



CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

Caribbean Sociological Association (CASA) Annual Conference 2026

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*Sociology of Societies in
Transition: Exploring Tensions
Between Stability and Change*

September
23 – 25
2026

University of
Guyana,
Georgetown,
Guyana

Several Caribbean societies are currently undergoing various socio-economic transformations driven by the discovery of substantial oil reserves, post-disaster recovery, geopolitical interventions, and other factors. These societies are navigating **post-disaster, environmental, digital, political, or geopolitical transitions** that shape the region's evolving social landscape.

Among these, **Guyana** stands out as a paradigmatic case of socio-economic transition. In 2015, extensive hydrocarbon deposits were discovered off the country's northern coast. This led to Guyana's "first oil" in 2020 and its initial revenue payout in 2022. Since these discoveries, Guyana has witnessed remarkable economic growth, with GDP expanding at unprecedented rates. The ripple effects of this economic boom are also evident in other dimensions of socio-economic life. As concerted efforts are being made to translate economic gains into tangible social development outcomes, there are still cries of poverty, inequality, and corruption coming from a sizable cross-section of the population.

Jamaica, still reeling from the devastating impact of Hurricane Ivan in 2004 and other disasters, has been undergoing a post-disaster transition, focusing on rebuilding and increasing resilience. The country has made strides in economic reform, investing in tourism, logistics, and renewable energy, aiming to create a more sustainable and equitable society.

Barbados' structural adjustment programme, supported by the IMF has had mixed results. Though, the macro-economic fundamentals of the country have tilted in a positive direction leading to a 4% economic growth and a 7.1% reduction in employment in 2024, and

increased investments in various areas, a sizable cross-section of the population has had to bear the burden of job losses, reduction in social welfare and other socio-economic shifts leading to an increase in inequalities.

Haiti and Venezuela stand as examples of countries both within and close to the Caribbean that are embroiled in crises with complex geopolitical dimensions. Haiti's ongoing struggle with gang violence, political instability, and economic hardship has led to a severe humanitarian crisis and the displacement of millions of its citizens. A similar situation is unfolding in Venezuela. Venezuela's socio-economic challenges, fuelled by political sanctions and political turmoil, have triggered a massive migration crisis, impacting regional stability.

The experiences of these countries highlight the complexities of managing socio-economic transitions in the Caribbean. As Caribbean societies, polities, and economies navigate their paths, they must balance economic expansion with social development, enlightened and democratic governance, environmental sustainability, and equitable distribution of benefits.

The aims of this conference are, among other things, to:

- Capture and analyse the dynamics of Caribbean societies undergoing socio-economic change;
- Rethink sociology and sociological analysis through the lens of local and regional experiences;
- Showcase the latest sociological research addressing issues critical to socio-economic development in the region;
- Attract a vibrant community of international scholars, researchers, and specialists working in related fields; and
- Facilitate debate, networking, and professional development across geographical boundaries and disciplinary divides.

Call for Contributions

Scholars within and beyond the region are encouraged to contribute to the conference by submitting their research in various forms. Contributions could be of a conceptual, critical, empirical, experimental, or theoretical nature in any area of sociological studies but particularly those that address issues related to the following subthemes.

Subthemes:

Socio-economic Transition: Most Caribbean countries have small and open economies that are vulnerable to external shocks. These shocks have both positive and negative implications for society at large. Positive shocks, such as Guyana's oil boom, bring tremendous growth opportunities but also risks, including inflation, unequal wealth distribution, and corruption. Shocks such as COVID-19 create opportunities to repurpose social infrastructure, emphasising accessibility and efficiency in public services such as health, education, and other social welfare, but they also expose weaknesses across various areas of socio-economic life. Papers that examine the intricate link (or disconnect) between economic growth, social development, and the equitable distribution of resources are particularly welcome.

Post-disaster and Environmental Transition: Climate change and natural disasters are constant threats that threaten the stability of Caribbean countries. Countries like Jamaica face challenges in rebuilding after hurricanes and other natural disasters, while rising sea levels threaten coastal communities in Guyana. Responding to these threats requires social education and mobilisation, as well as a transition to more sustainable practices. We seek papers that address the social dimension of environmental crises and transition.

Political Transition: The region's political landscape makes it an interesting subject matter for political sociology. Questions surrounding the transition from one kind of political framework to another, the socio-political implications of various forms of political representation such as PR in Guyana and FPTP in other small island states, the role of political activism, the strengthening of institutions and the support of inclusive politics, governance and transparency are just a few of the questions and issues that we intend to interrogate.

Geopolitical Transition: The Caribbean's history, strategic location, and resources make it a hub of global interests. These countries must therefore be able to navigate complex relationships with superpowers such as the US, China, and the EU skilfully to protect their sovereignty and advance their interests on the global stage. We welcome papers that interrogate the long history of external intervention in the Caribbean, new forms of geopolitics and their socio-political impact, and the role of the diaspora in advancing Caribbean issues and interests globally.

Digital Transition: The negative effects of COVID-19 notwithstanding, the pandemic accelerated digital adoption in the Caribbean, as it did elsewhere in the world. This digital adoption, coupled with the revolution in artificial intelligence, offers opportunities for growth and development in many areas of socio-economic life. But we also must be cognizant of the attendant risks, such as job displacement, that are associated with the digital transition. Therefore, there is a need to balance innovation with social protection in order to ensure inclusive development. We welcome papers that cover issues related to digital divides in the Caribbean, disparities in internet access, digital literacy, social media (mis)use, digital governance and politics, digital technologies and state surveillance, privacy concerns and digital rights, AI, big data and automation in Caribbean societies.

Transitions in Sociological Methodology: This subtheme explores new sociological methodologies that study stability and change in the Caribbean Context. Questions such as ‘What innovative or context-specific methodologies are being employed in Caribbean sociological research?’, ‘How do methodologies adapted to Caribbean environments address unique social, economic, and political conditions in the Caribbean?’, ‘How have Caribbean sociologies been developing and refining methodologies (both qualitative and quantitative) to the unique circumstances of Caribbean societies and contexts?’

Transitions in sociological theory: This subtheme explores theoretical innovations in Caribbean Sociology: How are Caribbean sociologies evolving in terms of theory? What unique perspectives are Caribbean sociologists contributing to global sociological debates, particularly those around development, decolonisation, and social justice? How can we revisit classical sociological theories through Caribbean lenses? What critiques of Eurocentric theoretical frameworks has Caribbean sociology advanced, and what does it continue to advance? What interdisciplinary approaches should be encouraged as the discipline engages with the complex social realities of Caribbean societies, including postcolonialism, global capitalism, and socio-economic transformations? What is the role of the Caribbean in global sociological theory and practice?

Submission Guidelines:

CASA invites abstract submissions of no more than 300 words, detailing the proposed paper's title, research question, methodology, and key findings or theoretical contributions. Please indicate the sub-theme that best fits your paper and highlight any policy implications or potential contributions to social and sustainable development goals within the Caribbean.

Submission Email: casaconference975@gmail.com

Important Dates:

- Abstract Submission Deadline: April 30, 2026
- Notification of Acceptance: June 30, 2026
- Conference Date: September 23 - 25, 2026
- Early bird registration: July 31, 2026
- End of early bird registration: August 31, 2026

About CASA

The Caribbean Sociological Association (CASA) is a regional body dedicated to advancing the study and understanding of Caribbean societies through sociological research, collaboration, and advocacy. CASA promotes social justice, equity, and regional cooperation across the Caribbean and its diaspora.

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