

**Progress report on gender equality, poverty  
eradication and the Millennium Development  
Goals in the Caribbean**

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## Abstract

The Caribbean subregion has been facing many challenges in its pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). These challenges include, but are not limited to the global financial crisis and economic downturn, food and energy crises; trade adjustment, volatile labour market conditions, vulnerability to increased episodes and severity of natural disasters, the paucity of empirical data in the region, and the indebtedness of several states with the associated debt financing costs. Despite these challenges, however, significant progress has been made in some areas such as access to education and health care, and there are goals that have been realized and adjusted to reflect higher levels of achievement, which are more in keeping with the Caribbean situation.

This report on “Gender Equality, Poverty Reduction and the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in the Caribbean Region” seeks to highlight the progress made during the period 2007-2011 and identify gaps that need to be closed if the MDGs are to be realized by the 2015 deadline or very soon thereafter. It is divided into 10 sections: Section one is an introduction to the report; section two addresses the issues of gender and poverty and their impact on the other MDGs; Section three deals with Millennium Development Goals achievement in the Caribbean; section four examines Progress Made Toward the Achievement of the MDGs; Section five addresses Challenges Faced by States in the Achievement of the MDGs; and Section six presents Necessary Actions to be Taken. Section seven presents Recommendations for the Way Forward, Section eight presents Recommendations for the Alleviation of poverty; Section nine presents Priority Areas for the Realization of Gender Equality and Poverty Reduction, and Section ten concludes the report.

Significant progress has been made in Goal 1 of the MDGs in the Caribbean region and five member countries of ECLAC, Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, and Barbados, and three Associate Member States, the Cayman Islands, Anguilla and the British Virgin Islands, are within the regionally agreed poverty head count range of 10-18%. Other countries are outside that range, but have made progress in lowering their poverty rates since 1990. However, the post global crises assessments indicate that there would be slippage of achievements, as countries grapple with the effects of the economic, fuel and food crises. Even though countries may have made significant progress, there are still groups and subgroups within countries for whom greater targeted efforts at poverty alleviation would be necessary.

Overall the Caribbean region has performed creditably on Goal 3, having already achieved gender parity in education, and has set itself the universal secondary education target, which several states have already achieved. States now face a “new” challenge; the underrepresentation and

performance of boys at secondary and tertiary levels of the education system. Measures would have to be taken to address these issues at the higher levels of the education system in order to prevent the erosion of the progress made in the area of gender parity in education, by 2015.

Gender parity in political decision-making continues to be an elusive goal for the Caribbean region and does indicate the slow progress in the ideological domain of gender, since there are persistent social mores that relegate women to support roles, reserving leadership roles at the political decision-making level for men. Despite women's higher participation rate at the tertiary level across the region, and their outstanding academic performance at the secondary and tertiary levels, there is significantly less translation into equality in income or enhanced access to decision making positions as compared to men.

The report highlights several areas which should be addressed in order to realize gender equality and sustainable poverty alleviation. These areas include but are not limited to the following: the education of teenage mothers with the necessary support, in the mainstream secondary programmes of the region; affirmative action to facilitate women's access to political decision – making; passage and enforcement of legislation to realize gender equity and equality; Focusing on decent work through macro-economic and social policy development; Strengthening of states' capacity to mainstream gender; social programmes to support women's work in the domestic sphere; collection of sex disaggregated data; improved food security; strengthened and re-engineered social protection and safety net systems, and the facilitation of community empowerment to harness the collective energies of the population, in order to realize gender equality and poverty alleviation.

The period under review has been one of many challenges for the Caribbean Subregion, but governments of the region and development partners have worked untiringly to realize a fair measure of success. Continued, concerted effort must be expended to ensure that during the next four years the subregion is able to build on the achievements to maintain goals that have been realized, and to improve attainments in areas that are lagging so that they could be realized as soon as possible after the 2015 deadline.

## I. Introduction

The Millennium Development Goals, with their time bound targets and indicators; extend hope to underprivileged persons all over the world, for a better quality of life, through basic human rights and decent living standards. The goals are part of the Millennium Declaration, 2000 and were embraced by member States of the United Nations, with firm commitments to ownership and nationalization of the goals in order to facilitate their realization. This report will focus on the progress or lack thereof that has been made by countries in the Caribbean region in the realization of goal one, the reduction of extreme poverty, and goal three, the advancement of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

The realization of gender equality is not only a goal in itself, but is also a means of achieving the other goals, since enhanced development can only be achieved and sustained when men and women share equally in every area of national endeavour. The Caribbean region has realized gains in the area of gender equality and the empowerment of women; however every effort will have to be made to maintain these gains, as they could be easily reversed. The region has made progress in the area of participation in education, and is experiencing parity in many of the countries at the primary level. The 2010, United Nations Millennium Development Progress Report, cites Latin America and the Caribbean as having a high enrolment in the primary schools of the region, and having realized gender parity.

Despite the fact that girls outnumber boys at the secondary and tertiary levels of the region's education system, this higher participation is not reflected in management in the private sector of the countries nor at the level of political decision making, since few of the territories have achieved or have been able to maintain the 30% women in political decision making that was agreed to by Member States in the Beijing Platform for Action (1995), and the Commonwealth Plan of Action (1995). Sluggish progress in this area could be a contributing factor to the slow progress in other areas, since women and men bring different perspectives to policy making and therefore the absence of gender balance in decision-making would adversely affect policy making and development processes.

In a September 22nd 2010 meeting of the United Nations General Assembly, Heads of Member States of CARICOM indicated that the region faced numerous challenges as a whole and individually, in the achievement of the targets by the deadline of 2015. Economic challenges, impact of natural disasters, the slow progress in gender equality, as indicated in the disparity between women's presence in higher education and their presence at the decision making level in the region were issues identified by the leaders. One head of State suggested a need for a programme for re-energizing the pursuit of the MDGs if they are to be realized in the prescribed time frame.

This report seeks to assess the progress made in the areas of gender equality and poverty eradication in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in the Caribbean; and highlight the gaps that must be addressed if the Caribbean is to realize its targets by the year 2015.

## **II. Gender, Poverty and the Millennium Development Goals**

### **A. Overview**

The Caribbean subregion comprises small nation States, most of which have economies that are driven by service industries. Although several of these States enjoy medium high Human Development ranking, and two States, Barbados and the Bahamas have been listed in the United Nations Human Development Ranking, 2010, as very high human development countries, there is still significant poverty in the region. This is borne out in the findings of the various Country Poverty Assessments (CPAs) that have been carried out across the region over the last few years.

Poverty in the region is an extremely complex phenomenon, with urban as well as rural pockets of poverty in existence, and high rates of poverty amongst employed persons. The heterogeneous nature of the poor necessitates addressing the needs of vulnerable individuals from birth to the grave while recognizing the distribution of gender inequalities across broader parameters such as ethnicity, religion, race, geographic location and educational attainment. The inter-play between these factors significantly impacts the individual's life experiences and these experiences because of varying degrees of access to resources, information and economic and political power affect men and women, boys and girls in different ways and have varied outcomes.

Ultimately, the general consensus is that on the one hand gender in-equality exacerbates poverty but on the other hand poverty causes the gap between men and women to widen as well. Policy makers must be cognizant of the fact that without considered effort key goals can be achieved as it relates to gender equality, poverty and the MDGs yet vulnerable segments of the population could still be left behind. It is therefore critical that approaches to enhance the quality of life of individuals within the region, as embodied by the Millennium Development Goals, fully employ gender sensitive lens.

Any meaningful progress in reducing poverty or improving child and maternal health or any of the MDGs in the Caribbean rests on acknowledging the different vulnerabilities of men and women as well as the socio-cultural, socio-economic and other factors which negatively impact on the lives of

men and women.<sup>1</sup> Keen attention to issues of empowerment, participation and agency not only helps to address resource, goods and information asymmetries but provides a platform to renegotiate notions of access and control as well as where inequality and injustice occur. For the region gender equality presents the opportunity to develop a social order where men and women share the same opportunities and constraints on full participation in the economic, political and domestic sphere.<sup>2</sup>

The World Summit held in 2005 endorsed the broader perspective of gender equality put forward in the Beijing Platform.<sup>3</sup> There is also agreement that the gender aspects of the other MDGs needed to be monitored as well. As such, as shown in Table 1 pertinent gender issues were identified for each goal.

“Gender equality and the empowerment of women”, Goal three of the MDGs is not only a goal, but a pre-requisite for the achievement of the other goals. The ending of poverty and extreme hunger depends on the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women. The region with its high incidence of single female headed households could benefit significantly from women’s economic advancement. Women are more often than men, involved in unwaged work in family businesses, carry the greater burden for care work, and perform many hours of care work, whether in the community or in their homes, before they could participate in waged work. This makes it more difficult for women to pursue waged employment to the same extent as their male colleagues.

Three of the four indicators, under MDG 3 have been realized in the Caribbean region, however their achievement has not facilitated the achievement of economic advancement for women, nor has it facilitated the achievement of political representation for women, proportionate to their representation in the population. Indicator 9, the achievement of gender parity at the primary level, as well as the secondary and tertiary levels of the education system, has been realized. The concern in the region is the under-participation and performance of male students at the secondary and tertiary levels. Indicators 10, and 11, “Literacy levels amongst men and women 15-24 years of age”, and women’s share of non-agricultural waged work have also been realized.

Millennium Development Goal 4, Reducing Child Mortality; Goal 5 – Improving Maternal Health; and Goal 7 – Combating HIV/AIDS Malaria and other diseases, are all inextricably bound to women’s sexual and reproductive health and rights. Women in the Caribbean suffer much sexual abuse, in every sphere of their lives. In addition, despite the Member States commitment under the Convention for the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), to ensure that women have the right to contraceptive methods of their choice, and the right to decide on the number of children, as well as their birth spacing, in many situations, this is not the case. Currently, only two jurisdictions in the Caribbean have spousal rape legislation, Trinidad and Tobago and Belize.

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<sup>1</sup> “Pursuing Gender Equality Through the MDG in Asia and the Pacific”, 2006, ADB, Philippines, page 5, <http://www.adb.org/documents/books/pursuing-gender-equality/pursuing-gender-equality.pdf>, 22/07/2011.

<sup>2</sup> See Bailyn, L., (2006). *Breaking the mold: Redesigning work for productive and satisfying lives*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell.

<sup>3</sup> The Beijing Platform, includes 12 critical areas of concern, including poverty, education, health, violence, armed conflict, the economy, power and decision-making, human rights, media, the environment, and the particular needs and vulnerabilities of girls. The MDG targets only address education and maternal deaths. In addition to Goals 3 and 5, only two other MDGs—Goal 2 on education and Goal 6/Target 7 on HIV/AIDS—include gender-specific or gender-disaggregated indicators.

**TABLE 1**  
**GENDER EQUALITY AND ACHIEVEMENT OF THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

Millennium Development Goals	Importance of Gender Equality for Specific Goals
Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	Gender equality in capabilities and access to opportunities can accelerate economic growth Equal access for women to basic transport and energy infrastructure can lead to greater economic opportunity Gender equality in interventions helps to increase agricultural production because women farmers are a significant proportion of the rural poor Equal investment in women's health and nutrition contributes to reducing chronic hunger and malnourishment, increasing productivity and well-being
Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education	Educated girls and women have greater control over their fertility and participate more in public life Mothers' education is a strong and consistent determinant of their children's school enrolment and attainment, and health and nutrition
Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women	Related indicators include parity in educational enrolments, wage employment and representation in national parliaments
Goal 4: Reduce child mortality	Mothers' education, income, and empowerment have significant impacts on lowering child and maternal mortality rates
Goal 5: Improve maternal health	
Goal 6: Combat HIV/ AIDS, malaria and other diseases	Women's economic independence, ability to negotiate safe sex, awareness of need to alter traditional sexual norms, access to treatment, and support for the care function that women perform are essential to halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS
Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability	Gender-equitable property and resource ownership policies enable women to manage their resources more sustainably
Goal 8: Develop global partnership for development	Gender equality in the political sphere may lead to higher investments in development cooperation

Source: UN Millennium Project, Taking Action: Achieving Gender Equality and Empowering Women (2005).

Early sexual activity which according to research in the region can start as early as 10 years of age, places young people at increased risk for contracting HIV and AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections and increases the rate of teenage pregnancy. The age group 16 to 24 years of age, especially women, who research show are more likely to have multiple partners are increasingly on the frontlines of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. The Caribbean records unacceptably high rates of teenage pregnancy registering births to teen at approximately 20% of live births.<sup>4</sup> Teenage pregnancy especially among poor girls adds to the pressure of these families as the burden of care and support increases especially for the main breadwinner as they step in to help shoulder the responsibility of this new addition to the family.

Facilitating women's empowerment, supporting a culture of shared familial responsibility and also addressing the issue of male sexual behavior, responsibility for contraceptive use and their role in parenting, which are critical gender issues could help in the achievement of MDG 4, 5, and 7.

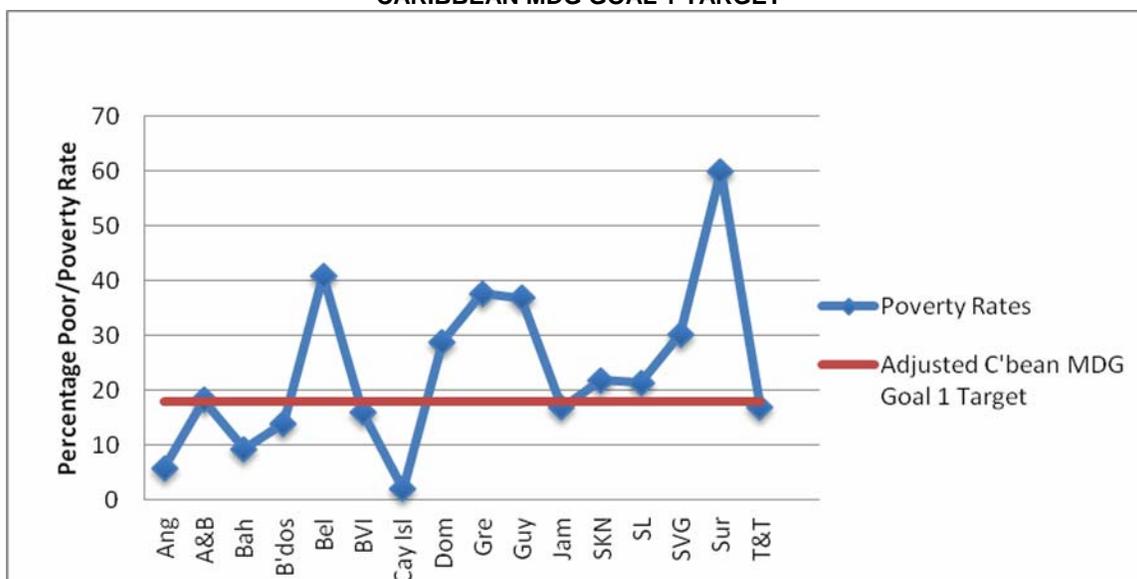
<sup>4</sup> Caribbean Millennium Goals Report 2010, p 40

## B. Poverty Levels in the Caribbean subregion

The Caribbean Millennium Development Goals Report (2010) suggests that despite the efforts of Caribbean countries to fight poverty, the MDG Goal 1 is not likely to be realized by 2015. The adjusted Caribbean version of Goal one is a poverty head count of 10% to 18% in Caribbean countries. Available data indicate that the many of the countries in the region, with the exception of Trinidad and Tobago, Bahamas, Cayman Islands, Barbados, BVI, Anguilla, Jamaica, and Antigua and Barbuda have poverty rates that are outside the adjusted regional range and the likelihood of increased poverty levels in the face of the global economic and food crisis is very strong.

Surveys of Living Conditions (SLC), which are conducted in the Caribbean Region with varying periodicity show poverty levels which range from 1.9% of the population in the Bahamas to 37.8% of the population in Grenada and over 60% in Suriname. Figure 1 below details the rates of poverty across the Caribbean. The head counts for most of the countries are high by international standards for countries of similar per capita incomes but as can be seen except in the case of Suriname, the Cayman Islands and Bahamas they are on similar levels to each other.

**FIGURE 1**  
**POVERTY RATES IN THE CARIBBEAN COMPARED AGAINST ADJUSTED**  
**CARIBBEAN MDG GOAL 1 TARGET**



Source: CPA Reports and Country Reports

When the effects of the global economic crisis, the impact of trade adjustment and increased occurrence of severe natural disasters are factored in, the poverty levels in the Caribbean region are likely to show some increase and be revised upwards. Figure 1 below also shows the percentage of the population for some countries which are at risk of descending below National poverty lines. The vulnerability line is set at 25% above the poverty line, and adverse economic shocks as well as natural disasters can cause the vulnerable segments of the population to fall below the poverty line. Most of the countries for which this data is displayed show vulnerability rates in the mid to high teens with Saint Vincent and the Grenadines recording the highest proportion (18%) of its population which is vulnerable.

Several countries have had post crisis poverty assessment surveys conducted. Results for Belize and Grenada show increases in poverty in both countries. In Belize the Country Poverty

Assessment of 2009, show increases over that of 2002. Indigent families increased from 8% in 2002 to 10% in 2009, while indigent persons increased from 11% to 16% for the same period. Poor families increased from 25% to 31%, while poor individuals increased from 34% to 41%. (Halcrow Group Ltd., 2010.)

**TABLE 2**  
**POVERTY AND VULNERABILITY RATES IN THE CARIBBEAN REGION**

Country	% Poor	Vulnerability Rate*	Year
Anguilla	5.8	17.7	2008/09
Antigua and Barbuda	18.3	10	2007
Bahamas	9.3		2001
Barbados	13.9		1998
Belize	41	14	2009
British Virgin islands	16		2003
Cayman Islands	1.9		2006
Dominica	28.8	11.5	2008/09
Grenada	37.7	14.6	2008
Guyana	36.9		1999
Jamaica	16.9		2009
Saint Kitts and Nevis	21.8		2007/08
Saint Lucia	21.4	16.2	2005
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	30.2	18	2007/08
Suriname	60		2000
Trinidad and Tobago	16.7		2005

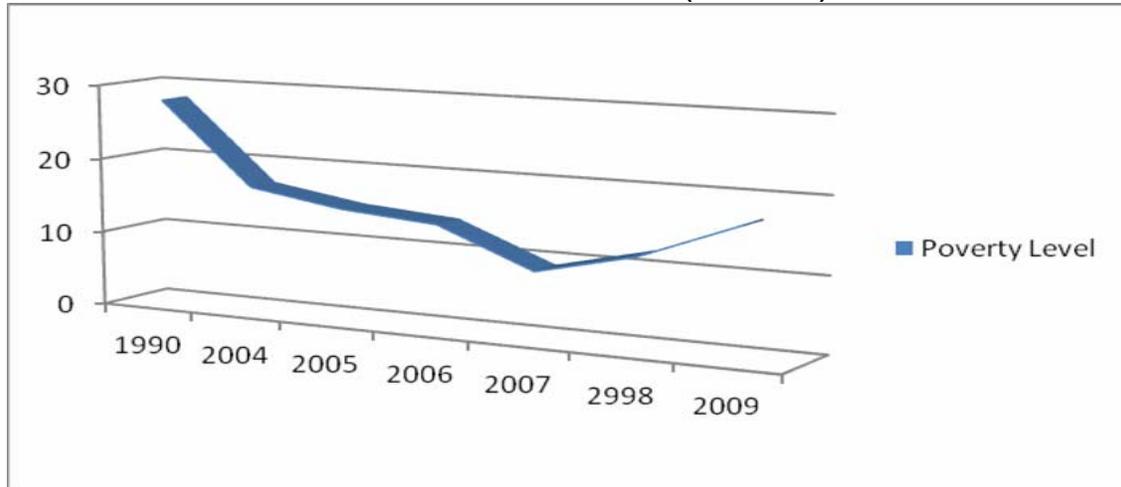
Source: CDB, Country Statistics and CPA Reports (\*Difference between the percentage of persons who fall below 100% of the poverty line and 125% of the poverty line.)

Grenada whose Poverty Assessment Survey was carried out in 2007-2008, also show increases in the levels of poverty. Grenada reported an increase in its poverty headcount from 32.1% in 1998 to 37.7 % in 2007-2008. Indigence levels in Grenada decreased significantly, however from 12.9 % to 2.4%. One measure that was not taken in the earlier surveys, and which was taken in the 2007-2008 survey, namely the vulnerability rate, indicates that 14.6% of the population could be considered vulnerable. It is interesting to note that the unemployment rate amongst the poor in Grenada is 10 percentage points higher than that of the general population. Poverty rates amongst men was slightly higher than amongst women, 39.5% and 36.2% respectively and children and youth were amongst the poor in largest numbers in the Grenadian population, 66.4%. Unemployment rates amongst women were higher than amongst men 17.9% to 31.8% amongst women. A contributing factor could be the definition used for unemployment, since a number of Caribbean men are engaged in the informal, underground sector and are not actively seeking work, therefore they may not have been captured as unemployed in the study.

While poverty levels in Jamaica have declined significantly since 1990 results for the 2009 SLC signaled a change in the tide and emphasized the fragility of achievements in the area of poverty reduction and the MDGs. Poverty rates for Jamaica decreased by 60% between 1990 and 2004 moving from 28% in 1990 to 17% in 2004. Further gains were made as the rate dropped to 12% by 2008. The findings for 2009 however showed an upswing of approximately 5% to a poverty rate of 17% of the population. If this upward swing continues under prevailing conditions without remedial actions, one can reasonably expect an erosion of the gains that have been made in that country with

respect to the MDGs and overall poverty reduction. (Government of Jamaica, 2009.) The graph below tracks the poverty levels in Jamaica between 1990 and 2009.

**FIGURE 2**  
**POVERTY RATES IN JAMAICA (1990 - 2009)**



Source: Planning Institute of Jamaica, 2009.

The phenomenal growth in the informal sector was a key pillar in the success of Jamaica in addressing poverty however this sector is disproportionately represented by women. Evidence suggests that the livelihoods of women employed in vulnerable jobs, such as in the informal sector are extremely vulnerable during economic downturns as they have much less of a buffer against the impacts of the crisis (limited savings, less access to formal social protection mechanisms and assets etc.).

The Commonwealth of Dominica has also undertaken a recent Country Poverty Assessment Survey and its findings are different from those of Belize and Grenada. Dominica experienced a drop in indigence levels from 10% to 3.1% and a decline in its poverty head count from 39% to 28.8%. The vulnerability rate which was not taken in the earlier study of 2003 is 11.5%. Despite the improved standard of living in Dominica, it is important to note that five of its parishes have poverty count indices that are above the national average, one parish St. Joseph has 47% of its residents considered as poor.

Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) were carried out in four member states of the subregion, Jamaica, Guyana, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago in 2006 by UNICEF to determine the situation of women and children. Several of the indicators of the MICS study are identical to those of the MDGs hence states could streamline their reporting responsibilities. The MICS 3 reports of Trinidad and Tobago shows poverty rates of 16.7% based on its SLC of 2005. This reflects a decline of 7.3% down from 24% of the population as recorded in 1997 when the previous Survey of Living Conditions was carried out. A proxy poverty line was constructed in 2008 by the Department of Economics of the UWI using the CPI for various years to adjust the poverty line generated in 2005. Due to the fact that it so closely mirrored the trend of the Poverty lines constructed by the previous two SLCs it was suggested that the downward trend in poverty rates was likely to continue albeit at a more rapid rate than before and it was expected that this will be borne out when a new SLC is conducted.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Theodore, K, Scott, S., "Income Poverty and State Support in Trinidad and Tobago – The case for Alignment", Department of Economics, UWI, 2008 - [sta.uwi.edu/fss/economics/.../POVERTYANDSTATESUPPORT.ppt](http://sta.uwi.edu/fss/economics/.../POVERTYANDSTATESUPPORT.ppt) p. 9.

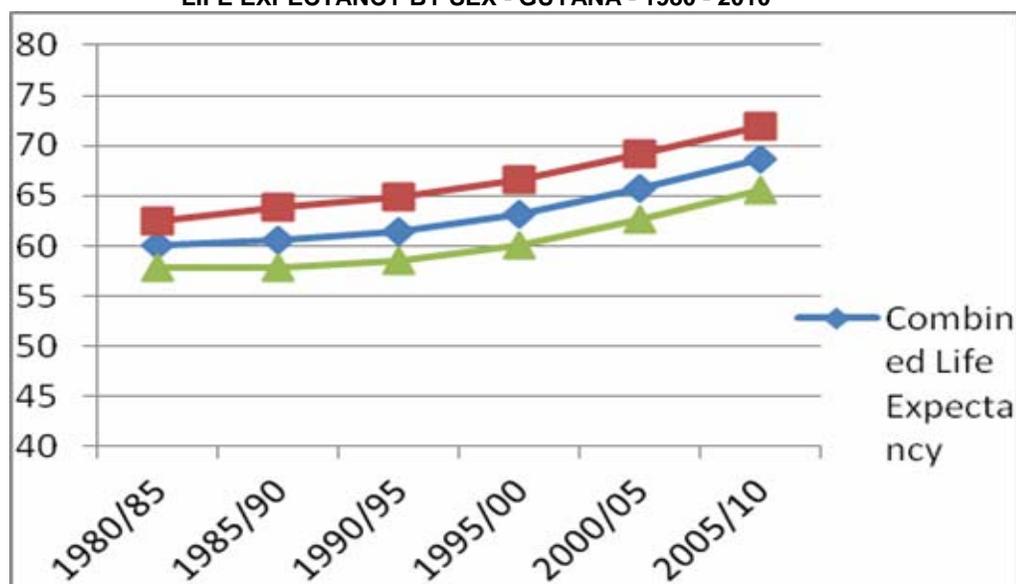
A poverty rate of approximately 37% was recorded for Guyana, one of the highest in the Caribbean region however the available data is dated. The 2006 MICS 3 report which looks at the situation of women and children in Guyana, provides a closer gauge of the conditions under which women and children live. Key health indicators such as infant mortality and under-five mortality rates were shown to have been reduced notably to lower levels from 2000 when the last MICS report was compiled. The 2006 MICS 3 report also indicated 83% of births in Guyana were attended by a health practitioner. UNDP Human Development report statistics for 2010 show a life expectancy of 67.9 years an increase from the 63.2 years noted for 2000. Life expectancy which shows an encouraging trend, rose more quickly during that 10 year period than during the previous two decades indicating achievements in the improvement of the overall health of the population. Life expectancy for women has remained above national average between 1980 and 2010 and stood at 71.9 years of age for the period 2005-2010. Life expectancy for men for the time-frame stood at 65.5 years of age. The following graph displays this trend.

**TABLE 3**  
**LIFE EXPECTANCY BY SEX – GUYANA (1980 - 2010)**

Range (years)	Combined	Female	Male
1980/85	60	62.5	57.9
1985/90	60.6	63.8	57.9
1990/95	61.4	64.9	58.5
1995/00	63.1	66.6	60.1
2000/05	65.7	69.1	62.7
2005/10	68.7	71.9	65.5

Source: Data.un.org

**FIGURE 3**  
**LIFE EXPECTANCY BY SEX - GUYANA - 1980 - 2010**



Source: Data.un.org

## C. The gendered nature of poverty

The United Nations World's Women 2010 report, indicates that women continue to be over represented in the poor, single parent households, over represented amongst poor elderly persons, are less likely to have cash income and have little power over their personal incomes in marital unions. Further, a 2003 World Bank report which looked at gender equality and the Millennium Development Goals pointed out that:

“...Whether measured in terms of command over productive resources, or in terms of power to influence the political process, poor men tend to have less influence in the community than non-poor men, and poor women generally have the least influence. These disparities disadvantage women and girls and limit their capacity to participate in and benefit from development”

On a whole, poverty has implications for what it means to be a man or a woman or a boy or girl in the Caribbean. For Caribbean women, being poor means having to take care of a number of dependents both young and old, or not being able to work because of family obligations and lack of alternative care options or working at the lower levels of the service industry or poor school performance, gender based violence and teenage pregnancy. It may also mean facing increased vulnerability and risks of exposure to sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV because of weak bargaining position or power within intimate relationships. Studies show that a large proportion of Caribbean women are overweight or obese and may be more prone to suffer from chronic non communicable diseases which are related to lifestyle choices. Many times a woman's limited economic situation or her partner's withholding of money to care for the children or to support the household affects her ability to access healthy foods for herself and her family.

Social capital or social relations networks also form part of the way of life of poor Caribbean women as the goodwill between themselves and others is a valuable resource. Bonding, bridging and linking allows women to build connections and access resources such as information, jobs, childcare, social provisions, etc. Through this avenue women come into contact not only with individuals who have similar values and ideologies but also with those who may have differing values and ideologies. This provides women with the impetus to challenge and transform the status quo especially as it relates to inequalities of power. Essentially, these networks with growing sophistication have helped women to survive over centuries in difficult economic situations, since the little that they have, whether it is time or economic resource, benefits all.

Alternatively poor Caribbean men may be faced with the dilemma of not being able to go “by his girl friend and sleep, if his pockets are empty” given the penchant for men and women to see relationships as a commercial bargain or they may become engaged in risky behavior such as criminality or drug abuse. Further, it is argued that a significant proportion of women and to a lesser extent men in the Caribbean engage in transactional sex in order to access economic resources and boys and girls may engage in unprotected sex also in exchange for money and goods. Studies suggest that these practices are rooted in cultural norms that support the view that the man is to provide financially for sexual partners. (Bombereau and Allen, 2008) The complex interplay of these factors along with others severely impacts the life chances and opportunities of males and females across the age spectrum.

The feminization of poverty, which is characterized by the prevalence of female-headed households represented among the poor over other forms of households, shows the difference between males and females living in poverty. While this does not fully explain the existence of poverty among females, evidence from CPAs across the region point to a correlation between female-headed households and the persistence of chronic or long-term multi-generational poverty in the region. The plight of these households is linked to low levels of educational attainment of the heads of household,

the low level occupation especially in the services industry, early and multiple child bearing, inability of fathers to maintain their children and other such factors which ensnare women and their off springs in a vicious cycle of deprivation.

In the three countries in the subregion which recently completed Country Poverty Assessment Surveys, poverty levels amongst women are similar to those of men or lower than those of men. In Belize for example, female indigence rate in the last Poverty Assessment Survey was 15% to 17% for males while the poverty levels were 40% for women and 42% for men. Female headed households were less likely to be poor than male headed households, 29% to 32% of male headed households. Dominica's poverty level between men and women was almost uniformed, 28.8% and 28.9%. There is however, significant difference between the unemployment rate of women and men in Dominica and Grenada. The unemployment rate of women in Grenada was 31.8% compared with the unemployment rate of men of 17.9%. Dominica's Country Poverty Assessment indicates a 20% unemployment rate for poor men and a 33.8% unemployment rate for poor women, and an unemployment rate of 8.1% and 13.0 % for non poor men and women respectively. While statistically women's levels of poverty may be similar to men's or even lower than men's, it is important to note that poverty impacts men and women differently. The PPA of Dominica indicates the challenges that women in poverty face, often pre-disposing them to high risk behaviours such as transactional sex, and involvement with narcotics.

Invariably women in the Caribbean perform a disproportionate amount of unwaged work in the maintenance of society and the family and therefore have less time to commit to waged work. In addition, the Caribbean, with its high incidence of single female headed households, further places women at a significant disadvantage, since women's income often has to be spent on members of the immediate family and extended family. Women's poverty therefore has far reaching effects on the well being of society.

## **D. Unwaged work and time use**

A significant amount of unwaged (reproductive) work is carried out to maintain society and to support the productive work within the society. The International Labour Conference Report, Gender Equality At the Heart of Decent Work, June, 2009 suggests that the value of unwaged care work could be as high as 50% of a country's GDP. Most of this unwaged work is performed by women, and it is lost to the GDP of member States since in most cases it is not quantified. Counting women's work would indicate how cutbacks and structural adjustment programmes have affected the community and the volume of unwaged work that must be performed for its maintenance. Valuing unwaged work would also address the issues of women's poverty, the perception that men are main bread winners in many situations, and the view that women are not creditworthy, because of their poor economic standing.

Member States agreed in the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) (Para. 206 iii) to put mechanisms in place to count women's unwaged work and to reflect the same in the GDP of the States.

“Developing measures in the appropriate forum for assessing the value in quantitative form of unremunerated work that is outside national accounts, such as caring for dependents and preparing food, for possible reflection in satellite and other accounts that may be produced separately from, but are consistent with core national accounts, with a view to making visible the economic contributions of women and making visible the unequal distribution of remunerated work and unremunerated work between men and women”.

Although several states have sought to collect data on women's unwaged work, and time use in the National Census, only one state in the subregion, Trinidad and Tobago has implemented

legislation in 1996, Act 29 which calls upon the Central Statistical Office and other public bodies to collect and value the unremunerated work.

## E. Women and men's position in the labour market

Although there is a definite increase in women's share of the employment in the non-agricultural sector in most Caribbean countries, and despite the fact that women are pursuing higher education in larger numbers than males, their position in the labour market still reflects the traditional gender roles that confine women to the services sector, the caring professions, and other low waged, labour intensive areas of the labour market. The International Labour Organization Trends, Econometric Model November 2009 indicates a marked difference between the participation of men and women in the labour markets of Latin America and the Caribbean. The participation rate of men is 79.7% while that of women is 51.7%; men had an unemployment rate of 6.9%, while women had an unemployment rate of 10.1%. There are 68.1 economically active females for every one hundred economically active males in the Latin America Caribbean Region.

In a recent study on Female Labour Force Participation Rate (FLFPR) in Trinidad and Tobago, it was found that women's participation rate in the labour force was a mere 51.5%, compared with male participation rates of 77.1%. Female unemployment rate was 6.2% compared with male unemployment of 4.5%. The study further indicated that over the ten year period 2000-2010, Trinidad and Tobago has had a lower female labour force participation rate than other Caribbean countries, and cited Jamaica with a FLFPR of 57.4% and Barbados with an FLFPR of 65.1%.<sup>6</sup>

The 2010 United Nations Report on the World's Women, indicates a labour force participation rate for women in the Caribbean of 48% and a participation rate of men of 72%.<sup>7</sup> The representation of women in the services sector of the Caribbean is a high 85% compared with that of men 56%. Eighty per cent of the employed women in the Caribbean are waged and salaried workers, while 16% are own account workers, 2% are contributing family workers and employers. Men's waged and salaried workers account for 67% of all workers, while 27% of all employed men, and 3% and 1% of employed men<sup>7</sup> are employers and family contributing workers, respectively.

Labour markets seldom take into consideration; the multiple roles of women and the uneven distribution of the care work within the family and society, thus women often find it difficult to balance the needs of family with their need to generate income. This could be a factor in the inactivity of women as reported in the ILO labour market trends. Even when women are participating in the work force their participation seems to be largely concentrated in the areas that are extensions of their unwaged work.

Member States of the subregion have been called upon to provide high quality, affordable day care facilities, on work sites to facilitate women's participation in the productive sphere, as well as an acknowledgement of their significant contribution to the reproductive sphere. There has not been significant evidence of compliance with commitments made under the ILO Convention for Workers with Family Responsibilities<sup>8</sup> in this regard. Member States have also committed themselves to the provision of child care services to facilitate women's participation in waged work under the Beijing Platform for Action.<sup>9</sup>

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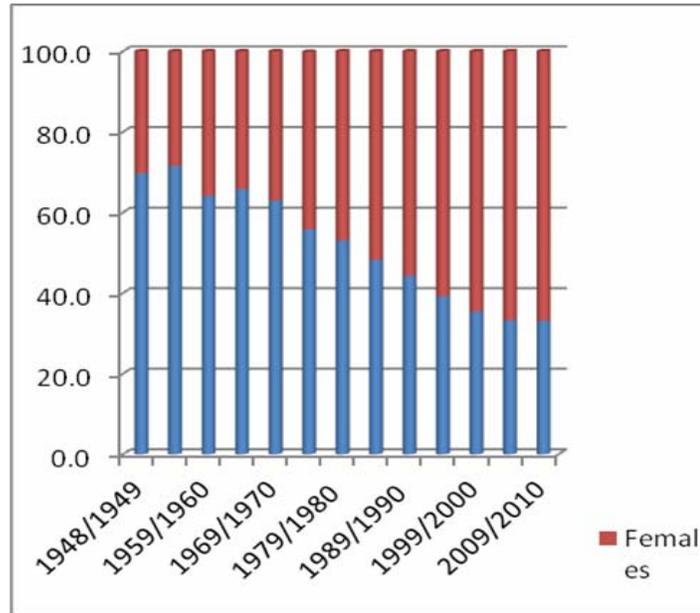
<sup>6</sup> Female Labour Force Participation: The Case of Trinidad and Tobago p3

<sup>7</sup> United Nations World's Women p.77

<sup>8</sup> ILO Convention for Workers With Family Responsibilities, Article 5b

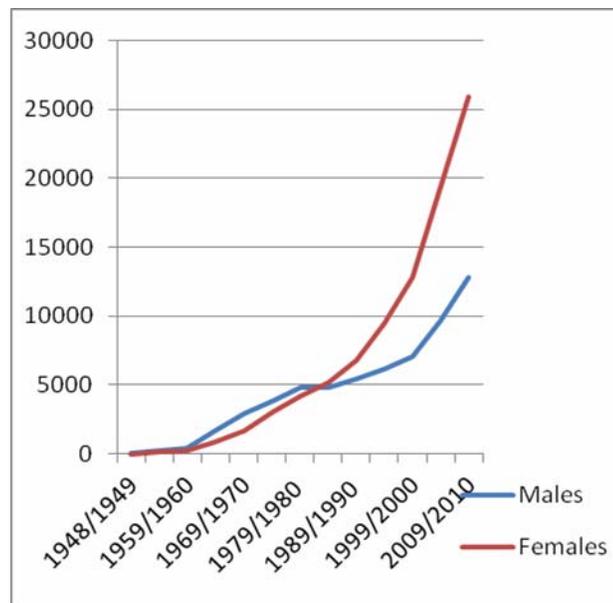
<sup>9</sup> Beijing Platform for Action 175 (g)

**FIGURE 4**  
**PROPORTION OF FEMALES TO MALES ENROLLED AT UWI - 1948/49 TO 2009/10**



Source: UWI Statistical Bulletin – 2009-2010

**FIGURE 5**  
**NUMBER OF MALES FEMALES ENROLLED AT UW1 - 1948/49 TO 2009/10**



Source: UWI Statistical Bulletin – 2009-2010

Despite women's higher participation rates in tertiary level education as is indicated in the enrollment statistics of the University of the West Indies, 2009-2010 women still do not find themselves positioned in the labour market in a manner that is reflective of their academic achievements. The enrolment of both males and females at UWI has increased steadily since it opened in 1948, however enrolment of females has significantly outstripped that of males showing twice as many women enrolled than men by academic year 2009-2010. Proportionally, women accounted for 69.1% of the enrollment for academic year 2009/2010 the three campuses and the open campus signaling a complete reversal of the trend in enrolment from that in the first year when the university started in 1948/49. Enrollment of women on the individual campuses ranged from 63.6% on the St. Augustine Campus to 81% on the open campus. Cave Hill and Mona Campuses reported enrollment of 68.1 and 71.2% female students respectively.<sup>10</sup> The Graphs and tables presented below further outline the specifics of male/female enrolment at the University of the West Indies.

Barriers to women's equal participation in the labour market, such as stereotypical ideas about jobs for women and jobs for men; educational training that channels males and females in traditional directions; societal norms about men's and women's roles and the valuing of care work, would have to be addressed if women and men are to participate in every area of the labour force relative to their representation in the population as well as their participation rate in institutions of higher education in the region.

**TABLE 4**  
**UWI ENROLMENT 1948/49 TO 2009/10**

Year	No. of Male	No. of Female	Males (%)	Females (%)
1948/1949	23	10	69.7	30.3
1954/1955	275	109	71.6	28.4
1959/1960	446	249	64.2	35.8
1964/1965	1661	862	65.8	34.2
1969/1970	2914	1713	63.0	37.0
1974/1975	3871	3057	55.8	44.1
1979/1980	4782	4229	53.1	46.9
1984/1985	4844	5182	48.3	51.7
1989/1990	5403	6777	44.4	55.6
1994/1995	6120	9484	39.2	60.8
1999/2000	7025	12800	35.4	64.6
2004/2005	9657	19338	33.3	66.7
2009/2010	12812	25866	33.1	66.9

Source: UWI Statistical Bulletin – 2009-2010

## F. Women in decision-making

Despite the progress that has been made in several areas of women's equality with men, the increased participation of women in the high levels of political decision-making continues to elude Caribbean women. The political parties of the region are predominantly composed of women, who work untiringly to raise funds, canvass door to door, and provide support for elderly and disabled persons to go to the polls on polling day, but the candidate's list continues to be a male domain. Even though

<sup>10</sup> University of the West Indies Statistical Review 2009-2010 p.14

Member States have committed themselves to the advancement of women in this area, with a minimum political representation of 30%, only Guyana has implemented quota legislation.

Gender parity in political decision making will be a missed target in 2015 by the Caribbean subregion. According to the 2010 Caribbean Millennium Goals Report, twelve general elections were conducted in the Caribbean region between 2007 and 2010, but there has not been significant progress in the area of women's political participation. In a recently concluded poll in Nevis on July 11th, 2011, the Organization of American States (OAS) Observer Mission highlighted the gender imbalance in the roles related to the electoral process. Women represented 83% of the poll clerks and 90% of the party agents, but a mere 10% of the candidates. The Mission recommended that mechanisms be put in place to promote female candidacies.

“With the exception of Guyana, none of the elections resulted in female candidates being elected to more than 27% of the seats in the lower house. In many cases, women did not comprise or surpass 30% of the total number of candidates being fielded.” These results demonstrate a clear need for improvement in the participation of women at the highest strata in the general elections. The proportion of seats in the lower house held by women in Guyana stood at 30% as of July 2010. “In contrast, in Belize, and Saint Kitts and Nevis, less than 10% of the seats in their lower or single houses are held by female politicians. These countries' proportions of elected female politicians have remained unchanged from 1990 levels. All other countries of the subregion, with the exception of Barbados which had a 3.3% decrease in female seats in the 2008 elections, have increased their proportions of elected female representatives by between 4.3 percentage points and 13.3 percentage points.”<sup>11</sup>

Despite the efforts of many agencies, the OAS, The United Nations Development Fund for Women, (UNIFEM)<sup>12</sup>, the Commonwealth Secretariat, working in the Caribbean region to facilitate the advancement of women in political decision-making, there is a stubborn resistance to the integration of women in political decision-making in the region. The Caribbean Institute for Women in Leadership (CIWIL) has been training and providing information and support for women who are desirous of entering politics, since 2005, and several of the female politicians in the region are graduates of training programmes conducted with CIWIL support.

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<sup>11</sup> UNDP Caribbean Millennium Development Goal Report 2010, p.35

<sup>12</sup> UNIFEM is now UN Women. In July 2010, the United Nations General Assembly, created UN Women, the United Nations entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women – merging four UN agencies that focused on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, including UNIFEM.



### **III. National priorities and MDG achievements in the Caribbean**

#### **A. Overview**

Since the member states of the Caribbean subregion committed themselves to the Millennium Declaration (2000) and the pursuit of the Goals, there have been varied levels of activity in the States in order to realize a decent standard of living for all of their citizens. The Millennium Development Goals are not being pursued in isolation however, since several States in their Human Development Agenda's have been pursuing poverty reduction, enhanced access to education, and health care; gender equality, and environmental sustainability.

#### **B. National efforts at poverty reduction in the Caribbean**

With the assistance of the Caribbean Development Bank and in some cases the Inter American Development Bank, several countries in the Caribbean subregion have carried out poverty assessment surveys to determine the levels of poverty and its severity, in an effort to put measures in place to address poverty and build human capacity. Jamaica's Statistical Division STATIN, manages to carry out a Survey of Living Conditions annually, to better gauge the situation in that country.

The Poverty Assessment Surveys have revealed a wealth of important information that could be used to inform the poverty reduction strategies which countries are implementing to address the issue of poverty. The surveys have found poverty to be more a feature of rural existence, although there are urban pockets of poverty. Large households are more likely to be poor and the elderly and children are more at risk for poverty. Indigenous groups have poverty rates that are higher than the general population. A significant proportion of poor households are multi-generational, thus inter-generational transfer of poverty is indicated. Information on education and training, and types of occupation of poor persons is also gathered from the Poverty Assessment Surveys, hence Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) are not "shots in the dark", but prescriptive documents that can help to lower the incidence of poverty and facilitate the development of human capital within the Caribbean.

Over the last five years, territories across the region have shouldered the challenge of addressing poverty in a concerted and comprehensive manner. This has been undertaken through the

drafting of national strategies embodied in national development plans, such the Barbados National Development Plan to 2025 (up to 2025), Trinidad and Tobago Vision 2020, Jamaica's Vision 2035 and Saint Lucia or PRSPs as in the case of Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana and Saint Kitts and Nevis. The salience of addressing poverty through enhanced and expanded social protection programmes, risk reduction strategies, the building of human capacity through training and skills development, and the development of small and micro enterprise has not been overlooked by Member States.

In particular, the financial crisis and the economic recession emphasized the need to mitigate the impact of the current downturn on the poor and vulnerable and to ensure that countries have in place a flexible but robust system which reduces the likelihood of future crises eroding progress made in the socio-economic arena. The recalibration of the social protection systems in the region is a work in progress and some countries such as Saint Kitts and Nevis, Antigua and Barbuda, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago have already set themselves on that path starting with the assessment and re-orientation of social safety net programmes. Jamaica implemented the PATH Programme and Trinidad and Tobago instituted a conditional cash transfer initiative respectively. These programmes will be examined in more detail in a subsequent section. The aim has consistently been to improve effectiveness and efficiency of services and to facilitate better targeting of the individuals and groups in society, identified by the CPAs as the most needy and vulnerable.

### C. Subregional efforts at poverty reduction

Since the implementation of the recommendations of the Moyne Commission<sup>13</sup> countries in the region have strived to improve the social and economic circumstances under which people live through initiatives ranging from enhancing housing, to improving access to education and quality health care and access to necessary services at the community and national level. More recently, in the OECS subgroup of countries<sup>14</sup>, poverty reduction, especially the reduction of multi-generational or chronic poverty has been placed high on the agenda. It has been recognized that poverty reduction efforts must extend beyond improving the material wellbeing of vulnerable citizens and must extend to issues such as labour and employment, quality education, quality health care, crime reduction as well as strengthening social capital at the community level.

Governments in the OECS have recognized the importance of education and health care to the welfare of the poor. Several actions have been undertaken to seek to improve the quality of life of persons, one of which has been the reform of education systems at all levels so as to improve access to quality education and to facilitate the creation of a skilled, flexible and competitive workforce. Improving access to quality tertiary level education and opening opportunities that women and youth can take full advantage of still remain a challenge especially as women continue to juggle care responsibilities with their career and educational development and young men opt out of the education system at an early age.

For the most part the region has maintained stable social insurance schemes however there remains some notable differences in terms of levels of benefits, age of eligibility and unemployment protection and coverage of the persons in the informal sector. A number of countries have initiated reform processes in order to ensure the continued viability of the funds. Public/private partnerships

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<sup>13</sup> The Moyne Commission was appointed in 1938 by the British Government to investigate and make recommendations on the social and economic conditions in the various British dependant territories

<sup>14</sup> "The (Organization of Eastern Caribbean States) OECS was established on 18th June 1981 on the signing of the Treaty of Basseterre, in Saint Kitts. Seven countries signed the treaty in 1981. They are: Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The British Virgin Islands joined the OECS in 1984 and Anguilla in 1995 increasing the membership to nine countries. The OECS may be described as a community of nine countries located in the Eastern Caribbean." See [http://www.stlucia.gov.lc/docs/FAQs\\_OECS\\_Integration.pdf](http://www.stlucia.gov.lc/docs/FAQs_OECS_Integration.pdf) pg 2. (September 09, 2011)

have become critical in the Health Sector as countries in the region seek to maintain the level of investment in healthcare and to ensure that those who are poorest are not locked out of receiving quality care. Health promotion has become central to healthy living as citizens are prompted to be pro-active in their health seeking behaviours.

Safeguarding the progress which has been made in the area of socio-economic development over the last two decades presents significant challenges for States in the Eastern Caribbean. With the onslaught of the financial crisis and the global recession this imperative has become a clarion call to ensure that the plight of the vulnerable and the deprived is addressed and that countries are better positioned to weather future upheavals. Emphasis of both international and regional partners has been on countries ensuring that current social protection systems are effective and efficient in terms of meeting the needs of those most at risk. For that matter UNICEF in concert with the World Bank, the OECS and UNIFEM has conducted Social Safety Net Assessments across the subregion in an effort to assess the policies and challenges of the social safety nets. Having completed their assessments states such as Grenada, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Barbados and Antigua and Barbuda have initiated reforms of their social safety net systems in order to ensure that the poor and disadvantaged are protected and supported in their efforts to escape the tentacles of poverty.

Governments in the subregion have recognized the need to pay particular attention to not only the identified categories of persons who are classified as poor such as women, elderly, youth and children. It is evident also that there needs to be significant focus on those subcategories of persons within these broader groups who are especially vulnerable or at risk due to added characteristics such as PLWHIV/AIDS, indigenous groups, young black males, teenage girls, disabled, under-performing boys, immigrants and prisoners. As such specially designed programmes have been targeted more and more at these groups. However there is much still to be done especially as governments struggle to reconcile their limited resources against a growing number of needs. This has presented a unique opportunity for countries to be more considered in their approach to addressing poverty. At the policy and legislative level efforts are a foot to modernize legislations and to implement more inclusive methods of policy making, to significantly enhance the environment within which much needed services are delivered. Transforming gender awareness into actual policy and action continues to present a challenge.

The tiny islands in the region are especially vulnerable to environmental risks hence throughout the region, risk management has become a critical aspect of poverty reduction efforts especially with regards to protecting livelihoods and homes of the poor. The investment of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and other such agencies has been significant in enabling countries to battle environmental challenges and rebuild lives of citizens after a particularly devastating event.

Sixteen countries<sup>15</sup> in the region are members of the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) which is a regional catastrophe fund for Caribbean governments designed to limit the financial impact of hurricanes and earthquakes by providing financial liquidity in a timely manner when a policy is triggered. This fund was developed through funding from the Japanese Government and capitalized through contributions to a trust fund by member countries as well as the Government of Canada, the European Union, the World Bank, the governments of France and the United Kingdom, the Caribbean Development Bank and the Governments of Ireland and Bermuda. In addition in the wake of devastating hurricanes in the region over the last decade and a half much effort has been expended to upgrade and enforce building codes so as to increase the level of protection enjoyed by persons in the face of natural or man-made hazards.

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<sup>15</sup> The sixteen members of the CCRIF are Anguilla, Antigua & Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago and Turks & Caicos Islands.

## **D. The role of regional and international agencies in poverty reduction**

The countries in the Caribbean Subregion have been the beneficiaries of a range of support activities and services, which have been made possible in the pursuit of poverty reduction, by several regional and international agencies, as well as institutions operating within the subregion. Country Poverty Assessment Surveys have been sponsored by the Caribbean Development Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank. These assessments which have been conducted over the past ten or more years, have been important in assisting member states in understanding the nature of poverty within states, identifying the most needy areas, and helping in the development of national strategies to combat poverty and to facilitate national development.

The Caribbean Development Bank in collaboration with the Canadian International Development agency has also been providing support for Governments of Member States, through the Basic Needs Trust Fund, BNTF in the implementation of programmes, and the development of the potential of citizens to move themselves out of poverty. The BNTF which is now in its 6th Programme has contributed to the development of rural infrastructure in farming communities, trained unemployed youth to become more marketable or to become entrepreneurs, built community capacity through community leadership development programmes and improved upon the health and education facilities in many communities.

### **1. Support to poverty assessment and reduction in the Caribbean**

Support for Poverty Assessment and Reduction in the Caribbean (SPARC) is a multi-donor programme which is designed to support the strengthening of poverty and the Millennium Development Goals monitoring and the development of Social Policy within the Caribbean region. SPARC has been designed to build on the work of the CARICOM Secretariat, the Caribbean Development Bank and the United Nations system as well as other development agencies. The overall objective of the programme is the realization of coherent donor support for a Caribbean wide system of social data, poverty monitoring and the development of relevant social policy.

SPARC has five key components – building national capacity for poverty assessments; monitoring and evaluation of policy and implementation; data dissemination and advocacy; regional coordination and the development of a legislative framework. Strategically, SPARC through the collaboration and partnership of development partners and stakeholders:

- Supports the systematic collection, analysis and dissemination of social data, leading to sustainability over the long term;
- Enhances capacity to provide high quality data, but will be at the centre of a sustainable process of continued development of policy analysis capacity;
- Supports country-driven and nationally owned poverty assessment and reduction strategies;
- Strengthens country-specific poverty monitoring and evaluation frameworks and support the involvement of civil society which is expected to result in a transparent and independent monitoring platform; and
  - Sensitizes senior policymakers and other relevant stakeholders to research techniques and outcomes that will be critical for timely and informed decision-making.

SPARC is based on a dual modality framework and currently operates on two programme streams: a) a Regional Programme; and b) bilateral or parallel projects. The Regional Programme, managed by UNDP/SRO Barbados and the OECS and implemented by CARICOM, consists of pooled resources contributed by UNDP, the UN system and other donor partners. Currently the Inter-

American Development Bank (IDB) has provided funding for the execution of the parallel stream in collaboration with the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB).

The United Nations Agencies within the Caribbean have been actively engaged with poverty reduction and the development of human capacity within the region for many years. The United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean has been involved with the collection of social and economic data, the processing of data and informing social policy within the region. In addition there has been significant effort to facilitate the development of the region's data collection and the standardization of the data across the region.

UN Women and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) have been helping the region's states to maintain compliance to the various conventions to which they are signatories. These include instruments that address inequality issues that could hinder national development, but when addressed could facilitate development. Support from these agencies helps member states to facilitate national development and ultimately subregional development by addressing issues of equity.

## **E. Caribbean best practices**

There have been many initiatives in the Caribbean in pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals, both at the Member State level and at the regional level. These include Poverty Reduction, Human Development Agendas, Mainstreaming of MDGs into National Strategic Plans of Member States, Regionalization of the MDG Targets by the CARICOM Secretariat, and the costing of the efforts to achieve Millennium Development Goals by Belize. Two of these initiatives would be highlighted here, the Cash Transfer Programme to Needy Persons, and the Localization of the Millennium Development Goals Project by the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States.

### **1. Trinidad and Tobago Cash Transfer Programme**

The Targeted Conditional Cash Transfer Programme (TCCTP) of Trinidad and Tobago was launched in August 2006, in response to that country's Poverty Assessment Survey of 2005. The Programme which is estimated to cost two hundred and fifty (\$250,000,000) million Trinidad and Tobago dollars annually, sought to decrease the incidence of poverty by 5% by the year 2010, and eradicate indigence by the said year. Through this programme, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago provides a monthly amount through the use of a debit card for the purchase of a pre-determined basket of goods that would be in keeping with the dietary needs of the recipients.

A two pronged approach to poverty alleviation is adopted in this programme. The short term needs of the recipients for food are met, and further their long term needs for training is also addressed in order to help them move themselves out of poverty, since it is a requirement that one member of the recipient family has to make him or herself available for skills training that would facilitate economic self-sufficiency.

The challenges faced by the Ministry of the People and Social Development to implement a programme the size of the Targeted Conditional Cash Transfer Programme are numerous, and include problems of logistics, targeting the most needy, human resource to manage the programme, and the transition of programme participants into skilled, income generating persons, who are able to move themselves out of poverty. Despite the challenges however, the programme has realized a fair measure of success.

The Ministry of the People and Social Development's comments in response to the Auditor General's Report of January 2010, indicates that the Ministry has records of all of the recipients of the programme who have received skills training and the benefits of improved quality of life that have been derived by their families as a result of the training and efforts to help them establish themselves as income earners. Clients interested in establishing their own businesses after they have received training are guided toward the Micro Enterprise and Training Grant. Also the staff of the TCCTP

makes representation to the Micro Enterprise and Training Grant Committee, on behalf of participants of the programme.

In highlighting the progress made by the training component of the TCCTP, the Ministry of People and Social Development, highlights the commendation of the Organization of American States as proof of the programme's success. "In fact the progress made by the Ministry of Social Development in the design of the "STEP UP"-Fighting Poverty, Building Strong Families to facilitate the conditional component of the TCCTP was acknowledge and given high commendation from the Department of Social Development and Employment (DSDE) of the Organization of American States (OAS) for being the most advanced in the Caribbean region under the Caribbean Puente Initiative."

## 2. Jamaica PATH Programme

The Government of Jamaica embarked upon the Programme of Advancement through Health and Education (PATH) in 2001. The programme which is managed by the Ministry of Social Security seeks to better target benefits and opportunities for development to the poor, by attaching them to the school attendance of children in beneficiary families, and visits to health care institutions. Eligibility for PATH is determined based on a scoring system that takes a number of family circumstances into consideration, and beneficiaries receive their benefits via the mail.

The Government of Jamaica (GOJ) in an effort to address the gaps in its social safety net formed an inter-institutional task force which was led by the Planning Institute of Jamaica to develop a policy matrix to realize programme reform. The reform was designed to render the social safety net more fiscally sound and efficient in its assistance to the poor, very poor, and vulnerable. The reform effort focused on developing and implementing a universal targeting system based on a proxy means test, consolidating major cash and in-kind transfer programmes into the PATH, improving targeting efficiency of school based and other social programmes, and developing systems to evaluate and monitor social programmes.

PATH was designed to replace three major income support programmes that provided cash or in-kind assistance: the Food Stamps Programme, the Poor Relief Programme, and the Public Assistance Programme. PATH has combined social assistance with the development of human capital, through fighting poverty in the present by providing monetary transfers and to reducing poverty in the future by encouraging poor households to invest in the health and education of their children. PATH identifies poor households through a scoring formula that ranks households from poorest to best off. Households scoring below a certain pre-determined level are eligible for benefits.

Jamaica's PATH Programme was evaluated by Mathematica Research Incorporated which submitted its evaluation in 2007. The report indicates that the PATH Programme has achieved the objective of improving the regularity of attendance in school of programme recipients, managed to target 58% of its benefits to the poorest quintile of the population, and improved the preventive health care use of the programme participants. Fifty eight percent benefits to the poorest quintile compares favourably with other countries that have similar programmes that target the poor. Two hundred and fifty thousand persons are enrolled in the PATH, however, in a given period only 180,000 receive benefits, because of compliance issues.

PATH has positively affected the regularity of attendance of children whose families are beneficiaries of the programme. The Evaluation report cites an increase of .5 days per month or 3% over the baseline, which is significant. Jamaica had an attendance of approximately 85% prior to the PATH Programme. PATH has also been able to increase its preventive health care seeking for children ages 0-6 by 38%. Health care visits by the elderly show no significant difference, and this could be a result of the decision taken early in the programme to refrain from denying seniors their benefits because of non-compliance.

The Evaluation report indicates that the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, has managed to develop and implement a highly successful programme to improve the quality of life of the poorest

persons in the Jamaican society. The Ministry has been largely successful in setting up a programme that has achieved its basic mission. It has accomplished the development of a formula to successfully determine eligibility for benefits: created the necessary public awareness to attract eligible persons, through its Parish Offices; setting up the MIS to collect key information on participants and the disbursement process; setting up procedures to gather the necessary information from schools and health care institutions, in order to determine compliance for continued payments.

“Together these accomplishments have created a programme which is widely viewed by stakeholders as having accomplished its basic mission.... Most of the participants surveyed report having had satisfactory transactions with the programme”.<sup>16</sup>

## **F. Localization of the Millennium Development Goals in the OECS subregion**

The localization progress places the spotlight on the relevance of globally established targets and goals of the MDGs and allows for introspection by states across the region. Some progress has been made in terms of ensuring that the MDGs reflect the realities which are dominant in the Caribbean and in the development of Caribbean specific targets and indicators. At the broader regional level, the CARICOM Secretariat collaborated with UNIFEM in establishing a Regional Taskforce on Gender and Poverty which included the CDB, CARICOM and other agencies who partnered together to further the agenda for the development of region specific targets and indicators. This collaborative process and the establishment of a working group to review the indicators allowed for the development of more precise indicators and targets which reflected the nuances of life in the region.

In 2005 the Social Policy Unit of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Secretariat with the assistance of UNDP embarked on a project to localize the Millennium Development Goals in all Member States. Initially the project was carried out in Saint Kitts and Nevis and Dominica and subsequently the BVI and Saint Lucia. The localization exercise continued with Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Antigua and Barbuda and Grenada and all 9 member states are expected to be completed by the end of 2011. Out of this process grew the “Plan of Action for the Localizing and Achieving the MDGs” for Barbados and Eastern Caribbean aimed at providing guidance to each country to deal with issues of the MDGs as well as present an outline for an action plan. Through the localization process some of the deficiencies of the MDGs in measuring issues relevant to the Caribbean experience were highlighted. For example it pointed to issues of quality education and health care, measurements of poverty, domestic abuse and other gender based violence and targeted education and skills development to support labour market demands and meet established development goals.

Perhaps the most outstanding outcome, though not measured, of the MDGs is the interest and involvement in poverty eradication that it has sparked throughout the world amongst citizens of all economic strata, especially vulnerable persons, persons socially excluded and discriminated against, human rights activists, and persons wanting to improve their societies and hold their leaders accountable for an improved quality of life.

Country ownership suggests that there is enough political support for a policy or programme within the country to realize its implementation. Ownership also indicates that governments have enough stakeholder support in and outside of government for the realization of the goals. Stakeholders would include parliament, line ministries, civil society organizations, trade unions, and private sector organizations. Country ownership does not pre-suppose the absence of opposition but it does indicate enough support for the implementation of a programme or policy in the face of opposition.

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<sup>16</sup> Evaluation of Jamaica Path Programme pp.93,94

In the case of the Millennium Development Goals, their localization and public awareness of the goals and their relevance to national development would help citizens to understand their importance. Citizens would with their heightened levels of awareness be able to hold state actors accountable for the realization of the goals; as well as be willing to work at the community level on programmes that would enhance the state's ability to realize the goal.

Within the Caribbean subregion there needs to be heightened awareness of the importance of the Millennium Development Goals since for many citizens they are the concerns of technocrats and have little relevance for the citizenry. Heightened awareness of the goals would help citizens to hold high expectations for the achievement of the goals and participate in their realization.

## **IV. Progress towards the achievements of the MDGs in the Caribbean**

### **A. Overview**

The Caribbean region with its high to medium-high development rankings continues to be challenged by stubborn pockets of poverty, both in its rural and urban population and amongst its employed and unemployed persons. The nature of poverty within the region is quite complex and despite a continued “war” on poverty, the levels would not be sufficiently reduced in a number of the member states to meet the agreed acceptable level by member states of 10%-18% poverty head count by 2015. Belize is the first country to carry out a Country Poverty Assessment Survey since the global food, economic and fuel crises of 2007/2008. Belize’s CPA has revealed increased levels of poverty, and it is therefore reasonable to assume that the other countries of the subregion which carry out post crises surveys would have similar results.

### **B. The face of poverty in the subregion**

The Caribbean region in its effort to localize the Millennium Development Goal 1, Target 1 suggested the following targets: 1(a) Proportion of households living below the poverty line, by sex of head of household; 1(b) Proportion of employed living in households with household per capita income which is below the poverty line, by sex of household. Clearly the goal of determining persons living on one or two US dollars per day has little relevance for most of the Caribbean territories, one of whose dollar is similar in value to the United States dollar, and several others whose dollars are pegged to the United States dollar at rates of under three dollar. In addition, the cost of living in many of the countries of the subregion makes it impossible to live on one or two United States dollars per day.

The Country Poverty Assessment Team, in collaboration with CDB established the poverty line in various countries for which assessments were done, by considering the minimum annual consumption in dollars that would be needed to meet the food and non-food needs of an adult at the prevailing prices in that country. The consumption level or poverty line separates the poor from the rest of the population.

In addition to the poverty line, an indigence line is established, taking into consideration the basic nutritional needs of an adult, based on the Caribbean Food and Nutrition Association’s recommendation for healthy living. A basket of goods is priced at the lowest possible cost and this is used to determine

the indigence line. Recently, poverty experts have taken to calculating a vulnerability line at 125% of the poverty line. This calculation has allowed Poverty Assessments which were conducted just prior to the onslaught of the crisis to remain relevant as it allowed for some level of adjustment of the poverty line to capture those who are on the brink of the line and who are more susceptible to falling below the poverty line due to crises.

The poor in the Caribbean are those persons whose income falls below the poverty line, or the indigence line. Despite the fact that impacts vary as a result of the availability of different services and social education safety nets, poverty is manifested throughout the Caribbean in low incomes, more limited access to basic services, inadequate housing, unsafe environments and social marginalization. For the most part, households with inadequate income are at greater risk of domestic violence, teenage pregnancy, school dropout, drug use, and malnutrition and food insufficiency. (USAID, 2010.)

In particular, a large proportion of the poor may live in rural areas, as the CPAs indicate that the majority of the poor live in rural areas. There are also significant numbers of poor persons in urban areas of the subregion. In Dominica for example, 12.8% of the residents in Roseau the Capital were poor, while 16.3% of the residents of St. George were poor. In contrast, several of the rural parishes had rates of poverty that were well above the national average of 28%. Three rural parishes had rates of over 40%. One parish St. Joseph had a poverty rate of 47.2%.

The distribution of the poor in Grenada is quite similar to that of Dominica, with a small percentage of the poor 15% resident in St. Georges, the capital and the majority living in the rural parishes. It is interesting to note that the rest of the parish of St. George has a poverty rate of 35.1% which is slightly below the national poverty rate of 37.7%. Two rural parishes, St. Patrick's and St. Mark's have poverty rates of over 50% while St. Andrew has a poverty rate of 44.9%.

The poverty rates in Belize as indicated by the CPA of 2009 indicate a significant difference to those of Dominica and Grenada. There is significant incidence of urban poverty with Belmopan/San Ignacio and Santa Elena, and Dangriga, urban areas recording 32% of their population being poor, and Orange Walk and Belize City not far behind with 27% and 28% of their population respectively being poor. On a whole many of the rural poor are engaged in the agricultural sector and tend to have lower access to a wide array of services and provisioning. These figures support the premise of the complex nature of poverty in the subregion. Often persons who are experiencing difficulties in rural areas would move to urban areas in search of a better quality of life, but without the necessary support, training, qualifications and skills, they are likely to become a part of the urban poor population. Urban poverty tends to be accompanied by increased environmental challenges, crime and poor housing or deterioration of housing conditions and increased pressures on services in the area.

Country Poverty Assessment Surveys have also shown a clear connection between household size and poverty. Larger households are more likely to be poor than smaller households. In Belize it was discovered that seventy five percent of indigent households and 66% of poor households had five or more persons living in them, while non poor households with five or more persons accounted for 25%. The average size of poor households was 5.3 persons, while the average size of non-poor households is 3.4 persons.

In Grenada a similar situation exists as the average size of poor households is five, while the national average is three. In Dominica the average household size for persons in the lowest socio-economic stratum is 3.84, while in the highest socio-economic stratum the household size is 2.01.

The housing situation and general living conditions of the poor in the Caribbean region, based on available information, seems quite similar. Most of the poor in the subregion occupy wooden structures and a significant portion use pit toilets. Government Departments of Housing have been working to improve the housing stock in several states, thus making it possible for low income families to enjoy better housing facilities.

The young and the elderly are heavily represented amongst the poor in the region. Poor families tend to be larger and have more non contributing adults in the families; hence the situation of poverty

within these families is compounded. Increased life expectancy and the evidence of an ageing population is also a factor which can contribute to poverty since persons have more post-retirement years and without proper planning for retirement could fall into poverty in old age.

Throughout the region, as indicated in the Participatory Poverty Assessments, there is evidence of various coping mechanisms that are used to address the issue of poverty at the personal and family level. These include but are not limited to business activities, legal and illegal, transactional sex, working additional jobs, resourceful use of natural resources to create income, and the maintenance from fathers of children, though in a number of cases this is sporadic.

### **C. Regionalization of the MDGs with reference to poverty**

The Millennium Development Goals have been viewed by Caribbean countries as a baseline for the improvement of human existence and not as the end point; hence several of the indicators have been made specific to the region. In some cases the goals may have already been achieved within the region, such is the case with universal access to primary education. Some countries in the region have already achieved universal access to secondary education while others have experienced ongoing challenges particularly with the need to increase the number of secondary school places. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) has indicated that 12 years of education are necessary to prevent poverty as it ensures in more than 80% of the cases that decent employment is secured.<sup>17</sup> Secondary education therefore has been added as a part of the Caribbean Specific goal. Goals 2 was amended in order to be relevant to the Caribbean region, where it has been realized that secondary education is absolutely essential to facilitate one's success in life. The fifteen indicators under this area all seek to collect sex-disaggregated data.

Millennium Development Goal 1, which seeks to half hunger and extreme poverty by 2015 has been a very important social issue for the countries of the Caribbean region, however, the measurement of hunger and poverty in the Caribbean would of necessity be different from several other locations worldwide, since the cost of living in the Caribbean, and per-capita income makes it impossible for one to earn and live on \$1US per day. In fact one US dollar could possibly be used to purchase only a snack in most Caribbean destinations.

In 2005, the United Nations Development Programme, Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean Office supported the Social Policy Unit of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States in helping member states of the OECS to localize the Millennium Development Goals and integrate them into their poverty reduction strategies. The effort to regionalize the MDGs was also a part of the same initiative.

The UNDP Caribbean Millennium Development Goals Report (2004) has established the poverty headcount ratio of 10-18 percent as the required reduction of poverty in Caribbean countries by 2015. Indicators 2 and 3 address the poverty gap ratio by sex and the share of the poorest quintile in national consumption by sex. The target "halve between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger" is also broken out into sex disaggregated indicators in the Caribbean Specific MDGs, "prevalence of underweight children under 5 years of age by sex; and "proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption by sex. The final target under goal one, "halve between 1990 and 2015 the proportion of persons without access to basic services has also been revised in the Caribbean MDGs indicators to make it possible to collect sex-disaggregated data.

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<sup>17</sup> Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean 2000, Social Panorama for Latin America 1999-2000. Santiago, Chile, ECLAC

## D. Findings of the Country Poverty Assessment surveys and the SLCs in the Caribbean

All of the countries that have carried out CPA's during the period under review, 2007-2011, show poverty head count above the targeted Caribbean rate of 10-18%. When the indigence rate is added to the poverty rate, the poverty levels are even higher as some states have high rates of indigence. Many of the national surveys were undertaken before the effects of the global financial, energy and food crises could be observed. Belize is the country which has done a post crises survey and the poverty levels and indigence levels have increased, over the findings in the 2002 CPA. Dominica, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Grenada and Jamaica all carried out CPAs or SLCs in the period under review. With the exception of Jamaica, all of the countries reported poverty rates above the targeted 10-18 %. Jamaica whose poverty rate was determined in 2007 was 9.9%. Saint Kitts and Nevis in its CPA of 2007-2008 had a poverty rate of 21.8% and an indigence rate of 1.0%. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines whose CPA was conducted in the same period, 2007-2008 had a poverty rate of 30.2% and an indigence rate of 2.9%. Grenada recorded a 37.7% poverty rate and an indigence rate of 2.4% in its 2007-2008 CPA, while Dominica in its 2008-2009 CPA recorded a poverty rate of 28.8% and an indigence rate of 3.1%.

In all of the countries for which data was available, except Jamaica, the poverty head count has been outside of the targeted range for the Caribbean region for achievement by 2015.

### Summary of key findings of Survey of Living Conditions – Caribbean

- Low human capital (i.e., level of education and skills) base, with lesser accessibility to secondary level schooling;
- Poor housing conditions with overcrowding being a problem;
- Relatively high use of pit latrines;
- Limited access to potable water;
- High incidence of poverty in female-headed households;
- High concentration of women in vulnerable jobs (informal sector, agriculture and services sector);
- High incidence of malnutrition among children in poor households;
- Increased proneness to chronic illnesses and obesity
- High levels of employment in informal sector (acting as a cushion for unemployment in the formal sector);
- Little correlation between growth in informal sector and significant economic growth at the individual or country level
- Persistence of poverty in the above group;
- Increased environmental vulnerability and weak frame work for risk reduction and vulnerability management;
- Heightened insecurity linked to increased crime and violence;
- Social Protection and Social Safety Nets System fragmented and in need of recalibration.

Source: UNICEF, 2005 and CPA Reports

## E. Poverty reduction strategy papers

In response to the findings of the Country Poverty Assessment Surveys, several countries of the subregion have begun, with the support of external development partners, like the International Monetary Fund, CDB, IMF and the World Bank, to develop Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, which would build upon the recommendations of the CPA's and develop prescriptive measures to address the issue of poverty within the state. The PRSP contains an assessment of poverty and the macro-economic, structural and social programmes that a country will undertake to lower the incidence of poverty. It also addresses the financial arrangements that would be necessary to carry out the programmes indicated. The PRSPs are developed through consultative processes which seek to acquire the greatest levels of participation by public and private sector, the NGO community and civilians. The International Monetary Fund Fact Sheet of March 2011 suggests that PRSPs need national ownership and broad based public support in order to be successful.

In addition to PRSPs, there are Medium Term Economic Strategy Papers and National Development Plans which some states have developed and these all seek to address the issue of poverty within the Member State, and include measures for the reduction of poverty and the development of human capital to foster self-reliance. As current information becomes available from Country Poverty Assessment Surveys or Standard of Living Conditions Surveys, the PRSPs are adjusted to reflect the new information and to make them relevant to the situation within the country.

## F. Progress made in the alleviation of poverty and hunger in the region

Country Poverty Assessments have been carried out in the Caribbean region for approximately a decade and have shown some decline in the incidence of poverty as well as the incidence of indigence. In spite of these declines, levels of poverty within the subregion are still unacceptably high, exceeding the rate of 10-18% as has been considered an acceptable range by 2015 in Member States. In addition, the global economic, food and fuel crises have not been factored into the poverty statistics in Member States, since only Belize has carried out a post crises CPA, and the findings of Belize's study do indicate an increase in the number of poor persons and families within the country. The incidence of indigence has also shown increase, and the vulnerability measure which has been introduced in the recently conducted CPA's also indicate a percentage of the population that is at risk of falling into poverty.

### **Main Focus of PRSPs and National Development Plans in Caribbean**

- Recalibration of Social Protection and Social safety Net
- Improve Access to Quality Social Services (Education, Health Care, Housing etc.)
- Promote of economic growth and Wealth Creation
- Reform the Macroeconomic Framework
- Maintain and improve social and physical infrastructure
- Strengthen institutional framework for improved social services delivery
- Reduce Social Vulnerability
- Foster Community Empowerment, Crime Reduction and Security Management
- Accelerate the development of Traditional sectors

- Broaden Employment and Income Opportunities for the Poor
- Develop Innovative People and human resource development
- Address Youth Under-achievement, Crime and Deviance
- Invest in Sound Infrastructure and Environment
- Foster Social Cohesion and strengthen social capital
- Facilitate Competitive business at all levels
- Nurture a caring society
- Effective and Accountable Governance and improved public sector management
- Encourage the development of a Technology Enabled Society
- Seek Energy Security and Efficiency
- Preserve Authentic and Transformational Culture
- Strengthen resilience to Natural Disasters and Climate Change
- Promote Healthy Lifestyles and ensure Stable Population

Source: Various PRSPs and National Development Plans

The Commonwealth of Dominica whose CPA was carried out in 2008/2009 shows a decrease in the level of poverty by eleven percentage points, and the indigence rate has shown considerable improvement. However, the vulnerability rate of 11.5% does indicate a significant number of persons within the society who are at risk for falling into poverty. The CPA also revealed a Gini-coefficient of inequality of .44 and the poorest 10% of the population consuming a mere 2% of consumption expenditure.

Grenada's MDG report of November 2009 indicated a decrease in indigence in that country from 10.1% to 2.4%, and a decrease in the depth of poverty from 15.3% to 10.1%. However, the poverty rate has increased and over one third of the population lives in poverty with another 14.6% of the population vulnerable to poverty. The percentage of persons who are malnourished has also increased by 10 percentage points of the 1991 percentage, to 23%.

Jamaica has realized a fair measure of success with its efforts to reduce poverty, despite the numerous challenges that the nation faces, with its debt servicing, which was placed at 56.5 percent of the 2009/2010 budget, the devaluation of its currency against the United States Dollar, vulnerability to natural disasters and an ongoing battle against violent criminal activity. The country has managed through its statistical division to carry out a Survey of Living Conditions annually.

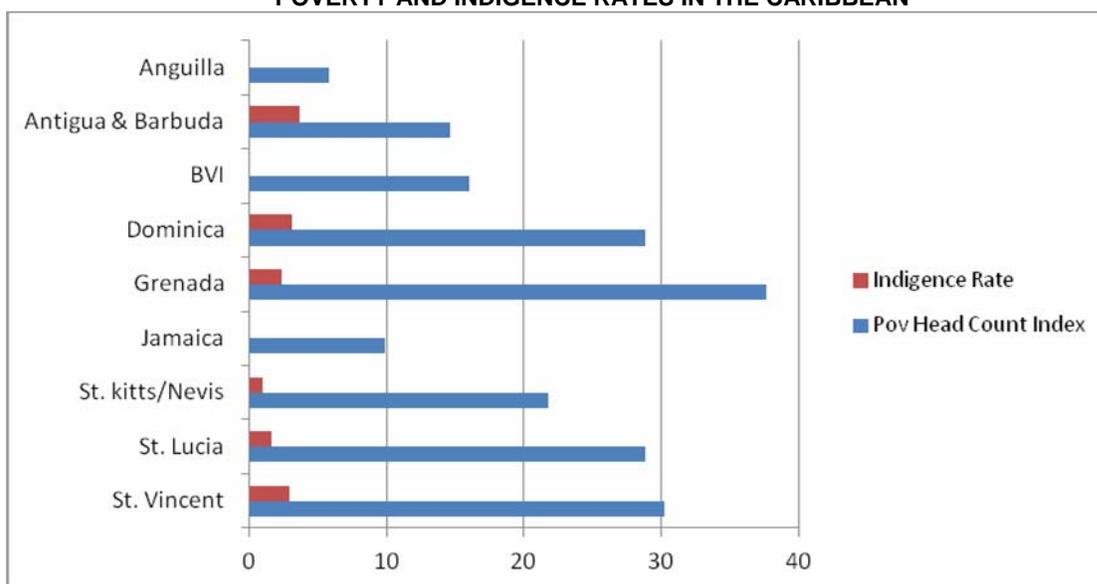
During the period 1990 to 2007 Jamaica has realized all of the indicators under Millennium Goal 1, as the percentage of persons living below the poverty line dropped from 28.4% to 9.9% while the prevalence of underweight children under five years of age fell by 6.2 percentage points to 2.2% and the proportion of the population living below the minimum level of dietary consumption fell from 8.3% to 2.9%. During this period however, the share of the poorest quintile in national consumption, showed little change showing an increase of .8%.

The global economic crisis is likely to affect Jamaica's outstanding poverty reduction efforts as remittances which constitute the largest source of foreign revenue declined by 21%, between 2008 and 2009 and the other two sources of foreign exchange, tourism and bauxite were also being adversely affected by the global economic crisis.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Government of Jamaica Millennium Development Goals Report 2009

Saint Kitts and Nevis has shown decreases in the poverty and indigence levels in their 2007 CPA compared with their 2000 CPA. The poverty head count index dropped by a little under 10 percentage points to 21.8%, while the indigence levels dropped from 14% to 1%. Saint Kitts and Nevis recorded a high vulnerability level, 35.6% which does indicate that there are many people in the population that are at risk for falling into poverty since the vulnerability level was established at 125% of the poverty line. Poverty and Social Impact Assessments have been conducted across the subregion in the wake of the economic crisis in order to assess the impact of the crisis as well as chart a way forward to mitigate against the risks which the vulnerable and disadvantaged face. Like the Social safety Net Assessments, the PSIA's have afforded the countries such as Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and Antigua and Barbuda the opportunity to make necessary adjustments or improve planning and service provision in order to better meet the needs of the people.

**FIGURE 6**  
**POVERTY AND INDIGENCE RATES IN THE CARIBBEAN**



Source: CPA and MDG Reports-<sup>19</sup>

## G. The case of the working poor

The ILO Summary Paper, *The Working Poor in the Caribbean*, 2006 defines working poor as "... individuals engaged in either paid or self employment who belong to households with an adult equivalent per capita household expenditure (or income) that falls below a specified line." In a study of eight countries of the subregion namely, The Bahamas, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana and Jamaica, it was found that a number of the countries, with the exception of Barbados and the Bahamas reflected high numbers of poor employed persons. Guyana poor as a percentage of employed persons, was 29% while Dominica's percentage was 21% and Grenada's was 20%. Jamaica Trinidad and Tobago and Saint Kitts and Nevis had their working poor represent 16%, 15% and 12.9% of their working population respectively.

Throughout the Caribbean region Country Poverty Assessments have revealed that a large number of poor persons in the Caribbean are employed, but continue to function below the poverty line. This does reflect a need for decent work within the region, so that persons who are employed could be able to

<sup>19</sup> Anguilla-2010, Antigua and Barbuda,, Saint Kitts and Nevis-2007; Saint Lucia-2005/2006; Jamaica- 2009 MDG Report; Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada-2007/2008; Dominica -2008-2009; BVI-2003

earn enough to maintain a decent standard of living. If poverty lines are established on basic food and non-food consumption, then it is difficult to comprehend how persons who are employed could be unable to afford their basic needs.

In the Survey of Living Conditions carried out in Dominica in 2009 it was revealed that 74.1% of the persons living below the poverty line were employed. This is an indication that the situation highlighted by the 2006 study still existed and may have grown worse.

The ILO Paper on the Working Poor identified men in larger numbers amongst the working poor except in Barbados and Saint Kitts and Nevis. In addition, the working poor are clustered in the age group twenty five to forty four and possess low levels of education and are found in elementary and agricultural occupations. Many poor employed persons are employed in agriculture, community and Social Services, and whole sale and retails services. The following shows the sector with the highest percentage of the working poor by country.

**TABLE 5**  
**HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF THE WORKING POOR BY SECTOR AND COUNTRY**

Sector and Countries	Working Poor (%)
Agriculture in Jamaica	39%
Agriculture in Dominica	35%
Community and Social Services in Trinidad and Tobago	31%
Construction in the Bahamas (25%)	25%
Wholesale/Retail Sales in Barbados	17%

Source: ILO Paper on the Working Poor – 2006

The Study revealed that privately paid employees were also over represented amongst the working poor and that on average, the working poor worked more hours per week that the non-poor.

## H. Gender equality in the Caribbean region

The Caribbean Subregion could be classified as largely matrifocal yet patriarchal in nature, since women are active in every area of societal life from the family, to the community to the political parties, yet there are areas within the society in which their absence or limited presence is quite noticeable. How has Caribbean society conditioned women to carry out distinct roles within the society and to believe that certain roles are for men, is an area for further, study, but this conditioning does exist and even though there has been progress in the ideological dimensions of gender, there is still quite a bit of work that has to be done in order to increase awareness of men's and women's roles as equal partners in the development of countries.

Gender role conditioning in some cases is so thoroughly entrenched that women who are very often the victims of the traditional gender roles, function as enforcers of these norms that have helped to restrict their development. The Human Development Report 2010, cites gender inequality as a major barrier to human development, and suggests that despite the fact that girls and women have made major strides since 1990, they still have not realized equity. The report introduced a new measurement for gender equality, the Gender Inequality Index, which measures three very important areas, reproductive health, women's empowerment and labour market participation. The GII ranges from 0 to 1, 0 representing no inequality and 1 representing high levels of inequality. How does the Caribbean region fare in the area of Gender Equality on the new GII measure?

In the 2010 Gender Gap Report six Caribbean Countries had a rank above forty five in a ranking of one hundred and thirty four countries to determine which countries had an equitable distribution of goods and services for men and women. Two countries in the Caribbean subregion Trinidad and Tobago

and Barbados had rates that were higher than a number of developed countries. The five countries that were featured in the first forty five countries were Trinidad and Tobago- 21, Barbados- 31, Bahamas- 36, Guyana- 38 and Jamaica- 44.

It is obvious that the Caribbean region has made progress in the pursuit of gender equity and equality, and the Gender Gap report attests to this progress, however maintaining these gains and building on successes will necessitate progress in the ideological dimensions of gender to support the gains in the material dimension. The Caribbean region has a high participation and performance rate of women in secondary and tertiary levels of education; however, there is not the corresponding placement of women in decision making, in particular political decision making and in managerial positions in private sector. Women continue to be over-represented in the service sector, retail sales, and social service employment, which is an extension of women's traditional roles in the family and the community.

The target of gender parity in political decision making will not be realized by 2015, as most of the countries will not be having general elections before 2015 and women's representation in the Parliaments and Lower House of the region as reflected in the table below is an indication that that target will be missed.

**TABLE 6**  
**WOMEN IN PARLIAMENT AND LOWER HOUSES OF THE CARIBBEAN SUBREGION**

Country	Lower or Single House	Parliament
Guyana	30%	
Trinidad and Tobago	28.6%	25.8%
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	17.4%	
Grenada	13.3%	30.8%
Jamaica	13.3%	23.8%
Dominica	12.5%	
Bahamas	12.3%	33.3%
Haiti	11%	
Saint Lucia	11.1%	36.4%
Antigua	10.5%	29.4%
Barbados	10.4%	33.3%
Surinam	9.8%	
Saint Kitts and Nevis	6.7%	
Belize	0%	38.5%

Source: Inter-Parliamentary Union Women in the World's Parliaments 2011

The Caribbean region has been endeavouring to address masculinity issues which are directly related to gender inequality and the socialization of males, who often enjoy privileges in their homes that could encourage lethargy and ill discipline. In recent years more and more parents are realizing the need to socialize their children to become responsible citizens, and not just men and women, since in a complex society, roles must be flexible for the benefit of all. The issues of male under-representation and under-performance at the secondary and the tertiary level of the education system is a very complex one, as it has bearing on male socialization and the education system's inability and or unwillingness to address the learning styles of males.

Crime and violence and citizen security is now a major concern of every member state in the subregion. Again there are complex gender dimensions connected to this issue. The prisons are overcrowded and most of the inmates are young males. In addition, most of the homicides in the Caribbean

region are committed by males against males. The high cost of crime detection and citizen security within the region could clearly be put to better use if there could be a workable solution for the development of a larger number of young males for productive citizenship.

## **I. A need for greater commitment to gender in the Caribbean region**

Gender has been a buzz word in the Caribbean since the 1970's with the World Conference of Women and the Decade of the Women, but the support for gender equality has not always been forth coming, and very often, gender practitioners have lamented the woefully lacking support mechanisms for the realization of gender equity and equality. Departments of Gender Affairs and Women's Affairs have been resourced strapped at all levels, including human resource, material resource and financial resource. Despite the fact that there has been delivery of services, and the development of policies and programmes, the operation of these national machineries continues to be adversely affected by the low status and level of resources made available to them. The Ministerial cluster in which gender functions often changes from one administration to another and the tendency is to place the gender portfolio under Ministries whose work is not related directly to the work of Gender Affairs. In some countries, Gender is in the cluster with either tourism or labour, or with sports and culture. In a few well thought out situations, Gender has been placed in a cluster with Probation and Child Protection, Social Development, Education and Health, which are ministries that could enhance the work of Gender Affairs.

In these economically challenging times, it is understandable that Member States have got to juggle their limited resources to ensure that they are still able to provide services to citizens in a wide range of areas. However, investing in gender makes sense, since it will prevent or lower expenditures in other areas. It is argued further that improving the status of women must be understood within the framework of recognition at all levels that the attainment of women's rights and gender equality are fundamental to the achievement of economic and social development priorities. (ECLAC, 2009.) For example, programmes in support of keeping teen mothers in school would prevent them from becoming poor adults who would be dependent on the States Social Assistance for the up keep of their children and themselves. Masculinity programmes, the support of single parents, and the promotion of active fathering as a social benefit to children, families and the state, would in the long run lower the incidence of crime amongst young males. The detection of crime and the incarceration costs to the state are significant.

Member States of the Caribbean have committed themselves to actively pursue gender equity and equality, in a number of international agreements that they have signed.<sup>20</sup> In addition to these agreements several Commonwealth Secretariat Work Plans, National Constitutions, and various pieces of legislation within the region seek to advance women's equality with men in every area of societal life. Despite these commitments, gender practitioners often complain about the lack of political will to realize gender equity and equality.. Often reminders of lack of compliance by practitioners are met with nonchalance, and an attitude that suggests these are non-priorities that could be realized as by- products of the development process.

Gender equality infrastructure which would include but is not limited to family courts to expedite family matters, legal aid services, data collection capacity to provide data in a timely manner to inform policy, and enhanced human and material resource of the National Women's/Gender Machineries in the

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<sup>20</sup> The Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies (1985) The Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and its Optional Protocol (1979), The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) The Plan of Action for the World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna Austria (1993) The Plan of Action for the International Conference on Human Development ,Cairo (1994), The Programme of Action for the World Summit of Social Development, Copenhagen (1994), The ILO Fundamental Conventions.

Caribbean Subregion, would facilitate the delivery of service that would aid the realization of gender equity and equality.



## V. Challenges of the achievements of the MDGs

There are several actions that could be taken to ensure that the MDGs are realized by 2015 or very shortly thereafter. These include, but are not limited to the following: greater national ownership of the goals, with civil society ownership of the programmes; debt relief for highly indebted states; greater attention to gender equality and the empowerment of women; universal access to social services, with targeted interventions to the most vulnerable; and enhanced data collection systems.

### A. Economic challenges

The small island developing states of the Caribbean subregion contain many states which could be considered highly indebted and whose debt to GDP ratio is quite high. Six of the ten most indebted middle income countries are in the Caribbean region, with four of the countries, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Jamaica, Barbados and Grenada with a debt to GDP ratios of over one hundred percent. There are many other factors which pre-dispose the region to economic challenges; these include small export base, high dependence on imports and vulnerability to natural disasters, and external economic shocks.

The global economic crisis which became noticeable in 2007 has had adverse effects on the Caribbean region, since many of the member states export products to the United States and to Europe, two areas that were very hard hit by the global economic crisis. In addition a number of the Eastern Caribbean States depend heavily on tourist arrivals from Europe from Europe and the United States. Financial crises in these locations would mean shortfalls in tourist arrivals, which would in turn affect tourism and related services within the region. In addition much of the flow of remittances to the Caribbean region originates in the United States and Great Britain, therefore economic downturn in these countries would adversely affect the remittances, which form a significant part of GDP in a number of Caribbean countries.

The OECS Member States (see earlier note) have been cited by the World Bank, Caribbean Brief as being hard hit by the global economic crisis. Since 2008 tourism revenues, Foreign Direct Investment and remittances have declined in all of the Member States, though to varying degrees. In addition, all of the member states of the OECS currency union, with the exception of Dominica experienced contraction in the Gross Domestic Products within a range of 1.1-7.7.

The challenges faced by Member States of the Caribbean Subregion would obviously have adverse social impact. The possibility of increases in unemployment, and poverty levels in the region,

decline is the number and quality of social services being offered by the States, loom over the region as governments endeavour to use their limited resources for debt management, and the necessary investment in social development infrastructure and programmes.

## **B. Gender equality and its role in sustainable development**

Society can be likened to a bird which needs two fully functioning wings to fly. When both of those wings are functional, the bird could gain and maintain flight, when this is not the case, the bird flounders on the ground. This analogy from the Baha'i writings may seem simplistic, but it does answer the question of the developmental efforts that have gone awry, or that have not met the needs of those to whom they were targeted. Facilitating the participation of men and women in every area of societal life, from the private to the public, would certainly facilitate and enhance national development efforts.

The member States of the Caribbean subregion have signed a number of agreements for the advancement of women and the realization of gender equality; however the realization of both has been elusive for a number of reasons. Despite these commitments to action to realize gender equality, there has not been the political will to ensure compliance with agreements, and often scant resources have been used to finance other endeavours which policy makers deem more important than the participation of men and women in every area of national life, having access to a decent standard of living and to all of the goods and services necessary to facilitate that standard of living.

A comprehensive vision of gender equality is needed within the Caribbean Subregion. This vision of gender equality would affect every aspect of personal and social development, and would include issues such as male responsibilities and role in the care industry, violence against women, and the societal norms that determine the roles of men and women within the society. Over the past decade, there have been gains made in the material domain of gender, since there has been improved access for women to higher education, political representation, though not sustained; however the ideological dimension of gender is continuing to lag behind.

The improvement of the lives of women as a component of the achievement of gender equality in the Caribbean Subregion is pivotal to sustained development, since research has consistently shown that investment in women redounds to the benefit of entire societies. The Cairo Programme of Action supports the view that “population and development programmes are most effective when steps are taken to improve the status of women”. (para 4.1) With its high incidence of female headship in families and the matrifocal yet patriarchal nature of the subregion, the advancement of women, would definitely benefit the sustained development of the region.

Gender equality must not only be seen as a goal in itself, but a means to achieving the other Millennium Development goals, as it is linked to the achievement of universal primary education, reduction of poverty and extreme hunger, maternal mortality, and infant mortality, combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, or ensuring environmental sustainability. United Nations Under-Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs, in his overview for the 2010 Millennium Development Goals Report, advances the view that “gender equality and the empowerment of women are at the heart of the MDGs and are pre-conditions for overcoming poverty hunger and disease”.

A firm commitment to the achievement of gender equality would manifest itself in the adequate resourcing of gender/women's bureaus, passage and enforcement of adequate legislation on sexual harassment, equality in employment and equal pay for work of equal value. The development of the necessary mechanism to ensure women's participation at the highest decision making levels, the collection of sex-disaggregated data to inform national policies, and the quantifying of women's unwaged work as a contribution to the States' Gross Domestic Product are also demonstrations of the member States commitment to the pursuit of gender equality.

## C. Data collection capacity of member States of the Caribbean subregion

The Caribbean has experienced some improvement in its data collection and analysis capability, in recent years, but the statistical offices of the region could all benefit from enhancement of their capacity, though to varying degrees. Vanus James<sup>21</sup> suggests that although there has been marked improvement in data collection within the region, with reference to timeliness and quality, the situation is far from perfect. James further suggests that most of the countries including the OECS have very weak general data collection capacity, and none of the territories has a well defined national statistical system with the capacity to make statistics and administrative data consistent across the region. The absence of adequate Meta data to aid comparison and interpretation is also a problem.

The capacity of the statistical offices in the region has been a cause for concern, since many are acutely under resourced with few staff members in the social statistical division of the offices. Further, the staff of the statistical offices has a wide range of data collection, analysis and dissemination responsibilities which challenges them to function effectively in these numerous roles. National Statistical Offices are often so swamped with their routine work, that staff members have little time to address request for data in a timely manner. Data sparseness has been reported as a challenge in almost every country report, and every regional report on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The 2010 Caribbean Millennium Goals Report cites it as one of the key issues affecting the monitoring of the Millennium Development Goals, and suggests that as a result of the scarcity of quantitative data, there has been a reliance on qualitative data.

There have been many efforts to enhance the capacity of the Caribbean NSO's. These efforts have included training of staff, increased human and financial resource and efforts at regional collaboration. The United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the CARICOM Secretariat, the Caribbean Development Bank, and the United Nations Development Programme, have been in the forefront of regional efforts, and have implemented various training activities at national as well as subregional and regional levels. One such regional effort is the project "Building National Statistical Capacities in Caribbean Countries to Estimate Purchasing Power Parities (PPP). This project aims to bridge the capacity gap of national statistical offices in twenty one (21) member countries, to establish common data collection protocols that address the issue of purchasing power parity.

If member states are to make policy decisions based on accurate data that is generated in a timely manner, the National Statistical Offices must have the capacity to deliver this data. Movement from anecdotal decision-making to decision making based on empirical information must be realized, as scarce economic and human resource cannot be siphoned off in a direction that would not be practical, when they could be better assigned.

There have been efforts to establish a regional MDG data base to facilitate the collection of reliable data and to ensure that the possibility to measure performance across the region is realized. Support for Poverty Reduction and Assessment, and the United Nations ECLAC have been engaged in this endeavour which is intended to harmonize data collection, and make it possible to compare achievements of various countries and at different time periods.

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<sup>21</sup> Human Development Reporting and Data Collection challenges within the Caribbean: With Special Reference to Linkages between Citizen Security, Governance and Human Development( January 2010



## **VI. Necessary action to be taken to realize goals by 2015**

It is clear that there are some Goals that are on track for realization by 2015, and there are others that cannot be realized by 2015. The Caribbean Specific Millennium Development Goals indicator for Goal 1 has set target poverty head count levels at 10%-18%. However, the Caribbean Millennium Goal Report 2010 has placed all of Caribbean Countries, for which data were available, except for Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, outside the range. When the current global financial crisis and food crisis are factored in, there is little likelihood that the region will realize goal one by 2015.

The Caribbean region has realized universal access to primary education and enjoys high enrollment rates at that level, and its legislation to mandate education from age 5-16 has helped in the realization of universal access to secondary education, which some countries have realized many years ago. Gender Parity index in education has shown that Caribbean countries have reached this goal, and now have begun to focus on boys' under-representation and under-achievement at the secondary and tertiary levels of the education system.

In addition to zeroing in on the key subgroups, it is imperative that countries also recognize the need to focus on higher order goals such as education quality (inputs and outcomes) at all levels of the education system thus developing a responsive and accountable system that allows males and females to benefit fully from opportunities which are available to them and ultimately break the chains of entrenched and multi-generational poverty. As countries become more engaged in the globalized world, the recalibration of the education system to improve competitiveness and quality of human resources on a global stage becomes critical. Questions of how to move women from the lower end of labour market or young men stereo-typically from off "the block" and upgrading their positions in order that they may have access to higher level employment and income, demand answers.

Women's political participation continues to be an elusive target, which is not likely to be realized by 2015. Although there has been improvement in women's share of non-agricultural work, there is still need for improvement in some countries of the subregion, such as Guyana, Dominica and Belize.

Embedding the Caribbean specific and localized goals and targets more deeply into national policy development and planning activities is requisite to achieving progress in achieving gender equality and improving the overall welfare of those most vulnerable in the region. In 2008 Caribbean specific targets and indicators were agreed upon and developed through the CARICOM Secretariat, There was consensus that these would help to fine tune the MDGs to allow for more realistic measurement of progress in the areas of poverty reduction and gender equality in the Caribbean region. Reviewing and implementing recommendations coming out of these processes will enable countries to actively employ strategies for the realization of the MDGs. This regionalization of the MDG targets and

the Localization programme, which has unfolded across the region and subregion have laid a foundation for countries to develop their programmes for the achievement of the MDGs.

## **A. Debt relief for Highly Indebted States**

Several of the States in the Caribbean Subregion have debt to GDP ratios that are well over 100%. Debt financing consumes a large amount of the countries budget expenditure, thus leaving scant resources for the provision of services for the most vulnerable persons in the population. Even though member states endeavour to keep their debt repayments current, many states experience challenges in this regard. Prime Minister Bruce Golding<sup>22</sup> in 2010 suggested that debt forgiveness for Caribbean Small Island Developing States should be kept “on the table” as an option, since some of the States would never be able to pay their debts.

The issue of debt forgiveness for small-island developing states is one that has been given quite some attention, as States endeavour to grapple with the effects of the global economic Crisis. The Finance Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, The Hon. Winston Dookeran,<sup>23</sup> raised the issue, asking that developing countries such as comprise the Caribbean region, be given preferential treatment such as large states receive, in the area of debt forgiveness and more liberal lending criteria.

The Caribbean Millennium Development Goals Report 2010 indicates a high debt servicing levels for all of the countries in the subregion except Guyana and Suriname, which has an unusually low debt to GDP ratio. Belize and Saint Kitts and Nevis have seen increases in their debt servicing levels of fivefold and threefold respectively. Significant increases were also recorded for Dominica, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

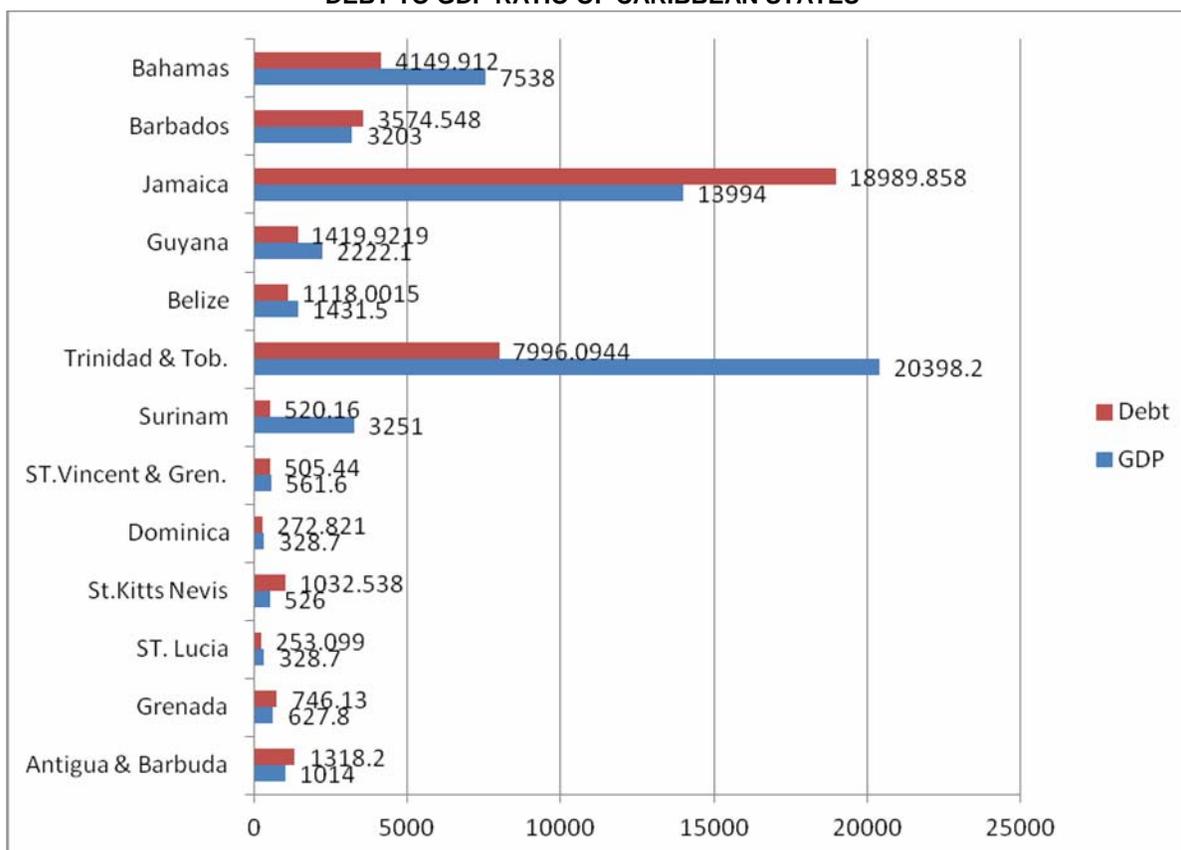
Restructuring of debts to facilitate lower servicing costs would also be helpful for many countries in the region, as budgetary expenditures for debt servicing could be used for education, health care, solid waste management, job creation and other pressing developmental issues within the countries.

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<sup>22</sup> Fifth Conference of Comprehensive Disaster Management, Rosehall Jamaica, December 9th, 2010

<sup>23</sup> North South Institute Forum, Ottawa Canada, July 6th, 2010

**FIGURE 7**  
**DEBT TO GDP RATIO OF CARIBBEAN STATES**



Source: World Bank Statistics 2011

## B. Universal access to quality social services

There is a definite connection between the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, universal access to social services, and the well being of countries. The United Nations Secretary General in the report “Keeping the Promise: A forward looking Review to Promote an Agreed Action Agenda to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals, by 2015”, supports this view when he suggested that:

“Ensuring universal access to social services and providing a social protection floor with wide coverage are essential to consolidate and achieve further gains in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The social consequences of economic crises have been most severe in countries where social protection systems were weakest and least adequate, made worse by their weak institutional and fiscal capacity. More importantly when growth collapses owing to external shocks, natural disasters or health epidemics, societal cohesion may rupture, leading to civil violence”.

Heads of States in the Outcome Document of the 2010 MDG Summit committed themselves to promote comprehensive systems of social protection that provide universal access to essential social services, consistent with national priorities and circumstances, by establishing a minimum level of social security and health care for all.

A country’s greatest resource is its people therefore human development is central to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The need for increased investment in the human,

physical, and institutional infrastructures including those in the health, education, water and energy sectors was highlighted in the LCD's Conference, March 10, 2011, Promoting Universal Access to Essential Services in LDCs. The development and improvement of services in the aforementioned sectors are intrinsically linked to creating an enabling environment where economic growth, particularly among the poorest of the poor, can be nurtured.

Member States of the Caribbean Region have recognized the importance of universal access to social services, as well as the need to implement means testing and greater targeting of services, so that the persons who are most needy, will have meaningful interventions, to assist them in their efforts to move out of poverty. Poverty and Social Impact Assessments have been conducted across the subregion in the wake of the economic crisis in order to assess the impact of the crisis as well as chart a way forward to mitigate against the risks which the vulnerable and disadvantaged face. Like the Social safety net Assessments, the PSIA's have afforded the countries the opportunity to make necessary adjustments or improve planning and service provision in order to better meet the needs of the citizens.

### **C. Enhanced data collection systems**

Despite the improvement in the region's ability to collect, analyze and disseminate social data in a timely manner, there is still need for improvement in the area of data collection within the region. There is a shortage of sex-disaggregated data, and the need for standardization regionally of poverty data, so that comparisons could be made regionally. In addition, there needs to be a Meta Data System, to further clarify the findings of the studies that are conducted. The United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and SPARC have been collaborating in the establishment of a regional MDG monitoring data base in order to facilitate the comparison of performance from one State to another.

The Hutcheon Study of 2002 highlighted the fact that a number of methodologies were being used and there was no consistent approach to poverty assessment. In addition, the same study indicated a need for enhanced social assessment capacity, and better linkages between data collection, analysis and policy development.

In an effort to address the concerns of the study, the UNDP SPARC implemented training in gender analysis, joint training on data interpretation and analysis, and the enhancement of the capacity of the region for social analysis. The region has made significant progress since 2002, and many of the Member States have carried out at least one Country Poverty Assessment Survey, some have carried out two, and were able to compare their findings. Despite this progress, however, there is still the need to enhance the data collection systems of the region, especially in regard to social data, since much of the progress has been in the area of economic data collection.

The enhancement of human resource and material and financial resource to the Statistical divisions is of critical importance, as policy directions are best determined by the empirical data presented by these offices. There is definitely a shortage of economic resources and decisions on the allocation of these scarce resources must be informed by an accurate picture of what obtains in the countries. The needs of the social statistical offices must be urgently addressed as in some states few or no staff members are assigned to this area.

## VII. The way forward

There is no doubt that much has to be done if some of the goals of the MDGs are to be realized by 2015 or shortly thereafter. The Caribbean region has made significant progress in the area of poverty reduction and in the material dimension related to gender equality. Legislation and policies have helped women to gain access to goods and services and have helped them to improve their status within the societies. However the issue of attitudes to women and the perception of women in support roles within their societies have persisted and these cannot be corrected through legislation and policy, but through ongoing education. The gains realized in the area of gender equality and poverty reduction must be maintained or they could be easily eroded. In the face of the global economic challenges, and the impact which these have had on the Caribbean region, sustained effort would be necessary to prevent slippage and to build on the gains that have been realized. This section of the report will address some of the issues that should be addressed to facilitate the realization of the MDGs.

### A. Teenage mothers' education

The Caribbean region has a high incidence of teenage pregnancy, with a rate in the vicinity of 20% of live births. While efforts are being made to address the area of adolescent sexuality, as is indicated by the Life Skills Programmes within the school systems, and the establishment of adolescent friendly clinics in many countries in the region, the support for teen mothers in secondary education has not been given enough thought by policy makers in all of the member states. Teen mothers' education could prevent the "social hemorrhage" that causes multi-generational poverty, as many of these teenage mothers could trace teen parenting two and three generations before them in their family tree.

Early onset of sexual activity, although in many cases, is due to sexual abuse, has been well documented in the region, through research by the Pan American Health Organization, The UWI Institute for Gender and Development Studies and local situation analyses for the preparation of country strategic plans for HIV and AIDS. Despite this knowledge and the number of girls who become pregnant in the teenage years, several of the Member States have neglected to develop policies for the integration of teen mothers into main stream education within the secondary schools. Some countries have developed alternative programmes, which often are inferior to mainstream education, while others have contended that the mainstream is not equipped to address the varied needs of teen mothers.

Teen mothers have been attending mainstream secondary institutions in several countries of the subregion with a high level of success, since most of the young women view this second chance as an

opportunity to provide for themselves and their children and to avoid a cycle of poverty. Jamaica has for several years, been providing a second chance for teenage mothers and with much success, as have Trinidad and Tobago, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Guyana.

All of the Countries in the subregion are signatories to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, (CRC), and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, CEDAW, as well as the Beijing Platform for Action which articulates the issues related to the girl child. Not addressing the right of girls to full development, and relegating them to schools that teach, home-economics, information technology and parenting, as important as these may be; is in direct contravention of the preceding documents and a glaring human rights infraction.

Investment in the education of teenage mothers and by extension their families, addresses poverty reduction and the empowerment of women. Every State within the subregion needs as a matter of urgency to address the education of teenage mothers in the mainstream and to develop policy and programmatic interventions to address the same.

## **B. Affirmative action to facilitate equality in political decision-making**

Women in the region are grossly under-represented at the political decision-making level despite their representation and performance in higher education and their involvement at every level of the political process within the region. Despite the Member States' Commitment to the advancement of women in political life, at a minimum of 30% or parliamentary representatives, only one member state, Guyana has ensured through legislation that there is compliance in this regard.

The political systems within the region with their first past the post system, have not served to advance women as candidates, since women are often expected to carry out the tradition support roles of canvassing door to door, fund raising, and assistance of the elder and disabled on polling day. Women are also the majority of poll clerks and party representatives on polling day. Proportional representation which allows for parties to provide a list and for the parties to be represented in parliaments at the levels at which they realized success at the polls would better facilitate women's access to political decision making and address the hostile political culture, which is often a deterrent to women's political participation.

A look at the countries in the Parliamentary Unions list of Women in the World's Parliaments would reveal that those countries that have realized parity in political decision-making or have a fair representation of women in parliament have put in place a quota system to advance women in political decision-making. Caribbean Member States should endeavour to pass legislation to facilitate women's access to political decision-making and provide support to the Caribbean Institute for Women in Leadership (CIWIL) which has been providing support and education for women leaders in the region, through grant funding from international agencies working in the Caribbean. The organization is performing an important function of the States since they have committed themselves to the advancement of women in political decision making, therefore States should also provide support for the organization's work.

## **C. Legislation to address inequalities**

Although progress has been made in the area of women's equality with men in the labour market, inequalities still exist and it is important for States to pass legislation which address these inequalities in employment. Some member states have drafted Equal Pay for work of Equal Value Legislation, Equality in Employment and Sexual Harassment Legislation, but these important pieces of legislation

have not realized passage in a number of instances. In addition the constitutions of some states have included “sex” as an area of non-discrimination.

The International Labour Organization has enshrined in core principles and its labour standards the need for decent work and equality in employment, not only as human rights issues, but as measures to realize poverty alleviation. In 2008, in order to advance equality in the world of work, the ILO adopted a strategy of gender mainstreaming which promotes the gender dimension in all programmes and policies whilst also calling for gender-specific interventions to redress longstanding inequalities.

The ILO has addressed a number of gender-based issues in employment, through research, training sessions, advocacy and capacity-building with its constituents. On October 12th, 2008, the Tripartite Declaration and Plan of Action for Realizing The Decent Work Agenda in the Caribbean was adopted at the ILO Tripartite Caribbean Employment Forum in Barbados. Government representatives and representatives of employers and workers organization committed themselves to mainstreaming gender in national development policies and strategies.

The reconciliation of women’s work in the productive sphere with their work in the reproductive sphere has also been an area in which the ILO has provided support and there has been support for maternity leave legislation since 2004. Legislation to value women’s work in the domestic sphere and the community as a contribution to the development of countries is also needed as it does indicate the total value of women’s work and their contribution to national Gross Domestic product. Trinidad and Tobago is the only nation in the subregion that has legislation in this regard.

## **D. Macroeconomic and social policy development to focus on decent work**

Decent work refers to opportunities for men and women to pursue income generating activities in safe environments, with equity, human dignity, job security and freedom. Work not only facilitates the generation of income, but it also helps the human being to feel valued, and to develop his or her skills and talents. As countries grapple with the effects of the global economic crisis, the creation of decent work becomes increasingly important, economies must be positioned to facilitate investment, the development of entrepreneurship, job creation and sustainable livelihoods.

The World Summit for Social Development 1995, suggests that the promotion of full and productive employment is one of three pillars of social development, the others being poverty reduction and social integration. The World Summit of 2005 further reiterated the central role of productive employment in poverty reduction. The Caribbean region has been hard hit by the global economic crises and this further underscores the need for more flexible policies, which would focus on the welfare of the poor, developing productive capacities, and creating employment opportunities for the majority of the labour force.

The Caribbean region has demonstrated keen interest in the issue of decent work, globalization and human development as is indicated in the convening of regional consultations on Fair Globalization, and Decent Work and Development Policies and in their commitment to the implementation of the Global Jobs Pact in 2009. In order to ensure a jobs rich recovery from the global economic crises, the Decent Work Agenda will have to be pursued with diligence by Caribbean States.

Recommitting themselves to the ideals of the decent jobs agenda, the Ministers of Labour of CARICOM met in Georgetown, Guyana in the 19th COHSOD from April 14th to 16th 2011, under the theme “Coherence for Human and Social Development in the Caribbean Community: the Contribution of Labour Ministries and the Decent Work Agenda”. Key note speaker Robert Kyloh, Senior Economic Advisor of the ILO, advanced the need for an integrated approach to economic development, with policy coherence between macro-economic, labour and social policies, in order to realize jobs rich economic recovery.

Caribbean States are keenly aware of the important role of medium, small and micro enterprises in economic growth and governments have established various agencies, nationally locally and regionally to facilitate the development and success of small and micro-businesses. For example the Caribbean Development Bank's Caribbean Technological Consultancy Services (CTCS) Programme provides direct one-to-one technical assistance to assist business start-ups and is delivered to individuals and small businesses to address any technical, managerial or human resource development need. CTCS has also successfully provided assistance to entrepreneurs in areas such as hospitality services, business services, light manufacturing and food processing.

Additionally, national agencies such as the Foundation for National Development, Small Enterprise Development Unit, Credit Unions, Jamaica Business Development Corporation, Trinidad's National Entrepreneurship Development Corporation, and Barbados Agency for Small Enterprise Development have been providing invaluable assistance and oversight of fledgling businesses to ensure their viability. Despite the support for small and micro-business in the region, there is an unmet need for capital to start businesses, as a number of potential beneficiaries do not have the necessary collateral. Member States should continue to extend incentives to small and micro-businesses by way of duty concessions, and technical support as well as the sourcing of funds that could be used as capital for the start of businesses. In addition support to the National Skills Training Programmes should be maintained, so that citizens could equip themselves for self-employment as a viable alternative to seeking employment in very difficult economic climate.

## **E. Strengthening States' capacity to mainstream gender**

All of the member States of the subregion are signatories to International Instruments which have secured their commitment for the advancement of women and the pursuit of gender equality. States therefore have the responsibility of ensuring that every planned action of the state or programme implemented by the state takes into account the separate impact on men and women, boys and girls. This responsibility necessitates, that the political will and adequate human, financial and material resource be available for the execution of this responsibility.

There needs to be an urgent increase in the number of persons in some member states who are trained in the area of gender and development, as there is a dearth of gender practitioners or persons trained in the area and who can support the public awareness efforts in the area. The University of the West Indies has an excellent distance programme in Gender and Development Studies, and governments could subsidize the programme for interested persons, especially persons in state employment who work in the field or who work in line Ministries as focal points.

Line Ministry Gender Focal Points need to be persons with decision making power to influence policy direction in their respective Ministries. Often Ministries name junior staff as focal points in order to ensure representation, but focal points are expected to function as change agents within their Ministries and cannot be expected to do the same if they are persons of junior status.

The political will for the mainstreaming of gender into every area of national life is very often absent in or not visible in the region. Gender practitioners complain about the nonchalance with which their reminders of non-compliance of States is are met, and often have difficulty performing their roles as guardian of women's human rights conventions, when their employers are the persons they have to remind of non-compliance and the consequences of the same. Support for gender equality within the region is often limited to rhetoric, and the actions in member states are not in sync with the articulate speeches that are made in various fora in support of gender equality.

Gender Affairs should be positioned in a portfolio within the government that indicates its importance and its cross cutting nature. The practice of attaching gender affairs to any portfolio, whether the other Ministries in the cluster could enhance its work, should cease. Gender should be accorded the importance it deserves, and provided with the necessary human and financial resource to

carry out its work. A one or two person operation, in which research and policy professionals are absent, and an establishment that operates out of the “proverbial” hole in the wall is clearly not a fitting representation of an important entity, that is expected to facilitate gender equality, the empowerment of women, and the enhancement of national development

The region is reeling from social problems that are directly related to scant attention to gender and development issues, and has begun to develop programmes to remedy family imbalance that leads to societal imbalance. Mainstreaming gender in the domestic sphere is therefore very important for the realization of improvement in situations such as males opting out of higher education, irresponsible fatherhood, teenage pregnancy, and young male criminal behavior.

Core Ministries such as Finance, Physical Planning, Social Planning, Health and Education, as well as Social Development, should have trained gender focal points to ensure that gender is taken into consideration in the planning as well as implementation stages of their policies and programmes. The training of gender focal points within government, and the training of persons in private sector organizations, NGOs and civil society must be on going if the State will be successful in mainstreaming gender in every area of national life.

## **F. Social programmes to support women’s work in the domestic sphere**

As the global Economic Crisis continues and Member States grapple with the challenges that are associated with the crisis, there will certainly be fewer resources to be expended on social programmes, in a period when these programmes would be needed to ensure that women could continue to balance their responsibilities in the reproductive and productive spheres.

Amongst the programmes that women need to support their work in the domestic sphere, are high quality, affordable child care; preferably in or near to work places, after school care in work places, day care services for the elderly, home health care services, and after school community programmes, and community health care clinics. A number of these programmes are currently being implemented in member states, but there is a real fear, that with scant economic resources, some of these programmes may be scaled back or cut.

Women’s economic contribution in the wage sector of the economy is significant and the high incidence of single female headed households in the Caribbean region, is indication of the extent to which family well being depends on women’s participation in the productive sphere. Therefore maintaining programmes to support women’s work in the domestic sphere will redound to the benefit of the society and nation, since women bear triple responsibilities in the family the community and the work place.

## **G. Collection of sex-disaggregated data**

The region has several reporting obligations under various convention to which member States are signatories. Often these reporting obligations could be streamlined into one comprehensive reporting mechanism, so that the burden of making multiple reports is addressed. In addition many organizations ask for sex-disaggregated data, so they could determine what the situation of men and women, and boys and girls is like within a given State.

The Statistical Divisions of Member States need to have the capacity to carry out the necessary studies and report in a timely manner on the situation of men and women within the country. Several of the Divisions have few or no staff members in social planning. In addition, the division also needs to assist various government Departments with the technical knowledge of developing their forms to collect data on men and women. Much important information is lost or shrouded when information is

collected on persons instead of on men and women. All of the survey documents, census enumeration documents, domestic violence report forms, crime report forms and other government documents, should include a category to capture whether participants are male or female, or as the Caribbean Specific Millennium Development Goals Indicators, which could be accessed on the CARICOM Website [www.caricomstats.org/Files/Meetings/SCCS34/Paper\\_4.pdf](http://www.caricomstats.org/Files/Meetings/SCCS34/Paper_4.pdf) has broken out the indicators by sex to capture the specific impact on men and women of the phenomenon under study, similar actions should be taken to ensure that all statistical information is disaggregated by sex.

## **VIII. Recommendations for the alleviation of poverty**

The eradication of poverty and extreme hunger, Goal 1 of the Millennium Development Goals addresses the basic lower order need of human beings to be able to consume the minimum nutritional requirements on a daily basis. The CPAs carried out in the region have consistently shown that there are persons within the population who are unable to have the minimum dietary requirements daily. In order to facilitate the alleviation of poverty and hunger within the region, the following recommendations are being made: the creation of decent work and the implementation of the ILO Jobs Pact; enhanced food security, focusing on entrepreneurship, especially amongst young people; targeted programmes to the most needy; and the development of communities to be a part of the solution to end poverty.

### **A. Creation of decent work/implementing the ILO Jobs Pact**

The International Labour Organization has enshrined in its core principles and its labour standards the need for decent work and equality in employment, not only as human rights issues, but as measures to realize poverty alleviation. In 2008 In order to advance equality in the world of work, the ILO adopted a strategy of gender mainstreaming which promotes the gender dimension in all programmes and policies whilst also calling for gender-specific interventions to redress longstanding inequalities.

The ILO has addressed a number of gender-based issues in employment, through research, training sessions, advocacy and capacity-building with its constituents. On October 12th, 2008, the Tripartite Declaration and Plan of Action for Realizing the Decent Work Agenda in the Caribbean, was adopted at the ILO Tripartite Caribbean Employment Forum in Barbados. Government representatives and representatives of employers and workers organization committed themselves to mainstreaming gender in national development policies and strategies.

In the ILO Global Jobs Summit, June 15th to 17th 2009, it was acknowledged by Member States through a unanimous decision to implement the Global Jobs Pact, that the financial and economic crisis had adversely affected the employment situation worldwide and that efforts would have to be made to address the situation, as it would adversely affect the realization of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

The Caribbean Subregion has also been affected by the global economic situation and unemployment rates have also increased since the onset of the global financial, economic and energy

crisis. The Global Jobs Pact has indicated that forty five (45,000,000,) million new persons enter the job market of the world annually, and in order to keep abreast of the employment needs three hundred (300,000,000 ) million new jobs would have to be created by 2015.

## **B. Enhanced food security**

Food production is an area to which Caribbean countries must pay keen attention, since despite our abundance of sunshine, arable land and water; many of the countries in the region are still heavily dependent on imported food. The global fuel crisis is likely to increase the cost of transportation of food thus affecting the cost of food to the consumer, therefore despite the view that increased productivity would not ensure food security, it is a definite factor in the realization of food security.

A 2006-2007 FAO study revealed that there were several factors affecting food security in the region. These factors included declines in food production, loss of income that resulted from the global economic crisis, increasing pockets of poverty and a dependence on imported food.

World Bank, World Development Report 2008, indicates that developing countries need to invest more in agriculture and place the sector at the center of development efforts if the goal of halving hunger by 2015 is to be realized. The said article further indicated that GDP growth arising in agriculture was four times more likely to raise the incomes of extremely poor persons than GDP growth outside of the sector.

The Caribbean region has an extremely high food import bill, which in 2010 was \$3.5 billion United States Dollars. Several States have been advocating recently for enhanced agricultural production as food import bills were taking out much needed foreign currency reserves. Ministers of Agriculture in the region have been advocating for a more efficient sector with technical support from well trained extension officers, and young agriculturalists to address the issue of food security within the region. It is believed that the territory has enough arable land to feed the eight million inhabitants.

The World Bank Food Price Watch February 2011 reported a 15% percent increase in the food price index and indicated that 44 million persons in low and middle income countries may have fallen into extreme poverty because of sharp food increases. Countries of the subregion have been adversely affected by the increase in food prices as food import bills have tripled in some instances over the past three years.

A more dynamic agricultural sector is the urgent need of the region. Feeding the inhabitants of the region and cutting the significant food import bill will definitely be beneficial to the countries, of the region all of which have large food import bills. The agricultural sector with improved infrastructure, and technical support would help persons move out of poverty as they would be able to, in the sector, generate incomes that would help their move out of poverty.

## **C. Facilitation of community empowerment**

Member States of the subregion understand the relationship between people development and poverty eradication and sustainable national development. Several states have built their poverty reduction strategies into their national development plans, so that an empowered people would help in the alleviation of poverty and in sustaining national development.

Deepa Narayan-Parker in Empowerment and Poverty Reduction,<sup>24</sup> suggests that there are four elements that are always present in successful, empowerment efforts. These elements are access to information, inclusion and participation, accountability and local organizational capacity. Access to

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<sup>24</sup> Deepa Naryan-Parker Empowerment and Poverty Reduction pp. xix,xx

information is critical to the making of informed choices; therefore citizens need to have current information on various key issues. Issues such as the fiscal situation of the State, available services, rules and rights regarding services available to the public are important to an empowered citizenry.

Poor and often disenfranchised persons are entitled to having their voices heard in the decision making of their country. States have the responsibility of ensuring that a space is created for all of the groups within the societies to dialogue on the issues that affect national development. There is an increased use of the participatory approach to data collection as has been demonstrated in the CPAs, however there needs to be concerted effort to reflect the wishes of citizens who are not likely to attend the town hall meetings, or call in on the local talk shows.

As the citizens of the subregion begin to demand explanations for the execution of duties by their parliamentary representatives, representatives must view this as political maturity that is necessary for the growth and well being of their countries and respond to this need for accountability in a positive manner. Demanding and expecting accountability from national leaders is an important ingredient of national empowerment, which should ultimately translate into sustainable development.

Local organizational capacity is essential for the citizens of the states to be able to work together, despite the ethnic and political challenges that some states face, in order to facilitate national development. There is an abundance of local talent and expertise that could be harnessed for national development. Solutions that arise in the populace are more likely to be long lasting. Building human capacity, for working together and devising solutions to the community's challenges, could be an effective way of confronting the social problems of the region, whether the problem is poverty, criminal behavior, boys under-representation in higher education, or teenage girls high birth rate.

The economic empowerment of youth is an important aspect of national empowerment as young persons in a number of territories have a higher unemployment rate than the general population. In addition there is quite a bit of criminal behavior that is being exhibited by youth in the region, of course there are youth who are doing positive things such as remaining in school and performing creditably, and are role models for other youth. But there are significant numbers of young persons, especially males who have fallen out of the mainstream of society and are resorting to anti-social behavior.

The National Skills Training Programmes, and Entrepreneurship fostering agencies of State are useful in helping young people to realize their full potential and to move themselves out of poverty. Career guidance programmes in school have also been presenting self employment as a viable alternative to seeking employment.

## **D. Targeted programmes to the poor and indigent**

There is no doubt that member states of the subregion have been expending large sums on social services such as education, and health care for their citizens. Social Service Programmes have been delivering assistance to those in need within the countries, however, there is greater need for means testing and targeting of services to ensure that the most needy actually get the needed assistance. Several countries within the region are currently reviewing their social safety net programmes in an effort to improve their efficiency and effectiveness.

Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica have been operating cash transfer programmes for some time with a fair measure of success. Evaluations of the programmes show high levels of client satisfaction and increases in school attendance, and health care facility visits, in Jamaica, while in Trinidad and Tobago, the long term outcomes include the training of a member of the family, to help move the family out of poverty.

The Chile Puente Programme which has been piloted in Chile since 2002 with significant success has been introduced into the Caribbean with Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago and Saint Lucia being the first countries to implement the programme. Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines,

Surinam and Barbados, would be the countries in the second phase of the Chile Puente. The programme pours significant resources into families that have been identified by CPAs as the poorest within the country, for a period of two years, along with the psychological support to move out of poverty.

## **IX. Priority areas for the realization of gender equality and poverty reduction**

Although Caribbean States have performed creditably on some of the targets of MDG 3, and some of the States, and Associate States have poverty head count levels that are within the agreed Caribbean Specific Millennium Development Goals, indicator of 10-18% , there is significant work that has to be done in the ideological dimension of area of Gender and Development especially as it relates to gender mainstreaming, gender analysis and planning, and societal perspectives on gender relations and asymmetrical access to information and resources if the goals under MDG 3 are to be realized.

Member States need the political will and the human, financial and material resources to mainstream gender into all areas of national life from the private to the public. Issues related to gender equality and the empowerment of women are still not given the importance that they deserve, and there are those who feel that they would be realized as developmental by-products and not as hotly pursued goals. Women's NGO's and gender sensitive men within the society need to hold State Actors accountable for the commitments made under the Beijing Platform for Action and the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and most of the States Constitutions which highlight sex as an area of non-discrimination. In a region in which women outnumber men at tertiary levels of education, there needs to be a corresponding representation of women in decision making positions, especially political decision-making. The statistics in the region with reference to women in political decision-making indicates that this target will be missed by 2015. Affirmative action for the realization of a critical mass of women in political decision-making is urgently needed in the region. Guyana is the only country in the region which has demonstrated seriousness in this area by passing the relevant legislation which ensures that women are at least one third of the candidates on the party lists.

Data Collection within member states is a key area in the efforts to realize gender equality and poverty reduction. The importance of sex disaggregated data cannot be over-emphasized, since the situation of men and women within the country cannot be ascertained when the statistics are lumped together. Building the capacity of States' statistical offices is very important, as the collection, analysis and dissemination of information help to determine the policy direction of the state, maximizing the benefits of scarce resources.

The global financial, food and fuel crises have created further challenges for the States in their pursuit of the MDGs and member States have seen the regional food import bill triple in three years to reach an all time high of \$3.5 billion US in 2010. Rising food costs have pushed millions of persons worldwide into deeper poverty, and the Caribbean region has to devise measures to realize food security.

Making agriculture a priority with additional resources, ensuring maximum use of arable land for crop production, organizing a regional agricultural system that, would address the issues of gluts and shortages, and marketing agriculture in schools as a science for highly capable students, thus attracting young people to the field of agriculture, would help to address the issue of food security in the region.

## **A. Responsibilities of governments and development partners**

### **1. Gender equality issues**

Caribbean Governments have the responsibility of ensuring that the gender infrastructure exists to realize gender equality and the empowerment of women. Adequately resourced Gender Departments, Family Court, Legal Aid Services, and the passage of important pieces of legislation that protect the rights of citizens are the responsibility of governments as they endeavour to be in compliance with commitments made for gender equality and the empowerment of women. Legislation such as Marital Rape, Sexual Harassment, Equality in Employment, Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value, and the Quantifying of Women's Unwaged Work, needs to be passed in Member States that do not already have these pieces of legislation in their statutes.

The Ministries of Social Transformation, or Social Development, have the responsibility of raising awareness of gender equality issues using the various media available. Local print and electronic media have been aiding in this effort, and it is interesting to note the tone of some of the talk programmes that cover gender equality issues. In a number of cases the majority of callers are men, who do demonstrate levels of gender awareness and sensitivity.

State Departments of Education also have a role to play in this regard, since gender awareness training should be provided for teachers and students and in some cases it is being done. The University of the West Indies Gender Studies Institute, has been providing distance studies in the area of gender and development to increase the number of persons in the region who are trained in that area. In addition the Institute carries out research in the area and often informs State governments through presentations and publications of the urgent need to scale up efforts to realize gender equality.

Grant funding from the UNFPA, UNIFEM, CIDA Gender Equality Programme, The Canadian High Commission Direct Aid Programme, the Organization of American States, has helped with livelihood creation for women, and the preparation of women and youth for political participation, and men and masculinities programme in various member states. UNECLAC, UNDP, the CARICOM Secretariat as well as the OECS Secretariat have been involved with research and documentation, policy development and the building of capacity in that area. While the Caribbean Development Bank has provided invaluable assistance to BMCs for the carrying out of the Country Poverty Assessment Surveys and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper.

### **2. Food security**

The region as a whole needs to give food security the serious consideration that it deserves, together with the needed effort to develop a dynamic food and agriculture industry. The global food crisis has driven the prices of basic commodities to an all time high and many persons in developing countries, such as comprise the Caribbean region have been forced into poverty or deeper poverty as a result.

The Food and Agriculture Organization, CARDI, Institutions in the region that train agriculturalists, Ministries of Agriculture and Fisheries, The Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute, have important roles to play in the areas of research, technical assistance, the encouragement for improved dietary practices and the growing of local fruits and vegetables, that could help in the fight against obesity and chronic diseases that are plaguing the subregion and increasing health care costs. FAOs mandate, since 1945, has been to raise levels of nutrition and standards of living, to improve agricultural productivity, and to better the conditions of rural population. A specific priority of the

Organization is promoting and supporting sustainable agriculture and rural development, a long-term strategy for the conservation and management of natural resources. It aims to meet the needs of both present and future generations through programmes that do not degrade the environment and are technically appropriate, economically viable and socially acceptable.



## X. Conclusion

Member States of the Caribbean subregion have been working extremely hard in an effort to realize gender equality and poverty alleviation and the Millennium Development Goal targets by 2015. Despite the challenges, progress has been made in some areas of the MDGs, however the area of women's political participation, and the poverty head count ratio of 10-18% will not be realized. Member State performance on the various MDG indicators is included in Annex 2 for those states for which data was available.

The impact of the global, economic, food, and fuel crisis, has helped to erode gains made in the area of poverty reduction as was demonstrated in the Poverty Assessment Survey's of countries that had done them after the crises became evident. Several of the member states are highly indebted countries whose budgetary allocations have to be split between debt financing and current expenditure, making it difficult to meet the needs of the population.

Greater efforts would have to be made by states to improve food security, to mainstream gender in every area of national life, and to target the neediest within the communities to provide them with the opportunity for improved existence and the alleviation poverty.



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# Annexes

## Annex 1

### ILO Global Jobs Pact Principles

- Devoting priority attention to protecting and growing employment through sustainable enterprises, quality public services and building adequate social protection for all as part of on- going international and national action to aid recovery and development. The measures should be implemented quickly in a coordinated manner;
- Enhancing support to vulnerable women and men hit hard by the crisis including youth at risk, low-wage, low-skilled, informal economy and migrant workers;
- Focusing on measures to maintain employment and facilitate transitions from one job to another as well as to support access to the labour market for those without a job;
- Establishing or strengthening effective public employment services and other labour market institutions;
- Increasing equal access and opportunities for skills development, quality training and education to prepare for recovery;
- Avoiding protectionist solutions as well as the damaging consequences of deflationary wage spirals and worsening working conditions;
- Promoting core labour standards and other international labour standards that support the economic and jobs recovery and reduce gender inequality;
- Engaging in social dialogue, such as tripartism and collective bargaining between employers and workers as constructive to maximize the impact of crisis responses to the needs of the real economy;
- Ensuring that short-term actions are coherent with economic, social and environmental sustainability;
- Ensuring synergies between the State and the market and effective and efficient regulation of market economies including a legal and regulatory environment which enables enterprise creation, sustainable enterprises and promotes employment generation across sectors; and
- The ILO, engaging with other international agencies, international financial institutions and developed countries to strengthen policy coherence and to deepen development assistance and support for least developed, developing and transition countries with restricted fiscal and policy space to respond to the crisis

## Annex 2

### Performance of member States on MDG 1 and 3

Dominica		
Target	Indicators	Status
<b>Goal 1 – Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger</b>		
Target 1 – Halve between 1990 and 2015 the proportion of people falling below the poverty line	1. Proportion of persons living below the poverty line	28.8% of individuals and 22.8% of households below the poverty line SLC 2009
	2. Poverty Gap Ratio	Poverty gap ratio is 8.9 and Poverty severity ratio is 4.0
	3. Share of poorest quintile in national consumption	5.2%
	4. Percentage of poor household living below the poverty line by sex of head	74.1% of individuals living below the poverty line were employed
Target 2 – Halve between 1990 and 2015 the proportion of people who suffer from hunger	5. Prevalence of under-weight children by sex	1998-2004 10% of children had low birth weight
	6. Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption buy sex	3.1% SLC 2009
Target 3 – Halve between 1990 and 2015 the proportion of persons without access to basic services	7. Percentage of persons with access to electricity by head of household	90.1% of households use electricity as main type of lighting
	8. Proportion of households using Pit latrines by sex of head	25.3% use pit latrines and toilet facility
Target 4 – Halve between 1990 and 2015 the proportion of persons living in inadequate housing	9. Percentage of persons in inadequate housing by head of household	2.5% of the persons in the lowest quintile had make shift material for the outer walls of their house
<b>Goal 3 – Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women</b>		
Target 6 – Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005 and in all levels of education, by 2015.	21. Ratio of boys to girls In primary, secondary and Tertiary education	2006 gender parity index showed girls 1.02 at the primary level and .98 at the secondary level
	22. Ratio of literate women to men 15-24 years old	2002 Literacy rates 84% female and 86% male
	23. Proportion of students that take Math and Science in grade 12	
Target 7 – Eliminate gender disparity in income and occupational opportunities at all levels and in all sectors no later than 2015	24. Share of women in wage employment non-agricultural sector	48.3% 2001
	25. Average national income of men and women, by sector	
	26. Employed persons by occupational status by sex	
	27. Proportion of seats held by women in National Parliaments	18.8% 2009
	28. Proportion of women holding office in local government	

<b>Belize</b>					
Goals, Targets and Indicators	Baseline	Target	2009		Comments
			Achievement	Target 2015	
<b>Goal 1 – Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger</b>					
Target 1 – Halve Proportion with Income < \$1/day					
Population below Poverty Line (%)	33.5 (2002)	30.5	41	16.8	Not on track; substantial increase in poverty and severe poverty since 2002 due primarily to poor economic performance (see section 2.5 and Chap. 3 of the CPA report).
Target 2 – Halve proportion population suffers hunger	10.8 (2002)	10.1	16	6.7	
Extreme poverty –population consuming less than minimum dietary needs (%)					
<b>Goal 3 – Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women</b>					
Target 4 – Eliminate Gender Disparity					
Girls per 100 boys in Primary	95.9 (2002)	96.6	101	100	Gender parity achieved in primary schools but new challenge is to ensure parity for boys, especially at tertiary level. LSMS indicates gender ratio at tertiary level of 115 and 105 at secondary but 138 at high school. Non enrolment at secondary (28% of 13-16 year olds) is arguably the greatest problem.
Girls per 100 boys in Secondary	105.2 (2002)	107.1	113	100	
Girls per 100 boys in Tertiary	149 (2002)	148.8	173	100	
Share of women in wage employment in non-agricultural sector (%)	38.7 (1995)		43.8 (2009)	50	Not on track but progress is being made.
Seats held by women National Parliament (%)	3.4 (1993)		0%		Currently no female representation in Parliament.

<b>Jamaica</b>				
<b>Goal 1 – Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger</b>				
Target	Indicators	1990	2000	2007
1a	1.1 Proportion of population living below the national poverty line	28.4%	18.7%	9.9%
	1.4 Status of the poorest and (wealthiest) quintiles in national consumption. ( Jamaica survey of living conditions)	6% (46%)	6.7% (46.1%)	6.8% (45%)
1b	1.9 Prevalence of underweight children under 5 years of age	8.4%	5.1%	2.2%
	1.10 Proportion of population below the minimum level of dietary energy consumption(the food poor) (Jamaica survey of living conditions)	8.3%	4.9%	2.9%
<b>Goal 3 – Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women</b>				
3a.	3.1 Ratios of boys to girls in:			
	Primary	0.99	0.96	0.96
	Secondary	1.07	1.03	1.02
	Tertiary	1.26 (est.)	2.06	1.98
	3.2 Ratio of literate females to males 15-24 years old (1999 min. of education, 2007 UNESCO inSt. for stats)		1.1 (1999)	1.07
	3.3 Share of women in wage employment in the non agricultural sector (Statistics institute of Jamaica)	38.3%	37%	48.9%
	3.4 Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament (Electoral office)	5%	12%	13%

<b>Grenada</b>		
Target	Indicators	Status
<b>Goal 1 – Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger</b>		
<b>Target 1 – Halve between 1990 and 2015 the proportion of people falling below the poverty line</b>	1. Proportion of households living below the poverty line	25.2 percent of households and 37.7 percent of individuals are living below the poverty line (2008 slc)
	2. Poverty ratio gap	The poverty gap ratio is 10.1 and the poverty severity ratio is 4.0 (2008 slc)
	3. Share of poorest quintile in national consumption.	The lowest quintile accounted for 7.3 percent of national consumption and the fifth quintile accounted for 45.7 percent (2008 slc)
	4. Proportion of employed living in households that are below the poverty line by sex of household head	65.1 percent of individuals who were below the poverty line were employed (2008 slc)
<b>Target 2 – Halve between 1990 and 2015 the proportion of people who suffer from hunger</b>	5. Prevalence of underweight children by sex	In 2000, 1.4 percent of males and 1.5 percent of females under the age of 5 years old were underweight (<2.500g) Over the period 2000 to 2007, 9% of infants had low birth weight
	6. Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption by sex	2.4 percent of individuals were consuming at levels below the indigence line or minimum dietary energy consumption. 51.9 percent of these individuals were male the other 48.1% were female (2008 slc)
<b>Target 3 – Halve between 1990 and 2015 the proportion of persons without access to basic services</b>	7. Proportion of population with access to electricity by sex of head of households	90% of households used electricity as the main type of lighting (2008 slc)
	8. Proportion of households using pit latrines by sex of household head	36.3% of households used pit latrines (2008 slc)
<b>Target 4 – Halve between 1990 and 2015 the proportion of persons living in inadequate housing</b>	9. Proportion of population in inadequate housing by sex of head of household	1.5% of those in the lowest quintile reported that the material of the outer walls of their dwelling was "makeshift" (2008 slc)
<b>Goal 3 – Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women</b>		
<b>Target 6 – Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005 and in all levels of education, by 2015.</b>	21. Ratio of boys to girls In primary, secondary and Tertiary education	The Gender Parity Index at the primary level was 0.96 and 0.99 at the secondary level
	22. Ratio of literate women to men 15-24 years old	In 1991, the literacy rate of males was 93.7 and for females it was 95.1
	23. Proportion of students that take Math and Science in grade 12	n/a
<b>Target 7 – Eliminate gender disparity in income and occupational opportunities at all levels and in all sectors no later than 2015</b>	24. Share of women in wage employment non-agricultural sector	48.3% 2001
	25. Average national income of men and women, by sector	
	26. Employed persons by occupational status by sex	
	27. Proportion of seats held by women in National Parliaments	18.8% 2009
	28. Proportion of women holding office in local government	

## Annex 2: Grenada (concluded)

**Target 8 – Reduce by 60% by 2015 all forms of gender based violence.**

29. Incidence of reported physical abuse by sex of the abused	n/a
30. Existence of integrated national action plans to eliminate gender based violence by 2010	Grenada signed the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1980
31. Type of crime by age and sex of both offender and victim	Stealing/ Theft was the nature of the crime reported by the largest percentage of persons who were victim of crime (2008 slc)
32. Age and sex of persons who report experiencing physical violence in the past year at the hands of an intimate partner	n/a
33. Percentage of sexual assault cases completed through the court process in a 12 month period of the date of charge	