Sub-Regional Workshop on Health Accounts and Health Financing in the Caribbean: Barbados, Trinidad & Tobago and OECS Member States

Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago
November 6-9, 2006

Summary

The Sub-Regional Workshop on Health Accounts and Health Financing in the Caribbean: Barbados, Trinidad & Tobago and OECS Member States was organized by the Pan-American Health Organization and coordinated with CARICON and the Standing Committee of Caribbean Statisticians (SCCS).

The objectives of the workshop were to i) promote the exchange among professionals working on estimations of health economic and financial indicators at national institutions; ii) present and apply methodologies for the estimation of health expenditure and discuss and update the estimates of expenditure on health; iii) discuss challenges faced on the financing of national health systems among participating countries, and; iv) discuss recommendations to the ECC to promote the development and use of health economic and financing indicators in the design, implementation and monitoring of public health policies.

National teams included representatives from the Ministry of Health (MOH), Ministry of Finance (MOF), Ministry of Social Development (MSD), and National Statistics Office (NSO) from Eastern Caribbean Countries and Territories (Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St Kitts and Nevis, St Lucia and St Vincent and the Grenadines), Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago; counting a total of thirty one national professionals.

The four days workshop agenda included participants attendance of the first sessions of the 31st Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Caribbean Statisticians (6-7) organized by CARICOM, covering topics on: status of Implementation of the System of National Accounts, the development of Satellite Accounts and progress being made in the development by National Statistical Offices in the development of Social Statistics; including, health, education and vital statistics. The third and fourth days (8-9) participants continued with the Sub-Regional Workshop on Health Accounts and Health Financing that focused on the development of hands on exercises on: i) estimating public and private expenditure in health, ii) the sources of funding of government operations, and iii) the estimation of expenditure and /or financing implication of a particular public policy issue.

Participants agreed in the usefulness of working in country teams reviewing national expenditure and financing estimates and discussing challenges on the financing of national health systems. They pointed the relevance to understand the financial implications of health policies and requested further support to: i) national initiatives to discuss financial issues in national forums for policy makers and political leaders, ii) national initiatives to strengthen their capacities on the estimation of health expenditure and financing, and iii) a regional initiative to harmonize the estimation of health economic and financing indicators.

Attendance of Workshop participants at the 31st Meeting of Caribbean Statisticians Standing Committee was seen as an excellent initiative that may contribute to the harmonization and improvement of country’s national statistical systems. The 31st meeting of the SCCS recommended that participation of other social sectors be included in future meetings.