

The OECS Social Policy Unit (SPU) began in late 1998 with seed funding from the UNDP, to help strengthen linkages between economic and social strategy development and provide the Secretariat with the capacity to assess and monitor human and social development related activities, including poverty reduction, for purposes of supporting the development planning processes in the sub-region.

Through this Unit, the Secretariat provides support to the OECS Member States in the following:

1. Social Development Policy and Planning

- Formulation of social development policies – A sub-regional Social Development Policy Framework for the OECS Region has been prepared to guide these activities
- Social sector programme assessments
- Institutional strengthening for improved social planning

2. Social Data Collection & Dissemination

- Design and development of social indicators databases
- Coordination of census 2001 preparatory activities for the OECS region, including post-census data analysis, and dissemination activities
- Provision of equipment and training for the design and dissemination of national social data management systems

3. Poverty Reduction Strategies

- Preparation of Poverty Reduction Strategy Documents
- Conduct of related background research and data collection activities

4. Capacity Building and Training

- Training courses to enhance capacities for analysis of data for improved policy formulation and monitoring.
- Building up competencies to produce speedy and high-quality analytic reports on a regular basis.

5. Assessment and Monitoring of Human and Social Development

- Production of first Human Development Report for the OECS Region - exploration of the unique meaning of human development within the OECS context; the construction and analytical aspects of the human development indices; assessment of the region's economic and social performance and its impact on human development.

These activities have been executed through a number of projects funded by UNDP, UNICEF, IDB and the World Bank.