

Launch of the Findings of the Barbados Survey of Living Conditions 2016/2017

The main findings of the Barbados Survey of Living Conditions 2016/2017 were presented at the launch at the Lloyd Erskine Sandiford Conference Centre on September 13, 2017. This was a collaborative effort among the Inter-American Development Bank and the Barbados Statistical Service. This launch was attended by Ms. Therese Turner-Jones, General Manager of the Caribbean Country Department Inter-American Development Bank, Mr. Juan Carlos de la Hoz Viñas, Country Representative of the IDB in Barbados, the Hon. Steven Blackett, Minister of Social Care Constituency Empowerment & Community Development, Mr. Aubrey Browne, Director of the Barbados Statistical Service(BSS).

The main goal of the Barbados Survey of Living Conditions is to support poverty analysis as well as policy planning in all sectors of the economy. According to the Director of the BSS, the survey was conducted according to best practice over a twelve-month period between February 2016 and January 2017. It represents a sample size of 7,098 individuals from 2,508 households in all 11 parishes. The survey was conducted by face-to-face interviews by a team of 12 interviewers from the Barbados Statistical Service.

According to Mrs. Turner-Jones, instruments like the Barbados Survey of Living Conditions will fill a data gap as it provides much needed data on actual conditions in Caribbean countries. This data is an essential tool for policy makers to facilitate fact-based decision making.

The survey found that in Barbados overall poverty levels, as measured by consumption per capita, have increased. Extreme poverty, which is measured as households with monthly consumption per capita of below BDS\$297.28, decreased in 2016 to 3.6% as compared with 6.8% in 2010. However, non-extreme poverty, which is measured as households with monthly consumption per capita above BDS\$297.28 but below BDS\$642.52, increased to 13.8% in 2016 from 8.4% in 2010. Overall poverty, which is the summation of extreme and non-extreme poverty, increased to 17.5% in 2016 as compared with 15.1% in 2010. Whereas poverty increased, the number of persons vulnerable to falling into poverty remained relatively constant reaching 11% in 2016. Also, inequality has decreased in Barbados. Gini coefficient, which measures inequality -being 0 absolute equality and 1 absolute inequality- decreased by 10% from 2010 (Gini score 0.42 points) to 2016 (Gini score 0.32)

With the findings from this survey, the Government of Barbados in collaboration with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) will continue to support dialogue on policies for the enhancement of social safety nets for poverty alleviation.

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