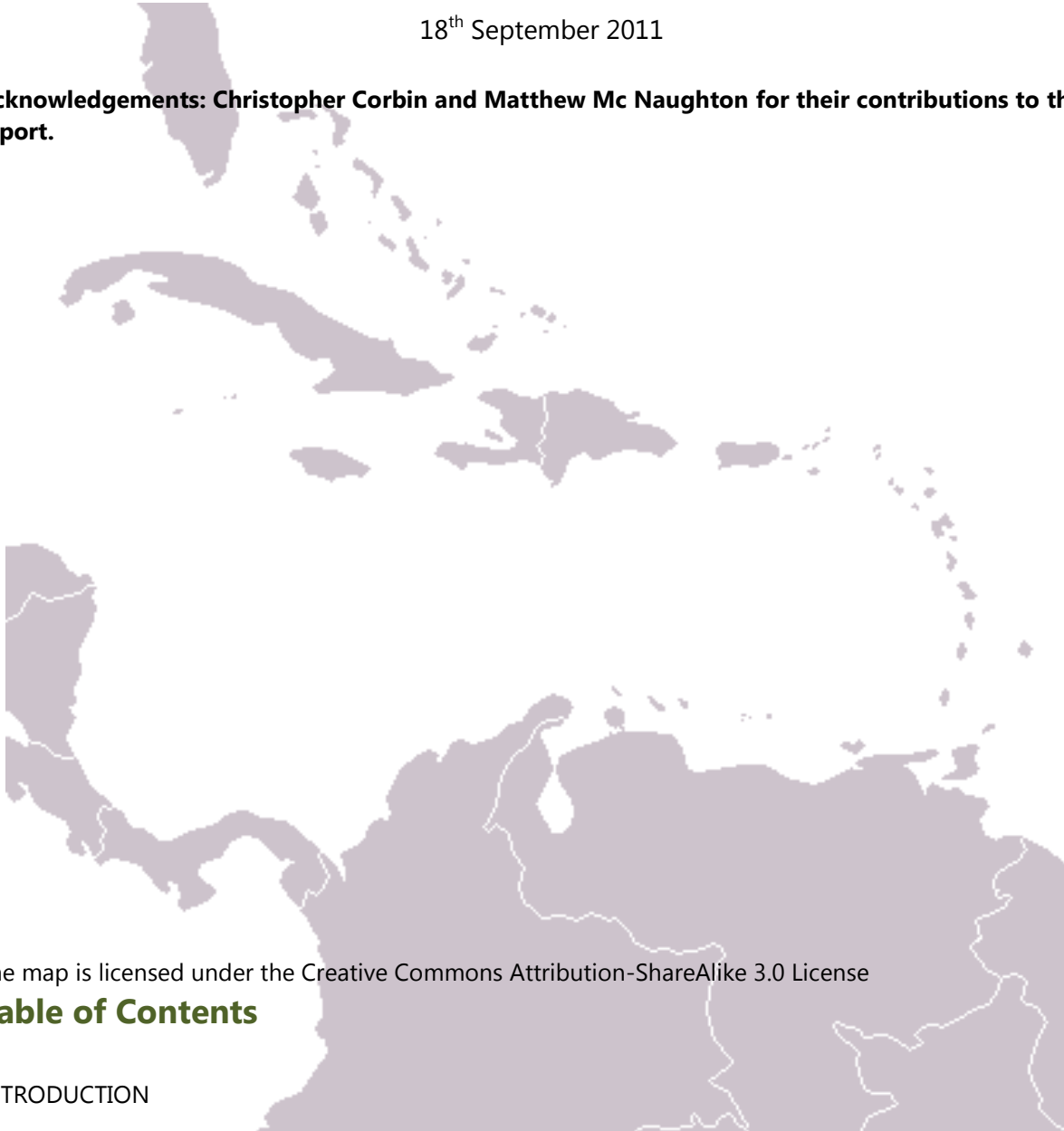# A Review of Freedom of Information, Data Protection and Open Data in the Caribbean

**This report was done for the Public Sector Information online: towards a Global policy framework workshop held at the Internet Governance Forum
Nairobi, Kenya 2011**

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INTRODUCTION

As an exploration of the possibilities for a global policy for public sector information for UN member states continue an assessment of what is happening in the realm, of freedom of information, data privacy and open data in the Caribbean region should also be included. Caribbean countries are increasingly recognising the importance of freedom of information and data privacy laws. However, the research conducted for this paper reveals that regional efforts will be essential in helping to form and enforce data laws, which can enable the provision of public sector information from Caribbean countries online. All Caribbean states are also UN member States. Freedom of information however does not in most cases provide the type of supportive infrastructure needed for open data.

Of the 16 Caribbean states[1] 7 have enacted freedom of information legislation and 4 have Data Protection legislation. There are however a few open data databases that have been identified in several countries. These tend to be from academic institutions and government projects and many are industry specific (e.g. focused on agriculture and fisheries). Some are also developed with external collaboration. Although some international organisations do not categorise Belize (located in Central America), Guyana and Suriname (located in South America) as Caribbean,

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[1] These are Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Christopher and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

history has led them to be included in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and so they are categorised as Caribbean countries in this this study[2]. To a lesser degree Caribbean islands, which are independent territories of the United Kingdom, The Netherlands, France and the United States are also referenced.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

The research undertaken revealed:

- 7 countries have legislation (Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago
- 4 countries have draft legislation (Barbados, Dominica, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia)
- 2 countries have freedom of information as constitutional only (Grenada, The Bahamas)
- 3 countries have no reference to freedom of information (Cuba, Haiti, Suriname)

Table 1: Freedom of Information Legislation in the Caribbean

UN Member State	Freedom of Information Leg	Constitutional Only	Draft	Nothing Exists	Additional Information
Antigua & Barbuda	The Freedom of Information Act, 2004[3]				Article 12 of the 1981 Constitution provides for a general protection of freedom of expression including a right to seek information. An Independent Information Commission is responsible for the general oversight of the system, The Antigua and Barbuda Constitutional Order 1981 [4]
The Bahamas		Article 23(1) of the Constitution includes the right to receive and impart ideas and information without interference within the right to freedom of expression[5].			The current government has promised to pass a Freedom of Information Law before the end of its term[6]
Barbados			The Freedom of		The Government has proposed a Freedom of Information Bill. They launched various

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			Information Act, 2008[7]		initiatives to enable citizens to comment on the bill. A commissioner of information will also examine any grey areas in the bill. However, it is not yet passed leading some citizens concerned.[8]
Belize	The Freedom of Information Act 1994				This provides for access to documents held by government departments. The Act however does not apply to the courts and the Governor General.[9]
Cuba				None	
Dominica			Draft		The Government says a freedom of information bill is being drafted for consideration.[10]
Dominican Republic	Law on Access to Information on 28 July 2004.				There is recognition of the need for reform of the law.[11]
Grenada			Freedom of Information Act (Draft)		In 2009, the government drafted and circulated for comments a Freedom of Information Act
Guyana	Access to Information Bill 2011 (passed on 15th Sept 2011)[12]				Read more[13]
Jamaica	Access to Information Act, 2002 - The FOI Act was passed in June 2002 and became				The Access to Information unit has been established to spearhead and guide the implementation and administration of Access to Information act. Initially, the Act was to be implemented across the whole of government, but in December 2004 the Act was amended to permit it to be phased into

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[7] Freedom of Information Draft Bill Barbados, http://www.gov.bb/portal/page/portal/GISMEDIA%20CENTREPUBLICATIONS%20MANAGEMENT/Government%20Publications%20Uploader/Freedom%20Of%20Information%20Bill%202008%20with%20Introduction.pdf

[8] Barbados Free Press (2011), WE TOLD YOU SO: Anti-Corruption legislation buried in dark hole, 28 August 2011 http://barbadosfreepress.wordpress.com/2011/08/28/we-told-you-so-anti-corruption-legislation-buried-in-dark-hole/

[9] Belize Freedom Of Information Act, 1994 No. 9 of 1994 http://www.informacionpublica.gub.uy/sitio/descargas/normativas-internacionales-legislacion/belize.pdf

[10] Dominica News Online (2011), Gov't drafting more legislation for ICT development, January 31st, 2011 http://dominicanewsonline.com/news/all-news/technology/govt-drafting-more-legislation-for-ict-development/ news/technology/govt-drafting-more-legislation-for-ict-development/

[11] Torres N (2011) Conferees Discuss FOIA Reforms in Dominican Republic, 1 July 2011 http://www.freedominfo.org/2011/07/conferees-discuss-foia-reforms-in-dominican-republic/

[12] http://www.parliament.gov.gy/documents/bill102011.pdf

[13] Caribbean News(2011), Freedom of information legislation passed in Guyana, September 17, 2011 http://www.caribbeannewsnow.com/topstory-Freedom-of-information-legislation-passed-in-Guyana-7883.html

	effective in 2003.[14]				effect in four phases, starting in January 2004. All Ministries had implemented the Act by May 2005, and all departments and agencies were fully implemented by July 2005[15]
St Lucia		Article 12 of the Constitution includes the freedom to receive and communicate ideas and information without interference as part of the right to freedom of expression[16].			The Ministry of Communications, Works, Transport and Public Utilities in collaboration with the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), under HIPCAR Project Phase II held consultations on June 16 and 17 to update and modernize the Freedom of Information Bill. The draft proposed legislation was presented to media stakeholders[17]. The bill should be passed soon.
St Vincent & The Grenadines	Freedom of Information Act 2003				
St. Kitts and Nevis			Freedom of Information bill 2006		Recommendation for the St. Christopher – Nevis Freedom of Information Bill 2006,
Suriname				None	
Trinidad and Tobago	The Freedom of Information Act was passed on November 4, 1999 and it came into effect on February 20, 2001				The minister of government who holds the information portfolio is responsible for overseeing the operation and implementation of the Act. This minister will prepare and present an annual report on the on the operation of the Act to the parliament.[18]

Common Freedom of Information Principles

Freedom of Information legislation was endorsed by Commonwealth Law Ministers in 1999. It put forward the Common Freedom of Information Principles.[19] The Commonwealth however

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[14] http://www.humanrightsinitiative.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=286&Itemid=270

[15] Banisar D (2006), Freedom of Information around the World 2006:A Global Survey of Access to Government Information Laws, Privacy International 2006.https://www.privacyinternational.org/foi/foisurvey2006.pdf

[16] Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (no date), Right to Information: International - Member States' Laws & Papers http://www.humanrightsinitiative.org/programs/ai/rti/international/laws_&_papers.htm

[17] Ally A (2011) Government and media talk Information Bill Freedom of Information Bill in its final stages 3 August 2011 http://stluciastar.com/content/news/government-and-media-discuss-information-bill/

[18] Freedom of Information Act website, http://www.foia.gov.tt

[19] Privacy International website, Commonwealth Freedom of Information Principles, Meeting of Commonwealth Law Ministers Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 3-7 May 1999 https://www.privacyinternational.org/article/commonwealth-freedom-information-principles (Last accessed 17th Sept 2011)

consists of 54 countries and only 12 are Caribbean independent nations[20]. While some governments are advocating the provision of public information nationally, a lot of focus is currently being placed on regional support for national data related initiatives.

HIPCAR: Harmonization of ICT Policies, Legislation and Regulatory Procedures in the Caribbean
The HIPCAR project "Enhancing Competiveness in the Caribbean through the Harmonization of ICT Policies, Legislation and Regulatory Procedures" was launched in Grenada in December 2008. This aims to respond to both the challenges and the opportunities of information and communication and the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) and the European Commission (EC) have signed an agreement to "Support for the Establishment of Harmonized Policies for the ICT market in the ACP", as a component of the Programme "ACP-Information and Communication Technologies (@ACP)" within the framework of the 9th European Development Fund (EDF)"[21]. 15 Caribbean member states are party to this. Cuba is the only country excluded and it is not an ACP country[22]. The research revealed that there is no Freedom of Information or Data Privacy law in Cuba. However, a number of open data portals, in relation to research and medicine have been identified in the country. HIPCAR aims to assist CARIFORUM countries[23] to "harmonize their information and communication technology (ICT) policies, legislation and regulatory procedures"[24]. Access to Public Information and Freedom of Information and Data Privacy/Protection Legislation also falls within HIPCAR's mandate.

In addition the HIPCAR Assessment Report on Freedom of Information[25], which examined all Caribbean states (with the exception of Cuba, who is not party to this initiative) provides even further details into the state of freedom of information in the Caribbean. Tables and summaries from this report have been provided below.

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[20] U.S. Library of Congress, Commonwealth Caribbean http://countrystudies.us/caribbean-islands/2.htm   (Last accessed 17th Sept 2011)
[21] HIPCAR (2010), Model Policy Guidelines & Legislative Texts: Establishment of Harmonized Policies for the ICT Market in the ACP countries, July 2010, pg. iii http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/projects/ITU_EC_ACP/hipcar/reports/wg2/docs/HIPCAR_1-3-B_Model_Policy_Guidelines_and_Legislative_Texts_Privacy_and_Data_Protection.pdf (Last accessed 17th Sept 2011)
[22] ACP refers to African Caribbean and Pacific States as categorised by their special relationship with the EU.
[23] The CARIFORUM is a regional organisation of fifteen independent countries in the Caribbean region (Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Christopher and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago). These states are all signatories to the ACP–EC Conventions.
[24] HIPCAR (2010) Model Policy Guidelines & Legislative Texts: Establishment of Harmonized Policies for the ICT Market in the ACP countries op cit pg. 1
[25] Assessment Report on Freedom of Information, Gilberto Martins de Almeida - Presentation at the First Consultation Workshop for Working Group 1 – ITU-EC HIPCAR Project Saint Lucia, 8-12 March 2010 http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/projects/ITU_EC_ACP/hipcar/events/2010/wg1/docs_wk1/Gilberto_Martins_FOI_HIPCAR_WG_1_workshop_01_20100308.pdf (Last accessed 17th Sept 2011)

Table 2: General Status of Freedom of Information: Source: Assessment Report on Freedom of Information, Gilberto Martins de Almeida - Presentation at the First Consultation Workshop for Working Group 1 – ITU-EC HIPCAR Project Saint Lucia, 8-12 March 2010[26]

Country	Type Of Info	Obligation to publish automatically	Records	Exemptions	Enforcement, review and appeals	Protection of whistleblowers	Fees	Limits
Antigua & Barbuda	Limited	Limited	None	Fair	Good	Good	Good	Good
Bahamas	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None
Barbados	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None
Belize	Good	Limited	None	Limited	Good	None	None	Good
Dominica	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None
Dominican Republic	Good	Good	Good	Fair	Good	None	Good	Good
Grenada	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None
Guyana	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None
Haiti	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None
Jamaica	Good	Limited	None	Fair	Good	None	Good	Fair
St. Kitts and Nevis	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None
St. Lucia	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	Limited	Limited	None	Fair	None	None	Good	Good
Suriname	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None
Trinidad and Tobago	Limited	Good	None	Fair	None	None	Good	Good

Source: Assessment Report on Freedom of Information, Gilberto Martins de Almeida - Presentation at the First Consultation Workshop for Working Group 1 – ITU-EC HIPCAR Project Saint Lucia, 8-12 March 2010[27]

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[26] Ibid
[27] Ibid

Type of Information

The HIPCAR report found that:

- "3 of the legal texts in the targeted Caribbean countries provide for all, nearly all or the most substantive portions of the key elements.
- No country legal text includes some of the key elements but miss substantial points.
- 3 countries have reference on the form of policy or consultation document or draft legislation.
- In 9 countries there is no reference in the legislative texts to the key issues."

Table 3: Type of Information[28]

Good	Fair	Limited	None
Belize, Dominican Republic, Jamaica		Antigua & Barbuda, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago	The Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, Suriname.

Obligation to publish, and automatic publication

The HIPCAR report found that:

- "3 of the legal texts in the targeted Caribbean countries provide for all, nearly all or the most substantive portions of the key elements.
- No country legal text includes some of the key elements but miss substantial points.
- 3 countries have reference on the form of policy or consultation document or draft legislation.
- In 9 countries there is no reference in the legislative texts to the key issues."

Table 4: Obligation to publish and automatic publication[29]

Good	Fair	Limited	None
Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago		Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Jamaica, St.	The Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada,

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[28] Ibid

[29] Ibid

		Vincent and the Grenadines	Guyana, Haiti, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, Suriname.

Records Management and Maintenance[30]

The HIPCAR report found that:

- "The Dominican Republic's legal text provides for all, nearly all or the most substantive portions of the key elements but in all other countries there is no reference in the legislative text to key issues."

DATA PRIVACY AND PROTECTION

The research revealed that:

- 4 countries have data privacy and protection legislation (The Bahamas, Barbados, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago)
- 1 country has draft data privacy and protection legislation (St. Lucia)
- 2 countries has data privacy and protection included in their constitution (Belize, Dominican Republic)
- 8 countries have no data privacy and protection legislation (Antigua and Barbuda, Cuba, Dominica, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevis, Suriname.

Table 5: Data Privacy/Protection Legislation in the Caribbean

UN Member State	Data Privacy/Protection Leg	Constitutional Only	Draft	Nothing Exists	Additional information
Antigua & Barbuda				None	
Bahamas	The Data Protection (Privacy of Personal Information) Act 2003[31]				The Constitution also provides a general right to privacy. If a person alleges that a Government Authority has improperly or unreasonably used any information in relation to himself, he can make a complaint to the Ombudsman under the Ombudsman Act who is authorized under

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[30] Ibid

[31] Parliament of The Bahamas (2002), A Bill For An Act To Protect The Privacy Of Individuals In Relation To Personal Data And To Regulate The Collection, Processing, Keeping, Use And Disclosure Of Certain Information Relating To Individuals And To Provide For Matters Incidental Thereto Or Connected Therewith. Enacted by the Parliament of The Bahamas Session: 2002 Bill No. 26 http://www.lexbahamas.com/Data%20Protection%20Bill%202003.pdf

				that Act to make the necessary investigations[32]
Barbados	Data Protection Act (2005) - Barbados			
Belize		Protection of the privacy of all persons in Belize is guaranteed by the Belize Constitution Act[33]		
Cuba			None	
Dominica			None	
Dominican Republic		The 2002 Constitution establishes a minimum protection of the right to privacy[34].		
Grenada			None	
Guyana			None	
Jamaica			None	
St Lucia			The Protection of Privacy Act (Still a draft Bill)	The Protection of Privacy Act is based on the commonwealth draft model legislation.[35]
St Vincent & The Grenadines	Privacy Act 2003			
St. Kitts and Nevis			None	
Suriname			None	
Trinidad and Tobago	Data Protection Act 2011[36]			

[32] Governance and Institutional Development Division, Commonwealth Secretariat (2004),op cit

[33] Governance and Institutional Development Division, Commonwealth Secretariat (2004), op cit.

[34] Privacy International (no date), PHR2006 - Dominican Republic: Constitutional Framework https://www.privacyinternational.org/article/phr2006-dominican-republic

[35] The National Review (2011), Government's legislative Agenda No. 21, 27 August 2011 - Towards Good Governance and Standards. http://www.stlucia.gov.lc/nationalreview/2011/National%20Review%20August%2027,%202011%20-%20Issue%2021.pdf

Table 6: A HIPCAR Assessment Report on Privacy and Data Protection[37] also provides some more in-depth findings for the countries under study (excluding Cuba). A table which charts this has been provided below.

Country	Legal Mandate	Institutional Framework	Regulatory Empowerment	Collection of Personal Information	Storage and Use of Information	Disclosure of Information
Antigua & Barbuda	None	None	None	None	None	None
The Bahamas	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
Barbados	None	None	None	None	None	None
Belize	None	None	None	None	None	None
Dominica	None	None	None	None	None	None
The Dominican Republic	None	None	None	None	None	None
Grenada	None	None	None	None	None	None
Guyana	None	None	None	None	None	None
Haiti	None	None	None	None	None	None
Jamaica	None	None	None	None	None	None
St. Kitts and Nevis	None	None	None	None	None	None
St. Lucia	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good
St Vincent and the Grenadines	Fair	Poor	Fair	Good	Fair	Fair
Suriname	None	None	None	None	None	None

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[36] Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago (2011), First Session Tenth Parliament Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Act No. 13 of 2011, AN ACT to provide for the protection of personal privacy and information *[Assented to 22nd June, 2011],* ENACTED by the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago http://www.ttparliament.org/legislations/a2011-13.pdf

[37] Assessment Report on Privacy and Data Protection Presentation at the
First Consultation Workshop for Working Group 1 – ITU-EC HIPCAR Project Saint Lucia, 8-12 March 2010
http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/projects/ITU_EC_ACP/hipcar/events/2010/wg1/docs_wk1/Kwesi_Prescod_Privacy_Data_Protection_HIPCAR_WG_1_workshop%2001_20100308.pdf

Trinidad and Tobago	Good	Good/Fair	Good	Good	Good	Good

Source [Assessment Report on Privacy and Data Protection Presentation at the First Consultation Workshop for Working Group 1 – ITU-EC HIPCAR Project Saint Lucia, 8-12 March 2010](#)

The HIPCAR report found that there is a need for harmonisation and consensus on what is considered to be a "public authority"[38]

Table 7: OPEN DATA PORTALS IN THE CARIBBEAN

(More information on portals marked * can be found on OpenDoar - http://www.opendoar.org/index.html)

UN Member state	Country	Open Data Portal	Draft	Does not exist	Links	Summary
British overseas territory	Anguilla	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Y	Antigua & Barbuda	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Y	The Bahamas	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Y	Barbados	Virtual Trade Policy Portal	N/A	N/A	http://www.virtualtradeportal.org/cms/	It is a project of the Shridath Ramphal Centre for International Trade Law, Policy & Services of the University of the West Indies in Barbados and is funded by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). It is mapping the trade sectors of the Caribbean region by aggregating and disseminating recent data and research on these sectors.
		Barbados Integrated Government Portal			http://www.gov.bb/portal/page/portal/BIG_Portal_Home_Page	Barbados has been identified as the first Caribbean country to have a single sing on for its national government portal
Y	Belize	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
British Overseas Territory	Bermuda	Open Bermuda			http://openbermuda.com	This is described as "A movement to push Bermuda's Government and businesses to make public data freely accessible to the public". No update on this initiative has been made available on the site.
British Overseas	British Virgin Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

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[38] Ibid

Territory						
British Overseas Territory	Cayman Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Y	Cuba	* Scientific Electronic Library Online - Cuba	N/A	N/A	http://www.scielo.sld.cu/	This provides a collection of selected publications from Cuban medical journals. Abstracts are available in English and Spanish.
		* EHTC Repositorio Institucional	N/A	N/A	http://www.repositorio.ehtc.cu/	This provides access to Hospitality and Tourism research. In Spanish.
		* Repositorio de Tesis de Doctorado en Ciencias Biomédicas y de la Salud de Cuba	N/A	N/A	http://tesis.repo.sld.cu/	This provides access to the student research (theses) on science and health.
		* Biblioteca Virtual de la EcuRed	N/A	N/A	http://biblioteca.ecured.cu/	This provides access to research from Cuban Universities. In Spanish
		* Repositorio de Legislación en Salud de Cuba	N/A	N/A	http://legislacion.sld.cu/	This provides access to legislative documents of the Ministry of Health, Cuba. – n.b. does not seem to be working
	Dominican Republic	* Repositorio Institucional de la Subsecretaría de Estado de Cooperación Internacional	N/A	N/A	http://190.166.45.252:8080/jspui/	This provides access to the documentation relating to Subsecretaría de Estado de Cooperación Internacional of República Dominicana. Some of the collections are restricted to registered users only. The interface is in Spanish.
		Empleateya.net	N/A	N/A	http://www.empleateya.net	an employment seeking portal with polls and online form submissions
	Grenada	Web Portal of Grenada Government	N/A	N/A	http://www.gov.gd/	Information is available but not open. Interestingly they also have a hurricane tracking map on the website
Overseas region of France	Guadeloupe	* Manioc (Bibliothèque numérique, Amazonie, plateau des Guyanes (Digital library on the Caribbean, the Amazon, the Guyana Plateau))	N/A	N/A	http://www.manioc.org/	This site provides access to the collection of materials relating to the Caribbean, the Amazon, the Guyana Plateau and regions or areas of interest related to these territories. In French.
Y	Haiti	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Y	Guyana	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Y	Jamaica	* Data.org.jm	N/A	N/A	data.org.jm	This is a project of the Mona School Of Business, UWI Mona campus in collaboration with the Rural Agricultural Development Agency (RADA) in the Ministry of Agriculture. The data catalog includes Farm data, Crop data and Crop retail prices. There is a demo application online (http://data.org.jm/demo-app/) that helps to visualise the data set. The data API is close to being complete. They are also developing a web application and an Andoid mobile app that utilise data from the API.
		* Mona Online Research Database	N/A	N/A	http://mord.mona.uwi.edu/	Provides research information
		* eJamaica.org Public Digital Repository	N/A	N/A	http://www.ejamaica.org/library/	A public digital repository for information about Jamaica
		* DSpace at the University of the West Indies, Mona	N/A	N/A	http://dspace.mona.uwi.edu/	This site provides access to the output of the institution.
Overseas region of France	Martinique	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
British Overseas Territory	Montserrat	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Overseas territories of the Netherlands.	Netherlands Antilles	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Overseas territory of the United States	Puerto Rico	* Repositorio de la Universidad de Puerto Rico	N/A	N/A	http://repositorio.upr.edu/	This provides access to the research output of the institution. The interface is in Spanish.
Y	Saint Lucia	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Y	St Vincent & The Grenadines	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Y	St. Kitts and Nevis	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Y	Suriname	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Y	Trinidad and Tobago	mFisheries	N/A	N/A	https://www.edu.tt/cirp/mfisheries/	mFisheries is developing capacity in the Caribbean to pursue opportunities arising from the provision of innovative mobile-

						enabled services for its poor communities, and providing related empirical data and analysis to inform Caribbean policy and regulation. It focuses its attention on the small scale fisheries industry in the Caribbean, with particular emphasis on Trinidad and Tobago.
		UWISpace	N/A	N/A	http://uwispace.sta.uwi.edu/dspace/	This site provides access to the output of the institution. The interface is in English.
		Ministry of Finance	N/A	N/A	http://finance.gov.tt/	Provides financial information. The Ministry of Finance is also inviting all interested persons to submit their ideas for 2012 National Budget
British overseas territory	Turks & Caicos Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Organized, unincorporated territory of the US	US Virgin Islands	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

OTHER ORGANISATIONS THAT HOLD CARIBBEAN DATA

The World Bank

The World Bank has been opening up their datasets and promoting the transparency and accountability that comes with doing so[39]. They are one of the first inter-governmental organisations to open up their data and make it freely available for reuse. Their 'open data initiative' is being used to improve aid effectiveness. Belize Guyana and Suriname are categorised as Latin American countries, however links to data on all 16 countries under study have also been provided below.

Table 8: World Bank Data per country[40]

Antigua and Barbuda	http://data.worldbank.org/country/antigua-and-barbuda
Barbados	http://data.worldbank.org/country/barbados
Bahamas	http://data.worldbank.org/country/bermuda
Belize	http://data.worldbank.org/country/belize
Cuba	http://data.worldbank.org/country/cuba
Dominica	http://data.worldbank.org/country/dominica
Dominican Republic	http://data.worldbank.org/country/dominican-republic

[39] WorldBank, Data.worldbank website, About, http://data.worldbank.org/about
[40] World Bank, Data.worldbank website, Country classifications http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-classifications

Grenada	http://data.worldbank.org/country/grenada
Guyana	http://data.worldbank.org/country/guyana
Haiti	http://data.worldbank.org/country/haiti
Jamaica	http://data.worldbank.org/country/jamaica
St Kitts and Nevis	http://data.worldbank.org/country/st-kitts-and-nevis
St Lucia	http://data.worldbank.org/country/st-lucia
St Vincent and the Grenadines	http://data.worldbank.org/country/st-vincent-and-the-grenadines
Suriname	http://data.worldbank.org/country/suriname
Trinidad and Tobago	http://data.worldbank.org/country/trinidad-and-tobago

Table 9: World Bank list of economies (18 July 2011)[41]

Economy	Code	Region	Income Group	Lending Category	Other
Antigua and Barbuda	ATG	Latin America & Caribbean	Upper middle income	IBRD	
Bahamas, The	BHS	Latin America & Caribbean	High income: nonOECD		
Barbados	BRB	Latin America & Caribbean	High income: nonOECD		
Cuba	CUB	Latin America & Caribbean	Upper middle income		
Dominica	DMA	Latin America & Caribbean	Upper middle income	IBRD	
Dominican Republic	DOM	Latin America & Caribbean	Upper middle income	IBRD	
Grenada	GRD	Latin America & Caribbean	Upper middle income		
Belize	BLZ	Latin America & Caribbean	Lower middle income	IBRD	
Guyana	GUY	Latin America & Caribbean	Lower middle income	IDA	HIPC
Haiti	HTI	Latin America & Caribbean	Low income	IDA	HIPC
Jamaica	JAM	Latin America & Caribbean	Upper middle income	IBRD	
St. Kitts and	KNA	Latin America	Upper middle	IBRD	

[41] World Bank (2011), World Bank list of economies 18 July 2011
http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/LACEXT/0,,menuPK:258575~pagePK:146732~piPK:146813~theSitePK:258554,00.html

Nevis		& Caribbean	income		
St. Lucia	LCA	Latin America & Caribbean	Upper middle income	Blend	
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	VCT	Latin America & Caribbean	Upper middle income	Blend	
Suriname	SUR	Latin America & Caribbean	Upper middle income	IBRD	
Trinidad and Tobago	TTO	Latin America & Caribbean	High income: nonOECD	IBRD	

<u>Mapping for results</u>

The World Bank Institute partnered with AidData to georeference 1,216 active World Bank projects in 42 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, 27 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, Indonesia, and the Philippines and some African Development Bank projects[42]. They coded about 12,000 specific geographic locations. The Caribbean countries which have been geocoded for this project include the Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines[43].

ACADEMIC RESEARCH

Universities and academic institutes traditionally do a lot of research and therefore hold a lot of data. Data on the Caribbean is no exception. For instance, recently the University of East Anglia's Climatic Research Unit, as part of their work on "ClimateGate" released climate data from a number of countries. This included raw data from virtually all of the world's 5,000-plus weather stations which is not freely available. They included data from Trinidad and Tobago, though the government disapproved with the decision to make this data open[44].

OPEN DIRECTORIES

Open Data Directories are often populated voluntarily. For instance The Open Directory Project is "the largest, most comprehensive human-edited directory of the Web"[45], which is maintained by volunteers. This directory includes information and data on the Caribbean, but the majority of this is not open or raw data. The Directory of Open Access Repositories (*Open*DOAR) also provides this type of information[46]. Both can be used to find out about open data projects in the Caribbean.

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[42] **Stern A (2010), Mapping For Results, AidData, 8th August 2010 http://blog.aiddata.org/2010/08/mapping-for-results.html**

[43] World Bank, Mapping for Results (Latin America and Caribbean Data http://maps.worldbank.org/lac

[44] The only exceptions concern 19 weather stations in Poland, for which the Polish national weather service has declined to release data, for reasons it has not elaborated. Black R (2011), Climate unit releases virtually all remaining data, BBC News, 27th July 2011 http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-14315747

[45] Open Directory Project, About the Open Directory Project http://www.dmoz.org/docs/en/about.html

[46] Opendoar website, http://www.opendoar.org/index.html

GEOSPATIAL DATA

Geospatial data is vital in the Caribbean particularly for disaster management. Resources on this can be found on the Caribbean GIS blog[47]. A lot of this data is related to climate change and natural disasters, which is very important to the region given its vulnerability to rising sea levels and hurricanes. For example CarryMap was used to access forest fires in Mountain Pine Ridge Forest Reserve in Belize.[48] Also the Wide Availability and Response Project (WARP)[49] was launched by URISA GISCorps and MapAction after the 5th URISA Caribbean GIS Conference, which looked at lessons learnt from missions to Haiti and elsewhere. In addition, the Caribbean Marine Atlas (CMA) Pilot Project "identifies, collects and organises available geo-spatial datasets into an atlas of environmental themes for the Caribbean region as a support service to the sustainable development and integrated management of marine and coastal areas in the region"[50]. It began as a joint initiative of Barbados, Cuba, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, and Turks and Caicos Islands (a British territory). Clearly, this would serve the Caribbean well, including those islands that are independent territories[51]. This is an extensive topic and a lot is being done in the region to promote the use of GIS. Additional research can be done on this in relation to open data given its importance.

ASSESSMENT OF E-GOVERNMENT IN THE CARIBBEAN

UN eGov Report 2010

The UN eGOV Report for 2010 examined how e-government can address the continuing world financial and economic crisis. It analysed how public trust can be gained through open government data based on open standards and transparency. Technology is identified as important in empowering citizens to hold government to account as well as improve public service delivery[52].

The report found that the Caribbean region improved e-government. They scored above the

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[47] Caribbean GIS blog, Geographic Information Systems/ Science (GIS), and its application in and around the Caribbean. http://www.caribbeangis.org/

[48] Caribbean GIS (2011) (2011), Carrymap - Belize Forest Fires 5th May 2011 http://www.caribbeangis.org/

[49] GIS Data Miner – Caribbean "The goal of this project is to collate spatial data concerning administrative districts, transport networks and population data for the Caribbean Basin countries of Belize, Bermuda and Saint Lucia. The resulting datasets will be used by the disaster-response NGO MapAction, URISA GISCorps, humanitarian agencies and national emergency management organizations in humanitarian missions supporting search and rescue, logistics for food distribution to affected populations." http://www.giscorps.org/documents/mapaction_jd.pdf 7 volunteers have been recruited for the project. http://www.giscorps.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=96&Itemid=63

[50] Caribbean Marine Atlas website, http://www.caribbeanmarineatlas.net/about

[51] Caribbean GIS (2010), Caribbean Marine Atlas, 29th November 2010, http://caribbean-gis.blogspot.com/2010/11/caribbean-marine-atlas.html

[52] United Nations (2010), United Nations E-Government Survey 2010: Leveraging e-government at a time of financial and economic crisis http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan038851.pdf

world average in the 2010 survey while in 2008 the score was slightly below the world average[53]. In this survey Belize is categorized as Central America and Guyana and Suriname as South America, but figures for these countries are also included below.

Table 10: E-government development in the Caribbean[54]

Country	E-government development index value		World e-government development ranking	
	2010	**2008**	**2010**	**2008**
Barbados	0.5714	0.5667	40	46
Antigua and Barbuda	0.5154	0.4485	55	96
Bahamas	0.4871	0.4911	65	71
Trinidad and Tobago	0.4806	0.5307	67	54
St. Kitts and Nevis	0.4691	0.4814	75	78
Dominican Republic	0.4557	0.4943	84	68
St. Lucia	0.4471	0.4746	88	80
Jamaica	0.4467	0.4679	89	85
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	0.4355	0.4306	94	98
Cuba	0.4321	0.3990	96	111
Grenada	0.4277	0.4545	99	92
Dominica	0.4149	0.3746	105	116
Haiti	0.2074	0.2097	169	165
Sub-regional average	**0.4454**	**0.4480**		
Belize (categorised as Central America)	0.3513	0.4102	120	107
Guyana (categorised as South America)	0.4140	0.4375	106	97
Suriname (categorised as South America)	0.3283	0.3472	127	123
Sub-regional average (including Belize, Guyana and Suriname)	**To calculate**	**To calculate**		
World average	**0.4406**	**0.4514**		

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[53] Ibid
[54] Ibid

According to the UN eGOV report:

Better telecommunications infrastructure, higher adult literacy and more broadband subscribers were important in placing Barbados in the lead for e-government[55]. Barbados was also identified as the first Caribbean country to have an integrated single-sign-on service for its national portal which enables greater use of e-government initiatives[56].

Furthermore:

"Antigua and Barbuda saw the biggest increase in the global ranking by 41 positions to rank 55th globally. Cuba and Dominica also had their rankings increase significantly over the 2008 Survey by 15 and 11 positions respectively. Cuba is now ranked 96th and Dominica 105th globally.

The Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago and Cuba led the region in the area of online services. Top scores in ministry sites were received by Education and Labour in the Dominican Republic along with the Ministry of Health in Cuba.

The Dominican Republic's Ministry of Labour offers key user services to citizens, including Empleateya.net, an employment seeking portal with polls and online form submissions and a related website, FlujoMigratorio, for tracking emigration and employment in Spain.

The national portal for Grenada integrates great design with social media elements that enable its citizens, especially youth, to share information on social networking platforms with the government.

The Ministry of Finance of Trinidad and Tobago has implemented a Web-based procurement tool, Finance.gov.tt, that allows suppliers to bid online for contracts to supply of goods or services."[57]

TOWARDS A CARIBBEAN OPEN INSTITUTE

An event titled "Towards a Caribbean Open Institute: Data, Communications and Impact" was held in June 2010 to discuss the use of open data for policy research in the Caribbean[58]. The event, which had the support of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) brought a regional group of researchers and organisations together. It "explored how open institutional data approaches, Web 2.0 communications and evaluation methods could promote regional co-

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[55] Ibid
[56] Ibid
[57] bid
[58] Caribbean Information Society Portal http://www.carib-is.net/node/96

operation on issues such as agriculture, fishing, trade, tourism, immigration, information communication technologies and entrepreneurship"[59]. The multiple stakeholders in attendance provided very useful insight into the state of open data in the Caribbean. They identified this as important for building the Caribbean Knowledge Economy. They however identified obstacles like cultural constraints, lack of expertise, lack of investment, and raw data[60] (See Box 2 for a list of open data challenges identified). It was also noted that the Access to Information Acts in the Caribbean do not necessarily go far enough in supporting open data. "(Freedom of information) is quite an anathema to the idea of open data which would mean being willing to share information even before knowing who would be using it and why. This is a new framework that we would want to endorse". Some of the challenges that exist in the Caribbean are the same for many countries in the rest of the world, and it seems as if regional initiatives will be useful given some of the constraints that exist in the developing this nationally. It was agreed that there needs to be a vision and guidelines which can help drive open data in the Caribbean. (Box 1 provides a summary of Guidelines and Recommendations presented from the conference).

Box 1: Summary of Guidelines and Recommendations

<div style="border:1px solid black; padding:10px;">

"Among others, the group propose that

(i) Governments in the region embrace Open Data programs as an essential component of their information dissemination strategies and development goals

(ii) Caribbean researchers actively collaborate and engage in dialogue and sharing information; and policy makers use this evidence-based information for decisions, and

(iii) the civil society increasing make use of available data to create new services and provide new ways for communicating valuable information and positively impacting and empowering the constituents they serve.

Initial steps include the identification of champions working in the Caribbean or from the different Diasporas, sharing of best practices, awareness raising, capacity building, pilot projects, open data repositories, effective use of traditional and new media and support to the Caribbean language diversity. This should be developed inside a framework of monitoring and evaluation that acknowledges complexity and supports learning."

Source: IDRC (2010), Towards a Caribbean Open Institute: Data, Communications and Impact. Summary of Guidelines and Recommendations, William Gordon Conference Room, the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel, Kingston, Jamaica, June 30 – July 1, 2010 http://web.idrc.ca/es/ev-157707-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

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[59] EPSI Platform (2010), Open Data and the Caribbean, Visioning and Promoting Caribbean Open Government Data Policy, Kingston, Jamaica: 15 July 2010 Source: IDRC (International Research and Development Council), Canada and the World Wide Web Foundation http://www.epsiplus.net/news/news/open_data_in_the_caribbean

[60] Ibid

Box 2: Open data Challenges in the Caribbean

On the Ground: Challenges in Data Collection
- Limited access to high quality data that is timely and accurate. This can be seen as a challenge of access as well as a challenge of resources to finance the collection of meaningful data.
- Limited availability of structured, current, machine-readable and locally relevant data for public consumption.
- It is sometimes considered that data produced using public resources is the private property of the organization which produced it and, therefore, Caribbean research data is not normally widely available or accessible. Strategies are needed for improving the quality of data about the Caribbean through data gathering, data systematization and data analysis.
- There is not enough confidence in local expertise in the generation of research to inform policy.
- There is a need to harness cultural diversity and local expertise in collecting contextually relevant data.

Evidence to Decision: Knowledge Processes in Influencing Policy
- There is a challenge in initiating and maintaining communication across various networks, countries and languages. Researchers may not know how to best collaborate in data collection and analysis. They also may not understand the policy contexts in which they must operate or the importance of developing a communication strategy to support their efforts to have an impact.
- Capacity-building efforts are required within research groups and local/regional institutions to effectively use new technologies to communicate research results and recommendations to policy makers and the public at large.
- There may not be sufficient institutional incentives for research institutions to make data available as well as institutional incentives to communicate research results to policymakers.
- There are also challenges of advocacy towards greater awareness among the policy makers and the public. Networking is not effectively used as a channel towards buy-in and support.

Political Will of Policy and Decision Makers
- There are a number of cultural and institutional limitations that hinder the use data, and other forms of evidence, for policy making.
- A cultural shift is required for policy makers to understand the value of evidence as input to decisions and in the development of well-designed social programs.
- Buy-in from policy makers, public organizations and civil society is needed. However, there is also the problem of internal bureaucracy, conflicting demands, contradictory evidence, little public interest and corruption. They all can hinder the effectiveness of the evidence as basis for policy.
- The effective implementation of policy can be difficult without the use of consistent and appropriate monitoring and evaluation measures. Policy makers need to identify the value of evaluating projects appropriately."

Source: IDRC (2010), Towards a Caribbean Open Institute: Data, Communications and Impact. Summary of Guidelines and Recommendations, William Gordon Conference Room, the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel, Kingston, Jamaica, June 30 – July 1, 2010 http://web.idrc.ca/es/ev-157707-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

They also proposed a stakeholder and network analysis for determining other individuals, groups and organizations that could help develop a Caribbean open data. "This initial map would be useful to determine what capacities lie where, and what capacities need to be strengthened to take on Open Data and to promote its place in the policy process"[61]. Since Caribbean Stakeholders, the IDRC and World Wide Web Foundation are continuing collaboration and work on joint initiatives it would be worth bringing these stakeholders into our network rather than trying to duplicate efforts[62]. It seems as though a lot of mapping could have been done or is being undertaken by regional stakeholders as well as independent technologists. In many respects this is similar to the way in which the open data community has been built elsewhere.

CONCLUSION

There is still a lot to be done in the Caribbean to not only implement, but also enforce legislation related to freedom of information and data protection. Public Sector information is increasingly being made available, but much more is needed for it to be accessible, available in a raw format for reuse as well as accessed by the public. However, there is room for optimism as initiatives being undertaken through HIPCAR as well as multistakeholder work on the Caribbean Information Society Portal are supporting an open data (including public sector information) and technology oriented future for the Caribbean region.

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[61] IDRC (2010), Towards a Caribbean Open Institute: Data, Communications and Impact. Summary of Guidelines and Recommendations, William Gordon Conference Room, the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel, Kingston, Jamaica, June 30 – July 1, 2010 http://web.idrc.ca/es/ev-157707-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html

[62] EPSI Platform (2010), op cit.

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