 landscape

According to ECLAC the output impact of COVID-19 on the Caribbean will approach a decline of almost 8 per cent (excluding Guyana being an outlier due to the oil boom), TABLE 19. The impact ranges from a high range of -14 per cent for Belize to a low of -5.3 per cent for Jamaica and Suriname. This will mean substantial decline in Government revenue collection for the 2020/2021 fiscal year.

Table 19: Post COVID-19 landscape 2020

GDP Growth Rate (%) *	2018	Preliminary	Projected	Government COVID-19 Investment
		2019	2020	Percent of GDP/2020
Antigua and Barbuda	7.4	4.7	-12.3	4.4
Bahamas (The)	1.6	0.9	-10.5	1
Barbados	-0.6	-0.1	-8.8	19.2
Belize	2.1	-2	-14	6.8
Dominica	2.3	5.7	-8.1	
Grenada	4.1	3.1	-10.5	1.6
Guyana	4.4	5.4	44.3	0.5
Jamaica	1.9	0.9	-5.3	1.2
Saint Kitts and Nevis	2.9	2.5	-11.5	4.2
Saint Lucia	1.1	1.5	-11.9	2.4
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	2.2	0.3	-7.8	3.3
Suriname	2.6	2	-5.3	
Trinidad and Tobago	0.2	-0.4	-7.1	1.6
CMCA Caribbean	1.4	0.9	-5.4	4.2
CMCA Caribbean (Excl. Guyana)			-7.9	
CMCA Caribbean (Excl. Barbados)				2.7

Source: COVID-19 Response, ECLAC, 2020¹⁷⁵

Regional fiscal efforts for the COVID-19 crisis have focused spending on social protection (national unemployment support, food assistance, unconditional cash transfers, agricultural support, etc.), business support, liquidity support and increase expenditure in the health sector in order to contain the pandemic. This has exacerbated an already challenging financial landscape since most of the COVID-19 mitigating investments has been financed through increased borrowing both domestic and foreign and significant increases in public sector debt. The region is also facing the implication of reduced economic activity and substantial reduction in government revenues which has also meant substantial increase in the fiscal deficits in order to maintain pre-COVID-19 provision of public goods and services.

175. Note survey was carried out by ECLAC in 2020 and, more likely is under-estimated the regional investment in measures to mitigate COVID-19. Only the figure for Belize was adjusted (from 0.7% to 6.8% based on the Belize SERP document) to reflect figures for 2020 provided by the National Authorities.

4. Conclusions

For the implementation of the 2030 Agenda countries and territories in the Caribbean region advanced in terms of formulating and/or aligning strategies to adapt¹⁷⁶ planning instruments and processes of implementation at the national and subnational levels. Agencies, funds and programmes have contributed to this by developing guides, manuals and guidelines, and hosting conferences, seminars and exercises on the subject of the integrated nature of the 2030 Agenda, and the need for coherence in both strategic and operational planning, in addition to the support, technical expertise in the areas of, legislation, standards setting, training, data/evidence generation, facilitation of networking, and facilitation of South to South and Triangular cooperation.

CCAs developed for 19 of the 22 countries in the next Cooperation Framework identified national challenges and opportunities for the countries, a commonality's analysis of these priorities (see Annex 2), based on issues raised by 13 or more countries indicates that 9 development challenges were shared by most of these countries and territories.

- a. Data gaps for evidence-based monitoring of the SDG and to inform inclusive policy making and plans, programmes and projects.
- b. Economic recovery based on sustainable economic growth, employment creation, income distribution and economic diversification, including Green, Blue, and Orange Economies, and resources mobilization to address development challenges.
- c. Climate change vulnerability, natural hazards resilience and environmental degradation.
- d. Perception of corruption.
- e. Weak institutional framework and human capital development.
- f. Food security (access, consumption and stability), sustainable agriculture.
- g. Citizens security, crime and violence, the administration of justice and judicial infrastructure, human trafficking, and border security.
- h. Equality and mainstreaming of vulnerable groups.
- i. Sustainable energy, generation transition and decarbonization.

176. CCA's are not available for Curaçao, Sint Maarten, and Aruba.

4.1 Key challenges and opportunities for advancing 2030 agenda/ SDGs in the region

Identification of regional challenges for the Caribbean was based first on the commonality's analysis of themes found in multiple countries to which a cross-border, transnational perspective was added based on challenges identified by regional stakeholders and the literature review of strategic priorities for the Caribbean region.

Regional challenges

Regional assessment of development challenges at the country level confirmed that there are substantial constraints in official data availability across the Caribbean subregion, making it difficult to assess development progress evenly among countries and territories. In this context, the need to invest in Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS), as well as censuses postponed by COVID-19 remain a priority. In terms of financial support and partnership needed to advance the 2030 Agenda, there is a relevant development challenge.

In terms of regional political integration lack of a regional body with powers and accountability that can help transform community decisions to binding laws in individual jurisdictions is a key impediment, a decision-making process based on unanimity principle, where each member retains its sovereign authority, also hinders progress, as well as the lack of alignment between national and multinational goals to deepen cooperation in terms of the potential benefits to complete the integration project in CARICOM.

Challenges identified in the economic transformation and financing landscape analyses rely on the fact that in CMCA Caribbean economies, long-term growth has been depressed for over a decade and the current COVID-19 crisis has wors-

ened this situation. High debt service payments limit fiscal space for investing in development projects with regional linkages and multiplier effect, and forecast for potential improvement in the rate of economic growth is restrained by the need for structural changes, including economic diversification, the pursue of further economic integration, debt restructure, innovative tax reform to generate greater levels of revenue, and the expansion of concessional financing based on the vulnerability condition of SIDS.

ODA has been on the decline because of the high-income and upper middle-income status of the countries. In addition, there is a need for structural improvements to boost economic growth and further economic integration through solutions to the various challenges in logistics, transportation and supply chains need to be incorporated into efforts at strengthening intra-regional (and extra-regional) trade and economic integration to address issues of economies of scale and competitiveness. The violence and high incidence of crime across the subregion has reduced foreign direct investments, increased the cost of doing business and diverted resources from the social sector (health and education, particularly) to crime control and the administration of justice.

Lack productivity growth is hurting progress on

socioeconomic indicators (poverty, inequality) and limiting the availability of funds for investment in achieving the 2030 Agenda during the coming Decade of Action. And there are shortfalls in innovative and creative capability, generally far behind in investment in R&D and innovation, shown, for example, by the disappointing performance of the broader region in comparable statistics.

Climate change is a challenge because the Caribbean region is hazard-prone and impacts such as rising sea levels, increased sea and air temperatures including heatwaves, changes in rainfall patterns including persistent drought are expected to result in an estimated annual cost of roughly 2-4 per cent of the region's GDP by 2050. Disaster displacement is a recurrent phenomenon across the region, affecting livelihoods and disrupting development trajectories. Weak institutional capacity, limited availability of information, lack of long-term environmental planning, inadequate policies and incoherent governance, as well as insecurity of access to resources. Challenges within the wider Caribbean include overfishing, degradation of the system, acidification of the water, lowering of the water levels, floods, seasonal sargassum, and the impact of climate change on marine ecosystems and reefs. In addition, energy-related measures are poorly considered in the early stages of the disaster risk management cycle.

In regard to the social exclusion analysis, COVID-19 intensified the inequality that already exists where the poor and vulnerable are most affected, efforts to address poverty and other vulnerabilities continues to be reduced while the constant threat of high impact climatic events creates a situation of compounded risks that further threaten the lives, livelihoods and food security of those who need it most. Where people live tend to determine access to basic social services, economic opportunities and build environmental resilience. Persons living in rural districts are

also more vulnerable to higher rates of poverty, violence and digital marginalization.

Existing social and political structures sustain patterns of discrimination and inequality that hinder certain groups of people in overcoming poverty, accessing quality education and healthcare, work opportunities and housing, as well as participation in political life.

Patterns of exclusion in terms of justice, health, employment, education, liberty of movement, and an adequate standard of living are linked to age (with children and older persons being most vulnerable to poverty), place of residence (people living in rural areas, indigenous peoples living in remote/hinterland areas or persons living in underserved urban areas), sex (women, adolescent girls, young boys, and the LGBTQI+ community), health status (PLWHIV), a minority or marginalized status (PWD, migrants, refugees) and occupation (sex work). Gender inequality remains a challenge in the Caribbean region, throughout the formal and informal economies and workforce, state institutions, service delivery, political participation, as well as health and security, with gender stereotypes prevailing across the countries on the role and place of women in relation to men.

LGBTQI persons, especially those affected by multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination (including based on age, sex, ethnicity, disability and social and economic status), suffer from the lack of access to their economic, social, and cultural rights, including the rights to health care, housing, employment, education and safety. Also, there is a lack of access to sexual and reproductive health services and information for the population, and high incidence rate of reported AIDS cases and HIV prevalence. Food insecurity, stunting among children, family violence, climate-related vulnerabilities, insufficient health care and services con-

tribute to include diminishing standards of living for people in vulnerability conditions.

Indigenous peoples tend to have limited access to justice and economic, social and cultural rights, they suffer from discrimination and are at increased risk of the impacts of climate change and the economic regression from COVID-19. High rate of youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) with several contributing factors including school dropout, low wages, teenage pregnancy, disconnection between the education and labour sectors, and forms of social exclusion. Migrants, especially those who have an irregular status, or who work informally, are often vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, or even trafficking in persons. As many migrants and refugees face increased situations of vulnerability due to the impacts of the pandemic, challenges to identify and support the most vulnerable will likely increase. The states and territories in the Caribbean are source, destination and transit countries for thousands of individuals crossing international borders. This increasingly complex migration phenomenon includes refugees, victims of human trafficking, stateless persons, and asylum-seekers, among other categories of vulnerable persons. Human rights based regional priorities and strategies should be developed to provide Caribbean states with the necessary tools to collectively address the needs of vulnerable populations and their communities.

The threat of transnational crime is common to all island states and territories in the Caribbean region, vulnerabilities are in many respects similar, and the strategies should take a regional approach. Most of the islands have overlapping maritime zones and geographic location allows for air routes and sea lanes connections between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. This characteristic is an advantage to foster greater economic growth,

but this air and sea linkages are also very useful for transnational crime. The region is a gateway to Europe, the United States, South America and through the Panama Canal to the Pacific Ocean.

There is a disparity in the independent countries and dependent overseas territories abilities to engage in border security to confront the myriad of challenges under transnational organized crime. A strategic approach is needed to better coordinate a regional legislative framework for enabling implementation of regional security response, within the terrestrial and sea domains aimed at strengthening the regional border security system.

Concerning compliance with international human rights, most CMCA Caribbean countries constitutions, do not provide guarantees for economic, social and cultural rights and domestic legislation in the region does not sufficiently reflect the social and economic rights espoused in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. None of the countries have National Human Rights Institution that meets the Paris Principles, thus, there is a lack of available legal remedies and mechanisms to demand the protection and fulfilment of human rights. Laws regarding discrimination do not include sex, disability and sexual orientation.

Conclusions of the humanitarian peace linkage analysis indicate that most countries in the region struggle with high levels of violent crime and an increasing number of countries are passing legislation strengthening state powers of arrest and detention. There are reports from reliable sources of excessive use of force by the police during arrests and interrogation, extrajudicial executions and torture. Significant case backlogs hinder judicial due process, primarily owing to the slow pace of investigations and prisons and detention centres fall well below international standards.

There is limited investment in social protection systems to ensure that poverty, other social factors or discrimination do not force people into situations of precarious labour migration and promote decent work opportunities for people at home. Women and girls are particularly vulnerable to intimate partner violence, including intimate partner and family-related homicide, non-partner sexual violence, sexual exploitation and human trafficking.

Lack of maritime security has acted as a risk multiplier in the vulnerable Caribbean communities. There is a prevailing weight of the availability and presence of firearms in the dynamics of violence that characterize the region, small arms and ammunition are the main tools used in many of today's conflicts and are the cause of most deaths from armed violence in the region.

There is a need for policies to transform food systems to reduce the cost of nutritious foods and ensure affordability of healthy diets. COVID-19 brought about a notable increase in the levels of food insecurity in the Caribbean. Over the course of three rounds of CARICOM COVID-19 Food Security and Livelihoods Impact Surveys conducted by WFP, it is estimated that 2.7 million out of 7.1 million people are food insecure across the English-speaking Caribbean compared to 2.9 in June 2020 and 1.7 in April 2020. However, severe food insecurity has increased from 403,000 in April 2020 to 407,000 in June 2020 to 482,000 in February 2021. Since April 2020, severe food insecurity has increased by 19 per cent while overall food insecurity (severe and moderate) is estimated to have increased by 56 per cent. Urgent rebalancing of agricultural and fisheries incentives for food nutritional production in alliance with the private

sector is necessary to ensure investments, as well as more efficient trade and marketing mechanisms aimed at reducing the cost of food to both urban and rural consumers, lowering the impact of barriers to international trade (including non-tariff measures).

Other challenges identified include an inefficient management of water resources and services, and inadequate investment in health particularly at the first level of care and failure to implement financial protection mechanisms, while most states experience significant challenges recruiting, training, and retaining health care professionals to ensure effective prevention given vulnerability to environmental and economic external shocks. In terms of education, government expenditures are declining and learning outcomes and equal educational opportunities need to improve by modernization of curricula, teachers' professional development, pre-service and in-service, and closing the digital divide to ensure access to distance learning.

Multidimensional risk analysis concluded that there are challenges in terms of climate change because the intensity of hurricanes and tropical storms will increase when they occur. There are also risks associated with the economic vulnerability of Caribbean countries due to the size of domestic markets, reliance on imports, and dependence upon a few exports products (oil, gas and tourism), as well as the economic activity and substantial reduction in government revenues has meant substantial increase in the fiscal deficits in order to maintain pre-COVID-19 provision of public goods and services. Other challenges include the patterns of foreign direct investments distorted by political risks.

Regional opportunities

Maintaining current levels of investment in COVID-19 mitigating measures and meeting the financing gap in regional SDG investment will require more than Official Development Assistance be it donor funds or more borrowing by the regional Governments. It will require greater collaboration and partnerships, between the public and private sectors at the regional level, in order to attract the needed investment flows and grant funding. Only by getting the private sector, both regionally and extra-regionally to see opportunities in SDG investment will the regional investment gap (not yet calculated) for keeping on track with the 2030 Agenda be met. Therefore, most of the opportunities for improving the regional financial landscape will depend on how successful the region is with domestic resource mobilization for national priorities that is complimented by a regional approach to resource mobilization to advance collective efforts towards Agenda 2030.

Estimates done indicate that nationally 10 per cent of GDP would be required just to undo damage done to SDG progress by the COVID-19 pandemic. The following opportunities are being proposed for consideration:

- Develop strategies to enhance the regional investment environment so as to attract and increase FDI from the present 4.8 per cent. In 2019 six countries managed to exceed a target rate of 10 per cent in FDI. A regional rate of FDI of 10 per cent would allow the region to focus the small amounts of ODA resources on those regional public goods for SDG areas that have difficulty in attracting private finance due to their Risk-Return expectation.¹⁷⁷ According to the World Bank, the region depends on FDI for 10 per cent of its gross capital formation.
- Attract greater regional investment, particularly in the infrastructure sector. This would benefit the region whereby keeping regionally the rent from investments for further development; apart from making the regional economy more resilient to external shock through the creation of jobs and increase output and less dependent on foreign extra-regional investment. However, this objective would require increasing the Regional Saving Rate which is estimated at 17 per cent of regional GDP (based on data for limited number of countries). This rate of regional savings is grossly insufficient to finance the region's need of capital formation. While the rate of capital formation varies among countries with the Bahamas having 29 per cent, Barbados having the lowest at 5 per cent and countries such as Belize having 10 per cent and Jamaica 22 per cent. The average for the World is 25 per cent with South Asia having 28 per cent.¹⁷⁸ Similarly, this opportunity would then allow the region to focus investments in those areas having difficulty in attracting regional investment for social protection, natural resource management, and social services.

177. Required return on FDI is high due to the country and region considered high risk for the investment on account of several vulnerability factors such as small domestic market, subject to high climate change risk/ natural disasters, open & undiversified economic base, lack of economies of scale, corresponding bank risk etc. Thus, most of the investment coming to the region is for the tourism sector, for natural resource base extraction and some limited investment for agriculture.

178. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GNS.ICTR.ZS?locations=8S>

- Tax reform represents an area for the region to generate greater levels of revenue for regional development. Tax evasion in Latin America is estimated at more than 6.1 per cent (ECLAC). No statistics are available for the Caribbean region but to the extent the rate is similar then this revenue recovery process would allow the region to reduce the current levels of poverty and inequality by redirecting these additional resources for SDG development, albeit at the national level, with no additional tax measures.
- Develop strategies in collaboration with regional institutions to seek funding from global NGOs and philanthropic foundations for multi-country/regional projects (health, education, environment, governance etc.) that are consistent with these foreign institutions mandate but supportive of the region's development objectives.
- Natural capital forms the foundation of the Caribbean's asset base. On it depends the tourism industry agriculture and its people. Therefore, the region needs to explore opportunities in attracting funds to the region through debt for nature swap and blue/green economy investment. For some countries in the region more than 60 per cent of the land is best suited for forest and conservation.
- The second valuable base of the region is its people inclusive of those residing in foreign countries with skills and financial capital. Regional framework should be explored that would instil confidence for attracting their investment into the region through innovative financial instruments such as "Diaspora Bonds" and new innovative financial instruments.
- International support in making the tax system more progressive so it is supportive of SDG 2030 Agenda in terms of reducing poverty and inequality while generating additional revenue for SDGs regional advancement. Most governments' tax revenues (59 per cent) in the region are generate through indirect taxes which contributes to greater inequality and poverty in the region. This rate is highest in the Bahamas with 75 per cent and lowest in Trinidad & Tobago with 32 per cent.
- Regional cooperation in generating tax revenues from the new digital economy that is growing exponentially and more so with the COVID-19 pandemic, can allow for a significant source of revenue to be generated through this means that is mostly not being taxed.
- The region invests significant resources in providing fiscal incentives for domestic and foreign investment (export processing zones, commercial free zones, fiscal concessions, tax holidays, guaranteed rates of return etc.). The Latin American region, foregoes an estimated 3.7 per cent of GDP (ECLAC) in tax revenue through this process. Regional cooperation to evaluate these preferential schemes for both foreign and domestic enterprises would be very help and could end up freeing financial resources that could then be available for strengthening much needed social protection systems and critical public sector investments.

Opportunities to address the challenges that can be better addressed at the regional level include two cross-cutting themes, data collection and statistics that was acknowledged by all countries and territories, and the development and implementation of a regional framework for human development capital aimed at strengthening institutional capacity building. Furthermore, other multidimensional development challenges were recognized to be common to the majority of the countries and territories and regional stakeholders.

- a. Data collection, statistics and knowledge production to inform policy and monitoring SDGs
- b. Development of human capital and institutional capacity building
- c. Climate change adaptation and natural hazards resilience
- d. Economic integration and diversification, including green economy (Sustainable Tourism), blue economy (sustainable ocean livelihoods), orange economy (cultural and creative industries) and financing for development
- e. Food security
- f. Water security
- g. Citizens security and the Rule of Law
- h. Energy resilience
- i. Finance for development and partnerships
- j. Mainstreaming of vulnerable groups at risk of being left behind

In addition to relevant national priorities identified that can be better addressed regionally and the world leaders pledge for a Decade of Action to Deliver SDGs¹⁷⁹ to mobilize financing, enhance global and local implementation, strengthen institutions to achieve SDGs and engaging stakeholders for the required transformation, UN priority areas were taken into account, based on currently observed UN international decades to promote awareness and action plans:

- a. UN Decade of Sustainable Energy for All (2014-2024)¹⁸⁰
- b. UN Decade of Action on Nutrition (2016-2025)¹⁸¹
- c. International Decade for Action on Water for Sustainable Development (2018-2028)¹⁸²
- d. Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030)¹⁸³
- e. UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030)¹⁸⁴
- f. UN Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021-2030)¹⁸⁵

179. SDG Summit. September 2019.

180. <http://undocs.org/A/RES/67/215>

181. <http://undocs.org/A/RES/70/259>

182. <http://undocs.org/A/RES/71/222>

183. <http://undocs.org/A/RES/72/73>

184. <http://undocs.org/A/RES/73/284>

185. <http://undocs.org/A/RES/75/131>

Data collection, statistics and knowledge production to inform policy and for monitoring the SDGs

In the area of data collection and the production of statistics, especially for monitoring the SDG indicators, all of the countries in the Caribbean subregion face challenges in terms of the institutional framework for statistics, and progress in this regard depends first, on the political will to implement legal changes that lay the foundation for proper functioning of national statistical systems, and second on the efforts of regional bodies and national statistical offices. Grenada and Trinidad and Tobago are member countries representing the Caribbean region in the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators working on the global indicator framework for monitoring SDGs. In addition, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines belong to the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (HLG-PCCB),¹⁸⁶ in charge of capacities strengthening to improve the preparation and dissemination of indicators. Statistical capacity is below average for the Caribbean subregion (SDG 17), SDGs present an opportunity to strengthen statistical capacities in the Caribbean to support the follow-up and review process of the 2030 Agenda, to integrate new data sources for collecting high-frequency and high-quality data, and that includes improvements in National Statistical Systems (NSS) and National Statistical Offices (NSO) as well as financial resources, technical capacity building, personnel and digital technology to carry out censuses and surveys, to enforce registries of reliable administrative records and to produce adequately disag-

gregated data regularly and in a timely fashion.

The magnitude of the data gap in the Caribbean is a clear limitation to any analysis of the progress in meeting the SDGs in the subregion.¹⁸⁷ Addressing this challenge is pertinent to not only expediting progress in implementing and monitoring the 2030 Agenda but also for leveraging international financial resources and mobilizing national budgetary allocations towards sustainable development. Addressing the legislation and policies issues related to data collection, processing and dissemination is a required first step in the enhancement of NSO capacities to adequately serve their coordinating role in the NSS and to meet the demands for modern and innovative statistical approaches such as incorporating big data in official statistics in the Caribbean. In addition, this all points to the need to substantially increase public and private spending on research and experimental development (R&D).

Relevant to the unavailability of data is the reference to population data and the modality of collecting these data sets. It is important to state that 98 of 232 unique SDG indicators require population data and the modality to collect this data is mainly through population and housing censuses. Region-wide digitalization of population data, using registry-based census approaches should push for more and up-to-date data. COVID-19 and the postponement of censuses have demonstrated the need to invest in Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS). UNFPA is the UN agency that, in collaboration with regional entities (CARICOM, OECS) and EDPs (Canada, IADB, CDB) provides

186. <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/hlg/members>

187. McKenzie, Sidona and Abdulkadri, Abdullahi. Mechanisms to accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Caribbean. ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean. Studies and Perspectives Series – The Caribbean – No. 71. United Nations Publication LC/RS.2017/19.

dedicated support to the national statistical offices to make this data available.

The United Nations System in partnership with CARICOM can address the frailty of institutional and technical capacity to produce the necessary statistics to monitor SDG's. Areas of potential collective regional work include support in the management of national administrative data, policies of access, and the strengthening of National Statis-

tics Offices (NSO), as well as regional repositories of data. Likewise, initiatives such as the Repository of SDG indicators of Trinidad and Tobago use to measure progress on the 2030 Agenda is a best practice that can escalate to other RCOs in the region to be used as an updating tool for the CMCA. Furthermore, these initiatives should be based on digitalization (digital technology) of processes with an approach towards digital transformation.

Development of human capital and institutional capacity building

Capacity building, human and institutional is a major crosscutting theme for the Caribbean region, one that comes transversely throughout all development challenges. In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, SDG 16 calls for strong institutions, a goal whose achievement represents the means to implement all other SDGs. Investment in continuous and resourced education and training in all development areas to enhance technical capacity to face the challenges is a major gap in the development agenda of the Caribbean region.

Opportunities to close the gaps in the achievement of the 2030 agenda requires knowledge and the loss of human capital to external markets is a fact across the region, that needs to find a way to build capacity in a broad sense. Education and training are critical for the development of human capital, economic and social, political and governance systems, and peace and security. They are enabling factors for employment and for generating entrepreneurship which along a strategic ap-

proach to gender equality in terms of the different socio-economic life chances of men, women, and youth will support gender responsive initiatives for economic growth and sustainable development, as well as the elimination of poverty.

CARICOM has developed a Human Resource Development Strategy, closely linked to SDGs, an initiative that is extremely important for the survival and prosperity of the region, given the local circumstances of the countries. CARICOM's strategy addresses the trade-offs with respect to freer labour market in the Caribbean region with free movement of people to overcome the technical capacity gap and outmigration hubs.

In addition, and this has been highlighted by COVID-19, cooperation and collaboration are imperative to strengthen and reinforce the incorporation of high-technological solutions for the establishment of a critical mass that facilitates cost savings and improved efficiency. Also needed are investments in systems that favour

remote working, team work, negotiation, common programmes and common policies. Likewise, advancing in collaboration with countries in the region, open dialogue, propose compromises for the retraining and repurposing of the labour force

through education with gender mainstreaming to address inequalities involving household chores and work-family conflicts will contribute to the challenge of technological and regulatory obsolescence.

Climate change adaptation and natural hazards resilience

The Caribbean region is exposed to natural hazards that include earthquakes, active volcanoes, droughts, floods, landslides. Climate change and rising global temperatures related to human activity have the potential to exacerbate many of the challenges the region is dealing with today, including global instability, hunger, poverty, migration, and conflict, placing the development and prosperity of citizens in jeopardy. But specific hazards such as rising sea levels, warming temperatures (including sea surface temperatures), deforestation, and volatility of extreme weather events place the Caribbean at higher risk, to the point of entire islands potentially disappearing if the dangers of climate change are not addressed collectively and urgently.¹⁸⁸

Disaster Risk Management is a vital component of any climate change adaptation programme, the reduction of current and future vulnerabilities to climate change risk should build on and expand existing disaster risk management efforts reduction of current weather-related disaster risk in the Caribbean, to reduce losses and initiate necessary

actions for climate change adaptation. Also, planning for extreme weather events supports preparedness for other emergencies and, therefore, brings additional benefits.

According to the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC), based on three variables: increased hurricane damage, loss of tourism revenue, and infrastructure damage, the estimated annual cost of inaction could total US\$10.7 billion by 2025, US\$22 billion by 2050 and US\$46 billion by 2100, representing 5 per cent, 10 per cent and 22 per cent of the region's GDP, respectively, and a perpetual economic recession in the member states of the Caribbean, given the cumulative recovery costs that take away resources from the economies and debilitates the possibility of a sustained development. Natural hazards cannot be prevented, but the ripple effects of global warming and extreme weather events can be mitigated by regionally addressing climate change, specifically coastal challenges to adaptation and resilience. Increased attention is also being devoted across the Caribbean to the nexus between human

188. Global Americans. The Caribbean's extreme vulnerability to climate change: a comprehensive strategy to build a resilient, secure and prosperous Western Hemisphere. 2019.

mobility, natural hazards and climate change. Based on global frameworks, such as the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction and the stream of work on human mobility under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Caribbean countries are advancing commitments to address the impacts of climate change and natural hazards on human mobility, notably including planned relocation and disaster displacement. This situation offers opportunities to build regional engagement and integration, and support policy action to prevent forced migration and address the needs of migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and displaced persons from a human rights perspective.

The review of Delivering Transformational Change 2011-2021, the implementation plan for the Regional Framework for Achieving Development Resilient to Climate Change, presents an opportunity for regional collective work in the Caribbean to articulate a resilience framework for the region based on disaster preparedness and recovery, including closing the social protection gap to weight the disproportionate impact on the poor, linked to SDG 1, enhanced economic opportunities, linked to SDG 8, livelihood protection and restoration, linked to SDG 2, design criteria and investment for resilient physical infrastructure, SDG 9. The aim is to develop a regional strategy to be implemented at the country level. The region can work together to change the paradigm of small country projects to mainstream regional resilience and expand financial protection against climatic shocks in the Caribbean.

Financing is a strategic drive to succeed in addressing climate change because national budgets can only accommodate prevention and mitigation efforts but the significant transformation that is needed requires combined investment, beyond the Green Climate Fund, in the science that supports the evidence to validate the work and to support effective decision making. In this context, to leverage digital transformation is fundamental to understand the risks faced by the Caribbean region. Science and technology inform everything, how the region tackles the underlying issues of what will happen; thus, the recovery planning is evidence-based on the risk's scenarios of impacts across the space. The Caribbean Risk Information System (CRIS)¹⁸⁹ was launched on November 2020, created by CDEMA in collaboration with the World Bank and with financial support from the European Union (EU). CRIS is a platform that gathers and shares information and data on disaster risk management and climate change adaptation across the Caribbean region to support decision making by providing access to information on hazards, guidance to reduce risk, and build disaster-resilient states, all critical elements to promote sustainable development. The Caribbean Regional Resilience Building (RRB) of the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR) is an opportunity to address a better structured response to recovery within the cycle of disaster management, that includes not only the ex-post phase of the humanitarian response, but the readiness phase that requires people's awareness of the complexity of the hazards, because a better understanding of the risks is foundational for the actions to be undertaken. Another opportunity is

189. CRIS consist of a Virtual Library, a geospatial component GeoCRIS, and databases including the Caribbean Handbook on Risk Information Management (CHaRIM), and a module, GeoNode, to facilitate evidence-based decision making and development planning processes.

the partnership of the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) which provides short term insurance pay-outs to limit the financial impact of catastrophic hurricanes and earthquakes to Caribbean governments.

The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration offers an opportunity to address climate change and enhance food security, water supply and biodiversity.

Economic integration and diversification

Regional priorities and strategies should be developed to provide Caribbean countries and territories with tools, partnerships and resources needed to strengthen the regional cooperation and integration process, with a view to creating an enhanced economic space preserving the environmental integrity of the Caribbean region.

Trade and regional economic, social and political integration are an opportunity for all Caribbean countries and territories. The CSME, CARICOM's initiative aimed at the free movement of capital, services, technology and skilled professionals within the region¹⁹⁰, provides access to premium markets for agricultural products with special consideration for less developed countries and territories with limited agricultural and industrial base to compete with larger ones. The opportunity of a single cohesive economic unit can allow smaller economies to focus on their competitive advantages instead of competing among themselves.

Nonetheless, in addition to the CSME, policies in a broader perspective are necessary to expand the opportunities of countries in the Caribbean region to wider markets such as those of South and Central America to find ways to revitalize growth and trade. One successful practice to model in the region is the integration of the ECCU through which a cohesive structure for collective efforts is benefiting countries of the OECS.

Improvement of transportation linkages is a necessity to lower the cost of traveling within the Caribbean region. Partnerships with the private sector in circular economies initiatives to foster the use of renewable resources to maximize the value in productive chains can help achieve SDG 12, responsible consumption and production, and contribute to multiple SDGs, including SDG 2, via sustainable food production, SDG 6, clean water, SDG 7, affordable and clean energy, SDG 13, climate action as well as SDG 15, life on land.

190. Caribbean Community and Common Market. "CARICOM Single Market and Economy."

A green economy is defined as low carbon, resource efficient and socially inclusive, an alternative economic model that improves human well-being and builds social equity while reducing environmental risks and scarcity.¹⁹¹ Promoting inclusive green economic plans that will create growth, jobs and prosperity while reducing pressures on the planet represents an opportunity to fast track progress through the desired economic transformation of the Caribbean region amidst the recovery from COVID-19. The development of public policies in the areas of trade, industry, and the service sectors are needed to align environmental and socio-economic objectives for the production of goods and services, including, among others, sustainable tourism and crop insurance mechanisms, which can be addressed regionally to accomplish SDG 12 and to drive the achievement of other SDGs, such as, food security (SDG 2), health (SDG 3) welfare and employment (SDG 8), and the creation of sustainable livelihoods (SDG 12) and SDG 17, partnerships.

Tourism is of utmost importance for the Caribbean region because it accounts for the majority of revenues at the national level, the effects of COVID-19 accentuated this lack of economic diversification and the results in terms of unemployment and inequality. Maintaining the economic benefits of tourism demands that the industry be resuscitated with a more integrated sustainable

approach. The pandemic sent a warning on how people travel and have heightened awareness among tourists of the intrinsic value of traveling to environmentally conscious destinations that not only are attractive, but also free of single-use plastics, waste food and water, and that provides local people with an income and an incentive to preserve their natural environment. Other parameters being considered are increased energy efficiency and the promotion of renewable energy in hotels and accommodation options.

In this context, certification of tourist destinations based on the principles of sustainable development fostered by the Sustainable Tourism Zone of the Greater Caribbean (STZC)¹⁹² is an instrument that can trigger the achievement of SDG 12 by promoting integrated tourism that generates the level of awareness, knowledge and understanding on sustainable livelihoods, benefits tourism companies and tourists and helps generate formal employment for people in the communities, while attempting to make a low impact on the environment and local culture. Training and facilitation can contribute to capacity building in countries of the Caribbean region and enhance productivity and competitiveness of regional tourism.

Sustainable tourism recognizes the need to ensure that the natural, cultural, social and financial resources are managed adequately, an equilibrium

191. <https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/green-economy>

192. Convention signed in 2001 and ratified in 2013 by Heads of State and Governments of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) establishing the region as a Sustainable Tourism Zone.

that represents an opportunity of the Caribbean region. Implementation of the set of Regional Sustainable Tourism Indicators, developed with the UNWTO, facilitates the evaluation of destinations based on regional standards and optional benchmarks on the principles of quality and responsibility in terms of environmental protection.

Decisive participation of public and private sectors, involvement from communities, and strategic alliances with international organizations will ensure collaborative work towards achieving sustainability in the long term, meeting the needs of the people and visitors, and contribute to the diversification of the tourism product and improve intraregional travel through initiatives that focus on the development of new market niches, such as multi-destination travel and eco-cultural tourism.

The need for effective risk management is acknowledged in the region as a key barrier to sustainability in agriculture because of the disproportionate impact of climate change and natural disasters such as droughts, hurricanes, volcanoes, earthquakes and floods in the sector. Disaster losses are likely to be exacerbated by the region's vulnerability to the effects of climate change, including sea level rise and increasing extreme weather events. Through crop insurance mechanisms it is possible to build the resilience and accelerate the recovery of farmers against volatile weather and at the same time protect agricultural livelihoods and assets of farmers in the Caribbean. There are clear opportunities to

increase the availability of insurance and improve the effectiveness of existing schemes in the Caribbean to address the demand for cost effective and sustainable weather-related disaster insurance for agriculture.

Climate smart agriculture and nature-based solutions represents an opportunity for the region, which requires the design of instruments to promote the adoption of digital solutions in agriculture and fisheries (for example, digital marketing and market information tools), climate-resilient technologies (for example, protected structure cultivation, water harvesting, precision irrigation, renewable energy) and new and emerging tools such as precision agriculture. In addition, opportunities exist to utilize agricultural and fisheries waste as inputs for bioenergy, soil amendments and animal feed (fish silage). For example, in Barbados there is the potential to repurpose an aggregate of 1,521 tonnes of fish waste annually which otherwise would be discarded.

ECLAC has been pursuing a debt for climate adaptation swap initiative to address low growth, high debt and fiscal stress through the promotion of growth-promoting green investments. ECLAC proposed the use of funds from various supporting financial sources, to reduce the debt at a discount with the resultant repayment placed in a resilience fund to address green investments aimed at climate change mitigation and adaptation and economic transformation.

Economic diversification is a demand common to all of the Caribbean countries. Initiatives in the context of Blue Economy can be better addressed regionally and target not only SDG 14, but drives other relevant SDG's, such as food security (SDG 2), health (SDG 3) welfare and employment (SDG 8), and the creation of sustainable livelihoods (SDG 12) and SDG 17, partnerships. Blue economy is ocean-based economy that aims at the improvement of human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities. The potential solutions at the regional level are backed by the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods and enhancement of the job market while preserving the ocean ecosystem. The United Nations has declared 2021-2030 as the "Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development,"¹⁹³ an opportunity to provide a unifying framework across the UN system to support countries actions to sustainably manage the oceans to achieve the 2030 Agenda by reversing the cycle of decline in ocean health and create improved conditions for the sustainable development of the ocean, seas and coasts.

Current gaps in the Caribbean region include development and implementation of common principles and standards concerning marine living resources, looking at the science for gathering data and information for evidence-based deci-

sion making. Using research to promote the development of the fisheries sector, where there is room for reorganization, growth, and investing in a sustainable manner. In many cases countries can concentrate in optimizing value in the supply chain instead of expanding production by developing an approach to use the regulatory system in place to address this issue and improve income for the fisherfolk.

Challenges within the wider Caribbean include overfishing, degradation of the system, acidification of the water, lowering of the water levels, floods, seasonal influx of sargassum seaweed, and the impact of climate change on marine ecosystems and reefs. Blue economy regional strategies to develop the administrative capacity for resource management and preservation represent an opportunity to tackle those challenges, at the preparation, implementation and monitoring stages of the initiatives. Transitioning from a subsistence operation to one that is more integrated in the modern technological economy, including the entire production chain and focused on marketing, with increase innovation and productivity. It is important to mention the threats posed by the invasive Lionfish that continues to have impacts on native marine biodiversity and fisheries. Land-based pollutants (wastewater, other commercial/ industrial discharges, plastics, nutrients) are also impacting productive coastal ecosystems.

193. United Nations. General Assembly Resolution to proclaim the 10-year period beginning on 1 January 2021 the Decade of Ocean and Science for Sustainable Development. UN Document: A/RES/72/73.

Sustained support and capacity building for aquaculture, the fastest growing fish production system in the world represents another prospect in production, the cost is high and commercial success is long term but the return in employment generation and food security, from experiences in other countries, indicates that the use of this alternative farming production go hand in hand with the need for diversification of multi-species of fishes, crustaceans, molluscs and aquatic plants that can be developed and used commercially. In addition, investment in people with specialize training at the highest levels is needed in marine biology, sanitary and phytosanitary measures, trade, legal issues and fisheries/aquaculture management. For smaller Caribbean countries it is difficult to find suitable technicians with the level of specialization required, because of lack of academic programs in local universities. Training abroad is expensive, thus, is an issue that can be addressed regionally, investments in training

people, and strategies to retain them in a proper way for them to be able to make a contribution at the national level.

Because fisherfolk communities live in the coastal areas, they are particularly vulnerable to climate change shocks. From a strategic perspective consideration of Fisherfolk's Insurance Coverage offers a tremendous security for the sector in the event of a disaster, to continue their livelihood. In this context, initiatives in climate resilience for fisherfolk early warnings, has proven useful through improved communication between the islands to report bad weather conditions. In addition, regional resources for capacity building for men and women fisherfolk workers is extremely important to ensure they have the information available to be resilient and to acknowledge the impact of climate change on their livelihood.

Orange Economy - Cultural and Creative Industries

The Caribbean sub-region has enormous potential in harnessing its cultural and creative industries to foster economic, human and social development by stimulating inclusive and sustainable growth of the cultural economy through: the creation of jobs creation of jobs within a decent work framework,

production of cultural and creative goods and services, improved market access, and support of regional and national policies and measures. This is also related to exploring opportunities and developing capacities for sustainable cultural tourism as a growing market in Caribbean SIDS.

Food security

Among geographic regions, the Caribbean ranked higher than the average of Latin American and the Caribbean region and the rest of the world on the cost of a healthy diet. It also ranks high when compared to the rest of the world. The cost for an energy sufficient diet in the Caribbean is US\$ 1.12, the third highest in the world; for a nutrient adequate diet is US\$ 2.89, the third highest in the world; and for a healthy diet US\$4.21, the second highest in the world. When compared to international poverty lines, the region ranks 2.3 and 3.3 times higher in the nutrient adequate and healthy diets, respectively. 104.2 million people in Latin America and the Caribbean could not afford a healthy diet in 2017, for the Caribbean region that represents 36.7 per cent of the population, the highest percentage of the region. Consequences of the cost of a healthy diet, dietary patterns and the food systems that support these are critical for meeting SDG 2 targets for ending hunger, food insecurity and all forms of malnutrition, and relevant in terms of trade-offs and synergies, to health-related SDG 3 and climate change related SDG 13.¹⁹⁴ What people eat and how food is produced affects their health and the state of the environment because the food system is responsible for around 21-37 per cent of total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

To meet SDG 2 targets, implies the need for policies to transform food systems to reduce the cost of nutritious foods and ensure affordability of healthy diets. These policies can be addressed

nationally in terms of land use, energy use and water footprint, and regionally in terms of more efficient trade and marketing mechanisms aimed at reducing the cost of food to both urban and rural consumers, lowering the impact of barriers to international trade (including non-tariff measures), and urgent rebalancing of agricultural and fisheries incentives for food nutritional production in alliance with the private sector to ensure necessary investments. In addition, nutrition-sensitive social protection programmes will be particularly needed to support the poor and those living through humanitarian crises, without basic access to sufficient nutritious food to meet dietary requirements. Consumer level behaviours need to also be considered, including where changes in consumption patterns will have multiple impacts on health and regional economic integration as is the case in food systems in the Caribbean.

Nonetheless, baseline and progress information are practically non-existent for most Caribbean countries in terms of prevalence of undernourishment, severe food insecurity, moderate or severe food insecurity, wasting in children under 5 years of age, stunting in children under 5 years of age, exclusive breastfeeding among infants 0-5 months of age, and low birthweight.¹⁹⁵ Challenges in lack of information hinders the knowledge base to inform adequate policy.

COVID-19 has exposed the fragilities of food systems – the constellation of activities involved in

194. FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP, and WHO. The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2020. Transforming food systems for affordable healthy diets. Rome, FAO. <https://doi.org/10.4060/ca9692en>

195. UNICEF Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2018 for Suriname (2018) indicates that stunting prevalence is 8.3 and wasting prevalence is 5.5 for children under the age of 5 (moderate and severe); underweight prevalence, 6.7, and the percentage of infants under 6 months of age exclusively breastfed is 8.9%. Guyana and Turks and Caicos MICS (2019-2020) are being processed and analysed, Trinidad and Tobago and Saint Lucia MICS are expected in 2021. For the rest of the Caribbean countries in the CMCA (Belize, Barbados and Jamaica) data collected is dated before 2016.

producing, processing, transporting and consuming food – in the Caribbean. COVID-19, however, has provided an opportunity to strengthen food security and livelihoods related data. The 2021 global Food Systems Summit will provide an opportunity for the Caribbean to identify, invest in and scale up game changing food systems solutions in addition to the recommendation of the forthcoming Mid-term Review of the UN Decade of Action on Nutrition in addressing food security emerging challenges.

Water security

Water security means having adequate water in quantity and quality to meet all demands of the population, the economic sectors and the environment and at the same time managing resources adequately and efficiently with the increased volatility of extreme weather events and the latent vulnerability of SIDS.

CCCCC has identified six water related challenges in the region:

1. Water sector infrastructure exposed to damage and disruption from water-related hazards;
2. Increasing demand, inefficient water use and leakage exacerbating the vulnerability of existing water supply systems and sources;
3. Effectiveness of community and urban water supply systems exposed to increasing climate variability;
4. Agricultural production vulnerable to seasonal rainfall and drought;
5. Effective management of water resource quantity and quality threatened by a changing climate; and
6. Escalating costs of flood-related damage and losses.

A commitment is needed to address water usage and the improvement of infrastructure in the Caribbean. The UN International Decade for Action on Water and Sustainable Development 2018-2018 represents an opportunity to contribute to meet water-related development challenges including the integrated management of water resources and sanitation. In addition, the CCCCC is developing guidelines for Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for climate adaptation in water utilities across the CARIFORUM region, as a contribution to the improvement of water security.

Citizens security and rule of law

Caribbean countries national challenges in terms of crime and violence, the administration of justice and judicial infrastructure have regional counterparts in transnational organized crime that are multinational in nature and with cross border impact, and the coordinated abilities needed to tackle them. Provision of illicit goods, such as drug trafficking, illicit services, like human trafficking, commercial sex, illegal migration, and infiltration of business and governments with financial crimes, cyber-crimes, and corruption. These are all offenses that can be addressed regionally.

In addition, collective action can take place regionally to address gaps in the criminal justice system in the Caribbean region. COVID 19 has highlighted the challenges of the courts at the basic and fundamental levels without technology, there is no access to justice. Investment on physical infrastructure, buildings, office space, ICT, is needed to close the gap of access to justice at the local level. One area that can be addressed regionally

is infrastructure in terms of global standardized practices, policies and protocols in areas such as harassment, gender equality, discrimination, a code of conduct and performance with integrity standards to model appropriate behaviour for justices, judges and staff in order to be able to provide quality services in a more contemporary and progressive justice sector, resourcing certain culture of excellence, performance and accountability aimed at behavioural change.

A regional repository of judiciary decisions will contribute to the consistency of the decisions that leads to public trust and confidence because it goes into the core of the rule of law. The flow of information will expedite the delivery of timely justice at all levels and from an economic point of view, efficiency within the justice system along with internally coherent decisions are interlocking wheels that allows for stronger institutions in the region (SDG 16).

Energy resilience and sustainable energy

Many Caribbean countries have already advanced in assessments (e.g., disaster vulnerability and resilience, resources potential, governance conditions) to determine the most suitable policy mix, available technologies and measures to enhance resilience of energy systems to disasters and climate change, and to identify challenges, gaps and renewable energy potential, and establishing energy use targets. However, it is observed that

energy-related measures are poorly considered in the early stages of the disaster risk management cycle. Business models are readily available, and the cost of technology is decreasing annually, the challenge seems to lay in the implementation of policies and in the identification of optimal governance mechanisms that allow the integration of climate change adaptation and disaster risk management agendas.¹⁹⁶

196. Flores, Adrián, Peralta, Leda. The enhancement of resilience to disasters and climate change in the Caribbean through the modernization of the energy sector. Studies and Perspectives 84 Series. ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean. 2020.

A discussion on National Energy Policies to achieve the 100 per cent renewable energy and carbon neutral island-states transformational goals by 2030 and summary information on where countries have reached (if they are on target or not) is an opportunity to advance regionally towards sustainable energy.

Investing in building energy resilience is essential for Caribbean countries and territories because of their vulnerability to climate change and the increasing risk of natural hazards, and the need for the energy infrastructure to withstand and recover quickly from a major disruption. Potential benefits of a sustainable energy transformation, SGD 7, based on recent developments in the sustainable energy market create opportunities that could yield US\$16 billion in net economic benefit to CARICOM countries over the next 20 years

from reducing costs by using renewable power, from increased efficiency in electricity use, and for increased resilience in the electricity system. Challenges remain in terms of the affordability of sustainable energy, because investments to realize that benefit is estimated at US\$11 billion in the next 10 years. Nonetheless, by adopting economically viable energy efficiency measures, Caribbean countries and territories could meet demand for energy services while consuming 18 per cent less electricity over the next 20 years based on the targets that each of the countries has established. Investments in renewable energy, geothermal, wind, solar PV, biomass and hydro could reduce oil imports by 260 million barrels and reduce CO₂ emissions by 26 per cent between 2020 and 2040.¹⁹⁷

Financing for development and partnerships

Regional financial strategies are needed to address development issues in the Caribbean, given the fact that COVID-19 has been a game changer for the UN's work on financing for development. Countries' classification as upper-high- and high-income groups implies limited concessional resources.

Financial support and partnership needed to advance in the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development (SDG 17) are critical challenges regional in scope, and there is a need to sensitize IFI's to address the issue of accessibility to concessional financing given the extreme vulnerability

of Caribbean countries, whose economy can be devastated by a single climate related event. Likewise, collective works should encourage creditors to participate in debt relief efforts by designing mechanisms to address sovereign debt restructuring in a comprehensive and coordinated manner that takes account of the need for countries to step up their efforts to achieve the sustainable development goals.¹⁹⁸ ECLAC has been pursuing a debt for climate adaptation swap initiative and the initiation of a Caribbean Resilience Fund (CRF)¹⁹⁹ to attract large scale long-term development finance to the Caribbean. ECLAC has also participated with other agencies (e.g., UNCTAD) in the

197. Masson, Malaika, Ehrhardt, David and Lizzio, Verónica. Sustainable Energy Paths for the Caribbean. Interamerican Development Bank (IDB). 2020.

198. Ellmers, Bodo. Financing for Development in the Era of COVID-19 and Beyond. A snapshot of the ongoing work at the United Nations in times of crisis. August. 2020.

199. Currently in draft form.

Secretary General’s Financing for Development in the era of COVID-19 Initiative, and has made a case for the Caribbean need for concessional finance. At the same time, given the climate vulnerabilities of the region, it is critical that further investments in disaster risk financing through layered approaches including a combination of contingency budgets, macro (e.g. CCRIF) and micro-insurance models, the inclusion of Deferred Drawdown Option for Catastrophe Risk (Cat DDO) linked to IFI financing, and calling for IFIs to support state contingent instruments such as GDP linked bonds, and hurricane clauses to address debt service challenges when countries face extreme events such as natural disasters and external economic shocks. A myriad of financial and development institutions, TABLE 20, play a major regional role in providing finance and/ or directly implementing social, economic and environmental programmes. These donor agencies are covered in more detail in the CCAs.

Table 20: Regional players in finance/development

Key International Financial Institutions	Key Development Partners	Key Bi-laterals
World Bank	CARICOM & all its Agencies	USA, UK, Canada
Inter-American Development Bank (IADB)	UN and all its Agencies	China, India, Cuba
Caribbean Development Bank (CDB)	Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture	European Union
International Monetary Fund (IMF)	Organization of American States University of the West Indies	ROC (Tai Wan) Mexico, Brazil

Resources mobilization, to ensure financial security and strengthened partnerships with international and regional stakeholders should be explored for the development of countries and territories in the Caribbean. These are priorities for all United Nations agencies funds and programmes in the region to address implementation gaps in the SAMOA Pathway priority areas and achieve SDGs. Regional stakeholders like CARICOM and its institutions, OECS, AOSIS, CDB, and the EU have initiatives that can be supported by the UN and vice versa. Collective negotiations with IFIs, in terms of the special development characteristics of SIDS will favour empowerment of the Caribbean region to speak of development conditions and vulnerabilities common to countries and territories.

The UN System at the regional level will benefit from continued engagement with civil society and strengthening partnerships with the private sector at the national level by improving the quality of the dialogue based on SDGs. With non-traditional partners, special relationships should be fostered to carry the focus of Leaving No One Behind through sensibilization with the UN operational guide for UN Country Teams ²⁰⁰ to generate awareness to support the implementation of this commitment at the national level.

200. UNSDG. Leaving No One Behind. A UNSDG operational guide for UN Country Teams (Interim Draft). 2019.

The UN System can lead the engagement of resource mobilization through coordination efforts of regional stakeholders and international development partners, a collective regional demand from donors to allocate funding for financing priority areas. The UN can play a strategic catalytic role to ensure programme guidance and technical level assistance to regional partnerships for achieving SDG's. The Global Partnership for

Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) is an excellent multi-stakeholder vehicle for driving development effectiveness through regional collective action²⁰¹ involving governments, bilateral and multilateral organizations, civil society, the private sector, members of parliaments, trade unions, foundations who are committed to strengthening the effectiveness of their partnerships for development to achieve SDGs.

Table 21: Regional challenges and opportunities, sds, un afp, regional stakeholders

CHALLENGES	SDGs - Direct	SDG - Drivers	AGENCIES, FUNDS AND PROGRAMMES	REGIONAL STAKEHOLDERS
Statistics for Monitoring SDGs	SDG 17	SDG 1 SDG 2 SDG 3 SDG 4 SDG 5 SDG 6 SDG 7 SDG 8 SDG 9 SDG 10 SDG 11 SDG 12 SDG 13 SDG 14 SDG 15 SDG 16	ECLAC FAO IAEA IFAD ILO ITC OHCHR PAHO/WHO UNAIDS UNESCO UNFPA UNHCR UNDP UNIDO UNIC UNICEF UNLIREC UNODC UNOPS UNSDG UN Women UPU WFP World Bank	CARICOM
Development of human capital and institutional capacity building	SDG 16	SDG 1 SDG 2 SDG 3 SDG 4 SDG 5 SDG 6 SDG 7 SDG 8 SDG 9 SDG 10 SDG 11 SDG 12 SDG 13 SDG 14 SDG 15 SDG 16	ECLAC FAO IAEA IFAD ILO ITC OHCHR PAHO/WHO UNAIDS UNESCO UNFPA UNHCR UNDP UNIDO UNIC UNICEF UNLIREC UNODC UNOPS UNSDG UN Women UPU WFP World Bank	CARICOM CDB
Climate change adaptation and natural hazards resilience	SDG 13	SDG 1 SDG 2 SDG 8 SDG 9	FAO IAEA IFAD PAHO/WHO UNESCO UNDP UNEP UNICEF	CDEMA GFDRR ACS CCCC IADB
Economic integration and diversification	SDG 12	SDG 2 SDG 6 SDG 7 SDG 13, SDG 15 SDG 17	ECLAC ITC UNDP UNIDO World Bank	ACS CARICOM CDB OECS
Green Economy	SDG 12	SDG 1 SDG 8 SDG 9 SDG 11 SDG 17	ECLAC ILO ITC UNEP UNIDO UNITAR UNDP UNWTO FAO WFP UNESCO	ACS CDB
Blue Economy	SDG 14	SDG 2 SDG 3 SDG 8 SDG 12 SDG 17	Intergovernmental Oceanic Commission UNEP	CDB CRFM EU IADB
Orange Economy	SDG 8	SDG 9 SDG 11 SDG 12 SDG 17	UNESCO	CARICOM UWI
Food Security	SDG 2	SDG 1 SDG 3 SDG 13 SDG 14 SDG 15	FAO IFAD IAEA UNFPA UNICEF WFP PAHO/WHO	CAHFSA CAPR CDB
Water Security	SDG 6	SDG 3 SDG 7 SDG 11 SDG 12 SDG 13 SDG 9 SDG 16	FAO IFAD PAHO/WHO UNEP UN Habitat UNESCO UNICEF UN-Water	CDB CCCC GCF
Citizen security	SDG 16	SDG 5 SDG 10	OHCHR UNAIDS UNESCO UNFPA UNDP UNHCR UNICEF UNODC UN Women	CAPRI CDB CARICOM IMPACS CCJ RSS
Energy resilience	SDG 7	SDG 11	UNFCCC	CDB IADB
Financing for Development	SDG 17	SDG 1 SDG 2 SDG 3 SDG 4 SDG 5 SDG 6 SDG 7 SDG 8 SDG 9 SDG 10 SDG 11 SDG 12 SDG 13 SDG 14 SDG 15 SDG 16	ECLAC FAO IAEA ILO OHCHR PAHO/WHO UNAIDS UNFPA UNHCR UNDP UNIDO UNIC UNICEF UNLIREC UNODC UNOPS UNSDG UN Women UPU WFP World Bank	AOSIS CARICOM CDB EU IADB OECS

201. GPEDC. Policy Brief: Development Effectiveness at Subnational levels as an enabler for implementing the SDGs.

4.2 The groups of persons left furthest behind

Multidimensional poverty is comprised of factors that constitute people's experience of deprivation, such as poor health, lack of education, inadequate living standards, lack of income, disempowerment, low quality of work, threat from violence. Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) ²⁰² on the Human Development Report 2020 is only available for Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, St Lucia, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago, TABLE 22. The average percentage for these seven countries is 2.9 per cent, less than half of the LAC region 7.2 per cent. Intensity of deprivation²⁰³ (38.5%) is also below the LAC average of 43.0 per cent.

Table 22: Multidimensional poverty INDEX

Country	Index	Headcount (%)	Intensity of deprivation (%)
Belize	0.017	4.3	39.8
Guyana	0.014	3.4	41.8
Jamaica	0.018	4.7	38.7
Suriname	0.011	2.9	39.4
Barbados	0.009	2.5	34.2
Saint Lucia	0.007	1.9	37.5
Trinidad and Tobago	0.002	0.6	38.0
Caribbean	0.011	2.9	38.5
LAC	0.031	7.2	43.0

Source: HDR 2020.

The Leaving No One Behind analysis was based on the five key factors (discrimination, geography, governance, socio-economic status, shocks and fragility) that help determine who and to what degree people are left behind in their particular context. These five intersecting factors are essential to understanding who is being left behind and why, thus regional efforts to take actions can be evidence based. From the people in risk of being left behind analysed in national CCA's, the commonalities mentioned include, 9 groups that were included by more than 7 countries, and 1 group included by 2 countries, they all presented intersecting disadvantages stemming from more than one factor. Nonetheless, additional data should be produced to analyse the three mutually reinforcing levers of change: examine, disaggregated and people driven data and information; empower, civic engagement and voice, and enact, integrated, equity-focused SDG policies, interventions and budgets. Groups identified were: (i) migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, deportees, undocu-

202. Percentage of the population that is multidimensionally poor adjusted by the intensity of the deprivations.

203. Intensity of deprivation is the average deprivation score experienced by people un multidimensional poverty, based on three dimensions: health (nutrition and child mortality), education (years of schooling and school attendance), and standard of living (cooking fuel, sanitation, drinking water, electricity, flooring, and assets ownership).

mented; (ii) persons with disabilities; (iii) people living in informal settlements and or remote, poor, rural areas; (iv) children in socio-economic vulnerability status; (v) Lesbians, Gay, Bisexual, Transexual, Queer, Intersex (LGBTQI) persons; (vi) Persons living with HIV/AIDS; (vii) youth men (aged 15-24), especially in marginalized communities; (viii) older persons and other vulnerable groups; (ix) women/ girls in socio-economic vulnerability status; and (x) indigenous peoples.

Migrants, refugees, asylum-seekers, PWD, LGBTQI, persons living with HIV/AIDS, male-youth, children, women, older persons, and indigenous peoples are all groups facing obstacles when it comes to accessing many of the human rights. These groups are all discriminated against, excluded or mistreat based on their identity, they are less likely to participate in decisions that affect them, face deprivation in terms of income, access to health services and educational attainment, and are exposed to enhanced vulnerability given external social, economic and environmental shocks. In

addition, if they are living in informal settlements and or remote, poor, rural areas their vulnerability increases because they have less access to social protection, inferior public services and a wider gap in terms of physical and technological infrastructure. Special attention in the region should be given to male-youth exposed to violence and crime.

The drivers of social of social exclusions at the national level are poverty, unemployment, gender-based violence, and violence and insecurity. COVID-19 also highlighted digital exclusion of marginal communities as an important factor to be weighted, especially with the shift of classrooms to digital spaces that have excluded children that are not able to access online education. Mainstreaming equality and equity in development policies is necessary to ensure decent work and opportunities, fundamental access to social protection and judiciary services for all groups at risk of being left behind.

5. Anexes



Annex 1 – References

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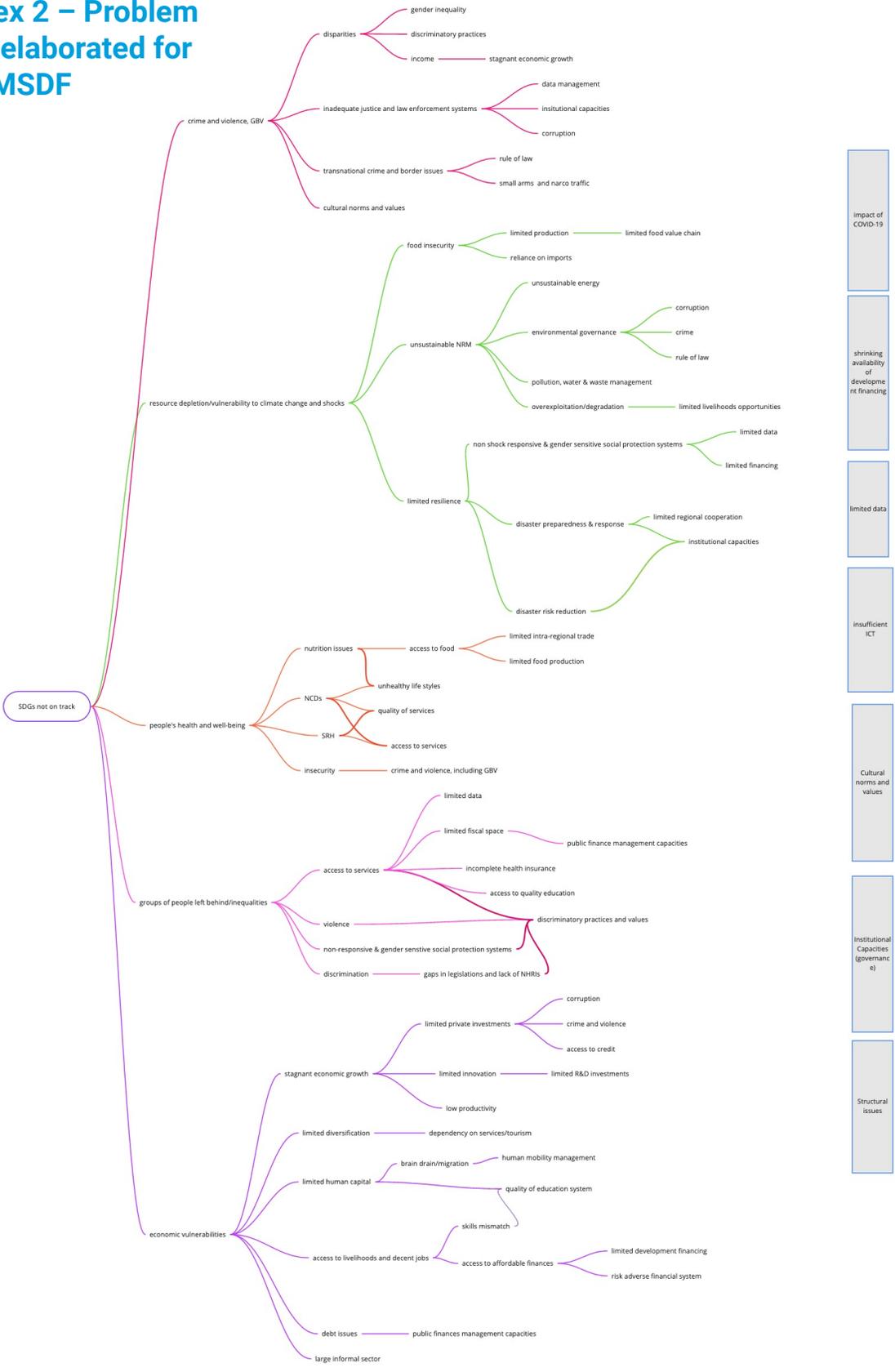
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Annex 2 – Problem tree elaborated for the MSDF



- Impact of COVID-19
- shrinking availability of development financing
- limited data
- insufficient ICT
- Cultural norms and values
- Institutional Capacities (governance)
- Structural issues

Annex 3 – Priorities in commonalities analysis between countries and territories

PRIORITY (Number of Countries)	COUNTRY COMMONALITIES	COUNTRIES	REGIONAL PARTNERS
21	Data gaps for evidence-based monitoring of the SDG and policy making to address the needs of the most vulnerable.	Barbados and OECS Guyana Jamaica Suriname Trinidad and Tobago Aruba Curaçao Sint Maarten Bahamas, The Bermuda Cayman Islands Turks and Caicos Islands	Statistical capacity Institutional framework Regional Strategy for the Development of Statistics CARICOM core set of indicators for SDG's monitoring
21	Economic recovery based on sustainable economic growth, employment, income distribution and economic diversification Green Economy Blue Economy Resources mobilization	Barbados and OECS Belize Guyana Jamaica Suriname Trinidad and Tobago Aruba Curaçao Sint Maarten Bahamas, The Bermuda Cayman Island	Financing for development, including blacklisting and the withdrawal of corresponding banking relations: Debt for Climate Adaptation Swap Initiative. Resources mobilization Sustainable tourism
20	Climate change vulnerability, natural hazards resilience and environmental degradation.	Barbados and OECS Belize Guyana Jamaica Trinidad and Tobago Aruba Curaçao Bahamas, The Bermuda Cayman Islands Turks and Caicos Islands	World's first Climate Resilient Zone Caribbean Recovery to Resilience Facility Integration and implementation of climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies and actions Reduction of region's reliance on fossil fuels Maximization of access to climate financing Disaster risk reduction
17	Perception of corruption	Barbados and OECS Belize Guyana Jamaica Suriname Trinidad and Tobago Bahamas, The Cayman Islands	
16	Strengthening institutional framework and human capital development	Barbados and OECS Belize Suriname Trinidad and Tobago Aruba Curaçao Sint Maarten	Continuous and resourced education and training aimed at knowledge and behavioural change in relevant sectors: justice, environment, statistics. Institutional framework for SDGs

PRIORITY (Number of Countries)	COUNTRY COMMONALITIES	COUNTRIES	REGIONAL PARTNERS
16	Food Security (access, consumption and stability) Sustainable agriculture	Barbados and OECS Belize Guyana Jamaica Trinidad and Tobago Bahamas, The Turks and Caicos Islands	Marine living resources and contribution to food security. Development of aquaculture for food security.
15	Citizens security, crime and violence, the administration of justice and judicial infrastructure Human trafficking Border security	Barbados and OECS Belize Jamaica Trinidad and Tobago Bahamas, The Cayman Islands	Citizen security and the regional security environment Infrastructure in terms of practices, policies and protocols to model appropriate behaviour in the public sector Judicial infrastructure in terms of practices, policies and protocols. Regional Gender Equality Strategy
15	Equality and mainstreaming of vulnerable groups	Barbados and OECS Belize Guyana Guyana Suriname Bahamas, The	Regional Gender Equality Strategy
13	Sustainable energy generation transition, decarbonization	Barbados and OECS Jamaica Bermuda Aruba Curaçao Sint Maarten	Sustainable energy

Annex 4 – CMCA Caribbean countries demographics, UN and regional bodies status

Demographics

ID	COUNTRY	GOVERNMENT	STATUS	GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION	OFICIAL LANGUAGE	OTHER LANGUAGES	DENSITY/KM²	DENSITY/MT²	POPULATION	MALE	FEMALES	AREA KM²
AIA	Anguilla	Overseas territory	United Kingdom	Western Caribbean	English	Anguillian Creole	166	430/mi²	15,002			91
ATG	Antigua and Barbuda	Constitutional monarchy	Independent	Western Caribbean	English	Antiguan Creole	223	579/mi²	97,928	47,269	50,659	442
ABW	Aruba	Constituent Country	Kingdom of Netherlands	South Caribbean	Dutch	Papiamentu	596	1,543/mi²	106,766	50,642	56,124	180
BHS	Bahamas, The	Constitutional monarchy	Independent	Atlantic Ocean	English	Bahamian Creole	28	74/mi²	393,248	191,093	202,155	13,943
BRB	Barbados	Constitutional monarchy	Independent	Western Caribbean	English	Bajan Creole	669	1,733/mi²	287,371	139,084	148,287	430
BLZ	Belize	Constitutional monarchy	Independent	Central America	English/Spanish	Creole, Hindustani, Mayan	18	46/mi²	397,621	197,761	199,860	22,966
BMU	Bermuda	Overseas territory	United Kingdom	Atlantic Ocean	English	Creole English	1,150	2,978/mi²	62,273			54
VGB	British Virgin Islands	Overseas territory	United Kingdom	North Western	English	Creole English	201	522/mi²	30,237			151
CYM	Cayman Islands	Overseas territory	United Kingdom	Eastern Caribbean	English	Creole English	252	652/mi²	65,720			264
CUW	Curaçao	Constituent Country	Kingdom of Netherlands	South Caribbean	Dutch	Papiamentu	371	961/mi²	164,100	75,469	88,631	444
DMA	Dominica	Republic	Independent	Western Caribbean	English	Antillean Creole French	96	249/mi²	71,991			751
GRD	Grenada	Constitutional monarchy	Independent	Western Caribbean	English	Grenadian Creole	329	851/mi²	112,519	56,666	55,853	344
GUY	Guyana	Republic	Independent	South America	English	Guyanese Hindustani, Tamil and Native Languages	4	10/mi²	786,559	395,549	391,010	214,969
JAM	Jamaica	Constitutional monarchy	Independent	Eastern Caribbean	English	Jamaican Patois, Caribbean Hindustani	271	701/mi²	2,961,161	1,469,641	1,491,520	10,991
MSR	Montserrat	Overseas territory	United Kingdom	Western Caribbean	English	Creole English	49	126/mi²	4,999			102
SXM	Sint Maarten	Constituent Country	Kingdom of Netherlands	Western Caribbean	Dutch	Creole English	1,277	3,307/mi²	42,882			34
KNA	St. Kitts and Nevis	Constitutional monarchy	Independent	Western Caribbean	English	Creole English	205	531/mi²	53,192			261
LCA	St. Lucia	Constitutional monarchy	Independent	Western Caribbean	English	Creole English	299	775/mi²	183,629	90,422	93,207	616
VCT	St. Vincent and the Grenadines	Constitutional monarchy	Independent	Western Caribbean	English	Creole English	286	741/mi²	110,947	56,218	54,729	389
SUR	Suriname	Republic	Independent	South America	Dutch		4	9/mi²	586,634	294,822	291,812	163,820
TTO	Trinidad and Tobago	Republic	Independent	Western Caribbean	English	Trinidadian and Tobagonian Creoles, Hindustani	274	709/mi²	1,399,491	690,947	708,544	5,130
TCA	Turks and Caicos Islands	Overseas territory	United Kingdom	Atlantic Ocean	English	Creole English	41	107/mi²	38,718			948
									7,972,988			437,320
	United Nations Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)											
	World Population Prospects 2019											

	COUNTRIES	MCO	UN	SIDS (Samoa Pathways)	OECS	MCDF	Country Implementation Plans (CIP)	Sub-Regional Implementation Plans (SIP)	CCA	MAPS	HDR 2020	VNR	SDG REPORT 2020		
1	Barbados	MCO-1	UN	SIDS		MSDF 2017-2021		SIP	C C A		HDI	2020	DASHBOARD		
2	Anguilla	MCO-1	NON-UN/ASSOCIATE MEMBERS OF REGIONAL COMMISSIONS	SIDS	OECS	MSDF 2017-2021									
3	Antigua and Barbuda	MCO-1	UN	SIDS	OECS	MSDF 2017-2021						HDI	2021	DASHBOARD	
4	British Virgin Islands	MCO-1	NON-UN/ASSOCIATE MEMBERS OF REGIONAL COMMISSIONS	SIDS	OECS	MSDF 2017-2021									
5	Dominica	MCO-1	UN	SIDS	OECS	MSDF 2017-2021						HDI			DASHBOARD
6	Grenada	MCO-1	UN	SIDS	OECS	MSDF 2017-2021						HDI			DASHBOARD
7	Montserrat	MCO-1	NON-UN/ASSOCIATE MEMBERS OF REGIONAL COMMISSIONS	SIDS	OECS	MSDF 2017-2021									
8	Saint Kitts and Nevis	MCO-1	UN	SIDS	OECS	MSDF 2017-2021						HDI			DASHBOARD
9	Saint Lucia	MCO-1	UN	SIDS	OECS	MSDF 2017-2021					MAPS	HDI	2019		DASHBOARD
10	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	MCO-1	UN	SIDS	OECS	MSDF 2017-2021						HDI	2020		DASHBOARD
11	Belize	MCO-2 (El Salvador)	UN	SIDS		MSDF 2017-2021	CIP		CCA		HDI	2017	DASHBOARD		
12	Guyana		UN	SIDS		MSDF 2017-2021	CIP		CCA		HDI	2019	DASHBOARD		
13	Jamaica	MCO-3 Bahamas Bermuda Cayman Islands Turks and Caicos	UN	SIDS		MSDF 2017-2021	CIP		CCA	MAPS	HDI	2018	DASHBOARD		
14	Suriname	MCO-4	UN	SIDS		MSDF 2017-2021	CIP		CCA		HDI		DASHBOARD		
15	Trinidad and Tobago	MCO-4 Suriname Aruba Curaçao Sint Maarten	UN	SIDS		MSDF 2017-2021	CIP		CCA	MAPS	HDI	2020	DASHBOARD		
16	Curaçao	MCO-4	NON-UN/ASSOCIATE MEMBERS OF REGIONAL COMMISSIONS	SIDS		MSDF 2017-2021	No CIP			MAPS					
17	Sint Maarten	MCO-4	NON-UN/ASSOCIATE MEMBERS OF REGIONAL COMMISSIONS	SIDS		MSDF 2017-2021	No CIP								
18	Aruba	MCO-4	NON-UN/ASSOCIATE MEMBERS OF REGIONAL COMMISSIONS	SIDS		MSDF 2017-2021	No CIP			MAPS					
19	Bahamas	MCO-3	UN	SIDS		Not in the MSDF 2017-2021	No CIP		CCA			2018 2021	DASHBOARD		
20	Bermuda	MCO-3	NON-UN/ASSOCIATE MEMBERS OF REGIONAL COMMISSIONS	SIDS		Not in the MSDF 2017-2021	No CIP		CCA						
21	Cayman Islands	MCO-3	NON-UN/ASSOCIATE MEMBERS OF REGIONAL COMMISSIONS	SIDS		Not in the MSDF 2017-2021	No CIP		CCA						
22	Turks and Caicos	MCO-3	NON-UN/ASSOCIATE MEMBERS OF REGIONAL COMMISSIONS	SIDS		Not in the MSDF 2017-2021	No CIP		CCA						

Regional Bodies

MEMBERS	UN		SIDS (Samoa Pathways)	OECS	CARICOM	AOSIS	ECLAC	WORLD BANK		CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT BANK (CDB)	INTER- AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK (IADB)	INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND (IMF)
	MEMBERSHIP	HDR						INCOME GROUP	LENDING CATEGORY			
Anguilla	NON- UN/ASSOCIATE MEMBERS OF REGIONAL COMMISSIONS		SIDS	OECS	Associate		Associate Member			Borrowing Member		
Antigua and Barbuda	UN	HHD	SIDS	OECS	Full	Member	Member State	High Income	IBRD	Borrowing Member		Member
Aruba	NON- UN/ASSOCIATE MEMBERS OF REGIONAL COMMISSIONS		SIDS		Observer		Associate Member	High Income				
Bahamas	UN	VHHD	SIDS		Full	Member	Member State	High Income		Borrowing Member	Borrowing Member	Member
Barbados	UN	VHHD	SIDS		Full	Member	Member State	High Income		Borrowing Member	Borrowing Member	Member
Belize	UN	HHD	SIDS		Full	Member	Member State	Upper Middle Income	IBRD	Borrowing Member	Borrowing Member	Member
Bermuda	NON- UN/ASSOCIATE MEMBERS OF REGIONAL COMMISSIONS		SIDS		Associate		Associate Member					
British Virgin Islands	NON- UN/ASSOCIATE MEMBERS OF REGIONAL COMMISSIONS		SIDS	OECS	Associate		Associate Member	High Income		Borrowing Member		
Cayman Islands	NON- UN/ASSOCIATE MEMBERS OF REGIONAL COMMISSIONS		SIDS		Associate		Associate Member	High Income		Borrowing Member		
Curaçao	NON- UN/ASSOCIATE MEMBERS OF REGIONAL COMMISSIONS		SIDS		Observer		Associate Member	High Income	Blend			
Dominica	UN	HHD	SIDS	OECS	Full		Member State	Upper Middle Income		Borrowing Member		Member
Grenada	UN	HHD	SIDS	OECS	Full	Member	Member State	Upper Middle Income	Blend	Borrowing Member		Member
Guyana	UN	MHD	SIDS		Full	Member	Member State	Upper Middle Income	IDA	Borrowing Member	Borrowing Member	Member
Jamaica	UN	HHD	SIDS		Full	Member	Member State	Upper Middle Income	IBRD	Borrowing Member	Borrowing Member	Member
Montserrat	NON- UN/ASSOCIATE MEMBERS OF REGIONAL COMMISSIONS		SIDS	OECS	Full					Borrowing Member		
Sint Maarten	NON- UN/ASSOCIATE MEMBERS OF REGIONAL COMMISSIONS		SIDS		Observer		Associate Member	High Income				
St. Kitts and Nevis	UN	HHD	SIDS	OECS	Full	Member	Member State	High Income	IBRD	Borrowing Member		Member
St. Lucia	UN	HHD	SIDS	OECS	Full	Member	Member State	Upper Middle Income	Blend	Borrowing Member		Member
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	UN	HHD	SIDS	OECS	Full	Member	Member State	Upper Middle Income	Blend	Borrowing Member		Member
Suriname	UN	HHD	SIDS		Full	Member	Member State	Upper Middle Income	IBRD	Borrowing Member	Borrowing Member	Member
Trinidad and Tobago	UN	HHD	SIDS		Full	Member	Member State	High Income	IBRD	Borrowing Member	Borrowing Member	Member
Turks and Caicos	NON- UN/ASSOCIATE MEMBERS OF REGIONAL COMMISSIONS		SIDS		Associate			High Income		Borrowing Member		



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