National review
DOMINICA

In the context of the twentieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

Division for Gender Affairs of Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean on the way to Beijing+20
COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA’S NATIONAL REVIEW REPORT ON THE BEIJING+20 REVIEW

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COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA

NATIONAL REVIEW

ON

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BEIJING DECLARATION AND PLATFORM FOR
ACTION (1995)

AND

THE OUTCOMES OF THE TWENTY THIRD SPECIAL SESSION OF
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2000)

Bureau of Gender Affairs

Ministry of Social Services, Community Development and Gender Affairs

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1.0 Introduction

This National Report represents a review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing in 1995 and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly 2000.

In resolution E/RES/2013/18, the United Nations Economic and Social Council called upon all states to undertake comprehensive national-reviews of the progress made and challenges encountered in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

The review to assess progress on advancing gender equality and empowerment for women in Dominica drew on several national sources including the Millennium Development Goals, the draft report prepared for submission under the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and other national assessments. The review benefited from the recent process to update the Dominica National Gender Policy, other consultations organized to raise awareness around the Draft Updated Gender Policy and the various focal groups arranged in preparation of this report.

The review recognizes that progress has been made to advance gender equality in some sectors as evidenced by some of the policies and programmes that have been designed to address gender inequalities; and in some cases gender-disaggregated data has been available to facilitate that assessment. However there are challenges to effectively link strategic development objectives to gender equality goals and outcomes because of the lack of clear institutional frameworks and systems. The lack of human resource capacities, technical knowledge, and coordinating mechanisms as well as the absence of political champions at the level of the executive continue to constrain progress.

The engagement of stakeholders in the process of reviewing implementation in the critical areas of concern has helped deepen understanding to progress made, appreciation of the challenges involved and to rekindle commitment to realization of the goals set out in Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The areas identified for action as emerging priorities provide the base on which programme of action for the next five years can be built.

It is the hopethat this report will contribute further to the process of reflection as we enter a phase of renewed energy on promoting gender equality and empowerment of women.
2.0 Methodology

In undertaking this exercise, a participatory approach was applied. The process involved interviews, literature review, and various stakeholder consultations.

The steps taken were as follows:

1. Interviews with the staff of the Bureau of Gender Affairs
2. Extensive review of reports on past and present activities of the Bureau of Gender Affairs, reviews of past reports prepared on the Beijing Platform for Action, reports to other agencies, strategic documents and Action Plans;
4. Focus group meetings were held with the Gender Focal Points, Zonal representatives of the Dominica National Council of Women and with the National Gender Advisory Committee.
5. Interviews were conducted with key stakeholders including senior government, NGOs and private sector organization

3.0 Background/National Context

The Commonwealth of Dominica is largest island of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). It lies between the French islands of Guadeloupe to the north and Martinique to the south. The island is 751 square kilometers (289.5 square miles). The island’s topography is rugged, and the country is known for its rich luxuriant vegetation and abundance of water that supports an array of plant and animal life.

The total population of Dominica, according to the 2011 Census report, numbers 68,913 comprising of 34,973 males and 33,940 females. The island is sub-divided into ten parishes or population zones with the capital city, Roseau, located in the south-west.

The early period from 1995 covered in this Review coincides with a phase of economic challenges for Dominica as the country saw the decline of its banana exports and grappled with the effects of the loss of a secure market for bananas. Bananas had been the ‘life blood’ of the Dominica’s economy since the 1970s when the Lome Trade Convention, a trade and aid agreement signed in 1975, gave Dominica and other African, Pacific and Caribbean countries preferential access to UK markets. With Dominica enjoying a buoyant economy for most of the 1980s into the early 1990s supported by high banana production levels, government spending was sustained and debt levels increased.
The impact of the loss of a secure market for bananas and uncertainties over the adjustment period impacted profoundly on farmers and communities across the country as the number of active banana farmers fell from 6,675 in 1990 to 1,155 in 2002\(^1\) many becoming dependent on wage employment.\(^2\) Export production in 2000 was less than 30,000 tonnes compared with 60,000-70,000 in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The loss in direct payments to banana growers dropped from EC$47m in 1990 to EC$17m in 2000.\(^3\) Agriculture as a proportion of GDP decreased from 25% in 1996 to 17% in 2001.

Between 2000 and 2003, with fiscal imbalances in the economy and little expansion in economic sectors, Government finances deteriorated sharply. Up until 2004, both production and demand stagnated, leading to reduced employment and incomes for a large segment of the population.\(^4\) The poverty rate for 2002 was recorded at 39%, the primary cause of which was unemployment and under-employment due to the ‘slow economic growth since the mid-1990s and the actual contraction of the economy’ in the early years of the millennium.\(^5\) The conditions of the period as noted in the Country Poverty Assessment of 2002 therefore increased pressures on women who had greater need to obtain employment, while still shouldering their child rearing duties.

With the economy having sufficiently recovered by 2006, and registering GDP growth rates of 7.77% in 2008, the challenges of the global recession was again to have a serious impact on the country’s economy which recorded negative growth of 0.74 % in 2009. In 2010 and 2011 positive growth of .33% and 1.72% were recorded, dropping to negative growth in 2012.\(^6\) Since 2009, the government of Dominica has intensified its programme of social protection and extended considerable support to addressing the needs of the poor and vulnerable.

The *Third Medium-Term Growth and Social Protection Strategy (GSPS) 2012-2014* of the Commonwealth of Dominica presents a broad strategic framework for growth and poverty reduction in the country, and is described as a “rolling plan’ that takes account of changing circumstances, provides an overarching framework for informing macro-economic framework, sector strategies and plans, the structural reform agenda, the annual public investment programmes and the annual budgets as well as social protection and poverty reduction interventions’.\(^7\) While the GSPS accepts the ‘empowering of women and the redressing of gender disparities...’ as a crucial imperative, a gender perspective has not been systematically applied to the overall plan.

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\(^1\) Caribbean Development bank, Government of Dominica, Country Poverty Assessment, 2003 p26

\(^2\) Country Poverty Assessment (Government of Dominica, 2009.p xvii


\(^4\) Commonwealth of Dominica, Second Medium Term Social Protection Strategy (GSPS) 2008

\(^5\) Caribbean Development Bank, Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica, Country Poverty Assessment, p. 84

\(^6\) Government of Dominica, Ministry of Finance.

\(^7\) Third Medium –Term Growth and Protection Strategy (GSPS), 2012-2014, Government of the Dominica.
4.0 ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES IN THE PROMOTION OF GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT SINCE 1995

4.1 Major Achievements in promotion of Gender Equality and Empowerment of women since adoption of Beijing.

Despite periods of uncertainty as was typical with national machineries evolving in the period of the 1980s and 1990s, the functioning of a Women’s Bureau in the post-Beijing period, helped maintain a focus on integrating an agenda for women in national development processes. In that period, the National Women’s Machinery provided the leadership to implement the national priorities that were influenced by the Beijing Platform of Action. An Advisory Committee was in place to provide overall direction to the Bureau.

By the time of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 and the consolidation of the thinking from a ‘women in development’ approach to an approach emphasizing ‘gender mainstreaming’, the focus of the National Machinery turned to developing and strengthening inter- and intra-government capacities for implementing National Action Priorities. The National Action Priorities evolved from a process of consultation in the immediate post-Beijing period around two critical areas of concern: that of Violence against Women and Women and Poverty. With strategic objectives embracing programme areas in Institutional Strengthening, Gender Planning and Analysis, Entrepreneurship Development and Advocacy, the momentum from the Women’s Bureau was on organizing women around income-generating activities, mainly in the rural areas, and on advocacy in partnership with other agencies. The Women’s Bureau in collaboration with the Dominica National Council of Women, Unions, and other partners were able to sustain a number of programmes and initiatives in support of reducing poverty among women, and to work collaboratively towards advancing the agenda towards gender equality. The Women’s Bureau provided the leadership in areas of human capacity development that were taken up by other agencies.

Training programmes were implemented around the country to help build capacity of women, and skills for women in non-traditional areas like plumbing, tiling and masonry enabled them to participate effectively in employment creation and other development activities.

Education and awareness programmes were facilitated through various outreach mechanisms, with a focus on providing information relevant to the law; and community education programmes through radio and training workshops helped build awareness and empower women to address their personal circumstances in areas like domestic violence.

In the period of the late 1990s, there was focused attention on advocacy around issues like violence against women, and mobilization around appropriate legislation and reform of Sexual Offences legislation. Advocacy against domestic violence created space for public debate and discussion, helped build awareness around the issue and worked to influence the process towards the enactment of the Protection against Domestic Violence legislation in 2001. The process benefited from the timing of an Organization of Eastern Caribbean States’ Judicial and

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8 Report on the implementation of the Beijing Plan of Action in Dominica, Carla Harris Pascal, Women’s Bureau, 1999
Legal Services Reform programme that supported development of model legislation and the establishment of Legal Aid in OECS countries including Dominica.

The Protection against Domestic Violence Act No 22 of 2001 was passed in Dominica in December of 2001. Shortly afterwards, the Legal Aid Clinic was established making it easier for women to access legal services as well as simplifying the processes involved in lodging complaints against domestic violence. In a more practical sense, the collaboration with the main Women's organization, the Dominica National Council of Women (DNCW) provided concrete support to victims of domestic violence. The DNCW successfully established a Crisis Hotline and a Shelter for victims of violence.

The Sexual Offences Act was amended in 1998 with a sensitivity to sexual abuse of the girl child.

The Education Act of 1997 set the stage for promoting equitable access to education for boys and girls, and facilitating broad education reforms. The result has been that in the last two women have been empowered through education to pursue and benefit from improved life opportunities.

Advocacy for increased access of resources for women and for enhanced support to education and training as a way of getting women out of poverty resulted in several income generating projects targeting women. Several such initiatives followed from the National Poverty Assessment of 2002 targeting rural poverty and women's needs for income through a government supported Dominica Rural Enterprise Project which targeted the rural poor especially female-headed households towards enhancing food security and generating income in farming communities.

The initiative for the development of a National Gender Policy came from the National Women's Machinery in 1999 and was influenced by broader international commitments as articulated under the Beijing Platform of Action. The process towards formulating the Dominica National Gender Policy took some six years, and the policy was finally adopted by the Government of Dominica in June of 2006. The stated goals of the National Gender Policy of Dominica is to promote gender equity, equality, social justice and sustainable human development; and gender mainstreaming is to be used as the main strategy for achieving the policy objectives. The adoption of the Dominica National Gender Policy and the institutionalization of gender into the government systems has been hailed as a major signal of the country's commitment to transforming its inequitable gender relations.

The process to Update the Dominica National Gender Policy and develop an Action Plan started in 2013 and has just been concluded. The product offers a strategic platform for eliminating barriers and to advance measures to promoting gender equality.

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9 Summary of activities compiled from various reports on activities of the Women’s Bureau
4.2 Challenges to promotion of Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women

The economic climate in the country over the last two decades have presented major challenges for policy makers and for women themselves to access opportunities for economic empowerment. Despite sustained spending on social sectors, sustainable development initiatives have been limited and women’s participation in the labour force have been curtailed.

Attempts to mainstream gender into development process have also faced challenges. Since the adoption of the Dominica National Gender policy, the structures and mechanisms that were established to mainstream gender equality at all policy, programme and project levels have not been fully implemented. And therefore the systematic application of a gender perspective to transform the existing development agenda has not been fully realized. The functioning of the Focal Points, senior technocrats in the various ministries and key drivers in planning and implementation of policy, has been affected by frequent staff movement and restructuring of ministries. There have also been issues around understanding of roles. Further, a number of Focal Points have not been nominated to important ministries and statutory boards and the process of gender mainstreaming has been further affected.

The process to appoint a National Gender Committee that was meant to act as an oversight body was delayed, further weakening the structures for monitoring and evaluation.

The Bureau of Gender Affairs has the main responsibility for driving the mainstreaming process, and has been consistent in providing leadership on the process. However, with inadequate technical staff, the Bureau of Gender Affairs on its own lacks the capacity to integrate gender perspective in all sectors without the requisite skills residing in the counterpart ministries. Not only would the expertise at the Bureau need to be enhanced, but on-going gender training needs to be a requisite at all levels of government processes. Inadequate budgets and dependence on external support to implement activities marginalizes the role of the Bureau, and further supports a perception that achieving gender equality is still a matter for the national women’s machinery as opposed to being the business of the whole governance process.

While there has been some progress with disaggregated data in the last decades and especially with the last two census reports, and data being collected by Ministries associated with the MDGs, disaggregated data from other sectors are not readily available for assessing and tracking gender equality processes and outcomes. The collection of sex-disaggregated data and a capacity to carry out research and gender analysis are all part of the processes to be in place to support gender mainstreaming. Additionally, gender-responsive budgeting processes have not been embraced; and the share of national budgets to gender equality cannot be effectively measured.

The under-representation of women at leadership levels and the lack of a critical mass of women at decision making levels have affected progress to achieving gender equality. Despite the progress made by women in attaining high levels of education that have supported improvements to overall quality of life, the impact of socialization processes and cultural attitudes combine to limit the value of the ‘woman’s role’ primarily to her reproductive duties.
Real challenges persist to women over-coming barriers to participating at high-level decision-making, and hence gender equality considerations are generally absent at policy levels.

4.3 Setbacks and reversals in progress towards gender equality and Empowerment of Women

Dominica has been impacted seriously by external factors associated with trade liberalization. It is a small open economy with high dependence on external trade, on single sector export products and dependency on external sources for investment and infrastructural development. As a result, the economic environment in the last decades has been challenging. The natural make-up of the country exposes it to serious environmental, economic and social vulnerabilities and has challenged its ability to maintain sustainable development.

The socio-economic realities in the country since 1995 indicate that the lives of women been impacted by persistent levels of unemployment and under-employment, by poverty which has remained entrenched and impacting negatively on women as heads of households with responsibilities for families. While men are also affected by poverty, the physical and social limitations placed on women by their child rearing responsibilities and expectations of society mean that options are not as readily open to a significant percentage of the female population.

Employment and income data indicate that men outnumber women in waged employment, and women predominate in unpaid reproductive work. Economic and social status have implications for access to resources and relevant training, and determine choices that affect overall wellbeing. Gender equality issues have not been effectively considered in the emerging economic sectors like tourism and other mainstream development initiatives, and this acts to further limit opportunities for equal gender participation and empowerment of women.

4.3.1 Mitigation Measures and Actions

The economic context of the late 1990s into the early years of the decade was one of falling economic growth rates from 3.08% in 1996 to -0.6% in 2003, poor fiscal health and unsustainable public debt. A programme of economic stabilization supported by an IMF Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility arrangement, and a World Bank Economy Recovery Support Operation was initiated in 2003 which included a fiscal adjustment and debt restructuring. Several poverty reduction programmes including those supported under the Dominica Social Investment Fund (DSIF) and the Basic Needs Trust Fund were introduced or intensified to provide support to the poor and vulnerable, and designed to target communities like the Indigenous (Carib) community that had been seriously affected by the banana crisis.

The reduction of poverty and increasing social protection have been identified as key pillars under the Growth and Social Protection Strategies of 2008 and for 2012-2014. An extensive social safety network consisting of Government and NGO administered programmes is being maintained to ensure provision of direct support enabling children attend schools, and poor and vulnerable households are supported by way of direct social transfer grants.

A number of social protection initiatives have been undertaken by the Government to mitigate the effects of the financial crisis. The Government has increased the school transfer grant for
children moving from primary to secondary school from $EC250.00 to EC$500.00 over the course of one year. There has been an increase to ten buses serving some 811 children from villages across the country; and increased funding has been made available for those pursuing higher education.

The Special Focus Areas Programme as outlined in the Growth and Social protection Strategy 2012-2014 are initiatives to deal specifically with incidence of poverty in identified areas. The idea is to "tailor interventions to the needs and circumstances of particular areas…and to consist of a variety of measures and activities that include targeted transfers, community engagement towards self-help and income earning activities, skills training, counselling adult education, access to lands among others, and delivered through an integrated approach.” Two communities of Layou and Silver Lake were identified to build capacity and empower residents to improve their employability and entrepreneurial opportunities and women have been specifically targeted for assistance with income-generating activities.

4.4 Main Constitutional, Legislative and/or legal developments in promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women.

A number of pieces of legislation enacted over the year have helped eliminate direct and indirect discrimination on the basis of sex, promote positive action for women, and advance equality between men and women. Others enacted since the country’s independence in 1978, were also geared to addressing issues of inequality between male and female children and address issues of inheritance that favoured the male line of progeny.

More recent legal developments include:

The Education Act (1997) underscores equal access to education and skills. All women have the legal right to pursue educational opportunities, irrespective of their background. It makes provisions for girls to return to school after they have given birth, but it is silent with regard to whether a pregnant teenager can continue if she is above age 16.

The Maintenance Act (1982). Under this act, both men and women have responsibilities for maintaining each other and their children. The Act has been amended to increase provisions to $75.00 a week. Magistrates can currently order payment of up to EC $300 for the maintenance of spouses.

The Social Security Act (1975) revision 17, 1991, reflects an acceptance of current social realities, and is an example of recent legislation promoting gender equality. The Act has moved positively to recognize persons in common-law relationships, and extend benefits to them. Under this Act, other persons can be recognized as registered beneficiaries of the Insured, notwithstanding the existence of a valid marriage between an insured person and another man or women.

The Sexual Offences Act (1998) sets out to revise and reform the law relating to sexual offences. The Act defines rape as sexual intercourse without consent of the other person or without believing that the other person consents to such intercourse. A husband is guilty of
offence of rape when he has sexual intercourse with his wife without her consent by force, fear, or the use of a drug or other such thing with intent to stupefy or empower when there is in existence: (i) a decree nisi of divorce; (ii) a decree of judicial separation; (iii) a separation agreement; (iv) an order for the husband not to molest his wife or have sexual intercourse with her.

The same applies to a woman who commits the act of rape in the above circumstances. No provision is made for a husband who rapes his wife to be prosecuted in the absence of the above circumstances.

Under the law, a person under the age of sixteen cannot consent to sexual intercourse. While girls are highlighted for special protection, it affords protection to boys, who are also potential victims of such crimes.

The Protection against Domestic Violence Act (2001) is an example of positive state action to address violence against men, women and children in the private sphere. The Act defines domestic violence as “including physical, sexual, emotional, or psychological or financial abuse committed by a person against a spouse, child, and any other person who is a member of the household, dependent or parent of a child of that household.” It is noted that the definition given is wide in that “financial abuse” is included as a form of violence. The Act aims “to provide protection in cases involving domestic violence and for matters connected therewith, and incidental thereto.” The Act caters for a range of persons to make applications on behalf of victims.

The Act also affords various kinds of injunctive relief in the form of Protection, Occupation and Tenancy Orders.

4.4.1 Areas identified for reform

Thus, while there are broad constitutional provisions against discrimination based on sex, and some legislation has sought to minimize discrimination, Dominica has no separate legislation to address gender-based discrimination, e.g., a ‘Sexual Discrimination Act’ or an ‘Equal Opportunities Act’. In a context where legal and economic issues are interwoven, the law often fails to consider the implications of legal provisions on persons’ livelihoods.

A key example is the issue of property ownership and rights of persons in common-law unions. Persons, especially women, in common-law unions, who are remain at home taking care of their partner, children and families, are not normally entitled to benefits upon the breakdown of the union, regardless of how long they have been in such a relationship. This more likely affects women who come into domestic arrangements with few or no economic assets and consequently face serious economic hardships when such relationships end.

The issues are also similar in the area of inheritance and succession, as the concept of ‘rights for common-law partners’ is not yet accepted in Dominican law. A common-law partner is not part of the class of persons entitled to benefit under the intestacy law in Dominica, and is unable to apply for the probate of the common-law partner’s estate. The existing legal framework fails to acknowledge existing social realities and family structures, and denies property rights to non-married persons, especially women in common-law unions, even when contributions have been made.
Additionally, women in married unions may have limited rights if they have not made financial contributions towards assets or have failed to have properties acquired during a marriage registered in joint names. Even when women do have rights in this regard, lack of education and awareness puts them at a disadvantage in asserting these rights.

Despite the Constitutional provisions the Caribs, the Indigenous people of Dominica, practice a traditional patriarchal system in the Carib Territory which promotes the higher status of men in a number of areas. For example, men have unlimited freedom to choose their marriage partner, regardless of race or ethnicity. Carib women are only allowed to marry men of Carib descent if they wish to remain resident in the Territory.

There is no Sexual Harassment Act in Dominica. While the Sexual Offences Act provides protection for victims of sexual assault affected by penetrative sex, it offers little protection for acts like fondling and touching, which are just as intrusive and demeaning.

The following pieces of legislation have been identified for reform as they exclude domestic workers, who are mainly women from protection of employment and contractual relations.

**The Labour Contracts Act 1983 (amended 1990)** provides for security of employment for all persons above 18 years of age through clear terms of employment, including provisions for entitlement to maternity leave and pay entitlements during periods of absence. That Act stipulates that an employer cannot establish a differentiation of wages on the basis of sex and further provides that every employer not later than fourteen (14) days after assumption of employment, must enter into a labour contract with the employee detailing the terms and conditions of employment. However, home assistants and agricultural workers are excluded from this provision.

**The Labour Standards Act 1977 (amended 1983, 1990, 1991)** affirm these stipulations by including similar provisions to ensure that employees are paid according to the job performed, regardless of sex. However, home assistants who are mainly women and agricultural workers are not represented by labour unions, and are consequently unable to negotiate better terms and conditions of employment.

**The Protection of Employment Act, 1977.** Chapter 89:02 provides protection for all categories of workers. Thus, while domestic workers, who are predominantly female, are afforded annual vacation leave and are protected from termination of employment, they are excluded from receiving redundancy pay as a result of termination on the grounds of redundancy.

**The Pensions Act 1944 (amendment 11, 1991)** regulates pensions, gratuities and other allowances in respect of offices held in the public service. Under this Act, a common-law spouse or partner is not considered as a beneficiary as is the case under the Social Security Act.

**Other Draft Legislation to be considered**

- Dominica’s involvement in the OECS Family law and Domestic Violence programme has provided impetus for compliance with CEDAW and other international obligations, since one of the main objectives of the project is to bring family law in OECS member countries into compliance with CEDAW and CRC which have been ratified by participating states. While several draft laws have been prepared in areas of Child Maintenance,
Domestic Violence, the Status of Children, and Child Care and Adoption over the past decade, they are yet to be enacted.

- The establishment of a Family Court to address issues including maintenance, child custody, and gender-based violence in a comprehensive and integrated manner.
- New legislation to address the rights of common-law partners and cohabitants, and to provide family provisions for other persons.

### 4.5 National Planning and Budgetary allocation related to achieving gender equality

The concept of gender-responsive budgeting has not yet been fully embraced as a tool for advancing gender equality. Although there is appreciation for gender-sensitive research in planning, the lack of adequate training and technical skills, lack of gender analysis skills, weaknesses in gender disaggregated data across ministries and lack of involvement of Focal points in the budget processes are some factors that affect capacity to track budgetary allocations for achieving gender equality. This is likely to change with increased training.

Budgetary allocations to the National Women’s Machinery have however increased over the period under review and proposals are being made for substantial increases.

### 4.6 Mechanisms for regular dialogue between Government and civil society

The development of National Gender Policy and Action Plan was not an isolated activity but was initiated in response to Dominica’s regional and international commitments and influenced by larger international and regional frameworks. In addition to other international frameworks and institutional arrangements, the National Gender Policy built upon the National Action Priorities that followed from the Beijing Platform for Action; through both initiatives, civil society organizations were fully engaged in the consultative processes that evolved. Capacity building involving women at all levels including the community were part of process of ensuring that women were able to effectively participate in development action that affected them.10 Although no formalized monitoring body has been in place, a process of regular consultation with all stakeholders including civil society organizations developed overtime and has become central to planning and programming.

The process leading up to the formulation of the Dominica National Gender policy involved active and broad consultations with cross-section of civil society, women’s and men’s organizations and the public at large. The process ensured that the final product was country-owned and stakeholders understood their role and stake in it. The National Women’s Machinery has been pivotal in building awareness, monitoring the process and supporting implementation of related goals under the Beijing Platform of Action. Focal points have remained integral to the process.

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10 Government of the Commonwealth Dominica, National Policy and Action Plan for Gender Equity and Equality p.10
Civil society organizations and other partners have also been active through the Gender Mainstreaming system that was designed to support implementation of gender equality and empowerment of women. A National Gender Advisory Committee set up to provide oversight to the process is in place and comprises mainly of non-governmental organizations, faith-based organizations and private sector organizations. That body understands its role in monitoring the country’s compliance to international obligations.

4.7 In country, bilateral sub-regional and regional cooperation

Since the National Women’s Machinery has had a leadership role in implementing the National Action Priorities that came out of Beijing, it has had responsibilities for monitoring and reporting on progress on implementation. The Bureau of Gender Affairs has over the years maintained the networks of knowledge sharing at national, regional and international levels, and have participated in the various international meetings convened to assess progress, and well as to benefit from feedback and other country’s experiences.

The process of preparing the reports on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration has in itself benefited stakeholders who have been able to reflect on progress made and learn from the experiences. The outcome of such sharing sometimes meant the development of new initiatives to address emerging issues. The issue of greater involvement of men in programmes and activities for women and to involve them in championing issues around children and domestic violence came out of such exchanges.

The value of cooperation especially at the sub-regional and regional levels can also be appreciated from the learning, sharing as well as the support to some of the programmes organized at national level to advance gender equality and empowerment of women. Dominica has been the recipient of tremendous support and practical assistance from agencies like the UN as it strives to transform its society and enhance human relations.

4.8 MDGS gender-related MDGS in facilitating and strengthening implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

The Commonwealth of Dominica is committed to achieving the MDGs, and indications are that the country is on track to achieve the goals set by 2015. A number of structures have been put in place to facilitate the collection of data in line with socio-economic indicators.

A national Core Monitoring Committee for the MDGs is in place to examine trends and make recommendations.

As regards MDG 3-Promoting Gender Equality and Empowering women, the latest MDG Country Report 2012 reviews that goal as being focused on achieving parity in education and to eliminating gender disparities in access to primary and secondary schools. While the report also highlights progress made in women’s participation in decision-making, it attributes the issue of under-representation of women to the fact that few women select to explore careers in politics. The impact of culture and the nature of politics in deterring active participation of
women is however acknowledged. The report further identifies the adoption of the National Gender Policy as an indication of the country’s commitment to gender equality.

The process of data collection and dissemination on the MDGs has helped maintain focus on gender equality issues in areas such as poverty, education and health, and assisted in understanding and appreciating progress made in relation to various goals. A number of areas have overlapped and progress is evident in those sectors. The focus of achievements on MDG Goal 3 has however been limited to some sectors and not fully mainstreamed. The coordination of efforts in activities designed to address goals under the Beijing Platform for Action related to gender equality and empowerment and the systematic use of data to track progress has been affected by lack of adequate sex disaggregated data and clear indicators.

5.0 Progress in implementation of critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action since 2009

5.1 WOMEN AND POVERTY

**Strategic Objectives:**

- Review, adopt and maintain macroeconomic policies and development strategies that address the needs and efforts of women in poverty.
- Revise laws and administrative practices to ensure women’s equal rights and access to economic resources
- Provide women with access to savings and credit mechanisms and institutions
- Develop gender-based methodologies and conduct research to address the feminization of poverty

The first major Country Poverty Assessment (CPA) carried out in 2002 found that around 29% of all households on the island were poor, and the poverty rate was 39% nationally. 15% of population was found to be indigent or very poor. Three-quarters of poor households were in the rural areas where 1 in every 2 households found to be poor. The 2002 Survey of Living conditions (SLC) found that the primary cause of poverty was the shrinking economy which led to high levels of unemployment and underemployment and a loss of wellbeing. In the CPA 2002 poverty is defined on the basis of indigent
The assessment was carried out at a time of serious challenges in the Dominican economy following the collapse of the banana industry. Women were found to be under increasing pressures to obtain employment while shouldering child rearing and domestic duties.

The latest Poverty Assessment in Dominica was conducted in 2008/2009 at a time when the country was emerging from a decade of challenging economic issues: decline in a major export industry, (bananas); fiscal imbalances occasioning drastic cutbacks of government expenditure; severe volatility on prices of imports in basic goods; disruption in trade in other services; the decline in remittances and effects of severe weather patterns. The Country Poverty report (2009) found poverty and indigent rates had improved and revealed that the level of poverty had fallen from 39 percent in 2003 to 28.8 percent in 2009; and the indigent rate had also dropped from 10% in 2003 to 3.1% in 2009. The improvement in poverty rates was attributed to efforts by government to stabilize the economy and to expand social and physical infrastructure.

Although the levels of poverty among men and women were the same levels, 28.8 percent for males, and 28.9 percent for females, there were differences in employment levels for males and females. The male unemployment rate was 11.1 percent and female unemployment rate was 17.6 percent. In fact, both poor and non-poor females faced higher levels of unemployment than males. Thus, while 20 percent of poor males were unemployed, the figure for poor females was 33.8 percent. With the non-poor, unemployment for males was 8.1 percent compared to 13.0 percent for females as shown below.

| TABLE 1: DISTRIBUTION OF UNEMPLOYED BY SOCIO ECONOMIC STATUS AND BY SEX |
|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| SEX         | SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS | POOR | NON-POOR | TOTAL |
|             | N | %   | N | %   | N | %   |
| Male        | 888 (4424) | 20.0 | 1110 (13647) | 8.1 | 1998 (18071) | 11.1 |
| Female      | 1092 (3224) | 33.8 | 1481 (11359) | 13.0 | 2573 (14583) | 17.6 |
| Total       | 1980 (7648) | 25.9 | 2591 (25006) | 10.4 | 4571 (32654) | 14.0 |

Source: Country Poverty Assessment 2008/09
Figures in parenthesis are total labour force.

11 The indigence line in that Report is based on minimum food requirements. The poverty line is described as the minimum food requirements plus an element of non-food expenditure. The poverty line in 2002 was $EC$3, 4000 (US$1,260) per adult per year but was estimated at $EC$6,230 in the CPA, 2008/9.

The CPA 2008/09 report indicated that female-headed households made up 34% of all households, and the members of such households make up 39% of all poor people. The report further noted that men preferred visiting relationships. Although society expects men to provide for their families, women felt greater responsibilities for the nurturing and maintenance of their families. In the absence of such support, poor women had to resort to various survival strategies so as to be able to feed their children and maintain themselves including transactional sex and illegal activities.

Poverty for women has different characteristics to that for men as women suffer doubly from gender inequalities arising from the segmented labour market as well as from particular family structures. The structure of the economy limits women’s access to certain types of activities, mainly low paid positions. Additionally, poor women can be further affected by intra-family relationships in situations of dominance and power by men.

Poverty has been, and remains an issue for the Indigenous (Carib) Population which is over-represented among the poor making up 49.8 percent of the poor in Dominica, compared to the national average of 28.8 percent. The Indigenous community has been targeted for special assistance including health, housing and literacy. Indigenous women have been beneficiaries of special programme such as the CDB-supported capacity building programme.

**Poverty-reduction programmes**

Several programmes have evolved to address poverty in the country, and government support to the poor has extended through various safety nets and broader poverty reduction schemes.

The CDB-supported Basic Needs Trust Fund (BNTF), operating since 1979 has been contributing to poverty reduction in targeted communities by providing infrastructure and livelihood enhancement services. In the early years of the last decade, the Dominica Rural Enterprise Project (DREP) provided credit to small farmers including landless and rural women.

The Dominica Social Investment Fund (DSIF) was another initiative under the European Union’s Special Framework for Assistance established in 2003 to address poverty and vulnerability in the island and to act as a ‘focal point for social sector provisioning on the island’. That three year project provided a complimentary source of support for local government institutions and non-government agencies that were already involved in delivering services to the poor. And the Social Protection programme was also established in 2002 with the aim of stalling the decline in rural communities.

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13 Ibid. p. xx
Throughout the last two decades, the Women’s Bureau helped build capacity among poor women. Through collaboration with partners, the Bureau has helped establish several projects among women farmers in the farming communities through skills training, agro processing and by encouraging small enterprise development.

Over the period from 2003 to 2009, the Government of Dominica embarked upon several programmes to address needs of vulnerable persons including children, the elderly, and single women. In 2009, the Government of Dominica implemented “Yes We Care” Programme designed to meet the care needs of the elderly. The majority of care givers as well as the beneficiaries are women.

Table 2: Number of Persons Assisted by the ‘Yes We Care’ Programme by District, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Gender of Client</th>
<th>Total Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portsmouth</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roseau North</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roseau South</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Joseph</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous Carib Territory</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castle Bruce</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Bay</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laplaine</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marigot</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>80</strong></td>
<td><strong>93</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.2 Administrative support

There are no administrative barriers preventing women from accessing economic resources, and women can own land in their name. Women have equal access to property under the Government-sponsored Squatter regularization programme. Other complementary housing schemes have assisted women to acquire property at low rates of payment.

Efforts at reducing poverty as a whole have intensified over the last decade; but as was noted in the CPA 2008/09, despite the various interventions to assist women, ‘…..the
engendered nature of the segmented labour market has the capacity to keep the cycle of poverty recurring from one generation to another.....women may face other handicaps'. For example, in that study, women reported not receiving the same level of support from extension services.\textsuperscript{14}

There is need to integrate a gender perspective in poverty reduction prgrammes and to understand their impact on women. A Social Protection Integrated Strategy (SPIS) is assisting with the synchronization of efforts among partners, and to facilitating a shift from targeting individuals to facilitating a convergence of services to families through a holistic approach.

5.2 EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF WOMEN

\begin{table}
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|}
\hline
\textbf{Strategic Objectives:} \\
\hline
\begin{itemize}
\item Ensure Equal Access to education \\
\item Eradicate illiteracy among women \\
\item Improve women’s access to vocational training, science, and technology, and continuing education \\
\item Develop non-discriminatory education and training \\
\item Allocate sufficient resources for and monitor the implementation of education reforms \\
\item Promote Life Long education and Training for girls and women \\
\end{itemize}
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

5.2.1 Primary Level Education

There are no institutional barriers based on sex to accessing education in Dominica. Under the Education Act No 11 of 1997, all children between the ages of 5 and 16 are required to go to school, and education at both primary and secondary is generally free of charge. Education attainment has increased among the population with levels for persons qualifying at GCE/CXC levels (high school leaving attainment levels) increased by 28%.

Primary schools are accessible throughout the island; and secondary level education is provided by 15 co-educational secondary schools in addition to two all-girls secondary

\textsuperscript{14} Country Poverty Assessment, Dominica 2008/09 pg.141
and one all boys secondary. School curriculum, equipment and facilities are standard at all government schools.

According to reports from the Ministry of Education, no gender disparity exists in terms of enrolment within primary and secondary education. Data indicating slight differences in number of enrolment of males over females may be explained by higher birth rates among males.

Table 3: Participation in Primary Schools: 2000-2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACADEMIC YEAR</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000/2001</td>
<td>6552</td>
<td>5835</td>
<td>12,387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001/2002</td>
<td>6252</td>
<td>6504</td>
<td>11,756</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002/2003</td>
<td>5818</td>
<td>5207</td>
<td>11,025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003/2004</td>
<td>5454</td>
<td>4893</td>
<td>10,247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004/2005</td>
<td>5100</td>
<td>4672</td>
<td>9,772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005/2006</td>
<td>4688</td>
<td>4361</td>
<td>9,049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006/2007</td>
<td>4429</td>
<td>4173</td>
<td>8,602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007/2008</td>
<td>4469</td>
<td>4060</td>
<td>8,329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008/2009</td>
<td>4207</td>
<td>4003</td>
<td>8,210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009/2010</td>
<td>3,982</td>
<td>4,156</td>
<td>8,138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010/2011</td>
<td>3,999</td>
<td>4,139</td>
<td>8,138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011/2012</td>
<td>3,958</td>
<td>4,186</td>
<td>8,144</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The net enrolment in primary education has remained consistently high: on average from 2005, 96 out of every 100 children within the official age group for primary education were enrolled at school.

Table 4: Net Enrollment Ratio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boys</td>
<td>97.14</td>
<td>97.15</td>
<td>97.33</td>
<td>96.67</td>
<td>96.7</td>
<td>99.4</td>
<td>98.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girls</td>
<td>96.09</td>
<td>96.09</td>
<td>96.3</td>
<td>96.41</td>
<td>98.2</td>
<td>99.6</td>
<td>98.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>96.62</td>
<td>96.62</td>
<td>96.82</td>
<td>96.54</td>
<td>97.45</td>
<td>99.5</td>
<td>98.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of Education & Human Resource Development

Girls and boys have equal access to education and related support. The Education Trust Fund, which was instituted in 1980 to provide needy students with assistance for school supplies and fees, continue to be open to all students irrespective of sex. A number of government-sponsored initiatives are operating to provide support at primary and secondary education levels which include the provision of school meals, school supplies and transportation for those eligible. Other initiatives include piloting of
Child-Friendly Schools, provisions of uniforms for children, Text Book Scheme which provide text books to students free of cost.  

5.2.2 Secondary Level Education

Girls and boys have equal access to secondary education which is now available throughout the island. A universal secondary education policy is enabling all students reaching 6th Grade in the primary school level to be placed in secondary school. This policy has helped address concerns in the past years around lower participation rates by boys.

Table 5: Participation at Secondary Schools: 2000-2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACADEMIC YEAR</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000/2001</td>
<td>3,377</td>
<td>2,922</td>
<td>6,731</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001/2002</td>
<td>3,678</td>
<td>3,053</td>
<td>6,731</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002/2003</td>
<td>3,648</td>
<td>3,202</td>
<td>6,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003/2004</td>
<td>3,481</td>
<td>3,250</td>
<td>6,731</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004/2005</td>
<td>3,471</td>
<td>3,377</td>
<td>6,848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005/2006</td>
<td>3,560</td>
<td>3,537</td>
<td>7,097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006/2007</td>
<td>3,668</td>
<td>3,545</td>
<td>7,213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007/2008</td>
<td>3,644</td>
<td>3,518</td>
<td>7,162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008/2009</td>
<td>3,479</td>
<td>3,451</td>
<td>6,930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009/2010</td>
<td>3,318</td>
<td>3,263</td>
<td>6,581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010/2011</td>
<td>3,076</td>
<td>3,129</td>
<td>6,205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011/2013</td>
<td>3,003</td>
<td>3,090</td>
<td>6,093</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2.3 Teenage Pregnancy

On the issue of Teenage Pregnancy, figures from the Education Planning Unit indicate that the number of girls dropping out of school because of pregnancy is showing signs of decreasing. The statistics for the period 2005/06 - 2011/12 indicate the following: For the years 2005/06: 9 teenage pregnancies; 2006/07: 5; 2007/08: 15; 2008/09: 14; 2009/10: 8; 2010/11: 6; 2011/12: 10.

The Education Act 1997 provides for teenage girls to return to school after giving birth. The Act is unclear on the issue of pregnancy among teens still at school who

15 Commonwealth of Dominica, MDG Report, 2012
havereached the age of 16 and have given ‘consent’. The option for teenagers to return to school after giving birth rests largely on the discretion of the school principals and other factors. Private religious schools operate different policies on the issue of teenage pregnancy, and the option for teenagers affected may be to seek to continue their education at other institutions.

There is no clear position regarding male peers involved in the pregnancy as they normally would not face the same stigma or barriers to completing their secondary education as their female counterparts.

5.2.4 Tertiary Education

The Dominica State College is the main tertiary level institution in the country, and has been broadened to include the Teacher’s College, the Nursing School and the technical and academic division of the former Clifton Dupigny College.

Table 6: Enrolment Statistics at the Dominica State College by Fields and gender, 2011/12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names of faculty</th>
<th>Semester 1</th>
<th>Semester 2</th>
<th>Semester 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Arts and Technology</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts and Science</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data on enrollment at the Dominica State College indicate that choice of subjects between females and males still largely reflect traditional gender roles with females predominating in the education, health and males in Applied Arts and technology. However, results of the CXC results for 2013 which influence choices of subjects taken at tertiary level indicate that girls are not only attempting traditional male subjects at that level, but are performing at levels equivalent to their male counterparts. The date also indicatethatwhilefemales are pursuing traditional male subjects there appears to be little movement with males in the other direction.

5.2.5 Educational attainment

In terms of attainment levels, more students are attaining qualifications at associate degree levels which has risen by 972.5% from 207 in 2001 to 2200 in 2011. Females
account for 62.9% of attainment levels compared to 37.1% for males. Attainment of bachelor degrees by 2011 were 1942 compared to 842 in 2001 reflecting female attainment levels are 55.6% compared to 44.6% for males. At post-graduate levels and higher degree levels, there has also been a 61% increase with female attainment at 53% compared to 46% for males.\footnote{Dominica Census Report, 2011}

5.2.6 Continuing Education

A number of adult education programmes are available to the public free of charge and programmes are delivered periodically around the island. Courses on offer include development of marketable skills like sewing, confectionery-making and other life-development. According to officials at the Adult Education Department, the issue is the lack of participation by men who themselves may be affected by peer pressure.

Other centres of continuing education includes the University of the West Indies Centre and the Business Training Centre (BTC). Women are actively accessing various programmes of higher through private institutions which are open to both sexes. Costs however, continue to be a factor for women wishing to pursue further studies.

The last literacy survey was conducted in 1993 and no updated information is available.

5.3 Women and Health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic objectives:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ Increase women’s access throughout the life cycle to appropriate, affordable and quality health care, information and related services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Strengthen preventative programmes that promote women’s health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Undertake gender-sensitive initiatives that address sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS, and sexual and reproductive health issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Promote research and disseminate information on women’s health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Increase resources and monitor follow-up for women’s health</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mission of the Ministry of Health in Dominica is to ‘enhance the ability of persons living in Dominica to better manage their own health, improve their productivity and
quality of life, reduce their risk of disease and in a cost-effective way…” The island is divided into seven (7) districts providing services through 52 health centres and two district hospitals located across the country. The MOHSS also has responsibility for provision and financing of health care and for regulation of the health sector.

The Ministry of Health is responsible for providing health care to the nation at two levels of care: primary and Secondary. Primary health care includes:

- Promotion of proper nutrition
- Environmental Health management
- Immunization against major infectious diseases
- Education concerning preventing and controlling diseases
- Appropriate treatment for common disease and injuries
- Provision of essential drugs
- Maternal Care.

The main general hospital is the Princess Margaret Hospital which provides all the major curative and rehabilitative services including medical, surgical, obstetrics, gynecology, pediatrics, neo-natal, psychiatric, accident and emergency care, referrals for overseas tertiary care and diagnostic services.

5.3.1 Gender concerns are primary to the health sector.

Gender equality in health means men and women have equal access for realizing their full rights and potential to be healthy, to contribute to health development and to benefit from results. Life expectancy for males is 73.5 and for females it is 78.1. Generally, more women access health services than men, but women are more likely to suffer from depression, stress, chronic conditions and to die from family violence.

One of the primary health concerns which has a bearing on poverty reduction and which remains a leading cause of death is that of chronic non-communicable diseases. These diseases are mainly caused by many factors including lifestyle behaviors such as poor eating habits, inactivity, smoking, sexual infections, and poor stress management.

According to the Strategic Plan for Health, the four major causes of female mortality in 2001 in ranking order were:

- Hypertension
- Malignant neoplasms
- Diabetes mellitus

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19 ibid
- Heart failure

In the recent Census Report 2011, hypertension is recorded as the leading chronic disease with 6,985 or 10.1% of the population affected reflecting a 26.4% increase over 5,524 recorded in 2001. Hypertension is more prevalent among females who account for 66.0% of the cases, slightly down from the 69.9% of cases recorded in 2001. Females account for 64.3% of the cases recorded for diabetes down from 65.3% over the last decade. Women are also affected by Arthritis affecting 2229 females or 65.5% compared to 1176 or 34.5% or males.\footnote{Dominica Census Report, 2011}

The table below presents the population figures by chronic illness and sex.

Table 7: Population by chronic illness and sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chronic Illness</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011 Male</td>
<td>2001 Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sickle Cell Anemia</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthritis</td>
<td>1176</td>
<td>2229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asthma</td>
<td>999</td>
<td>1188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diabetes</td>
<td>1355</td>
<td>2437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypertension</td>
<td>2377</td>
<td>4608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart Disease</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stroke</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidney Disease</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancer</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lupus</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpel Tunnel Syndrome</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental illness</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illness Unknown</td>
<td>504</td>
<td>458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Illness</td>
<td>1152</td>
<td>1374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No illness</td>
<td>28115</td>
<td>24203</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census Report, 2011

5.3.2 HIV/AIDS

The first AIDS-related death occurred in Dominica in 1987. Between 1987 and 2012 a total of 396 persons have tested positive for HIV in Dominica, of those 280 (70.7%) are males and 116 (29.3%) are females. Since 1987, there have been 148 AIDS-related deaths, 115 (77.7%) males and 33 (22.3%) females.
The number of persons registered for treatment and care for the period of 2002 to 2012 was 112, 13 of these patients registered for treatment were between 15-24 years old\textsuperscript{21}. At the end of 2012, the Commonwealth of Dominica Global Aids Report\textsuperscript{22} noted that there were 70 active patients with 39 of them on antiretroviral therapy. Of that total client population, 64% male and 36% were female.

A National HIV/AIDS Response programme was established by Government in 2003 with the aim of providing oversight and guidance through a multi-sectoral approach with a Country Coordinating Mechanism. Country consultations have begun with a view to developing a National HIV and AIDS policy.

From 2006-2012, the general population estimated prevalence rate for HIV/AIDS is 0.75% with the most affected group between the ages 25-49 years. The country’s target for prevalence is to remain under 1%.

There are four fully functioning testing sites on the island in addition to the National HIV/AIDS Response Programme. 1167 test were performed at these sites during the year 2012. Additionally, pregnant women continued to access testing for HIV.

The approach by the Government of Dominica to this medical issue is to ensure that prevention and therapeutic services are offered to the entire population. A national Strategic plan for HIV/AIDS (2003-2007) had been developed in line with regional priorities with a focus on: reducing the incidence of HIV/AIDS in the Commonwealth of Dominica; (b) to alleviate the negative impacts of HIV/AIDS on persons infected and affected.

The gender dimension to HIV/AIDS is that infection rates have always been higher among males which suggest the need for targeting men for education on sexual health and for encouraging use of facilities for testing, prevention and contraception. The figures reveal that roughly 70% of cases occur amongst males and close to 30% amongst females.

\textbf{5.5.3 Maternal and Child Health}

Maternal and child health has always been a priority for the health services in Dominica with an emphasis on access to ante-natal and post-natal services which are free at the Health centres. Death rates are minimal and figures indicate about one death per year. As noted in the Action Plan for Health Care in Dominica, 97 percent of women utilize antenatal clinics in the public sector by the sixteenth week of pregnancy. From 2006-

\textsuperscript{21}MDG Report 2012, pg.40
\textsuperscript{22}The Commonwealth of Dominica Global Aids Report found at: https://www.google.dm/search?q=commonwealth+of+dominica+global+hiv+aids+response&f=cla&ie=UTF-8
2012, 100 percent of births was attended by skilled physicians.\textsuperscript{23} Reproductive health services are available at all the seven health districts.

Health education and Nutrition are important components of antenatal care, and the Maternal Nutrition programme is focused on improving the nutritional status of all pregnant lactating mothers as well as their children. The nutritional status of infants are encouraged through proper breast feeding and complementary feeding practices. Breast feeding is encouraged for four to six months.

The Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission programme ensures that all pregnant women are tested for HIV. This effort is coordinated through maternal and child health services. All HIV positive mothers are offered highly antiretroviral therapy (HAART) and all exposed infants are treated and followed up with specialist care for the first year and a half. HIV tests were conducted on pregnant women at the Government laboratory. A total of 1017 tests were performed among pregnant women in 2012.\textsuperscript{24}

There were no women testing positive in 2012 and no infants were born to HIV positive women.\textsuperscript{25} According to that report, the most at risk population for Dominica as informed by a consultative process for the strategic planning process are men who have sex with men, (MSM), prison inmates, sex workers, young people, (15-24 years) and the Indigenous (Carib) population.

5.3.4 **Strengthen prevention programmes that promote women’s health**

The Health Information Unit of the Ministry of Health has responsibility for collecting and managing information on morbidity and mortality rates. Mortality due from communicable diseases has declined because of emphasis on prevention supported by expanded programmes on immunization, increased accessibility to safe and clean water, and on safe disposal of waste.

However concerns remain over the prevalence of chronic non-communicable diseases among women. Much is being done at all levels especially their public education and at the primary care level to help women better manage their lifestyles and to take control for their health.

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{23}Commonwealth of Dominica, Millennium Development Goals Progress Report 2012.  
\textsuperscript{24}Commonwealth of Dominica, Global Aids Report, 2012  
\textsuperscript{25}Commonwealth of Dominica, Global Aids Report, 2012}
## 5.4 VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

**Strategic objectives:**

- Take integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women
- Study the causes and consequences of violence against women and the effectiveness of preventive measures
- Eliminate trafficking in women and assist victims of violence due to prostitution and trafficking

Gender-based violence is commonly associated with violence within a family setting. Victims of domestic violence are generally women, but may also involve, children, male spouses, the elderly and parents. In the Dominican context, domestic violence is defined as ‘including physical, sexual, emotional, psychological or financial abuse committed by a person against a spouse, child, any other person who is a member of the household, dependent or parent of a child of that household’. Increased awareness of the issue may be giving rise to increased reporting, but under-reporting still persists in a context where victims often lack confidence in the police to follow-up or where economic dependency may discourage victims from seeking court-directed redress and agree to extrajudicial arrangements.

There are indications that the nature of domestic violence is changing, and recent incidents suggest a more aggressive pattern of behavior may be emerging which point to the need for on-going research and deeper understanding of a complex issue.

The Protection against Domestic Violence Act 2001 (hereinafter PADV) was a timely piece of legislation as prior to its enactment in 2001 domestic violence would have to be addressed through ordinary criminal laws. The Act is open to wide interpretation in its definition, and it affords injunctive relief in the forms of Protection, Occupation and Tenancy Orders from the courts. Perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse can be prevented from entering or remaining on premises of the victim, and the police are given powers to enter premises without warrants where violence is suspected. A range of persons other than the victims can make applications for such Orders under the Act.

While an increased number of women are accessing the courts, there are issues around enforcement, delays in the court, and a lack of capacity to effectively respond to breach of Orders. The issue is understandably complex, needing a multi-prong approach. Attempts to implement a multi-sectoral strategy to domestic violence based on research carried out among various agencies have not been successful.
5.4.1 Administrative support systems

A National Registry for Domestic Violence was established in 2011 with support from UN Women following the call for improved data on domestic violence. The Bureau of Gender Affairs maintains the Registry and receives reports from various partners including the Dominica Police Force, the Gender Bureau, the Dominica National Council of Women, the Dominica Legal Aid and the Welfare Department.

A report for the last three years on Domestic Violence as compiled from the National Registry on Domestic Violence indicates that 349 were reports of sexual abuse, 140 cases of physical abuse and 118 cases of physiological/emotional abuse, with 479 (85.68%) recorded as female victims. Over the three years since 2011, most of the persons accused were from the 19-30, 31-45, and 45 to 60 year old groups. The highest number of victims come from the age range 0-5 years.26

The causes of domestic violence have not been systemically studied in the case of Dominica, but studies around the Caribbean are relevant to supporting notions that such acts are generally carried out by persons who may have been victims of abuse themselves often as children. Studies carried out in Dominica27 point to acceptance of abusive behavior by victims and perpetrators who were themselves abused. A study on domestic violence in Dominica by Child Fund28 suggests that ‘the primary cause of domestic violence against women is rooted in the imbalance of power relations between men and women. That study support other findings confirming that domestic violence is generally carried out in a context of power and control over a weaker or less powerful victim and accept the existence of male power and control over different spheres of the Dominican society, be it cultural, economic and political.’ There is further support for the view that the issue needs to be tackled at different levels.

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27 Study on ‘Attitudes to Domestic Violence in Dominica’ by the Bureau of Gender Affairs.
28 Child Fund Dominica Study on ‘the Gendered nature of Violence in Dominica’, 2012
Table 8: Type Of Abused Suffered By Victims and Inflicted By Accused from 0 to 100 Years According To Sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age range</th>
<th>Victim</th>
<th>Accused</th>
<th>Victim</th>
<th>Accused</th>
<th>Victim</th>
<th>Accused</th>
<th>Victim</th>
<th>Accused</th>
<th>Victim</th>
<th>Accused</th>
<th>Victim</th>
<th>Accused</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-18</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-30</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-45</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-60</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-100</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4E5</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Dominica is slowly developing a capacity upon which effective interventions for preventing domestic violence can be developed and a number of agencies are collaborating on this effort. However, efforts to eliminate domestic violence will require a multi-faceted approach involving strong coordinating mechanisms.

5.4.2 Trafficking in women and prostitution.

Trafficking has not been identified as a major problem in Dominica; however there have been a few well publicized cases of trafficking of persons associated with illegal immigrant groups. Trafficking is dealt with under the Immigration and Passport Act: under the Act, trafficking is described narrowly as assisting persons to enter and leave the county unlawfully, and is not addressed as a gender issue.

Under the law, prostitution is an illegal offence; but in spite of this, the police are encouraged to protect identified prostitutes from discrimination and harassment.

5.5 WOMEN AND ARMED CONFLICT

This issue was not considered a national priority. Some of the issues around violence and security are addressed under Protection against Domestic Violence Legislation.
5.6 WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY

Strategic Objective:

- Promote women’s economic rights and independence including access to employment, appropriate working conditions and control over economic resources.
- Facilitate women’s equal access to resources, employment, markets and trade.
- Provide business services, training and access to markets, information and technology, particularly to low-income women.
- Strengthen women’s economic capacity and commercial networks.
- Eliminate occupation segregation and all forms of employment discrimination.
- Promote harmonization of work and family responsibilities for women and men.

5.6.1 Women and Economic Activity

The figures for the most recent Census Report of 2011 revealed that the total labour force in Dominica was 30,204 of which 17,646 were males and 12,558 were female. The figures indicate that 26,802 persons are employed: of which 15,482 are males or 57.8% of the employed population, and 11,320 or 42.2 representing the employed female population. The national unemployment rate in 2011 was 11.3 slightly above the 11.0 percent rate registered for 2001 indicating that employment creation is still a challenge for the country.

The unemployment rate for women as indicated in the latest 2011 Census figures was 9.9% for females compared to 12.3% for males.

The Table below presents breakdown of the population by economic activity.
Table 9: Population 15 years and over by Economic Activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Activity</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th></th>
<th>2001</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>26802</td>
<td>15482</td>
<td>11320</td>
<td>25223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>3402</td>
<td>2164</td>
<td>1238</td>
<td>3105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment Rate %</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total labor force</td>
<td>30204</td>
<td>17646</td>
<td>12558</td>
<td>28328</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not in Labour Force</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home duties</td>
<td>7030</td>
<td>1409</td>
<td>5621</td>
<td>8371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attended School</td>
<td>5382</td>
<td>2518</td>
<td>2864</td>
<td>4877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>5044</td>
<td>2368</td>
<td>2676</td>
<td>4855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled Unable to work</td>
<td>1817</td>
<td>897</td>
<td>920</td>
<td>1977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1004</td>
<td>621</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Started</td>
<td>1134</td>
<td>727</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>478</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Not in Labour Force</td>
<td>21411</td>
<td>8540</td>
<td>12871</td>
<td>20761</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Dominica Census Report, 2011

For the figures presented for Persons “not in the Labourforce” close to 50% of the numbers for women employed are otherwise engaged in ‘home duties’: these are 5,621 females compared to 1,409 for males. Despite the contribution being made by women to social and economic development, no value has been placed on their unpaid ‘home duties’.

In terms of data presented for “Occupations by Industry and Sex” as presented in ANNEX 1 women continue to predominate in the services and care sectors. Some 2359 women or 7.2% of the work force are engaged in wholesale and retail sectors compared to 1917 for males. For figures provided for “Accommodation and Food services” 1,293 females are employed in that sector employment compared to 533 males, and in Education and Health sectors 1,442 and 930 females are employed respectively, compared to 545 and 195 for males. Women have still not attained parity in the non-traditional areas of work.

The figures below indicate that the structure of employment for women has changed over the last decades. While women appear to be losing employment across sectors, they are making gains in some areas as professionals and in services, indicating that they may be benefiting from investments in enhanced training and education.
Table 10: Population on 15 years and over by Occupation and Sex.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legislators Senior Officials and Managers</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professionals</td>
<td>903</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technicians and associate professionals</td>
<td>1316</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical support workers</td>
<td>395</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service and sales workers</td>
<td>2206</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled agricultural forestry and fishery workers.</td>
<td>3320</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craft and related trades workers</td>
<td>3987</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant and machine operators and assemblers</td>
<td>1253</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary occupations</td>
<td>1566</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others/Not stated</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>15482</strong></td>
<td><strong>57.8</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


5.6.2 Women and Type of employment

The latest Census figures by type of employee and sex indicate that the largest numbers are employed as paid employees with the Private sector 9.3% of paid employees are with Government are women compared with 7.4 % for men. When compared to the 1991 and 2001 figures when women made up 22% and 23 % of employees, women appear to be losing out in what was once a source of secure employment.

22.6% of employees are women employed with the private sector compared with 28.7% for males. 1,536 females or 5.7% of employees own their own business without paid help compared to 13.1 % for men. A smaller number 430 or 1.6% of employees own businesses with paid help compared to 900 males or 3.4 % of employees.

Compared to previous decades when women accounted for 20.3% and 18 % of ‘own account’ or business owners, they now account for 5.7%. Employment for women as
paid employee/statutory appeared to have dropped by about 50% from figures of 44.5%, 48% and 52.3% recorded in the 1981, 1991 and 2001 censuses respectively.\textsuperscript{29}

Table 11: Population on 15 years and over by Type of Employee and Sex.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Employee</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th></th>
<th>Female</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid Employment – Government</td>
<td>1974</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>2484</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>4458</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>4724</td>
<td>18.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid Employee – Private</td>
<td>7699</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>6063</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>13762</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>11815</td>
<td>46.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid Employee – Statutory Body</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>299</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>721</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>674</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid Employee – Non-Government Organization</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid Employee – Regional Organization</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid Employee – International Organization</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpaid Worker/Employee</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpaid Family Worker</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own Business with paid help</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1330</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>1255</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own Business without Paid help</td>
<td>3524</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>1536</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>5060</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>6147</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprentice</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know / Not Stated</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>15482</strong></td>
<td><strong>57.8</strong></td>
<td><strong>11320</strong></td>
<td><strong>42.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>26802</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>25223</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Figures presented by Industry and Sex as outlined in Annex 1 and 11 indicate that the structural changes in the economy over the last decade have impacted seriously on women’s participation in the economy. Employment levels for women have decreased in areas like agriculture, wholesale/retail and even in the more traditional areas like public administration, health, education and accommodation and services. The challenge is to fully integrate gender perspectives in economic activities, especially in emerging growth areas.

\textsuperscript{29}Commonwealth of Dominica, Population and Housing Census 2001.
5.6.3 Women and Access to resources

The Dominica Third Medium Term Growth and Protection Strategy for 2012-2014 recognizes the challenges related to attaining growth in the economy and is focused on efforts geared to generate and create jobs that are pro-poor and can activate the unemployed in the rural areas where poverty is most pronounced.\(^\text{30}\) p 3

Dominica has limited flat land and produces a narrow range of products for export. The economy is still relatively agricultural-based despite efforts at diversification and there has been active support to services and enterprise development.

Several national institutions have partnered with government and other agencies to make credit available for micro, small and medium enterprises and women entrepreneurs have been targeted for special assistance. One such NGO, the National Development Foundation (NDFD) of Dominica has a commitment to poverty reduction, employment creation and enterprise development. The organization applies some flexibility in situations where female-headed households may not be able to meet the collateral requirements. NDFD Loan figures available for 2012 indicate that female borrowers received 187 loans or 50.7% compared to 170 loans or 45.7% for male borrowers.

The NDFD over the years has operated a special loan scheme on behalf of the Gender Bureau specifically targeting women interested in going into small business. The scheme was in direct response to the fallout of the banana crisis and the loss of incomes for women who faced an uncertain future in farm communities. Again, a more flexible approach to managing collateral requirements which can act as a bar to women accessing credit is being applied, and this has helped promote active participation by women in accessing loans.

The Dominica Employment and Small Business Support Agency, in the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Diaspora Affairs, also aims to support small enterprises through loans and grants. The breakdown of data presented on that scheme indicate that although male applicants predominate in the male fields of endeavor, women are applying for assistance in traditionally ‘male’ fields of economic activities like ICT and export services.

For the financial year 2102/13, the Dominica Employment and Small Business Support Agency assisted 192 clients with some $82,912, and 14. Out of 192 clients, 119 were women and 73 men.

\(^{30}\) Dominica Third Millennium Term Growth and Protection Strategy for 2012-2014.
Over the years, the Gender Bureau has been able to deliver on programmes of training and skills development in non-traditional areas of work. A number of women have used those skills, backed by small loans, to open up businesses. A number of groups including the TolomaWomen’s group have set up viable enterprises in food processing and have benefited from related support towards the exportation of processedfarine products.

5.6.4 Administrative frameworks

Legislation like the Title by Registration Act provides for all persons to deal in land. No legal barriers exist to prevent women from owning and accessing land.

While no legal or administrative barriers exist to prevent women from participating in economic life of the country, the figures reveal that a substantial number of women are not part of the labour force, and recognition of the value of their work to national accounts is not recognized.

No Sexual harassment legislation is in place to protect persons in workplace affected by sexual harassment. Although Sexual Offences Act have been revised to offer protection against penetrative sex, reports from the Gender Bureau confirm that the issue of sexual harassment continue to be an issue confronting women in the work place.

5.6.5 Maternity/Paternity Leave

No paternity legislation exists, but Government Policy now allows for three days leave for fathers in situation where the couple is married or where the common-law union has been more than two years. This measure took effect after the adoption of the Dominica National Gender Policy.

5.7 INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISM FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic Objectives:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ Create or strengthen national machineries and other government bodies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Integrate gender perspectives in legislation, public policies, programmes and projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Generate and disseminate gender-disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.7.1 National Women’s Machinery

Dominica’s National Women’s Machinery comprises of the Bureau of Gender Affairs, the National Gender Advisory Committee (NGAC), and Gender Focal points. The Bureau of Gender Affairs is located in the Ministry of Social Services Community, Community Development and Gender Affairs. The Bureau has a staff complement of five including the Director, the Coordinator of Research and Programme development, a field Officer and a Secretary. A temporary post of Data Registry Officer is being supported through external funding.

The establishment of a Women’s Desk in 1979 one year after the country attained independence was the response of the Government of Dominica to the United Nation’s call for countries to focus on addressing the inequalities between men and women, and advance the institutionalization of a national machinery for representation of women’s concerns in national development processes.

In 1980, the Government of Dominica presented a National Policy Statement on Women supporting its commitment to removing disadvantages that women face under the law, and to ensure that economic and social programmes must provide for equality and access to resources by both men and women. A multi-disciplinary Advisory Committee was also formed to provide direction and guidance to the Women’s Desk, and throughout the 1980s, the Women’s Desk which attained bureau status in 1982, worked through the national planning process and with other key stakeholders like the Dominica National Council of Women to maintain its mandate as primarily a coordinating, catalytic and planning body ….in ensuring that appropriate policies, legislation and plans were in place to achieve the improvement and status of women…”31

The Women’s Bureau was to have overall responsibility for driving the process of policy development as well as monitoring the implementation of the policy in all government agencies. The National Action Plan for Gender mainstreaming proposed an institutional framework which incorporated the establishment of Gender Management System (GMS) comprised of a Gender Management Team and Gender Focal Points. Gender Focal points, made up of permanent secretaries, senior technocrats and administrators would constitute the basic level in policy planning and implementation. A Gender National Advisory committee comprising of persons from non-governmental organization, unions, churches and private sector was to serve as a monitoring body.

As part of the process of formulating the National Gender policy and Action Plan from about 2005, the need for strengthening the capacity of the Dominica Women’s Bureau to more effectively deliver on its mandate of influencing policy action for gender equality was recognized. Strategies proposed for increasing capacity included increasing resources, provision of training, adequate and relevant staff, and for a name change to better reflect a broader gender focus. The development of appropriate frameworks were some of the major strategies, with continuous awareness and education identified to help build capacity.

In the period from 2006 when the National Gender Policy was adopted, several initiatives were undertaken to strengthen the National machinery: (i) The name of Women’s Bureau was changed to Bureau of Gender Affairs, reflecting a broader focus on gender and a sensitivity to addressing equality and equity concerns affecting males; (ii) Gender Focal points were established in all Government ministries; (iii) the process to establish a National Gender Advisory Committee with a clear role and oversight responsibility was also initiated.

In 2013, a process to update the 2006 National Gender Policy was initiated by the Bureau of Gender Affairs in Dominica, and it was observed that at present there is no system-wide application of gender equality principles and goals in the economic and social development of Dominica. The draft Updated National Gender Policy was developed from a wide consultative process and identifies areas for strengthening the institutional structures and mechanisms to enhance gender mainstreaming; it also highlights the need for undertaking a gender sensitization and consultation process to raise public awareness and increase capacity for policy implementation among stakeholders across the public and private sectors and civil society.

**5.8 WOMEN IN POWER AND DECISION MAKING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategic objectives:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ Take measures to ensure women’s equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Increase women’s capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership</td>
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</table>

There are no legal barriers to women participating in political power structures and decision-making levels in Dominica. Women have always been visible in party-

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32 Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica. Draft Updated National Gender Policy and Plan of Action, p.84
political structures of the country including as leaders of opposition parties. Since independence in 1978, women have operated at top levels of political decision-making, and at political leadership levels. During the period 1980-1995, Dame Eugenia Charles led the ruling Freedom party for three successive terms in Government.

Three women were assigned ministerial positions under the ruling UWP government between 1995 and 2000. In 2000 elections, 27% of those contesting the elections for the opposition (the Coalition party) were women, compared to 17% for the incumbent. After the general elections of 2000, women made up 23.3% of parliamentarians or 7 out of the 30 parliamentarians; that level dropped to 13.3% after the 2005 elections.

Women remain under-represented at top political levels, and presently make up 13.3% of the members of parliament compared to 87% men.

The four current female parliamentarians include two ministers of Government, the Speaker of the House and a Senator on the ruling side of the house. There are no female parliamentarians on the Opposition side.

A similar pattern of under-representation of women at decision-making levels in the private sector is emerging. Figures obtained by the Gender Bureau indicate that although women participate actively in civic and private sector organizations, males continue to dominate at leadership and headship levels.

Women however remained fully engaged at the level of local government and their involvement at decision-making at that level has shown signs of increasing. Out of 345 councilors island-wide, females number 141, with 14 out of 42 in positions as chairpersons.

Results of studies carried out in Dominica indicate that views being expressed on the issue of under-representation of women in political leadership point to deep-seated cultural perceptions that view the place of women in the home and not in politics. Participants at several consultations discussing the issue also concurred that women were ‘more likely to vote for men’; and despite the confidence placed in women managing at top level public service positions, the feeling of both men and women was that women would likely not have the required support to survive in political careers with demanding reproductive responsibilities.

While the general view among women is that the nature of politics was too negative and destructive and created a barrier to women’s effective participation, the views of political parties were that women themselves were reluctant to come forward.

33 (Hendrix, V. Female Leadership and Political Advancement. An international Public Service Project through the Clinton School of Public Service. August, 2010)
Women make up a significant proportion of those at decision-making/management levels of the public service and operate at important levels of responsibilities including that of Solicitor-General, Director of Public Prosecution, the Speaker of the House, and Chief Magistrate. 60% of permanent secretaries are women.

More is needed to be done through education and awareness raising in sensitizing public at large, in changing mindsets, breaking barriers, and incorporating leadership training as part of development programmes for women.

5.9 HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN

**Strategic Objectives:**

- Promote and protect human rights of women, through the full implementation of all human rights instruments, especially the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women.
- Ensure equality and non-discrimination under the law and in practice.
- Achieve legal literacy.

5.9.1 Promotion of Human Rights of Women

5.9.2 Equality and Non-Discrimination

The principle of equality between men and women is embedded in the supreme law of the land, the 1978 Constitution of the Commonwealth of Dominica. Under the Constitution,

Chapter 1, Section 13 sets out the definition of 'discrimination', and the Constitution prohibits discrimination on the basis of their sex, race, and place of origin, political opinions, colour or creed. There may be circumstances when differences in treatment may be deemed necessary, but they must be justified.

The Constitution further support fairness and equality, and prohibit discrimination in the workplace.

5.9.3 Legal Literacy

The Bureau of Gender Affairs has actively promoted awareness around human rights through public education on aspects of the law, including the organizing of public fora on issues around human rights and gender.

Prior to the passage of the Protection against Domestic Violence Act, 2001 several consultations were held around the island educating citizens about the Act and its implications. The Bureau of Gender Affairs in collaboration with other partners like the church and women’s groups, was equally involved in advocating around the issue. And, with assistance from the UNICEF, successfully mounted several public education programmes using popular theatre and local television.

A series of community workshops on ‘Human Rights and Gender Issues” were organized in several communities over the last three years. Issues of relevance to women and the law are regularly aired on weekly programmes hosted by the Gender Bureau through its sponsorship of “Talking Gender” which is a regular feature on national radio. A “Women’s Magazine” is also a weekly programme on an independent radio station and several partners often collaborate on issues relevant to law and gender. A project to provide information in simplified language on aspects of the law relevant to women was initiated by the Women’s Bureau. The booklets were disseminated island-wide.
5.10 WOMEN AND THE MEDIA

**Strategic objectives:**

- Increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication
- Promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media.

The media in Dominica has a role in conveying information and entertaining the public, and has the power to influence and manipulate people’s opinions and attitudes. The 2011 National Census figures indicate that 79.2% of households have Television, 65.7% have radios and 30.4% of households are connected to the Internet. A further 84% of households have mobile telephones. Radio and national TV news are popular channels for news and information.

There is consensus that local public radio and TV are effective in communicating information and promote education on important radio issues like health, education and on topics of national interest.

The role of women in influencing programming and content of programmes directed at children and families were highlighted as positive factors, and women were considered as bringing different perspectives to the media. As journalists and producers, women were viewed as having used their training and education to make positive in-roads at management and production levels of media houses. Several women were identified with the main national radio, and other women were viewed as having positive influences on other radio and television programmes.

Despite the positive changes taking place as far as gender roles were concerns, views were nevertheless expressed at the various consultations held in preparation for this report that advertisements on television, in particular, were reflecting and promoting gender stereotypes. Participants noted that there were negative portrayal of women in popular songs, that some lyrics were degrading to women and promoted violence; and views were expressed that women were being used in advertisements as sex objects.

The Bureau of Gender Affairs currently hosts two radio programmes, ‘Women’s Magazine’ and ‘Talking Gender’, both of which are ‘call-in’ programmes on separate radio stations. Programmes are generally used to promote positive gender perspectives on issues of national interest.
The *Dominica Broadcasting Act (1976)* was enacted when there was one radio station on the island, and in its present form, the Act is considered inadequate to deal with current media issues or gender issues. A new Act is under consideration and could benefit from inputs from a wide range of stakeholders including inputs from the Bureau of Gender Affairs.

The National Gender Policy advocates a number of areas for promoting gender awareness in the media. Those ideas have been further endorsed at recent fora aimed at raising awareness around the National Gender Policy.

### 5.11 WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT

**Strategic objectives:**

- Involve women actively in environmental decision-making at all levels.
- Integrate gender concerns and perspectives in policies and programmes for sustainable development
- Strengthen or establish mechanisms at the national, regional, and international levels to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women.

Disaster risk management and Climate change issues have emerged as major issues for the Caribbean small island states like Dominica which by its nature vulnerable to natural disasters due to its ecological and economic fragility. With the country’s recent experiences from hurricanes, floods, and other natural disasters with the attendant human and economic costs, there is a keen awareness in the country of the need to protect its environment from the growing threats to its natural resources. At the same time, the country is intensifying efforts to diversify into other productive sectors like tourism. The potential impact of climate change and the urgency to fully mainstream an environmental sustainable approach in development has given rise to *Dominica’s Low Carbon Climate Resilient Strategy.*

Dominica has ratified the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and has fulfilled other commitments under the Convention by developing a National Climate Change Adoption Policy. *Phase 11 of the Enabling Activity* under

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UNFCCC which involved capacity building for climate change has been completed. Capacity building needs assessment are part of efforts to facilitate Dominica’s transformation to a climate-resilient economy that addresses priority climate change risks to agriculture and food security, livelihoods, the economy, water security/quality, and to support national poverty alleviation.\textsuperscript{35}

The Dominica Low Carbon Climate Resilient Strategy recognizes the role of vulnerable people like the Indigenous (Carib) community especially women whose needs have to be addressed in assessments for risks to climate change and in planning for disasters\textsuperscript{36}. Women as heads of households with responsibilities for large families including the elderly are often affected by disasters associated with climate change, and need to be involved in preparations and planning for disasters.\textsuperscript{37} As heads of households, they are also vulnerable to serious disruption to livelihoods without adequate support. Vulnerable groups like women who depend on subsistence farming and marginalized economic activities are often without insurance coverage; and the provision of community shelters, social safety net programmes and targeted support by way of micro-finance that can help restore livelihoods are critical in the after-math of disasters.

The need to respond to the differential impacts on women and other vulnerable persons is being addressed as part of recommendations under the \textit{Climate Resilient Development Pathway pillar of Dominica’s Low-Carbon Climate-Resilient Development Strategy}.

As part of efforts to ensure a high level of national ownership for Dominica’s \textit{Low-Carbon Climate Resilient Strategy}, the consultation processes have involved several hundred persons as well as representatives of local and national government in understanding context-specific climate impacts and the Strategy. The consultations have also involved persons from the private sector, civil society, and vulnerable segments of society including indigenous Carib population, women and youth.

A focus on ‘green economy’ as an approach to sustainable development in Dominica will also need to involve women in issues around water management, waste management, land use and renewable energies, and importantly as an alternative stream to economic activities.

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid, p.17-18
\textsuperscript{36} Climate Change and the Kalinago of Dominica, as an annex to the Dominica’s Low Carbon Climate –Resilient Development strategy outlines the risks of Climate change to vulnerable people in Dominica especially to the Indigenous “Carib” population
The draft Dominica Updated Gender Policy \(^{38}\) recommends the integration of gender equality goals into strategies aimed at climate change and natural resource development as a means of facilitating men’s and women’s different and complementary roles in environmental management and practices, and building of a ‘green economy’.

### 5.12 THE GIRL CHILD

**Strategic objectives:**

- Eliminate all forms of discrimination against the girl child.
- Eliminate negative cultural attitudes and cultural practices against girls.
- Promote and protect the rights of the girl-child and increase awareness of her needs and potential.
- Eliminate discrimination against girls in education, skills development and training.
- Eliminate discrimination against girls in health and nutrition.
- Eliminate the economic exploitation of child labour and protect young girls at work.
- Eradicate violence against the girl-child.
- Promote the girl-child’s awareness of and participation in social, economic and political life.
- Strengthen the role of the family in improving the status of the girl child.

#### 5.12.1 Legislative and administrative provisions.

Several pieces of legislation are in place to protect children in Dominica. The Sexual Offences Act 1998 and the Children and Young Persons Act specifically highlight protection and care of the girl-child. Under the Sexual Offences Act 1998, no child

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below the age of 16 can give consent to sexual intercourse. The Marriage Act requires persons below the age of 18 to obtain parental consent for marriage.

The Protection against Domestic Violence Act 2001 also affords protection to children and provides special consideration to be given where children are at risk in domestic settings.

The age of admission of children for employment in Dominica are addressed in two pieces of legislation: under the Employment of Children Prohibition Act, the minimum age for employment is 12 years; and under the Employment of Women, Young Persons and children Act, the age specified for employment is 14 years. Dominica has also ratified the ILO Minimum Age Convention and agreed to the minimum age of 15 years for employment of children.

Dominica has ratified the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention on the worst forms of child labour.

Additionally, a number of policies and procedures provide guidelines around issues of violence against children including child abuse and include the Crisis Management policy, the Child Abuse Reporting procedures, the Early Childhood Education policy and the Policy on Violence in the care and justice system. A National Action Plan on Child Sexual Abuse is under consideration.

The Welfare Department under the Ministry of Social Services, Community Development and Gender Affairs has main responsibility for welfare and protection of children in the state and that includes probation dealing with children at risk, child provision, foster care, juveniles, adoption and public assistance.

There are no institutional or administrative barriers preventing girls from participating fully in the social, economic and political lives of the country. In addition to the legislative frameworks, a number of agencies operate in the country to support wellbeing of children and offer support to disadvantaged children including girls. Child Fund Caribbean through its Dominica office runs several programmes geared to supporting welfare of children in Dominica, and the Social Centre has traditionally been active in early childhood education, child care and supporting probation services. Other institutions like Chances and Operation Youth Quake are Government sponsored institutions providing shelter and housing to children in need and at risk including girls. The Dominica Legal Aid Clinic, the Dominica National Council of Women and the Bureau of Gender Affairs are all providing targeted support to children.

The health and status of girls in Dominica are intrinsically linked to the socio-economic status of families. Children are affected by poverty; the odds of being poor increases by 37% with each additional household member under the age of 15. The Country Poverty
Report of 2008/09 found children made up 35% of the poor population and 26.5% of the national population. Over the last decade, children have been beneficiaries of programmes targeting poor families. No discrimination exists to prevent girls accessing social assistance schemes. Children including girls have been assisted through school feeding programmes, and with schemes providing text books and schools supplies.

Despite the existence of appropriate legislation against violence and sexual offences, girl children have been at huge risk of abuse including child sexual abuse. Data available from the Welfare Division on child sexual abuse indicate a disturbing trend, and show the girl child to be at risk of continued sexual violence. Reports from the Welfare Department to the National Registry on Violence indicate that child victims made up 93.12%, i.e. children below the age of consent, with females accounting for the majority of cases. A Study carried out by the Child Fund Caribbean Dominica office in 2012 found that children were at risk of sexual, emotional and physical abuse at home, school and in the community. Of the sample of 573 children, 39% of girls and 35% boys had experienced some kind of violence of some kind at home, and 38% of girls and 46% boys had experienced physical violence at school. 15% of all children experienced sexual violence at school, with girls most likely to be affected.

In that study, girls were found to be vulnerable to sexual harassment and sexual violence in their community, with 19% of the girls surveyed experiencing sexual violence and subjected to forced sexual intercourse.

Issues affecting the girl child in Dominica reflects the broader Caribbean realities and studies done that indicate that poverty and patriarchal values promote gender inequalities and disempowerment of women. Mothers in situations of economic dependency to men are more likely to ignore signs of child sexual abuse and other factors that continue to influence attitudes and behaviors towards girl children.

Further, lack of effective mechanisms at local levels in support of multi-sectoral approaches to integrated child welfare, institutional strengthening and targeted support to the girl child as a potential victim to sexual violence have been highlighted as areas of concern. The needs of male children who are also victims of violence must also be considered.

6.0 DATA AND STATISTICS

A Core set of national indicators for monitoring progress in gender equality has not been formally established. While there have been some attention given to development of indicators as part of gender training, these have not been integrated as part of national statistical frameworks. There is a general lack of awareness of gender indicators and their application at levels of planning and implementation. The National Census which is carried out every ten years is a quantitative report and contains sex-disaggregated on demographic characteristics, economic activity, education, health, fertility, living arrangements and housing. The responsibility for the Census is the Central Statistical Office.

In addition, the Survey of Living Conditions is conducted every five years and the data is disaggregated by sex. That survey is qualitative, and is designed to collect data on living conditions and forms part of the Country Poverty Assessment. This survey is conducted under the Ministry of Finance and is used for formulation of policy.

The Dominica Labour Force Survey is conducted annually and is disaggregated by sex. The responsibility for that falls under the Central Statistical Department. The Dominica Labour Force survey is designed as a household survey with the aim of providing up-to-date data on the labour force characteristics of the population of Dominica. It has the ability of measuring changes in the characteristics of the labour force and provides estimates of current levels of employment and unemployment.

Data collection and compilation on the Minimum Set of Gender Indicators have not begun because of general lack of awareness. However, gender-related data and relevant indicators are being compiled for the MDGs, and as part of other administrative records. These are now being done routinely by Ministries such as Health and Education; they maintain disaggregated data by sex which can be useful in policy formulation and planning.

With the establishment of a National Registry on Domestic violence, it will now be possible to compile data on the nine indicators on violence against women. The system is now being reviewed to facilitate the required changes, but will however call for training and awareness –building among all stakeholders.

7.0 EMERGING PRIORITY AREAS

This section has been largely informed by feedback provided in focus groups and in the recent consultations held to build awareness around the Draft Updated Gender Policy. Areas for strengthening the legislative framework have been identified in the first section of the documents and will continue to be a priority area for the coming period.
7.1 Poverty

Female poverty may occur even when women are in full-time employment and needs to be examined further given that employment is a critical avenue to escaping poverty and to empowerment. Consideration to be given to:

- Empowering women to access better paying jobs as part of efforts at poverty alleviation.
- Understanding the notion of feminization of poverty and survival strategies for women in the context of Dominica through on-going research.
- Gender differences to be considered as part of Poverty Reduction Strategies and women to be targeted in special programmes in sustainable growth areas of the economy.

7.2 Violence against Women

Gender-based violence is an area of continued concern, and efforts at reducing it will be intensified in the coming period.

- The need for further research in understanding the complexity of issues involved in domestic violence, and effective implementation of the Protection against Domestic Violence Act has been highlighted as an area for further action.
- Multi-sectoral strategy for addressing domestic violence to be implemented.
- On-going capacity-building at all levels including the judiciary, police and all partners to be involved.
- Effective practical support for victims of violence in areas such as counselling and secure and well-resourced accommodation.
- Approval and implementation of the national plan on gender based violence

7.3 Women and the economy

- Account must be taken of gender differences in planning and execution of public investment programmes.
- Gender to be effectively mainstreamed in national plans and strategies like the Growth and Poverty Reduction strategies.
- Women’s participation in agriculture in particular, and links to land and credit needs to be approached in an integrated fashion.
- Interventions should consider the segmented nature of the labour market and gender analysis need to be effectively integrated.
7.4 Women in power and decision-making

- Women themselves need to demand greater representation from women and to provide support to women leaders in what many consider to be hostile climate.
- Political parties should take affirmative action to increase the participation of women from marginal constituencies/groups.
- Gender sensitization and leadership training to be offered to women in decision-making positions.
- Political parties to be encouraged to reserve positions for women as senators.
- On-going awareness-building and training to change mind-sets.

7.5 Human Rights

- Promote awareness around human rights and gender particularly recognizing that violence against women is a threat to peace and development, and undermines the dignity of women.
- Advocate for revision of legislation in areas affecting women and impacting their access to assets and family provisions.
- Advocate for observing reporting commitments to CEDAW committee
- Localizing aspects of the CEDAW Convention into the country’s legislation

7.6 Women and the Media

Some of these areas for further action were identified under the Dominica National Gender Policy and enforced at follow-up consultations.

- Gender sensitivity training for management and staff of media institutions.
- Development of policies regarding portrayal of women in the media and particularly in advertisements.
- Closer alliance if not partnership between gender and the media in the achievement of change in cultural attitudes in relation to male and female stereotypes through stipulated programming time.

7.7 Women and the Environment

- Increase awareness of the environment and men’s and women’s roles in sustainable development.
• Ensure the equitable inclusion of men and women in communities in developing strategies and mechanisms for coping with and adapting to the adverse impacts of climate change, including assessing sectoral vulnerability, strengthening institutional arrangements, and adopting energy efficiency strategies such as the use of renewable energy and cleaner technologies.

• Natural disaster plans to be informed by the distribution of households by sex, and cognisant of the specific needs of children, the aged, disabled and infirmed in the planning and implementation of disaster preparedness responses.

• Undertake gender analysis, gender impact assessments, and gender-responsive approaches in utilising, managing and preserving the natural resources of Dominica.

7.8 The Girl Child

- Institutionalization of a Family Court on the island to respond to concerns for justice for child victims of sexual abuse and family-related matters in appropriate settings.
- Review of legislation to address welfare and protection of children in an integrated fashion.
- Development of national coordinating mechanisms for effective implementation of policy and legislation geared to protection of children.
- Building and strengthening capacities of agencies concerned with child welfare and protection.

7.9 Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women

This issue has been dealt with extensively as part of the process to update the Dominica National Gender Policy and a comprehensive programme to strengthen the National Gender Machinery has been proposed.

The Updated National Gender Policy makes recommendations for the following gender-mainstreaming mechanisms/processes to be put in place systematically, and that:

- Gender equality is mainstreamed in all policy-making processes at the national and sectoral levels, including of a diverse range of stakeholders;
• Gender-responsive planning and budgeting are introduced at the national level (i.e. through the mid-term national development plan and annual national budgets) and sector Ministries;
• Clear systems are adopted to integrate gender equality into Ministries’ sector programmes, including collecting sex-disaggregated data, undertaking a gender analysis of key issues in the sector, and developing gender-responsive indicators and targets.
• Establishing minimum set of national gender indicators for monitoring progress in gender equality.
• Clear procedures for gender monitoring and evaluation are put in place in Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) facilitated by Gender Focal Points.” 42

8. **Recommendations for strengthening the capacity of the Bureau of Gender Affairs** include proposals for:

• A semi-autonomous status for the Bureau;
• A system of appointments to the National Gender Advisory committee and Gender focal points ensuring that appointments come from statutory bodies;
• Increased staffing of the Bureau to include a Counsellor, a Legal Officer and an additional Field Officer (male :)
• Cabinet approval of the Updated Plan of Action 2014-2024;
• The Bureau to take an increased leadership or catalyst role in (a) women’s transformational leadership (b) Upgrading existing DNCW shelter for victims of domestic violence (c) Developing a programme to involve active collaboration with males. 43

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42 ibid pg. 84
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Report on the implementation of the Beijing Plan of Action in Dominica, Carla Harris Pascal, Women’s Bureau, 1999


ANNEX I

Persons Consulted

Esther Thomas, P.S. Ministry of Social Services, Community Development, Gender Affairs
PraymaCarrette, Chief Statistician
David Letang, PS, Lands, Housing, Settlements, Water Resource Management
MarietteCaneyville, Commissioner of Cooperatives
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Gloria Augustus, Magistrate
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Mathew Carrette, ProgrammeManager, Basic Needs Trust Fund
George Challenger, Business Development Officer, National Development Fund of Dominica
Josephine Dublin-Prince, Past-President of the Dominica National Council of Women
Nichol Toussaint, Child Protection Officer, Welfare Department

National Gender Advisory Committee

Neva Edwards
EulinaAudain
Clementina Moreau
Lollell Williams
Phillip Carlisle
Clement Carty
Curtis Augustus

Gender Focal Points

Eunie John, Ministry, Public Works Energy and Ports
Martha Andre, Director, Adult Education
Veda George, Education Officer, for Early Childhood Education
Anthea Emmanuel, Bureau of Standards
Delia Cuffy -Weekes, Communications Officer, Ministry of Agriculture
National Council of Women –Zonal Representative Focal Group

Vanya David, President
Sheena Joseph
Ophelia Linton
Anita Watty
Sandra Bannis
Rebecca Sweetland

Bureau of Gender Affairs

Rosie Brown, Director
Yoshabel Durand, Data Registry Officer
Gina Abraham, Research and Programme Coordinator
## Annex 11: Population on 15 years and over by Industry and Sex

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<td>Accommodation and Food services</td>
<td>533</td>
<td>1293</td>
<td>1826</td>
<td>1309</td>
<td>5.2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial services and insurance activities</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>474</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>611</td>
<td>2.4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real Estate and other Business Services Activities</td>
<td>768</td>
<td>803</td>
<td>1571</td>
<td>552</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of which Professional, scientific and technical activities</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of which Administration and support services</td>
<td>628</td>
<td>592</td>
<td>1220</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public administration and defense; compulsory social security</td>
<td>1382</td>
<td>1022</td>
<td>2404</td>
<td>2486</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table: Percentage distribution of employed Persons in the past week by sex and industrial group, 1991 and 2001 Censuses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industrial Group</th>
<th>1991 Male %</th>
<th>1991 Female %</th>
<th>1991 Both Sexes %</th>
<th>2001 Male %</th>
<th>2001 Female %</th>
<th>2001 Both Sexes %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Hunting, Forestry &amp; Fishing</td>
<td>40.2</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining &amp; Quarrying</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity, Gas &amp; Water</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale &amp; Retail Trade</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel &amp; Restaurant</td>
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<td>7.3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport, Storage &amp; Communication</td>
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<td>2.5</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>6.3</td>
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<tr>
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<td>6.0</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration, Defence &amp; Social Security</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>6.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Social Work</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>4.2</td>
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<td>Commerce, Services</td>
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<td>19.5</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Community Social and Personal Service Activities</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Houses with Employed Persons</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra-Territorial Organizations and Bodies</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Services</td>
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<td>10.7</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not Stated</td>
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<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
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</table>

Source: Dominica Census Report, 2011