

ECLAC SUBREGIONAL
HEADQUARTERS
FOR THE CARIBBEAN

Caribbean synthesis report on the implementation of the Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes

Catarina Camarinhas
Dwynette D. Eversley



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Abstract

The Subregional review of youth policies and strategies in the Caribbean offers an overview of national policies on youth in 29 Caribbean states and territories that are members or associate members of ECLAC. The report aims at providing a comprehensive review of the state of youth policies and programmes in the Caribbean, its current operational status, and the involvement of youth in guiding future implementation, including enhancing the understanding of the complex and multifaceted challenges facing youth empowerment, based on a set of international and subregional standards for youth policies.

Developed in the context of the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes, this study offers a critical overview and a reflection on the social and developmental role of youth policies, and a comprehensive assessment of progress achieved and continuing challenges in the implementation of the Declaration. The study also proposes recommendations to improve public policies on and programmes for young people and highlights promising trends in evidence-based and participatory youth policies for broader adoption and implementation by national governments.

This report, prepared by the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean in consultation with Caribbean countries, regional development partners and youth organisations, has been structured to support the dialogue and review of youth policies in the Caribbean. The first chapter provides an overview of the current situation of youth in the Caribbean. The second chapter presents a comparative analysis of progress made in the subregion in terms of youth policies and programmes, including thematic analysis of goals, a review of youth institutional frameworks in the Caribbean and lessons learned from Caribbean youth policies. The report ends with a summary of the findings and a list of recommendations for future action relating to strengthening national ecosystems for policy making and implementation, making more strategic resource allocations and investments in youth development, and ensuring a sustained role for young people and their networks, guided by regional and global policy frameworks that integrate and mainstream youth in all development, consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Introduction

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,¹ including its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), is a global plan of action for people, planet and prosperity and a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace, promising to leave no-one behind. The Agenda commits leaders to “provide children and youth with a nurturing environment for the full realization of their rights and capabilities”.² It calls young men and women “critical agents of change”,³ who “will find in the new Goals a platform to channel their infinite capacities for activism into the creation of a better world”.⁴ It highlights youth employment as a particular challenge for sustainable development and refers to young people as being at particular risk of marginalization.

The integration of youth into development processes is seen as a crucial step in the process towards more egalitarian societies. Progress in achieving sustainable development with equality requires policies that may promote the autonomy of the most vulnerable groups and that attend to their vulnerabilities, addressing those inequalities that especially affect youth.⁵ The United Nations is committed to support member States in the implementation of youth policies that are rights-based, inclusive, participatory, gender-responsive, comprehensive, knowledge-based and evidence-informed, fully resourced, and accountable.⁶

ECLAC aims to promote equality as a structural pillar for development, and policy as the instrument to reach that horizon.⁷ In the continuous process of promoting sustainable development in

¹ UN General Assembly, Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 21 October 2015, A/RES/70/1.

² *Idem*, para. 25.

³ *Idem*, para. 51.

⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁵ ECLAC (2015). Towards the social inclusion of youth: Tools for analysis and policy design.

⁶ United Nations (2014), Baku Commitment to Youth Policies, 1st Global Forum on Youth Policies, Baku.

⁷ ECLAC (2015). *Op. Cit.* Equality is viewed as going beyond the distribution of means, such as monetary income, to include equal opportunities and capacities. This implies understanding equality as the full exercise of citizenship, with dignity and the reciprocal recognition of actors.

the Caribbean that recognizes the youth as active stakeholders, this subregional review of youth policies and strategies in the Caribbean subregion offers an overview of national policies on youth in 29 Caribbean countries and overseas territories that are members or associate members of the ECLAC.

Between February and July 2018, a research team was assembled to conduct a review of National Youth Policies of Caribbean countries using a consultative process that involved different stakeholders including government officials from member and associate member countries of ECLAC, youth organisations, civil society, the UN system and other international development partners⁸. The study and associated Caribbean Forum on Population, Youth and Development, provided a platform for policy-makers, youth experts, researchers, and representatives of civil society and youth organisations, as well as the United Nations system to meet and evaluate the implementation of youth policies and programmes and exchange good practices towards the development and full participation of the Caribbean youth in the sustainable development of the subregion.

A. Background

In 1995, the member States of the United Nations directed the international community's response to youth issues by adopting the "World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond (WPAY)". Three years later, the delegates at the World Conference of Ministers responsible for Youth, in Lisbon, Portugal, committed themselves to the development of National Youth Policy (NYP). The recommendations were subsequently adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in its follow-up resolution 54/120 in 1999. The General Assembly also encouraged the United Nations regional commissions to follow-up on the WPAY in their respective regions, in coordination with regional meetings of ministers responsible for youth and regional non-governmental youth organisations, and to provide advisory services to support national youth policies and programmes in each region.

The WPAY provides a policy framework as well as practical guidelines for national action and international support to improve the situation of youth around the world. It contains proposals for action, aiming at fostering conditions and mechanisms to promote improved wellbeing and livelihoods among young people. The role of a National Youth Policy is crucial in that it provides the overarching vision for all programs and activities relating to youth in each member State. The 15 priority areas of the WPAY, adopted in 2007, indicate the range of policy areas to be covered, namely: Education; Employment; Hunger and Poverty; Health; Environment; Drug abuse; Juvenile delinquency; Leisure-time activities; Girls and young women; Full and effective participation of youth in the life of society and in decision making; Globalisation; Information and communications technology; HIV/AIDS; Armed conflict; and Intergenerational Issues.

In 2009, the United Nations Economic and Social Council identified a series of goals and targets for monitoring the progress of youth in the areas covered by WPAY. These goals and targets address youth as a specific socio-demographic group and focus on the issues that impact directly on youth development. Twenty years after the adoption of the WPAY, the first Global Forum on Youth Policies

⁸ This team, led by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-ECLAC), Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, included the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat and regional youth organisations, namely the Caribbean Regional Youth Council (CRYC), the CARICOM Youth Ambassador Corps, and The University of the West Indies Students Today, Alumni Tomorrow (UWI STAT). The consultative process included development partners such as the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), the Commonwealth Secretariat, and the Organization of American States (OAS). From the United Nations system, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA), the International Labor Organization (ILO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) participated in the process.

produced guiding principles for integrated and inclusive youth policy development. The Baku Commitment to Youth Policies outlined eight key guiding principles and ten follow-up actions.

Complementary to global initiatives on youth development, in 2012 the Caribbean subregion adopted the CARICOM Youth Development Action Plan (2012-2017). This Action Plan was recently revised to cover the period 2017-2022 and advances the 2010 Declaration of Paramaribo on the future of Youth in the Caribbean. Furthermore, member States of the Caribbean are currently implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the associated 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In the planning, implementation, and follow-up and review stages of this global Agenda, the crucial role of youth in the Caribbean cannot be overemphasized.

Therefore, a review of the implementation of the Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes in the Caribbean over the past 20 years is very timely. Such a review will provide recommendations to improve public policies on and programmes for young people. Attaining this outcome required consultation and sharing of best practices among stakeholders that comprise of member States, youth organisations, civil society, the UN system, and regional and international development partners.

Following a consultative process, the research team conducted a review of youth policies and strategies in the Caribbean to provide a platform, at the subregional level, to promote effective policies and programmes for youth development, thus contributing to the sustainable development of the Caribbean. The review process raised opportunities to develop a better understanding of guiding principles for integrated youth policy development and of dynamics between concerned stakeholders at different levels, which are analysed in this report. This study, therefore, allowed a space for recommendations on a Caribbean Youth Platform (CYP) for the SDGs, its operationalisation, including suggested activities for the CYP, and its links to the World Programme of Action on Youth. Furthermore, it facilitated the identification of specific needs for technical assistance by Caribbean countries in the future development and implementation of integrated youth policies and programmes.

1. Definition of Youth

Definitions of youth have changed continuously in response to fluctuating political, economic and sociocultural circumstances. "Youth" is best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence and awareness of our interdependence as members of a community. It is a social rather than biological construct which explains why it may be applied differently according to culture and context to define that period of transition.

However, age is the easiest way to define youth, particularly in relation to education and employment. Therefore, "youth" is often referenced as the age group in which individuals may leave compulsory education and find the first employment. This latter age limit has been increasing, as higher levels of unemployment and the cost of setting up an independent household puts many young people into a prolonged period of dependency. This also sets, depending on particular contexts, new interpretations and delimitations of the age group.

The United Nations, for statistical consistency across regions, defines "youth" as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years, without prejudice to other definitions by member States. All United Nations statistics on youth are based on this definition, as illustrated by the annual yearbooks of statistics published by the United Nations system on demography, education, employment and health.

Apart from the statistical definition of the term "youth" mentioned above, the meaning of the term "youth" varies in different societies. This report applies the UN definition of Youth as the period from 15 to 24 years of age. However, other organisations use different age ranges: The Commonwealth, for example, categorises persons 15 to 29 years old as youth and the CARICOM Youth Development Action Plan (CYDAP) presents a range from 10 to 29 years old. For this reason, when referring to

activities of other organisations or at the national level, for example when analysing a National Youth Policy, “youth” may be interpreted in a more flexible manner.

Therefore, ECLAC uses the terms “youth”, “young people” and “young person” interchangeably to mean those aged between 15 to 24 with the understanding that member States and other entities may apply different definitions.

2. Review of international standards on National Youth Policy

A National Youth Policy is a statement of political intent that locates all development for and with young people in all spheres of national development and participation within a single cohesive document. Youth rights are human rights, and in that context a national youth policy aims to ensure the full enjoyment by young people of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, providing access and opportunities so that young people can achieve their full potential, according to their needs. In that sense governments should develop and implement youth policies, customised to national contexts, which are designed in alignment with international standards, and which ensure genuine inclusion, participation, opportunities and access to diverse youth cohorts across all spheres of national development.

There are a number of international and regional/subregional agreements established by member States addressing youth policy (see Table 1). As a follow-up to International Youth Year in 1985, the General Assembly endorsed the Guidelines for Further Planning in the Field of Youth. The Guidelines of 1985 are at the root of current youth policy development standards and many of its underlying objectives and recommendations remain valid today.

At the tenth anniversary of the United Nations International Youth Year, in December 1995, the General Assembly adopted the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond. By that Programme, the GA sought to address in particular the question of an integrated national youth policy. Governments, which had not already done so, were urged to formulate and adopt an integrated national youth policy as a means of addressing youth-related concerns.

The General Assembly further recommended that youth-related concerns in development activities can be facilitated through multilevel mechanisms that are cross-sectoral in nature and multidisciplinary in approach and should include the participation of youth-related departments and ministries, national nongovernmental youth organisations and the private sector. Special and additional efforts were also recommended towards strengthening national capacities for data collection and dissemination of information, research and policy studies, planning, implementation and coordination, training and advisory services. National coordination mechanisms should be appropriately strengthened for integrated youth policies and programmes.⁹ Where such mechanisms did not exist, Governments were urged to promote their establishment on a multilateral and cross-sectoral basis.

In 1998, the United Nations First Conference of Ministers responsible for Youth, held in Lisbon, committed themselves to the development and implementation of National Youth Policy in the first section of the Declaration. This commitment is reproduced in Box 1. The Lisbon Declaration marked the first time in the history of the United Nations that the General Assembly invited all relevant parts of the United Nations system to provide greater support to national youth policies and programmes within their country programmes.

⁹ WPAY suggests that additional efforts could also be directed towards strengthening national capacities for data collection and dissemination of information, research and policy studies, planning, implementation and coordination, and training and advisory services.

Box 1**National Youth Policies in Lisbon Declaration**

- Ensuring that NYP formulation, implementation and follow-up processes are accorded commitment from the highest political levels, including the provision of adequate levels of resources;
- Developing national youth policies and operational programmes, at appropriate levels, to implement the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond, considering the national priorities, realities and limitations arising from different socio-economic and cultural development contexts;
- Establishing the necessary policies and programmes by the year 2000 to improve living standards for young women and young men and to permit the effective implementation of NYPs, of an inter-sectoral nature, foreseen, among others, in the Programme of Action;
- Reviewing the situation of youth and their needs and incorporating young people's own assessment of priorities, through their participation in a consultative process, and ensuring that young women and young men actively contribute to the formulation, implementation and evaluation of national and local youth policies, programmes and action plans;
- Developing capacity building through the empowerment of formal and informal coalitions and networks of youth;
- Strengthening responsible partnerships among all key stakeholders, especially youth networks, non-governmental youth institutions and organizations and other non-governmental organizations also including young women, particularly the girl-child, and young men, their families, governments, international agencies, educational institutions, civil society, the business sector and media in order to create synergies to better address youth potentials and problems both at national and at local levels;
- Introducing measurable time-bound goals and indicators to allow a common basis for national evaluation of the implementation of the above-mentioned policies;
- Supporting bilateral, subregional, regional and international exchange of best practices at the national level in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of youth policy, and the provision of appropriate development tools and technical assistance, through the creation of networks;
- Ensuring the mainstreaming of national youth policy and international development, plans and programmes.

Source: Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes, Lisbon, Portugal, 12 August 1998.

The World Youth Conference held in Belize in 2017 sought to enhance the role of youth in the development process. The conference highlighted the importance of mobilising young people in the pursuit of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The meeting facilitated inclusive dialogue among youth leaders, practitioners, policymakers, and academics through the creation of a collective youth commitment document, the Mahogany Declaration (The Belize Declaration on Youth).

In support of implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, "Youth2030: the United Nations Strategy on Youth" was launched in 2018, during a high-level event at the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly. The UN Youth Strategy acts as an overarching framework to guide the entire UN system in engaging young people and benefitting from their perspectives and ideas, as well as to promote greater coordination and cohesion in the UN's work on youth issues. The Strategy outlines cross-cutting system-wide actions and interventions, to be further detailed through an Action Plan, which will support the overall capacity of the UN to advance and deliver across five key priority areas:

1. Engagement, Participation and Advocacy – to amplify youth voices for the promotion of a peaceful, just and sustainable world;
2. Informed and Healthy Foundations – to support young people's greater access to quality education and health services;

3. Economic Empowerment through Decent Work – to support young people’s greater access to decent work and productive employment;

4. Youth and Human Rights – to protect and promote the rights of young people and support their civic and political engagement;

5. Peace and Resilience Building – to support young people as catalysts for peace and security and humanitarian action.

Youth2030 and initiatives that will support its implementation, such as Generation Unlimited¹⁰, represent a renewed commitment by the UN system for the rights and the participation of youth. These initiatives are an opportunity for young people in the Caribbean to get further involved through partnerships with all stakeholders in the implementation, follow-up and review of the SDGs.

3. Subregional actions to promote National Youth Policies

The Caribbean’s recent institutional framework for youth development is rooted in the Regional Strategy for Youth Development (RSYD), a regional framework guiding governments in strengthening their youth development portfolios and addressing critical issues confronting youth. CARICOM developed the RSYD in 2001 in response to the 1995 WPAY to guide policy and programming for adolescents and youth between the ages of 10-29. The RSYD focused on four key policy areas highlighting crucial constraints for youth development in the Caribbean: i) Adolescent and Youth Reproductive Health and Rights; ii) Adolescent Youth Leadership, Governance and Participation; iii) Social and Economic Empowerment Opportunities for Youth Development; and iv) Youth Care and Protection.¹¹

With its focus on adolescents and teens the RSYD specifically integrated reference to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the framework of UNFPA on the rights of persons to reproductive health information and services. In a review of NYPs¹² of CARICOM members, there was evidence of a generally consistent representation of the RSYD priorities, except for the area of “Youth Protection”. The 2001-2009 RSYD provided a regional focus for reorienting national youth portfolios, coordinating the work of regional development partners and fostering youth participation in regional development and integration. The strategy was implemented by a mix of public/private institutions and youth organisations/NGOs. In 2007, at the Sixteenth Meeting of CARICOM’s Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD) focusing on Culture and Youth,¹³ the difficulty experienced by member States in coping with the impact of constant social and economic change on Caribbean adolescents and youth was reported, in particular, the increasing incidence of crime and gun-gang violence, HIV/AIDS, and unemployment. The report advocated for the development of the youth sector to be integrated as a national priority, within the scope of the national development plans. This required, it was stated, increased investment in youth; clarification of roles and responsibilities, as well as increased visibility in communities and responsiveness to youth needs, notably regarding work and professionalisation.

¹⁰ Gen-U is a UNICEF led partnership to ensure that all young people are in school, training or employment by 2030 and will focus on three key areas: access to secondary age education; acquisition of employability skills; and empowerment, with emphasis on girls.

¹¹ Key outcome areas related to the policy areas were: i) HIV/AIDS, Early initiation in sexual activities, and Teenage pregnancy; ii) Representation nationally and regionally – youth networks, advocacy and governance; Participation in decision making at all levels; school, community, national governance levels; access to information and opportunity to influence national agendas; political and social disenchantment and disconnectedness; iii) Education and skills building for enhanced employment and employability, enhanced financing and access for youth wealth creation and standard of living, and enhanced access and opportunities for youth employability and skills; and iv) Negative Peer Pressure, Crime and violence on and by youth, Suicide.

¹² A representative sampling of NYPs of Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, and Turks and Caicos informed the 2009 CARICOM report.

¹³ The meeting was held in Guyana, under the theme “Realising the Potential of Youth and Culture in the Development of the Community”.

Table 1
Framework for youth policy at international and subregional level

Year	Title of document/event	Summary	Comments
INTERNATIONAL			
1965	Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples	From 1965 to 1975, both the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council emphasized three basic themes in the field of youth: participation, development and peace. The need for an international policy on youth was emphasized as well.	Resolution 2037 (XX)
1969	UN Secretary General Report on "Long-Term Policies and Programmes for Youth in National Development"	The Assembly recommended that Governments, in formulating national youth policies, should ensure a more coordinated approach to meeting the needs and aspirations of youth. It further recommended to Governments that, especially during the Second United Nations Development Decade, youth and youth organisations should be given an appropriate opportunity to participate in the preparation and implementation of national development plans and in programmes of international co-operation. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General and the specialized agencies engaged in various studies and programmes on the problems and needs of youth and its participation in national development to identify separately the problems and needs of youth in the developing countries and suggest possible solutions accordingly.	Resolution 2497 (XXIV) of 28 October 1969, Economic and Social Council resolution 1407 (XLVI) of 5 June 1969.
1985	Guidelines for Further Planning in the Field of Youth	The guidelines are significant for their focus on young people as a broad category comprising various subgroups, rather than a single demographic entity. They provide proposals for specific measures to address the needs of subgroups such as young people with disabilities, rural and urban youth and young women. The themes identified by the General Assembly for International Youth Year: Participation, Development, Peace reflect a predominant concern of the international community with distributive justice, popular participation and quality of life. These were reflected in the guidelines, and they represent overall themes of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond as well.	In 1979, the General Assembly, by resolution 34/151, designated 1985 as International Youth Year. The General Assembly endorsed, by its resolution 40/14 in 1985, Guidelines for Further Planning in the Field of Youth (document A/40/256) as a follow-up to International Youth Year.
1995	World Programme of Action for Youth	In 1995, on the tenth anniversary of International Youth Year, the United Nations strengthened its commitment to young people by directing the international community's response to the challenges to youth into the next millennium. It did this by adopting an international strategy—the World Programme of Action for Youth (WPAY) to the Year 2000 and Beyond. Originally adopted in 1996 and amended in 2007, the WPAY has long been drawn upon to identify the minimum key policy areas in which young people should be specifically considered, of which it names 15: employment, poverty, leisure, participation, HIV/AIDS, girls and young women, and armed conflict. In addition to the WPAY, various UN agencies have, over time, produced structural and thematic frameworks at a global level. The WPAY provides a policy framework and practical guidelines for national action and international support to improve the situation of young people. It contains proposals for action, aiming at fostering conditions and mechanisms to promote improved wellbeing and livelihoods among young people. The WPAY focuses on measures to strengthen national capacities in the field of youth and to increase the quality and quantity of opportunities available to young people for full, effective and constructive participation in society.	A/RES/50/81 (10 thematic areas), A/RES/58/133 and A/RES/62/126 (5 additional thematic areas – supplement to the WPAY). Goals and targets were defined through a participatory process involving experts from the UN System, academia and representatives of youth organisations. See: Commission for Social Development Res. 45/2; UN GA Res. 62/162; Reports of the SG on the follow-up to the WPAY (A/62/61/Add.1-E/2007/7 and A/64/61-E/2009/3).
1998	Lisbon Declaration	At global level, modern youth policy standards are rooted in the 1998 Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes, agreed at the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth. The first point articulated the need for governments to develop "national youth policies and operational programmes, at appropriate levels, to implement	(A/53/378) Braga Youth Action Plan was adopted during the 3rd World

Year	Title of document/event	Summary	Comments
		the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond, considering the national priorities, realities and limitations arising from different socio-economic and cultural development contexts." Ministers signed up to a range of commitments, including the need to match a policy with implementation processes and resources, mainstream youth issues beyond a singular policy document, consider the needs and priorities of young people themselves, develop measurable goals and indicators for accountability, and collect data and commit research and make its findings public.	Youth Forum of the UN System, Braga, Portugal, 1-7 August 1998
2001	Dakar Youth Empowerment Strategy	The Forum's recommendations cover youth concerns in the 10 areas addressed by working groups, namely education and information and communications technology, employment, health and population, hunger poverty and debt, environment and human settlements, social integration, culture and peace, youth policy, participation and rights, young women and girls, and youth, sports and leisure-time activities.	Adopted at the fourth session World Youth Forum of the United Nations System
2002	UN General Assembly resolution on Youth Policies and programmes	Calls upon all States, all UN bodies, the specialized agencies, the regional commissions and the intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations concerned, in particular youth organisations, to make every possible effort towards the implementation of the Programme of Action and to exchange knowledge and expertise on youth-related issues; also calls upon all parties concerned to consider the appropriate ways and means to provide follow-up to the Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes adopted at the World Conference on Ministers Responsible for Youth; expresses deep concern over the fact that approximately half of new HIV infections are in youth aged 15 to 24 years old; calls upon member States, all UN bodies and non-governmental organisations to continue to implement fully the guidelines adopted by General Assembly resolutions 40/14, 32/135 and 36/17 on youth activities; invites all Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations to contribute to the UN Youth Fund; requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its 58th session on the implementation of the present resolution.	(A/RES/56/117)
2005	The Baku Commitment to Youth Policies	First Global Forum on Youth Policies, marking the 20th anniversary of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond and reaffirming its importance as an overarching global youth policy framework, and recalling the Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes, the First Global Forum on Youth Policies specifically aimed at elevating the youth policy debate, with the particular purpose of advancing youth policy development and its full and effective implementation at all levels. The Baku Commitment on Youth Policies highlights eight guiding principles for youth policy development and puts forward 10 concrete commitments with a view to support the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of youth policy. This commitment aims to ensure that youth policies are rights-based, comprehensive, inclusive, participatory, gender-responsive, knowledge-based and evidence-informed, fully resourced, and accountable, while also pledging to further promote synergies between youth policies and broader development policies and frameworks, particularly in the context of the post-2015 development agenda. Among the Forum's commitments, one of the key commitments is the development of a Global Initiative on Youth Policies to support member States in implementing the WPAY and ensuring the efficiency of their youth policies.	2004 – UN General Assembly resolution on tenth anniversary of WPAY (A/RES/59/148) and 2005 – UN General Assembly resolution on Policies and Programmes involving youth (A/RES/60/2)
2017	Mahogany Declaration	(The Belize Declaration on Youth): a comprehensive document created by young leaders that established their commitment towards the implementation of the SDGs and solidified their commitment to serve as leaders of change, thus providing an inclusive youth approach and shared ownership of the SDGs to the young people.	Results from the World Youth Conference held in Belize in 2017.
2018	Youth2030: the United Nations Strategy on Youth	Guiding framework for UN system improved coordination in support to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda across five key priority areas: 1) Engagement, Participation and Advocacy; 2) Informed and Healthy Foundations; 3) Economic Empowerment through Decent Work; 4) Youth and Human Rights; 5) Peace and Resilience Building.	Launched during a high-level event of the 73rd session of the UN General Assembly.
SUBREGIONAL			
1970	Commonwealth Youth Programme	The Commonwealth Secretariat established the Commonwealth Youth Programme Caribbean Centre (CYPCC) to support youth development in newly emerging and independent countries of the Commonwealth Caribbean.	Focused on support to governments and youth-led networks in 4 key areas: youth work, youth policy,

Year	Title of document/event	Summary	Comments
			youth participation and governance, and youth entrepreneurship.
1985	International Youth Year	Within the context of International Youth Year, many CARICOM States established or expanded Youth Departments. It also revitalized government programming for youth and reinvigorated National Youth Councils (NYCs) to play a strong advocacy, brokerage and catalytic role in the national youth agenda.	Five UN conferences on youth, in cooperation with the 5 UN regional commissions, and 20 regional meetings of Ministers responsible for youth.
1987	Caribbean Federation of Youth (CFY)	The Caribbean Federation of Youth (CFY) was established and served as an umbrella body for NYCs which effectively increased youth representation and advocacy at the regional and global levels.	
2000	Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (PAYE)	Enhanced framework guiding governments and civil society in empowering young women and men aged 15 to 29. Commonwealth's guiding strategy to guide youth empowerment and participation in the coming years and is in keeping with the Commonwealth's commitment to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).	Revised for the period 2007-2015
2001	Regional Strategy for Youth Development (RSYD) 2001 – 2009	CARICOM's Regional framework aimed at guiding governments in strengthening their youth development portfolios and addressing critical issues confronting Youth. The RSYD provided a regional focus for reorienting national youth portfolios, coordinating the work of regional development partners and fostering youth participation in regional development and integration.	
2006	Twenty-Seventh Meeting of CARICOM Heads of Government	Mandated the establishment of a Commission on Youth Development, tasked with undertaking "a full-scale analysis of the challenges and opportunities for youth in the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME); and making recommendations to improve their wellbeing and empowerment".	
2007	CARICOM Commission on Youth Development (CCYD)	The CCYD has the mandate to provide an analysis of the challenges and opportunities for youth in the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME); and to make recommendations on how to improve their wellbeing and empowerment.	
2010	Declaration of Paramaribo on the Future of Youth in the Caribbean Community	Sets out commitments from CARICOM Head of Government to implement the recommendations of the CARICOM Commission on Youth Development. The CCYD Report argues that young people comprise the sector of the population best positioned by their creative potential to play the leading role in responding to the challenges of globalisation and, therefore, to the demands of regional integration and the CSME.	Four key actions: a) understanding the transitional character of youth; b) tangible recognition of their contribution to the Region; c) more investment in them for greater returns to both country and Region; and d) a radical shift towards partnering with them.
2011-13	Caribbean Regional Youth Council	The establishment of a Caribbean Regional Youth Council came out of decisions made at three Caribbean Youth Leaders' Summits between 2011 and 2013. The development of the CRYC was supported by the Commonwealth as part of their youth governance and participation programming for the Caribbean. The CRYC seeks to establish itself as a strategic youth governance and advocacy network/movement working towards regional representation, integration and cooperation as a platform for youth development.	

Year	Title of document/event	Summary	Comments
2012-2017 and 2017-2022	CARICOM Youth Development Action Plan (CYDAP)	Advances the 2010 Declaration of Paramaribo on the future of Youth in the Caribbean. The plan is a holistic and multi-sectoral institutional framework for national policy, integrated planning and action. The CYDAP operationalises the Declaration of Paramaribo on the Future of Youth in the Caribbean Community, complements the implementation of the CSME and supports mainstreamed adolescent and youth wellbeing and empowerment.	Recently revised to cover the period 2017-2022.
2018	Powering Our Common Future	The Declaration by the Young People of the Commonwealth reaffirms the powerful potential of young people across the Commonwealth in devising solutions for a more prosperous, secure, sustainable and fairer future. The Declaration was supported by an Action plan expressing current policy recommendation of young people from the Commonwealth.	Adopted at the 11th Commonwealth Youth Forum in April 2018. Remarkably, the Caribbean now holds 4 positions on the 9 members executive committee of the Commonwealth Youth Council (CYC). The newly elected Chairperson of the CYC, Tijani Christian, is also Caribbean (national of Jamaica).
2018	Commonwealth Caribbean Summary Action Agenda	Commonwealth Caribbean Regional Directors of Youth met in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, and developed a Summary Action Agenda highlighting 5 key areas of work: Policy and Legislative Environment; Funding for Youth Development; Institutional arrangements to support youth development; Regional coordination of youth development initiatives; Communication and partnership engagement for youth development.	

Source: Authors' compilation.

Youth in the Caribbean face many economic and social challenges, which hinder their full development potential. This was recognised in the findings of the report of the CARICOM Commission on Youth Development (CCYD).¹⁴ The report makes a strong case for investment in youth development by CARICOM governments and highlights the opportunity and cost of the lack of such investments.¹⁵ The report confirmed expert's belief that young people do not trust their education system to prepare them adequately for their professional future, noting that rapid advances in information and communications technology over the past few decades had not yet translated into the education system and the labour market with consequent record high levels of youth unemployment in the subregion when compared to the world. Against this backdrop a Regional Education and Human Resource Development 2030 Strategy was launched aiming to ensure a new transversal approach to education.¹⁶

The 2010 Declaration of Paramaribo on the Future of Youth in the Caribbean Community sets out commitments from CARICOM Heads of Government to implement the recommendations of the CCYD. The role of youth in development and integration is clearly articulated in the Declaration of Paramaribo which reinforces the importance of regional integration in advancing the interests of youth and its relevance to achieve economic resilience and integration at the national and subregional levels, while affirming the right of adolescents and youth to participate in decision-making on matters in which they have an interest and that affect them. Further to these initiatives on youth development, member States of the Caribbean Community adopted in 2012 the CARICOM Youth Development Action Plan (CYDAP, 2012-2017), recently revised to cover the period 2017-2022. The plan provides a multi-sectoral institutional framework for national policy, integrated planning and action. The CYDAP operationalises the Declaration of Paramaribo, and mainstreams adolescent and youth wellbeing and empowerment; it is anchored in six goals which provide a framework to monitor progress towards regionally and nationally agreed targets in the following areas: education and economic empowerment; protection, safety and security; health and well-being; culture, identity and citizenship; policy and institutional framework; and leadership, participation and governance.

Complementary to subregional initiatives, the Commonwealth initiated its commitments to youth work through its support for the implementation of the Commonwealth Diploma in Youth Development Work in the 1970s. The 2007 Commonwealth Youth Ministers Meeting committed to the Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (PAYE), an enhanced framework guiding governments and civil society in empowering young women and men aged 15 to 29. Since then, the Commonwealth has expanded its contributions to youth work education and training through establishing the emerging Youth Work Education Qualifications Consortium. PAYE provided a framework for Commonwealth action in youth affairs and as such it is seen as a foundational document for the Commonwealth Youth Programme and its ministerial network, and a guiding document for youth policy and programming in the Commonwealth Caribbean. The PAYE also seeks to stimulate and guide action by other development partners: from intergovernmental agencies, NGOs, to organisations formed of young women and men themselves.

At the 11th Commonwealth Youth Forum in April 2018 a Declaration by the Young People of the Commonwealth,¹⁷ "Powering Our Common Future", was signed, reaffirming the powerful potential of

¹⁴ CARICOM (2010), *Eye on the Future: Investing in Youth Now for Tomorrow's Community*.

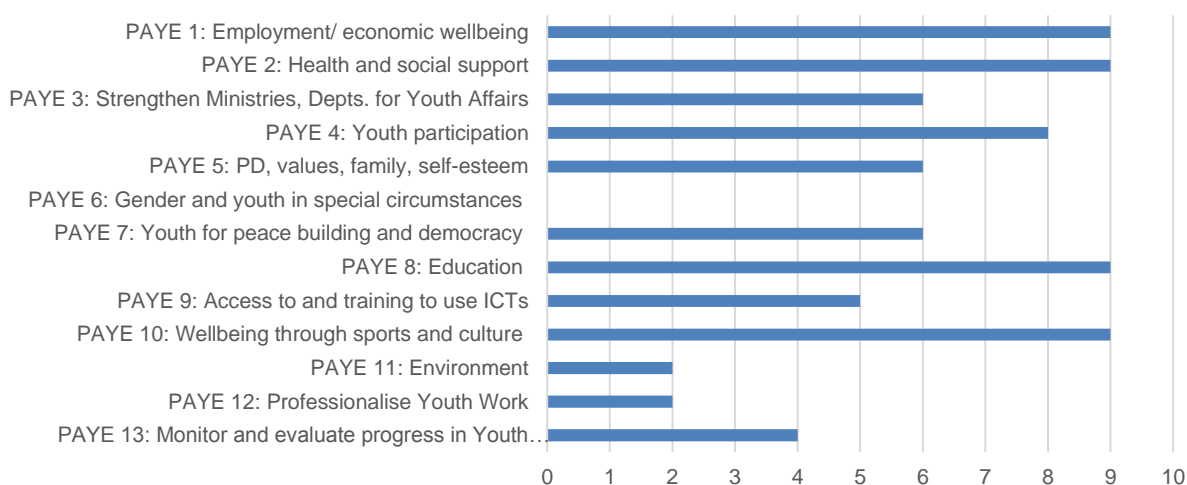
¹⁵ For example, the report concludes Jamaica's GDP would increase by 0.78 per cent if it could achieve full enrolment in primary education, by 1.37 per cent if there was a similar outcome in secondary education, and by 5.47 per cent with a 30 per cent enrolment at the tertiary level. Likely, by reducing youth unemployment to adult levels the report mentions GDP could grow by 2.46 per cent in Saint Lucia, by 2.3 per cent in Saint Vincent and The Grenadines, by 1.3 per cent in Haiti and by 1.1 per cent in Belize.

¹⁶ CARICOM (2017), *Human Resource Development 2030 Strategy*. Endorsed by CARICOM Heads of Government at their 38th Regular Meeting, Grand Anse, Grenada, July 2017.

¹⁷ Remarkably, the Caribbean now holds four positions on the nine members of the executive committee of the Commonwealth Youth Council (CYC). The newly elected Chairperson of the CYC, Tijani Christian, is a national of Jamaica.

young people across the Commonwealth in devising solutions for a more prosperous, secure, sustainable and fairer future. The Declaration, expressing current policy recommendations of young people from the Commonwealth, was supported by an Action plan outlining the key recommendations made. Results from this meeting were further incorporated into a Caribbean-specific Summary Action Agenda developed within the Commonwealth Caribbean Regional Directors of Youth meeting held in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, in June 2018, highlighting five key areas of work: Policy and Legislative Environment; Funding for Youth Development; Institutional arrangements to support youth development; Regional coordination of youth development initiatives; Communication and partnership engagement for youth development.

Figure 1
PAYE's action areas integrated into CARICOM's NYP's
(number of plans that integrate the action area)



Source of data: Eversley, 2009.

B. Methodology

The study on the implementation of the Lisbon Declaration of Youth Policies and Programmes was developed within a consultative process which included surveys and youth dialogue sessions integrating youth participants and youth practitioners from Caribbean countries. The study was further analysed within the wider scope of population and development issues and was discussed in the framework of the Caribbean Forum on Population, Youth and Development which was held in July 2018 in Georgetown, Guyana. The meeting provided an avenue for advancing ongoing dialogue towards the identification of practical support needed by member and associate member Countries in the implementation of youth policies and programmes and in the involvement of Youth in the 2030 Agenda during the early years of implementation.

The Forum served as a consultative platform to address youth policies and programmes, and for monitoring and reporting on youth platforms and agreements in the Caribbean, especially relating to the World Programme of Action on Youth, the CARICOM Youth Development Action Plan (2012-2017), and the SDGs. The meeting provided not only an avenue to identify the status of implementation of youth policies and programmes in member States and the required technical assistance in the implementation of youth policies, it also afforded multiple stakeholders involved in supporting the planning, implementation and monitoring of youth-related goals and targets of the SDGs in the

Caribbean an opportunity to design a Caribbean Youth Platform (CYP) for the SDGs, in order to support member States in promoting the involvement of youth in the 2030 Agenda.

The research team used various approaches and methodologies in the different phases of the youth policy review:

- Contextualisation of an evaluation framework for the subregional analysis.
- Desk review and empirical research.
- A survey instrument was administered to senior government officials in the field of youth policy from 29 Caribbean countries.
- Statistical overview on youth in the Caribbean.
- A best practice database was compiled.
- Focus groups discussions – Youth dialogue sessions with youth groups were held.

The main limitation in conducting the study was that there were no readily available data to inform reporting for Curaçao, Haiti, Martinique, Puerto Rico, and United States Virgin Islands. It can be assumed that the youth policy formulation, implementation and programming in the Dutch and the French Caribbean are guided by the respective youth policy provisions of the Government of the Netherlands, and the Government of the French Republic and the overarching soft policy guide for members of the EU contained in the EU Strategy for Youth 2010-2018, which align with the Lisbon Declaration 1998 and the WPAY.

C. Criteria for country analysis of National Youth Policies

Youth development in general, and youth unemployment in particular, are growing concerns for Caribbean countries. While there exist in the subregion adequate policies and programmes to address the very specific needs of children and youth,¹⁸ insufficient analysis and monitoring of the situation does not allow for targeted and efficient interventions. Notwithstanding efforts to assist policy-makers in bridging this policy-practice gap, more needs to be done to ensure that the data available is used to facilitate evidence-based policy formulation and greater efficiency and effectiveness in the efforts undertaken. Moreover, having committed to the SDGs and other SIDS-specific development platforms, member States now need to synergise these programmes and platforms in order to guarantee the full participation of youth in the implementation and monitoring stages.

To ensure that comprehensive and current data are used in the conduct of the subregional review which examines progress made by Caribbean States at the national level, and the achievements and continuing challenges faced by the subregion in the implementation of the Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes, a questionnaire (see Annexes) was developed to capture information on the following themes itemized in the Lisbon Declaration:

- Youth empowerment and participation.
- Peace and security.
- Youth employment and entrepreneurship.
- Information and communication technologies.

¹⁸ ECLAC (2008), *Socio-Demographic Analysis of Youth in the Caribbean – A Three Country Case Study*, ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean (Studies and Research Papers), p. 18.

- Personal Development.
- Intergenerational relations.
- Poverty and hunger.
- Education in all its aspects.
- Health development.
- HIV/AIDS.
- Drug and substance abuse.
- Environment.
- Urbanisation and housing.
- Youth justice.
- Girls and Young women.
- Others.

D. Structure of the report

The synthesis report is structured into three chapters. Following the Introduction, the first chapter provides an overview of the current situation regarding youth in the Caribbean. The second chapter undertakes a comparative analysis of progress made in the subregion in terms of youth policies and programmes. An account of lessons learned from Caribbean youth policy implementation follows with an analysis of the potential for investment in youth in relation to the demographic dividend. The report closes with a brief summary of recommendations for future action within a framework of a Caribbean youth platform for the Sustainable Development Goals.

Table 2
Thematic areas in the main youth policy frameworks and reviews

WPAY (1995)	LISBON DECLARATION (1998)	WPAY 10-y REVIEW (2005)	WPAY 20-y REVIEW (2015)	ECLAC SURVEY	ECLAC Study – Analysis
Full and effective participation of youth in the life of society and in decision-making	Participation	Youth Participation in Decision-Making Processes	Participation	Youth empowerment and participation	Participation
Leisure-time activities	Development	Personal Development	Leisure	Personal development	Personal development
Armed conflict	Peace	Youth and Conflict	Peace & security	Peace and security	Peace and security
Education	Education	Education	Education	Education	Education
Employment	Employment	Employment	Employment & entrepreneurship	Employment and entrepreneurship	Employment
Health	Health	Health	Health	Health	Health
Drug abuse	Drug and substance abuse	Substance Abuse		Drug and substance abuse	Drug abuse
Girls and young women			Gender equality	Girls and young women	Girls and young women
Juvenile delinquency		Juvenile Justice	Youth & Justice	Youth Justice	Youth Justice
Hunger and poverty		Poverty and Hunger		Poverty and hunger	Poverty and hunger
Globalisation		Globalisation			Globalisation
Information and communications technology		Information and communication technologies	Information & Communication	Information and communication technologies	Information and communication technologies
HIV/AIDS		HIV/AIDS		HIV/AIDS	HIV/AIDS
Environment		Youth and Environment	Environment	Environment	Environment
Intergenerational issues		Intergenerational relations		Intergenerational relations	Intergenerational relations
			Social inclusion		
			Urbanisation & Housing	Urbanisation and Housing	
			Volunteerism	Others	

Source: Authors' compilation.

I. Overview of the current situation regarding youth in the Caribbean

A. Demographic snapshot

The Caribbean subregion is home to nearly 7.5 million youth representing 7 per cent of the Latin American and the Caribbean region's youth population (cf. Table 3). Young women and young men in the 15 to 24 age range comprise almost 17 per cent of the subregion's total population with the largest Caribbean youth demographics being in Haiti (2.2 million), Dominican Republic (1.9 million), and Cuba (1.4 million), as represented in Figure 2. Approximately 42 per cent of the subregion's citizens are under 25 years old. The Caribbean is therefore still a youthful subregion. Indeed, there are more young people in the subregion than ever before, creating unprecedented potential for economic and social progress. Youth possess tremendous potential to serve as agents of social and economic transformation – this is all the more critical given projections that populations in the subregion will age rapidly. However, youth, as a period of transition from childhood to adulthood, is neither finite nor linear and young people face multiple attendant challenges that may affect the developmental potential of the subregion.

Most countries of the Caribbean are still in the vital demographic dividend period.¹⁹ This window may be fairly narrow for some countries: it will close in the 2020's for at least five countries,²⁰ while for the remainder the period will extend well into the 2040s and 2050s. This conveys a sense of urgency for investing in youth in the subregion.

¹⁹ The demographic dividend refers to the period when the working age population is the largest population group, and to the growth potential that results from the increase in this group *vis-à-vis* the inactive population. ECLAC classifies potentially active population as comprising persons between the ages of 20 and 64, and the potentially inactive populations persons under 20 and over 64. ECLAC (2017), *Social Panorama of Latin America and the Caribbean*, pp. 199 – 202.

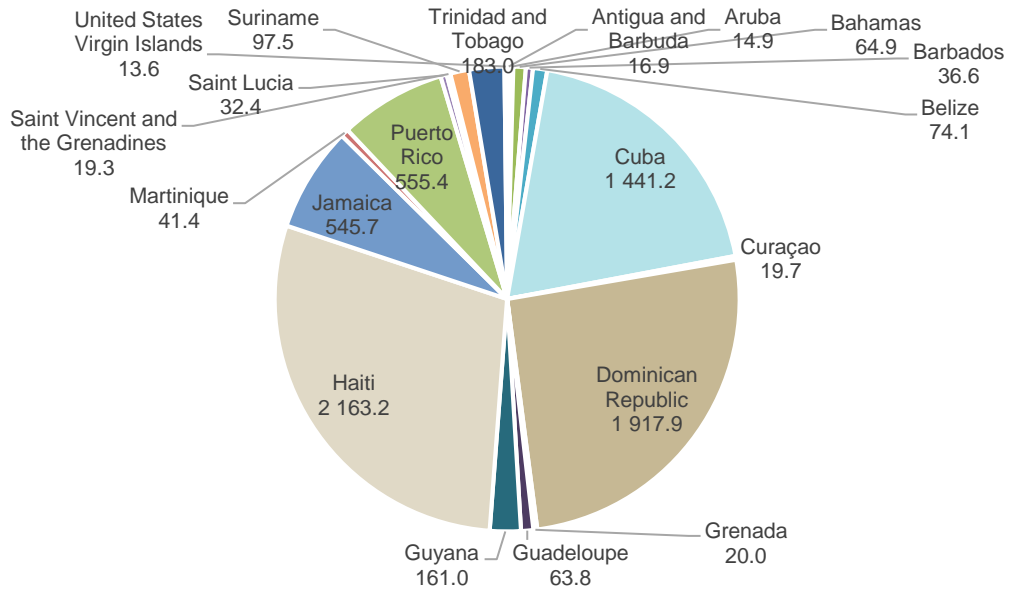
²⁰ Antigua and Barbuda, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Suriname. The period will extend into the 2040s and 50s for Belize, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, and Haiti.

Table 3
Age distribution, 2000 and 2015
(thousands)

	2000						2015					
	0-14	15-24	25-64	65+	total	youth (% of total population)	0-14	15-24	25-64	65+	total	youth (% of total population)
Antigua and Barbuda	24.7	12.4	41.0	5.5	83.6	14.8	24.5	16.9	51.9	6.6	99.9	16.9
Aruba	21.1	11.2	51.7	6.9	90.9	12.3	19.5	14.9	57.3	12.7	104.3	14.3
Bahamas	87.3	51.4	143.3	15.9	297.9	17.2	80.0	64.9	209.9	32.1	386.8	16.8
Barbados	59.2	39.6	139.9	31.1	269.8	14.7	55.0	36.6	152.3	40.3	284.2	12.9
Belize	100.8	50.4	86.5	9.7	247.3	20.4	116.6	74.1	155.1	13.5	359.3	20.6
Cuba	2 431.3	1 482.1	6 140.4	1 096.9	11 150.7	13.3	1 866.9	1 441.2	6 559.7	1 593.8	11 461.4	12.6
Curaçao	32.9	16.1	69.5	13.6	132.1	12.2	29.8	19.7	84.0	24.5	158.0	12.5
Dominican Republic	3 001.1	1 683.8	3 438.2	439.5	8 562.6	19.7	3 154.2	1 917.9	4 755.9	700.4	10 528.4	18.2
Grenada	35.6	21.2	36.9	7.9	101.6	20.9	28.3	20.0	50.8	7.6	106.8	18.8
Guadeloupe	102.6	63.6	215.2	43.3	424.6	15.0	87.5	63.8	225.2	73.8	450.4	14.2
Guyana	272.4	136.9	313.6	30.4	753.3	18.2	229.2	161.0	339.6	38.7	768.5	21.0
Haiti	3 448.0	1 773.3	2 979.3	348.5	8 549.2	20.7	3 614.1	2 163.2	4 437.7	496.0	10 711.1	20.2
Jamaica	853.5	477.6	1 116.3	209.3	2 656.9	18.0	673.6	545.7	1 385.4	267.2	2 871.9	19.0
Martinique	89.1	51.8	199.3	46.8	387.0	13.4	70.8	41.4	205.0	68.7	385.8	10.7
Puerto Rico	894.6	613.0	1 859.6	429.7	3 797.0	16.1	685.8	555.4	1 899.7	532.9	3 673.7	15.1
Saint Lucia	50.6	29.8	64.7	11.9	156.9	19.0	35.0	32.4	93.2	16.6	177.2	18.3
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	33.9	21.7	44.8	7.5	107.9	20.1	26.8	19.3	55.3	8.0	109.5	17.6
Suriname	152.9	82.5	211.2	25.9	472.4	17.5	149.0	97.5	269.7	37.0	553.2	17.6
Trinidad and Tobago	324.3	256.0	604.9	82.9	1 268.0	20.2	282.6	183.0	766.5	128.0	1 360.1	13.5
United States Virgin Islands	28.1	14.6	56.6	9.4	108.7	13.4	21.4	13.6	51.7	18.3	105.0	13.0
Caribbean (20 territories)	12 044.0	6 889.0	17 813.0	2 872.6	39 618.5	17.4	11 250.7	7 482.5	21 805.9	4 116.6	44 655.7	16.8

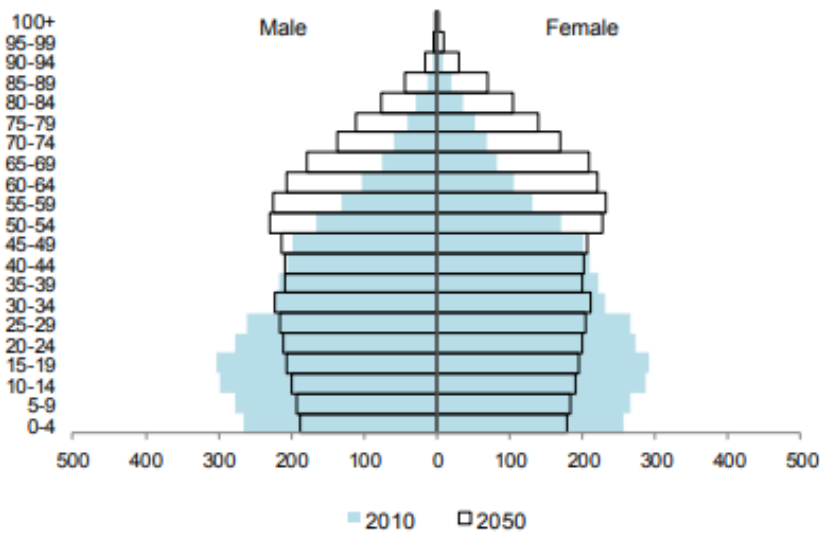
Source of data: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2018).

Figure 2
Youth (15-24) population in the Caribbean, by country, 2015
(Thousands)



Source of data: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2018).

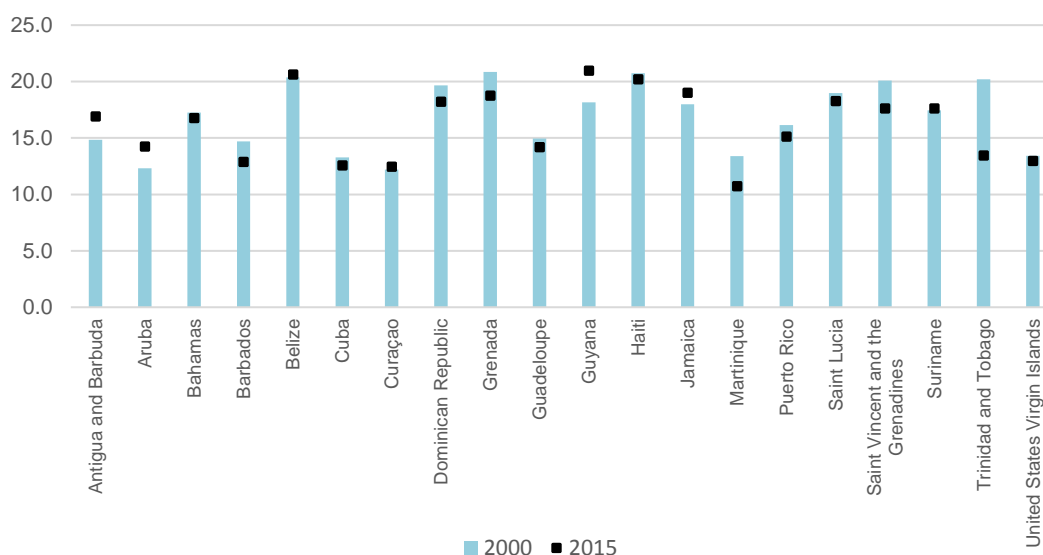
Figure 3
Population pyramids for ten Caribbean countries, 2010 and 2050
(Thousands)



Source: Nam, Valerie and Francis Jones (2018).

Figure 3 provides a graphical representation of the population in the form of overlapped population pyramids for 2010 and population prospects for 2050 that shows the changing age structure towards an older population.²¹ Population ageing is a powerful transformational demographic force. A better understanding of the changing relationship between demographic groups is crucial if we are to create a future that takes full advantage of the powerful resource inherent in the intergenerational potential resulting from interaction between different age groups. The ageing index which measures the relationship between the elderly and the youngest is expected to rise from an average of 43 per cent to 152.5 per cent over the period 2010-2050 as the increases among the elderly are accompanied by a decline of over 25 per cent among the youngest (in this case those under 15 years old) from 1.7 million to 1.1 million.²²

Figure 4
Percentage of country's population aged
15-24 years, 2000-2015
 (% share of total population)



Source of data: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2018).

The Caribbean is therefore not exempt from the ageing of its population. While still youthful, Caribbean societies are in the midst of a demographic transition process that has already begun to affect the age and sex composition of the majority of the countries.²³ The ageing process is more visible across

²¹ The countries with the highest dependency rates in the subregion are Antigua and Barbuda (34 per cent), Saint Lucia (44 per cent), Jamaica (39 per cent), Bahamas (37 per cent), and Trinidad and Tobago (36 per cent), and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (33 per cent). Nam, Valerie and Francis Jones (2018), *Inclusive social protection and demographic change, the implications of population ageing for social expenditure in the Caribbean*, ECLAC Studies and perspectives – The Caribbean, No. 66.

²² Maintaining the population estimates of 2010, the country with the highest dependency ratio in 2050 will be Barbados. By the end of the projection period there will be about five older persons to every ten persons of working-age in Barbados. By then, there will also be a further six countries with dependency ratios of 30 per cent or more. Belize will remain the country with the youngest population with a dependency ratio of 17 per 100, albeit showing a more than 100 per cent increase over 2010. Cf. *Idem*, pp. 36-37.

²³ ECLAC (2008), *Socio-Demographic Analysis of Youth in the Caribbean – A Three Country Case Study*, ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean (Studies and Research Papers), p. 18.

the Caribbean than in Latin America, but far less than in North America.²⁴ The dependency ratio (percentage of persons 65+ / persons 15-64) in 2015 was 11 in Latin America, 14 across the Caribbean and 22 in North America. By 2040, it is projected that the dependency ratio will be 24 in Latin America, 28 in the Caribbean and 37 in North America. This means that over this period, the number of older persons is projected to double in the Caribbean. This demographic transition affects, in varying degrees, all countries and overseas territories within the Caribbean.²⁵

Despite variations between countries, population ageing is a common and pressing issue with considerable impact in Caribbean societies and one which cannot be dissociated from the future prospects for youth development – given its implications for public policy, notably in terms of the challenging grounds for youth development financing it represents.

The proportion of youth in the total population is often referred to as “the youth bulge”; it provides a narrowing demographic window of opportunity in which youth can be engaged as positive resources in the path towards sustainable development. Most Caribbean countries are experiencing a fall in their relative share of youth in the total population, as shown in Figure 4, with countries such as Trinidad and Tobago (6.7 per cent drop), Martinique (loss of 2.7 per cent) and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (2.5 per cent fall), experiencing recent major declines in the proportion of youth in the total population. Notwithstanding the fall, seven countries of the Caribbean experienced recent relative growth in the youth age group. The relative loss of youth population may be linked in part to an increasing share of the elderly in the total population, as longevity increases at a rapid rate over the last decades. Rising youth migration also plays an important role. Despite the relative fluctuations in the youth share, in absolute terms the youth population continues to grow at varying paces across Caribbean countries.

B. Youth unemployment

Youth unemployment rates in the Caribbean are among the highest in the world.²⁶ Employment opportunities for Caribbean youth are mostly found in low skill, low education jobs.²⁷ Moreover, structural youth unemployment among the tertiary educated, beyond the direct impact on current and future economic growth, may also lead to an undervaluing of education and training from the perspective of young people. High youth unemployment also affects the youth dependency ratio in the subregion when young people are forced to extend their dependence on families and relatives. Such circumstances are exacerbated in a context where often female-headed families are already in a position of vulnerability, with inadequate social safety nets.²⁸

The marginalisation of young people and insufficient support for their development have been identified as potential threats at subregional level.²⁹ Data from ILOSTAT³⁰ suggest that the proportion of youth not engaged in education, employment or training (NEET) may vary widely across the Caribbean; from countries such as Bermuda (6.8 per cent youth NEET) scoring fairly well in terms of

²⁴ Jones, Francis (2016), *Ageing in the Caribbean and the human rights of older persons*, ECLAC, Studies and Perspectives Series – The Caribbean, No.45, p. 16.

²⁵ *Idem*, p. 17.

²⁶ Caribbean Development Bank (2015), *Youth are the future: the imperative of youth employment for sustainable development in the Caribbean*, p. 11.

²⁷ Lashley, J.G. and D.D. Marshall (2015), “Youth and Employment in the Caribbean”, Background Paper for the UNDP Caribbean Human Development Report, UNDP.

²⁸ ECLAC (2018), *Caribbean Outlook*, (LC/SES.37/14/Rev.1), Santiago, 2018.

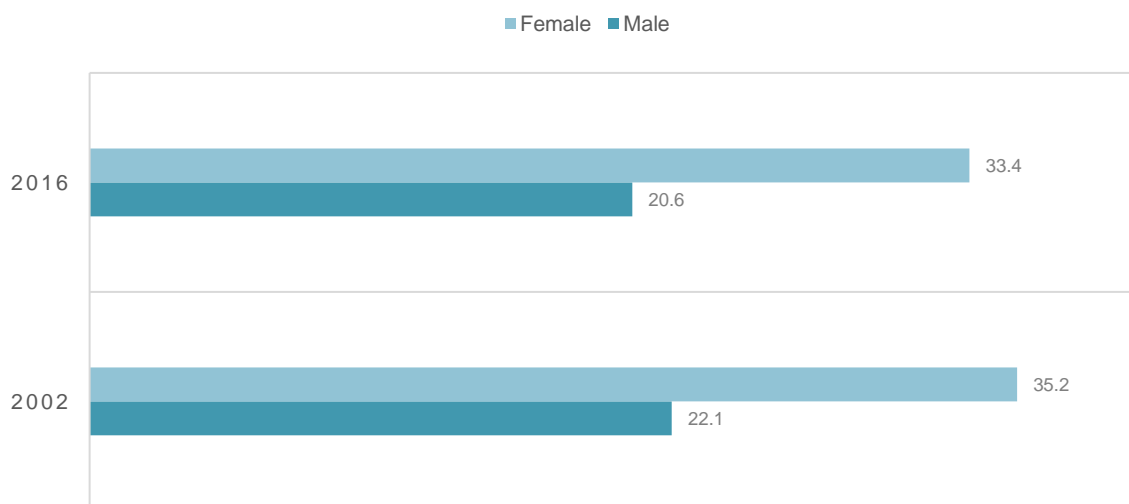
²⁹ *Ibidem*.

³⁰ SDG Indicators Global Database, see <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/?indicator=8.6.1>

social inclusion via the engagement of youth in socioeconomic activities to the extreme case of Trinidad and Tobago (52.2 per cent) where more than half of the youth (15-24) are not fully participating in any of these areas of activity, considered crucial for social inclusion and development.

The social and economic costs of youth exclusion may be very high for Caribbean societies. Impacts may include alienation, deprivation and growing incidence of youth crime. ECLAC's recent *Caribbean Outlook*³¹ presents the situation of youth unemployment within the overall scope of development prospects for the subregion and reflects an environment in which youth unemployment is high, gendered and poses a threat to the long-term development of the Caribbean. In fact, a quarter of all Caribbean youth are unemployed – more than three times the adult rate of 8 per cent³² – and gender differences are notable, as represented in Figure 5. Among Caribbean countries young females experienced unemployment rates of over 30 per cent in 2016, while male youth experienced rates of 20 per cent. The contracting workforce characterized by increasing job loss and limited job creation has mostly affected women and youth making them more vulnerable in society. The global financial crisis of 2008 had a particularly negative effect on the unemployment rate for those between the ages of 15 and 24.³³ Together with crime and violence, high levels of youth unemployment present a key bottleneck to growth in the Caribbean.

Figure 5
Unemployment rate by sex among 15-24 years old in the Caribbean, 2002 and 2016^a
(Percentages)



Source: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), on the basis of figures from the World Bank and the International Labour Organisation (ILO), in ECLAC, *Linkages between the social and production spheres: gaps, pillars and challenges*, 2017 Available at: http://repositorio.cepal.org/bitstream/handle/11362/42269/1/S1700768_en.pdf.

^a Simple average of the following countries: Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

³¹ ECLAC (2018), *Caribbean Outlook*, (LC/SES.37/14/Rev.1), Santiago, 2018.

³² Caribbean Development Bank (2015), *Youth are the Future: The Imperative of Youth Employment for Sustainable Development in the Caribbean*. In some countries (for example, the Bahamas, Barbados, and Jamaica), youth unemployment rates are nearly three times that of those aged 30 and over.

³³ Wong, Joyce and Uma Ramakrishnan (2017), *Crime and Youth Unemployment in the Caribbean*, International Monetary Fund.

C. Poverty among the youth

The Country Poverty Assessments (CPAs) of the CDB³⁴ indicate that youth are disproportionately represented among the poor and vulnerable. Based on ILO estimates, approximately 7 per cent of Caribbean youth are affected by extreme poverty,³⁵ with large differences being observed at the subregional level (e.g. Haiti 23.3 per cent, Barbados 1.6 per cent).³⁶ When analysed at national level using national estimates and national poverty lines, poverty is much more acute. Young people in the Caribbean are significantly affected by poverty (22 per cent) with countries such as Belize (43 per cent) and Grenada (48 per cent) experiencing close to half of its youth population living in poverty (see Table 4). Evidence suggests that female-headed households are more likely to be affected by poverty, especially where there are more occupants in the household, effectively raising the dependency ratio.³⁷

While there are no in-depth studies in the Caribbean establishing a direct causal link between unemployment and poverty for youth, data from poverty studies have indicated that the unemployment rate is higher for those living in poorer households. Consider, for example, the 2011 United Nations Common Country Assessment (UNCCA) in Jamaica which provides valuable insights into the key challenges faced by Caribbean young people: in a context of low growth and inequality, youth are particularly affected by the attending structural constraints. The 2012 Situation Assessment of Youth in Jamaica shows that poverty is often transmitted across generations, expressing concern that youth who consider themselves to be excluded from decision-making processes and who are frustrated by poverty may opt to find alternate – including underground – avenues to survive, with serious social and economic consequences.³⁸

Table 4
Poverty rate by age in selected Caribbean countries
(Percentages)

Country	0-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65+	All persons	Poverty line (dollars per adult male per year)	Year
Antigua and Barbuda	24.6	21.6	14.0	15.3	15.2	18.4	2 366	2005-2006
Belize	50.0	43.0	35.0	31.0	34.0	41.3	1 715	2009
Bahamas ^a	13.9	9.1	4.9	3.5	6.3	9.3	2 863	2001
Dominica	38.7	29.1	27.2	21.2	23.0	28.8	2 307	2008-2009
Grenada	50.8	47.7	33.0	24.8	13.3	37.7	2 164	2007-2008
Jamaica	20.2	18.6	11.9	14.0	18.7	16.5	...	2009
Saint Kitts and Nevis	31.3	28.0	17.6	10.9	10.6	21.8	2 714	2007
Saint Lucia	36.9	32.5	25.0	21.3	19.1	28.8	1 905	2005-2006
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	38.1	36.1	28.0	21.7	18.8	30.2	2 046	2007-2008
Trinidad and Tobago	23.0	22.1	15.6	11.5	6.7	16.7	...	2005
Average (simple)	32.8	28.8	21.2	17.5	16.6	25.0
Average (population weighted)	24.1	21.9	15.1	14.3	15.6	18.8

Source: Country poverty assessments and ECLAC – calculations based on Surveys of Living Conditions.

in Jones, Francis (2016), *Ageing in the Caribbean and the human rights of older persons*, ECLAC, Studies and Perspectives Series – The Caribbean, No.45, p.32.

^aFigures correspond to the following age groups: 5-14, 15-19, 35-54, 55-64, 65+.

³⁴ The Caribbean Development Bank routinely conducts Country Poverty Assessments (CPAs) in the Caribbean.

³⁵ As defined by the World Bank and the UN, below the international poverty line of USD\$1.90. See for example, UNICEF and the World Bank Group (2016), *Ending Extreme Poverty: a Focus on Children*.

³⁶ Data for 2016, compiled in the SDG Indicators Global Database, see <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/?indicator=1.1.1>.

³⁷ Stuart, Sheila, Lydia Rosa Gény and Abdullahi Abdulkadri. (2018), *Advancing the economic empowerment and autonomy of women in the Caribbean through the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, ECLAC Studies and Perspectives Series – The Caribbean, No. 60, p.23.

³⁸ United Nations Jamaica Country Team (2011), *United Nations Common Country Assessment: Jamaica*.

D. Youth and education

Secondary school enrolment rates vary widely across the Caribbean from 61 per cent in Suriname to over 90 per cent in several countries of the Caribbean (96 per cent in Cuba, 95 per cent in Barbados, 94 per cent in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, 93 per cent in Guyana). On average, these rates are higher than global levels,³⁹ with a strong gender component in favour of female youth. Socioeconomic conditions and urban/rural location impact access to and the quality of available education.

However, in most Caribbean countries, educational infrastructure and the quality of teaching still need to be improved. Several resources, including CARICOM⁴⁰ and ECLAC,⁴¹ note the significant accomplishments in the education sector while still emphasising that “member States recognise that severe systemic and cultural deficiencies threaten the contribution of their respective Human Resource Development sectors to national and regional development”.⁴² In the *Caribbean Outlook*, ECLAC points out that despite good progress in secondary school enrolment, years of educational attainment, and relatively high levels of budgetary expenditures devoted to education, there are still major challenges to overcome in the area of education. These include low school performance, especially in Mathematics and English Language and a low pass through rate in the region from secondary to tertiary education – a rate that at about 15 per cent is much less than half the OECD average.⁴³

E. Impact of crime on youth

Young people are both the primary victims and perpetrators of crime in the Caribbean with reports of victims of violent crime being predominantly between the ages of 18 to 30 and of lower levels of income, while 80 per cent of prosecuted crimes were committed by people aged 17 to 29 years.⁴⁴ Victimization rates for assault and threat also differ greatly when analysed by gender, age, and income. In fact, rates for male victims are significantly higher than for women, as well as for youth ages 18–30. Although males are the main perpetrators and victims of crime and violence, females are the main victims of domestic, intimate partner, and sexual violence.

F. Adolescent fertility rates in the Caribbean

While sexual and reproductive health of young people in the subregion is highly differentiated, in general there is early initiation of sexual life, with relatively high use of contraceptives and exposure to STD risks. It is estimated that adolescent pregnancy rates have risen among the disadvantaged (estimated at 20-35 per cent of 17-year-old girls), with adolescent pregnancy presented as one of the main factors hindering access to education and work. Statistics from country reports present a very difficult environment for girl children in the Caribbean with main vulnerabilities identified in the areas

³⁹ The global net secondary school enrolment is 76%. World Bank Education Statistics, 2016.

⁴⁰ CARICOM (2017), *Human Resource Development 2030 Strategy*. Endorsed by CARICOM Heads of Government at their 38th Regular Meeting, Grand Anse, Grenada, July 2017.

⁴¹ ECLAC (2018), *Caribbean Outlook*, (LC/SES.37/14/Rev.1), Santiago, 2018.

⁴² CARICOM (2017), *Op. cit.*, p. 29.

⁴³ Enrolment across the subregion varies – in Jamaica post-secondary enrolment now approaches 30 per cent and is even higher in Barbados, while in some countries, such as Guyana and Saint. Lucia, it is much lower. www.oecd.org/education/education-at-a-glance-19991487.htm

⁴⁴ Zimmermann, Robert; Carol Lawes and Nanette Svenson (2012), *Caribbean Human Development Report 2012: Human Development and the Shift to Better Citizen Security*, UNDP, p. 34. On this matter, see also Sutton, Heather and Inder Ruprah (2017), *Restoring paradise in the Caribbean: combatting violence with numbers*, Inter-American Development Bank, pp. 85-85.

of fertility patterns, threats from HIV/AIDS, sexual abuse and violence, human trafficking, educational barriers and economic insecurity.⁴⁵

In Guyana, on average 9 per cent of adolescent girls aged 15-19 are mothers. The average age of sexual initiation for in-school youth, both boys and girls, is 13 and half years, while the age of consent is 16 years. However, it is worth noting that the adolescent fertility rate has decreased in all 17 countries analyzed except Guyana (cf. Table 5). Countries like Grenada (-58 per cent), Saint Lucia (-53 per cent) and The Bahamas (-52 per cent) now record less than half the number of teenage pregnancies registered in the 1990s. This is a remarkable improvement for the region as captured in Figure 6. Despite this important advance, the reintegration of teenage mothers into the education system remains a challenge. Many of the teenage mothers do not go back to school after giving birth due to discriminatory administrative or bureaucratic practices in the education systems.⁴⁶

Reports from UNICEF reveal that young women in the 15-19 age group face health risks and even death due to difficulties in pregnancy and childbirth, with maternal mortality rates five times higher than women in the 20 to 25 age group. While these trends are found in many developing countries, the Eastern Caribbean is reported to have markedly high maternal death rates among the teen age population. The correlation between teenage pregnancy and school dropout rates is also noted: in Jamaica, 50 per cent of teen girls who had dropped out of secondary school gave pregnancy as their reason for dropping out, and were unable to attend school consistently after the pregnancy.⁴⁷

Table 5
Adolescent birth rates in the Caribbean by country, 1990-2015
(births to women aged 15-19 per 1,000 women of that age)

	1990-1995	1995-2000	2000-2005	2005-2010	2010-2015	Variation (%)
Antigua and Barbuda	71.9	68.7	62.8	55.5	49.3	-31.5
Aruba	49.1	47.3	41.1	33.9	28.5	-42.0
Bahamas	69.6	61.9	44.0	39.4	32.8	-52.9
Barbados	57.9	52.0	49.1	47.9	46.9	-19.0
Belize	121.7	106.3	91.2	76.2	69.7	-42.7
Curaçao	51.5	43.5	36.7	33.7	34.2	-33.7
Grenada	83.5	61.5	51.2	42.4	35.4	-57.6
Guadeloupe	25.8	21.8	20.3	18.8	15.8	-38.8
Guyana	88.8	92.7	100.2	92.6	90.1	1.4
Jamaica	97.7	93.8	84.0	74.0	60.8	-37.8
Martinique	28.7	26.0	24.5	24.2	21.1	-26.4
Puerto Rico	73.2	72.4	65.4	50.6	43.8	-40.2
Saint Lucia	94.6	69.8	54.6	48.2	44.2	-53.3
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	88.0	76.1	64.6	58.9	54.5	-38.0
Suriname	66.0	60.8	56.3	52.3	49.3	-25.3
Trinidad and Tobago	56.1	44.3	38.4	38.1	34.8	-37.9
United States Virgin Islands	77.0	64.5	49.4	50.0	47.3	-38.6

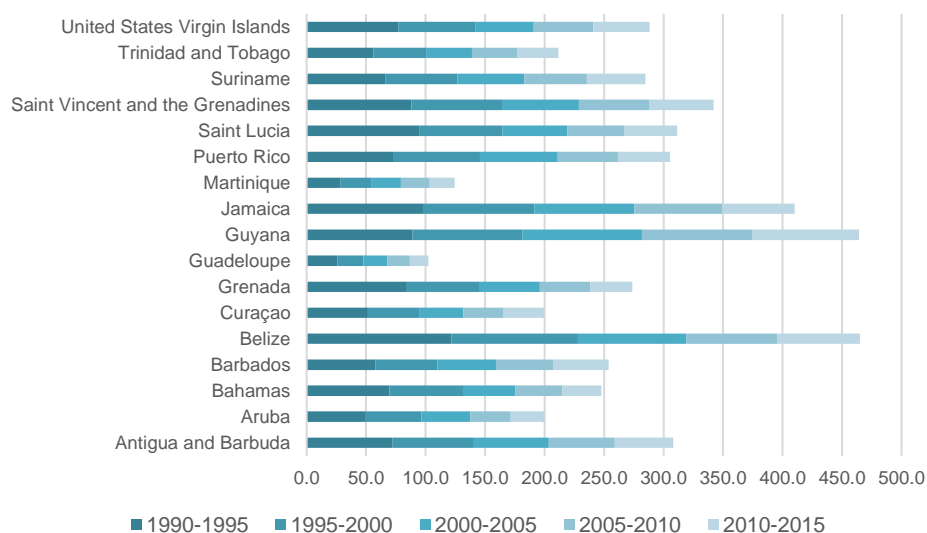
Source: UN population division.

⁴⁵ Mondesire, Alicia (2015), *Caribbean synthesis review and appraisal report on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, ECLAC – Studies and Perspectives Series – The Caribbean, No. 42.

⁴⁶ *Idem*, p. 33.

⁴⁷ *Idem*, p. 34.

Figure 6
Adolescent birth rates for seventeen Caribbean countries, 1990 to 2015
(births to women aged 15-19 per 1,000 women of that age)



Source: UN population division.

G. HIV/AIDS among young women and adolescent girls

An important challenge for Caribbean youth remains the effective control of HIV/AIDS. According to UNAIDS data, HIV prevalence in the Caribbean has been stable over the last decade with a reported HIV prevalence of 1 per cent among youth and an estimated 310,000 people living with the disease at the end of 2016. Through programmes such as the Caribbean Regional Strategic Framework on HIV 2014-2018, significant results have been achieved over the last decade, with a 52 per cent reduction in AIDS-related deaths and a decline of five per cent in new infections. However, and as referenced in the UN Global AIDS report, young women remain at unacceptably high risk of HIV infection. In 2016, young women in the Caribbean accounted for 22 per cent of new HIV infections,⁴⁸ despite making up just 8 per cent of the population. Factors contributing to this are the barriers young people face in accessing prevention services,⁴⁹ cultural practices regarding early initiation of sexual activity and a lack of knowledge of HIV prevention among young people: UNAIDS reports that knowledge of HIV prevention varies widely across the Caribbean, with countries such as The Bahamas, which has the highest HIV prevalence rate of the LAC region (3.3 per cent among adults aged 15 to 49) reporting that only 4.4 per cent of their youth aged 15-24 received HIV prevention information of which only 2.8 per cent of young women aged 15-24 had knowledge about HIV prevention.

⁴⁸ UNAIDS Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (2017), *Ending AIDS: Progress towards the 90-90-90 targets*, Global AIDS update 2017, Geneva, Switzerland.

⁴⁹ UNAIDS Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (2016), *The Prevention Gap Report*. In nine out of 17 countries, minors require parental or guardian consent to take an HIV test and find out the results. A few countries in the Caribbean have developed policies allowing minors to access HIV testing without parental consent, either allowing it at any age (such as in Guyana) or above the age of 14 (as in Trinidad and Tobago).

H. Youth development in the Caribbean

The Youth Development Index (YDI)⁵⁰ measures the status of 15-29 year-olds according to five key domains measuring levels of education, health and wellbeing, employment and opportunity, political participation and civic participation for young people. The Youth Development rankings over the past five years (Table 6) show progress for all Caribbean countries with the exception of only two – Haiti, a country which is still recovering from the devastating 2010 earthquake, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, mostly recorded due to decline in political participation. Most countries are featured among high or very high YDI countries with the exception of Belize and Haiti who have attained medium to low Youth Development performance. However, within the Youth Development Index rankings, employment, as a composite index, underperforms some other Youth Development factors, especially for Belize, Trinidad and Tobago and Haiti, as visible in Figure 7.

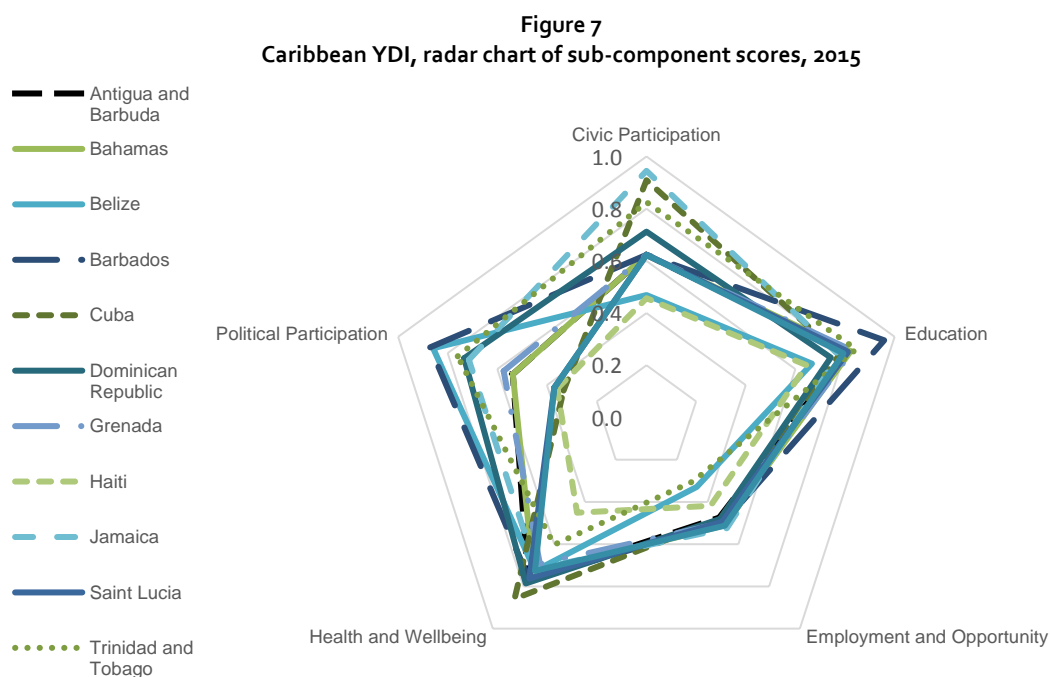
Table 6
Caribbean Youth Development Index, 11 countries, 2015

	Civic Participation	Education	Employment and Opportunity	Health and Wellbeing	Political Participation	YDI Overall Score
Antigua and Barbuda	0.62	0.80	0.48	0.77	0.54	0.66
Bahamas	0.62	0.82	0.51	0.74	0.54	0.66
Belize	0.47	0.67	0.33	0.73	0.86	0.61
Barbados	0.62	0.96	0.50	0.77	0.87	0.75
Cuba	0.91	0.78	0.48	0.86	0.33	0.67
Dominican Republic	0.71	0.74	0.48	0.79	0.73	0.68
Grenada	0.62	0.83	0.50	0.69	0.58	0.65
Haiti	0.46	0.65	0.42	0.45	0.36	0.48
Jamaica	0.95	0.78	0.53	0.72	0.72	0.71
Saint Lucia	0.62	0.81	0.49	0.76	0.37	0.64
Trinidad and Tobago	0.83	0.85	0.30	0.60	0.76	0.63
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	0.62	0.79	0.51	0.73	0.37	0.63

Source: The Commonwealth Youth Development Index and Report, 2016.

The Caribbean had solid improvement in levels of youth development between 2010 and 2015, increasing its overall YDI score by approximately 2.6 per cent. Trinidad and Tobago made notable progress in its YDI score, showing the largest improvement in the LAC region, raising its YDI score by 10 per cent between 2010 and 2015 because of a large improvement in its scores for the Civic and Political Participation domains. On the other hand, the 8 per cent drop in Haiti's YDI score was also the highest for any country in the region; while Saint Vincent and The Grenadines' score deteriorated by 4 per cent.

⁵⁰ The YDI is a composite index of 18 indicators developed by The Commonwealth that collectively measure multi-dimensional progress on youth development in 183 countries, including 49 of the 53 Commonwealth countries. YDI scores range from 0-1, 0 being the lowest youth development and 1 the highest. The YDI is guided by the Commonwealth definition of youth as people between the ages of 15 and 29, while recognising that some countries and international institutions define youth differently.



Source of data: The Commonwealth Youth Development Index and Report, 2016.

I. The role of youth policy in youth development

The prevailing social and economic challenges that Caribbean citizens experience in many countries of the subregion affect young people in a disproportionate manner. At the subregional level, the following trends are observed:

- Longer and more complex transitions from childhood to adult life, partly as a consequence of a difficult labour market, but also as a global trend as life expectancy rises and more education and training is expected of young people.
- Very high and gendered youth unemployment and over-representation of young people in marginal and precarious employment.
- High dependency rates with reliance on family structures and social support systems.
- Despite important improvements, an education system that still reflects low school performance and a low pass through rate from secondary to tertiary education and mismatch to the needs of the job market.
- Sustained levels of substance abuse and increasing violence suffered and committed by youth, with significant victimization, prolonged trauma and other adverse health risks.
- Significant improvements in adolescent fertility rates and overall youth development index.

As reflective of the global trend, young people in Caribbean countries comprise a relatively smaller proportion of the total population because of generally lower birth rates and longer life expectancy. Notwithstanding the lower ratio adults to youth in some cases, youth comprise today a social group that is particularly vulnerable and disproportionately affected by crime, unemployment and poverty, and other impacts of persistent hunger and poverty that impact access to education, health

and other essential services. Caribbean youth are also struck by diverse uncertainties regarding their future, in part due to climate change and demographic transition but which are further enhanced by an economically vulnerable region with limited appropriate opportunities for youth employment. As they move into work, today's generation of Caribbean youth will face an increased burden in supporting the remainder of the growing population who will depend on the working-age group, for example, in terms of maintaining quality public health and education systems, as well as pension schemes.

Despite these challenges, which are already being observed and addressed globally, Caribbean young people represent an important resource for the sustainable development of the subregion and can potentially be key agents of change, at the social, economic and environmental levels. The ways in which the challenges and potentials of young people in the Caribbean are addressed by policy will influence current social and economic conditions and the wellbeing and livelihood of future generations. Youth can contribute with their creativity and impetus in the design and implementation of innovative youth policies and programmes at all levels, articulated meaningfully to promote a new development path towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

II. Review of the implementation of the Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes

Information provided by member and associate member countries revealed the sustained application of the Lisbon Declaration and the continuing development of national youth policies and programmes to support its implementation. The main policy guides informing Caribbean youth policy development have been influenced by the Lisbon Declaration and by the World Programme of Action on Youth (WPAY 2000 and beyond). These are the CARICOM's Youth Development Action Plan (CYDAP) 2012-2022, and the Commonwealth's Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (PAYE) 2008-2015.

While the majority of Caribbean countries have progressed in developing a NYP, only five NYPs have accompanying Action Plans. With the majority of active NYPs developed during the previous five years, a second generation of youth policies is emerging imbedded in a new, 'Baku oriented' policy design, one that is rights-based, inclusive, participatory, comprehensive, gender-sensitive, and evidence-informed.

A. Comparative analysis on country actions to implement National Youth Policies:

1. Summary of actions undertaken by governments on NYP

The NYPs of the Caribbean took on certain common characteristics (cf. Annexes 2-3):

- Relative standardisation of the legal definition of youth as persons in the age range of 10-29, influenced equally by CYDAP and PAYE. Some older NYPs still retain ranges of 0-35 years old (Antigua and Barbuda).
- Focus on education, employment, health, participation and safety and security in all policies.

- Deliberate programming on life skills building for “Not in Education, Employment, or Training” (NEET) and at-risk youth, vocational skills and employability skills for the job market, and the introduction of dedicated entrepreneurship programming.
- Changed paradigms on youth participation and access as a right; on youth as assets and enablers of their own development; and on ensuring the provision of youth-friendly services, including in the health sector to reduce systematic barriers to participation.
- More deliberate preparation and the inclusion of diverse youth in the social research agenda in support of policy formulation.
- Establishment of, or enhanced support to youth movements and networks for roles in national youth programming, and for wider representation of youth in decision-making in varying thematic issues in regional and global fora.
- Contextual precision to Caribbean realities in the articulation of policy priorities on youth crime and violence especially gang violence, to manage behaviour transformation, impulsive risk taking leading to conflicts with the law, on restorative justice and other alternative sentencing for justice-involved youth.
- Attempts for more comprehensive coverage of WPAY priority areas, for example, the integration of strategies on gender mainstreaming, targeting girls and women; ICTs; leisure; intergenerational issues; and the environment, as “cross-cutting” to the five core priority areas.
- A focus on building a culture of multisectoral supports and collaboration for youth policy formulation and implementation.
- Research on youth and building capacity for data collection, compilation and use for youth policy and programming.
- Promoting youth mainstreaming as indispensable to the realisation of policy goals and successful youth outcomes.
- Focus on strengthening youth ministries and departments as main coordinating bodies for youth policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation and focus on professionalising youth work.

These three latter policy pathways included in NYPs are very significant. They reflect a genuine interest and paced progression towards professional youth work science, notably in the management of youth departments in the public sector. They mirror the commitments of Lisbon Declaration to ensuring a sound environment for youth formulation as well as monitoring and evaluation of its outcomes and impact.⁵¹

2. Status of National Youth Policies and Programmes of Action in the Caribbean

There is genuine interest and commitment in the region to develop a modern youth policy. The work of CARICOM and The Commonwealth has supported youth policy aims, while the work of the UN system and the more recent high-level outreach, education and global youth participation agenda of the Office of the UN Envoy on Youth, have combined to reinforce the need for comprehensive, inclusive and accountable youth development and participation with a comprehensive youth policy framework.

⁵¹ The CYDAP Goal 5 and in the PAYE Action Points 3, 12 and 13 also provided guidelines in these areas.

Available data (see Table 7) indicate that:

- Twenty-three of the twenty-nine (79 per cent) Caribbean countries have some iteration of a NYP, be it recently passed, current, in draft, or otherwise incipient. Nineteen of the twenty (95 per cent) CARICOM countries have some iteration of a NYP.
- Five NYPs have accompanying Action Plans (Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Lucia Montserrat).
- NYPs of four other countries (British Virgin Islands, Jamaica, and Saint Kitts and Nevis) contain guidelines for the formulation of Action Plans and implementation mechanisms.
- Sixteen out of seventeen countries (94 per cent) whose NYPs were available for review, provide for the establishment of, or support to, youth-led movements to ensure youth participation in decision-making and for policy support (cf. Annex 3).
- The majority of active NYPs were developed during the previous five years: Aruba (2015), Bahamas (2014), Belize (2012-2022) British Virgin Islands (2014), Dominica (2017), Grenada (2015), Guadeloupe (2014), Guyana (2015), Jamaica (2015) Montserrat (2013); Saint Kitts and Nevis (2017), Saint Lucia (2016).
- Five countries (Anguilla, Barbados, Bermuda, Trinidad and Tobago and Turks and Caicos) have mobilised for policy review, with the intention to complete updated policies in 2018.

The Commonwealth, specifically the CYP, has been influential in rallying commitment and maintaining motivation for the establishment of NYPs, providing technical assistance to five countries in the last three years to draft new youth policies. The Commonwealth also solidified a culture of professional youth work, commencing with its Youth Work certification in the 1980s, and culminating in the Bachelor of Science in Youth Development Work, which is a degree programme that is now available through the UWI Open Campus.

These are all contributing factors to the establishment of NYPs that were part of a major learning curve and paradigm shift about youth policy, moving away from anecdotal work and elections-driven promises to youth towards evidence-based youth development. The finalisation in 2016 of the YDI supports the evidence-based pillar in the theory of change in youth development. CARICOM with its accompanying M&E framework guide for the CYDAP has also supported this critical focus.

Table 7
The Status of National Youth Policies in Caribbean Countries

Country	Name of Document	Policy Year	Main Agency	Status Comments
1. Anguilla	Anguilla National Youth Policy	Updated 2012	Department of Youth and Culture, Ministry of Social Development	Anguilla recently prepared a request (with effect from May 2018) for technical assistance to review the NYP.
2. Antigua and Barbuda	Antigua And Barbuda National Youth Policy – <i>Empowering Tomorrow's Leaders Today</i>	2007	Youth Department, Ministry of Social Transformation and Human Resource Development	Unknown
3. Aruba	1 st Integral Youth Policy 2015-2020 for Aruba: "Generation of Leaders"	2015	Unknown	Target group is 0 to 18 years
4. The Bahamas	The Commonwealth of The Bahamas National Youth Policy – "Engaging, Empowering, and Enabling Our Youth"	2014-2021	Department of Youth Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture	Active
5. Barbados	The National Youth Policy of Barbados	October 2011	Division of Youth Affairs, Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports	Policy implementation and impacts under national review preparatory to revision
6. Belize	National Youth Development Policy of Belize	2012-2022	Department of Youth Services, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports	Policy being implemented within framework of available resources.
7. Bermuda	Children and Youth Engagement and Participation Policy	2018 draft	Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation falls under the Ministry of Youth, Families and Sports	Draft under review. Bermuda Government. Ministry of Community, Culture and Sport. Public Access to Information: Information Statement
8. British Virgin Islands	Virgin Islands National Youth Policy and Strategic Framework	2014-2019	Department of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Education and Culture	Active
9. Cayman Islands	National Youth Policy	2011	Youth Services Unit, Ministry of Health, Environment, Youth, Sports and Culture	Active
10. Cuba	No single youth policy. Several acts that integrate an enabling and developmental framework. Priorities for education, employment and health sectors	Constitution of the Republic (1976), Law 1285/1975 – the Family Code, Law 16/1978 – Childhood and Youth Code, Law 49/1984 – the Labour Code, Social Security Laws No. 24/1979 and No. 105/2009, Law 51/1985	Cuban Parliament has a Permanent Commission for the welfare of children, the young, and women's rights (1982).	Youth policies are managed and funded by the State, through relevant subject Ministry. Policies are governed by the following principles: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comprehensive approach, • social equity, • high participation, differentiated treatment for disadvantaged social groups

Country	Name of Document	Policy Year	Main Agency	Status Comments
		-the Civil Registry, Law 59/1987 – the Civil Code, Laws 62/1987 and 87/1999 – the Penal Code, Cuban Electoral Law 72/1992, Law 75/1994 – the National Defence and Decree-law 224/2001 of the Military Service.		
11. Curaçao	National Action Program for Youth Development	2015-2020	N/d	The government of Curaçao ratified the National Action Program for Youth Development in August 2015 and the National Youth Council was launched in 2017. Active.
12. Dominica	The Commonwealth Of Dominica National Youth Policy	2017-2022	Youth Development Division, Ministry of Youth, Sports and Constituency Empowerment.	Draft replaces the 2003 Policy. Awaiting official Cabinet approval.
13. Dominican Republic	General Youth Act 49 of 2000 (<i>Ley General de Juventud 49-2000</i>)	Passed in 2000. Entered into force in 2002.	Ministry of Youth <i>Ministerio de la Juventud (MJ)</i>	Review and reform of the Act recommended, among other things to (a) ensure adequate and appropriate resource allocations to programmes (b) professional youth workers are installed to manage programming (c) better integration of national youth structures in implementation of programming (Red Nacional de Acción Juvenil, 2011)
14. Grenada	National Youth Policy	2015-2020	Ministry of Youth, Sports and Ecclesiastical Affairs	Approved by Parliament on Dec. 18, 2015. Active
15. Guadeloupe	Guadeloupe Integrated Youth Policy (<i>Schéma des Politiques de Jeunesse de Guadeloupe</i>)	Developed March 2014. Not in effect.	Departmental Council of Guadeloupe	Policy recommended 10 main goals for youth 16-25 relating to education opportunities for school dropouts and NEET entry into the world of work, youth mental health, reducing juvenile delinquency and recidivism, civic engagement, youth rights, access and opportunities, support for parents and families, outreach to youth in their spaces, integrating youth services and support, improving quality of life for vulnerable Youth
16. Guyana	National Youth Policy 2015 of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana	2015	Ministry of Education, Department of Youth	Adopted by the National Assembly on October 13, 2016 ((DPI/GINA, June 2016).
17. Haiti	None		Ministry of Youth, Sports and Civic Action	USAID/Haiti Youth Assessment Report 2016 recommends “an integrated youth policy as a guiding framework for the effective transformation of the Haitian youth development landscape”.
18. Jamaica	National Youth Policy 2017	2017-2030	Youth and Adolescent Division, Ministry of Education, Youth and Information	The National Youth Policy was approved in November 2017.

Country	Name of Document	Policy Year	Main Agency	Status Comments
19. Martinique	No data available	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable.
20. Montserrat	National Youth Policy Montserrat	None	Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports	Several National Drafts with effect from 2004. Most recent (2nd Revised Policy Draft) April 2013
21. Puerto Rico	No data available	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable.
22. Saint Kitts and Nevis	Saint Kitts and Nevis Federal Youth Policy	2017-2022	Ministry of Education, Youth Sports and Culture	Draft completed in March 2017. Policy read and approved in Parliament in November 2017.
23. Saint Lucia	National Youth Policy – <i>A Shared Vision and Commitment for Achieving the Full Potential of Young People in Saint Lucia</i>	2016-2021	Department of Youth and Sports, Ministry of Equity, Social Justice, Empowerment, Youth Development, Sports and Local Government	Draft Policy completed in August 2016. Public consultations on draft completed in May 2018. Policy to be submitted for Cabinet approval
24. Sint Maarten	Draft		Department of Youth, Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport	Draft NYP includes policies for Youth in different developmental phase: early childhood (0-6 years), childhood (7-12 years), adolescence (13-18 years) and Young adulthood (19-24 years).
25. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Youth Policy Document	1996	Ministry of National Mobilisation, Social Development, Family, Gender Affairs, Persons with Disabilities and Youth	Outdated. Efforts ongoing to secure technical assistance for policy review
26. Suriname	Integrated Child and Youth Policy (ICYP)	2014	Department of Youth Affairs, Ministry of Spots and Youth Affairs	Policy for persons 0-21 years. Young adults 22-29 not included but there is guidance under CARICOM's CYDAP for this population and the Declaration of Paramaribo of January 2010 relating to Youth 12-29.
27. Trinidad and Tobago	Republic of Trinidad and Tobago National Youth Policy	2012-2017	Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs	Island-wide consultations are currently ongoing (May 2018) to commence the NYP review and redrafting with effect from September 2018.
28. Turks and Caicos Islands	Turks And Caicos Islands National Youth Policy	2012	Department of Youth Affairs Ministry of Education, Youth, Sport and Culture	Policy active. Scheduled 5-year revision currently under consideration.
29. US Virgin Islands	No data available	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable

Source: Author's compilation.

B. A review of thematic areas in Caribbean Youth Policies

Youth is not a sector. The current and emerging priorities in national and global ecosystems are all relevant in shaping a policy environment for young people. This is part of the principle of youth mainstreaming where the implications for youth of trends, developments and investments must be taken into consideration. The Lisbon Declaration of 1998 established this important context with its recommendations on youth mainstreaming and WPAY facilitated wider understanding of the multisectoral approach to youth policy given that young people's access and development must address compounded risks and concerns that coexist across multiple domains.

According to the WPAY Guide 2006, the 15 priority areas are "interrelated and intrinsically linked". It is intended that the recommendations for each priority area should be customized to local context and circumstance. Implementation of WPAY should also be managed through the joint commitment of many partners at the national, regional and international levels, including relevant stakeholders.

As established previously, the NYPs of Caribbean countries⁵² that were available for scrutiny, and those responding to the subregional survey, were influenced by the CYDAP and the PAYE. Both of these regional policies were developed to align with the WPAY. The following sections describe the respective priority areas in WPAY and how they have been represented in Caribbean NYPs under review.

1. Youth and the global economy

Priority areas: Education; Employment; Poverty and hunger; and Globalization.

Education

This priority area details education as a basic human right to help the individual to realize their full human potential, and recommends measures for young people to acquire the knowledge and competencies to manage in all spheres throughout their lifetime, focusing on:

- Responsive and appropriate youth training programmes.
- Government action to strengthen links between youth and employers.
- Educational needs and circumstances of girls and young women to remove barriers to educational attainment and managing gender-based violence (GBV) and gender inequality.
- Non-formal learning for school drop-outs and re-entry, relearning and second chance programming.
- Learning about HIV/AIDS in the classroom with the expected outcome of better education leading to lower rates of infection.

Education as a priority area was included in all NYPs under review, with a universal concern for education and curricula reforms to meet the emerging learning needs of youth for life and for employment. For example, NYPs largely recommended enhanced access and variety in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), with Belize recommending agriculture education and other

⁵² The exception is Bermuda, whose 2018 draft Children and Youth Engagement and Participation Policy covers the age range 5 to 25 years old. It seeks to enhance genuine participation of young people in education, health and wellness, sports, the Arts, overall culture in Bermuda, and to prevent anti-social behaviours. This policy references the Australian and Canadian "Engagement Spectrum" in developing the context and scope for meaningful participation in decision-making.

non-traditional education as viable education options, and improved teacher quality and classroom experiences. NYPs also commonly recommended enhanced tertiary education opportunities for youth, and universal secondary access consistent with SDG 4 targets including for school drop-outs and other young people out of the formal system for extended periods. Most NYPs also included actions for young people who required special support such as teen parents, youth in rural communities (Belize and Trinidad and Tobago) and hinterland and indigenous youth (Guyana), and for children with learning and physical disabilities as well as gifted children (Antigua and Barbuda). These provisions aligned with the result area of responsive and appropriate youth training programmes were well represented in all NYPs, with linkages to the opportunities and challenges for youth in the formal education system.

On the link between education and employers, the NYP of Grenada elaborated action points for “education that prepares and supports youth participation in the labour market” while Dominica spoke to creating “opportunities for young people to acquire the requisite skills, competencies and experience to access existing and emerging employment opportunities”, and Saint Kitts and Nevis recommended more linkages to meet changing labour market demands and to enhance the support base for more inclusive youth transitions to the labour market. Other NYPs opted to reserve the action point on strengthening links between youth and employers for their employment priority area.

Recommendations on education specific to bridging any gender-related access for girls and young women were not found in the majority of NYPs reviewed. The exceptions were Grenada and Antigua and Barbuda with action points to strengthen programmes and initiatives to ensure pregnant teens and teenage mothers could continue their education. Guyana’s NYP recommended social and economic supports to improve school attendance by girls and promoted the participation of girls in non-traditional and vocational education. Interestingly, Saint Lucia noted that females made greater use of opportunities for adult and continuing education than males, while Belize revealed that more boys are out of the school system than girls, except in one district (Toledo) where cultural practices resulted in more girls being out of schools than boys. As such, Belize’s NYP contains a specific provision to develop and implement strategies to increase retention of boys at secondary level.

NYPs were also comprehensive in their coverage of the needs of youth for informal and non-formal education such as the case of The Bahamas, Belize, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Saint Lucia, which included “lifelong learning, consistent with needs and aspirations of youth” (Saint Lucia) in the education priority area. Non-formal education provisions considered life cycle needs of young people and availability and access to a range of informal and non-formal opportunities. Saint Kitts and Nevis recommended national literacy and numeracy measurement, and adult literacy and remedial learning programmes to meet needs of youth.

Most NYPs also contained recommendations that integrated important contributing factors to young people’s educational attainment and outcomes. There were a variety of recommendations calling for enhanced opportunities and access to the arts, ICT based learning and non-traditional subjects for youth. Barbados, The Bahamas, the Cayman Islands, and Saint Kitts and Nevis among other NYPs, included actions promoting youth input in decision-making in and about the education system, and the creation of student/peer-led movements to represent students’ social wellbeing, interests, and academic life representative of the diversity of the school population. Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, and Jamaica, among others, recommended approaches to secure enhanced parenting involvement in the school system to contribute to better education outcomes for young people.

HIV/AIDS in the classroom, as well as the range of public health and sexual and reproductive health issues of adolescent and youth populations, were integrated into the health priority area.

Employment

This priority area covers a comprehensive framework to reduce employment and address inequities, consistent with the ILO's Youth Employment Network (YEN)'s strategy in areas of employability of young people through investments in training and education; entrepreneurship; employment creation; and ensuring equal opportunities for decent work for men and women, and recommends action to:

- Monitor the needs of the labour market and create more jobs for youth.
- Taking measures to ensure decent work in the informal economy.
- Expanding economic opportunities for youth through volunteering and youth service programmes, microfinance, youth financial inclusion, and youth entrepreneurship.

Employment inclusive of youth entrepreneurship was the priority area most elaborated in all Caribbean NYPs, and recommended actions were consistent with the recommended WPAY framework given the high levels of unemployment in the Caribbean. Measures for "decent work", in the context established by the ILO were incorporated into NYPs of Dominica, Guyana, Saint Lucia and Saint Kitts and Nevis to address high unemployment, with Guyana's NYP analysis reporting youth unemployment to be "hovering" around 40 per cent and youth entrepreneurship as low and "unsupported", Grenada's youth policy survey revealing that 40 per cent of the respondents were unemployed, with a higher number of females unemployed or employed part-time, and respondents to the youth policy survey in Saint Kitts and Nevis indicating 50.3 per cent were employed full time, 33.2 per cent were unemployed, while 10.6 were employed part-time. Jamaica's NYP posited that the "challenge of youth employment requires an integrated policy mix, and interventions at the macro- and micro-economic levels to improve labour demand and supply, and the quantity and quality of employment".

As regards entrepreneurship, a salient feature was the number of dedicated youth entrepreneurship schemes being managed over several years by Ministries of Youth in cooperation with other partners such as in Barbados, Dominica, and Grenada, and the sustained levels of youth-led businesses arising from these partnership initiatives. Such programming involved a package of supports, coaching and mentoring, and access to micro funds. Other NYPs such as Belize, British Virgin Islands and Saint Kitts and Nevis, recommended Government action to develop entrepreneurship programmes that met the comprehensive needs of young people wanting to start-up their own businesses. The Cayman Islands referred to a "Small Business Initiative" with the Department of Commerce to match interested young entrepreneurs with existing businesses to "spur entrepreneurial spirit". Dominica recognized the need to give more support to young entrepreneurs including through increased access to markets and non-financial supports. Guyana's mechanisms on youth entrepreneurship included efforts to protect youth innovation, intellectual property and patenting procedures, advocacy for a regional virtual regional clearing house to offer youth entrepreneurs improved access to Caribbean and South American markets, and the introduction of youth protection schemes that increase the Government's engagement of youth-owned businesses to at least 10 per cent of annual government expenditure.

There were relevant linkages in this priority area to critical partners at national and regional levels to influence and enhance employment creation and entrepreneurship programming including, ILO, ECLAC, Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) World Bank (Dominica) on a national youth employment database and youth employment. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines pointed to the provision of Finance for Small Business and assistance from the Caribbean Export Development Agency (CEDA) for small business owners, but it was not indicated whether there are specific provisions for youth entrepreneurs.

NYPs of The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Saint Lucia, all recommended improved youth access to effective youth service or volunteerism initiatives as community builders and to some extent to enhance readiness for the world of employment.

Poverty and hunger

This priority area focuses on addressing the impact of poverty on the access to resources as a social justice and inclusiveness issue and recommended measures to mitigate young people's disproportionate vulnerability such as:

- Making involvement in agricultural sector attractive.
- Skills-training opportunities to promote income generation.
- Land grants for young citizens.
- Ensuring mechanisms to promote and link food production and distribution between rural and urban youth.

Most NYPs provided for improved access to resources under provisions of employment and youth entrepreneurship, with some recommending enhanced financial inclusion and equitable access for youth to financial services to enable business ownership, and land and home acquisitions (Saint Kitts and Nevis). The British Virgin Islands and the Cayman Islands referred to social protections available in the wider national ecosystem for poverty alleviation, but it was not evident whether these contained youth-specific protections. Measures to promote youth involvement in agriculture were integrated within the employment priority area in some NYPs, with a focus on the equitable participation of young women and men into all aspects of agriculture as a sustainable livelihood for young people, for national food security, and as an enabler of overall development (Saint Lucia).

Several NYPs made deliberate pro-youth provisions to address land and housing ownership bearing in mind the chronic problems associated with both for young people. The Bahamas recommended that 22 per cent of all government low-cost homes be reserved for young people under the age of 35 years who meet the basic mortgage requirements and creating a National Youth Land Trust Corporation so that Crown Lands could be reserved for young people to purchase. Belize recommended creating a "decentralized land tenure mechanism" to ensure young people's access to land titling and housing opportunities as part of the push for economic advancement and poverty reduction. Barbados included a separate priority area on housing in response to the difficulty young people face to access affordable housing solutions and included a specific action measure to provide young mothers, people with disabilities and those living with HIV/AIDS or other illnesses with decent housing and the means to help themselves. The Cayman Islands also included measures to promote youth access to housing.

In general, while policy provisions in this area were a good start in addressing the scope of WPAY's hunger and poverty priority areas they were not explicit in addressing the specific needs of the most vulnerable Caribbean youth populations. These include youth who cannot attract credit and cannot qualify for loans for housing or land because of their lived circumstances, because they are females, because of their sexual identity, because they live in stigmatized zones or areas, or because they are justice-involved. Saint Kitts and Nevis's NYPs recommended a safe house/bridging facility for young people leaving prison, with attention to the "different needs and circumstances of young women and of young men". More attention is needed to establish successful interconnectedness to address compounded aspects of persistent poverty-specific vulnerability.

Globalization

This priority focuses on the opportunities and challenges of globalization and its impact on youth, with attention to:

- Impact on youth employment opportunities and migration patterns, youth culture and consumerism and global youth citizenship and activism.
- Issues of young migrants and other social and economic hardships faced by youth who are outside of the scope of NYPs and other protections.
- Providing young people with viable alternatives and incentives to stem brain drain especially in countries like Haiti and Jamaica where more than 80 per cent of college educated workers were leaving.
- Rights and access of young migrants including through innovative approaches to deal with their rights, integration, economic and financial access and retain links to the home country.

Youth policies tended to respond to the challenges of globalization in priority areas of education and employment. For example, Jamaica's NYP recommended "youth employment and skills development in the context of globalization and technological innovation". Other NYPs recognized the need for education and job readiness in their young citizens to take up opportunities of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (CSME), which allows free movement of graduates and skilled workers to work and live in CARICOM countries. There were no provisions to stem the youth brain drain. Belize referred to the challenge posed by migration, human trafficking and related crimes but no corresponding measures were found to manage youth risks in these areas. Provisions to ensure belonging and connectedness with national identity and culture were represented expressly in NYPs of The Bahamas, British Virgin Islands, Guyana, Montserrat, Cayman Islands, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Trinidad and Tobago. In some cases, provisions on youth participation e.g. in Barbados, Dominica, Saint Kitts, Saint Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago embraced a larger perspective of preparation and readiness for responsible (global) citizenship.

Mindful of the increased numbers of migrant populations in some Caribbean countries, there were provisions made to address the growing anomaly of stateless youth consistent with CYDAP Goal 4, whose key outcomes included reduced "vulnerabilities of young people migrating in the region through legal and illegal channels, as well as young family members left behind". Saint Kitts and Nevis's NYP included an action point to ensure "children born of foreign residents residing in the Federation can access an identity and identity documents". However, the NYP of The Bahamas was most comprehensive on the issue of societal dynamics of migrant youth, no doubt due to the large populations of 1st, 2nd and 3rd generations Haitian youth residing there. The NYP of The Bahamas spoke of "young stateless persons" unable to identify themselves as Bahamian or with the nationality of their parents, and the resulting tension created "between Bahamians and immigrants, social unrest, forced displacement and regional instability". The NYP included measures to protect stateless youth, to navigate requirements for citizen applications, and for Bahamians of Haitian descent to have (a) fair and equal access to grants to assist them with developing themselves, (b) temporary work permits to qualify for various jobs pending a determination of their citizenship or naturalization process (c) advocacy campaigns managed on their behalf by the Ministry of Youth to bring awareness and appreciation to the "many complex issues and challenges" with the view of sensitizing the public to their plight, and (d) temporary status accorded by Government, pending a complex process of determination of their citizenship rights.

2. Youth health and wellbeing

Priority areas: Health; HIV/AIDS; Drug abuse; Youth justice; Peace and security.

Health

This priority area concentrated on enhanced access to information and services for young people's physical and mental wellbeing and on addressing health improvements for young people focusing on:

- Available information on where to access health services in a timely manner to prevent escalation of health risks and fatalities.
- Development of health education programmes focusing on primary health knowledge, healthy life style behaviours and practices and overall health improvements for youth.
- Promotion of health services, including sexual and reproductive health rights, education and services.

As with other priority areas, all NYPs included policy actions on youth health and wellbeing in all forms critical to the empowerment of young people with measures across a range of public health education, early intervention, treatment, and harm reduction for adolescents and youth to be available in schools and spaces that young people normally occupy. There were important linkages to the school system as a youth space for the promotion of health education and healthy practices, and to health sector policy roll-out managed by the Ministry of Health targeting adolescents and youth. NYPs included measures to manage chronic life style diseases affecting young people in greater numbers, proper nutrition education, and the promotion of sports and physical literacy in schools and youth spaces for youth healthy lifestyles and wellbeing.

Action points for youth programming on tobacco, alcohol and other substance abuse were integrated into public health education to achieve health improvements for young people. Special recommendations to address mental health concerns of young people were addressed in NYPs of Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis. Ensuring youth health improvements in cases of bullying, interpersonal violence, accidents, cyber bullying, and psychological trauma were also mentioned as youth wellbeing issues. Some policy actions for youth mental and emotional wellbeing were located in other priority areas such as in the domains of youth rights, genuine participation, and social inclusion.

Policy measures on youth access to youth-friendly services that were confidential, accessible, and respectful of youth diversity, were also largely covered. There was comprehensive focus on adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights given the precedent established by CARICOM's CYDAP in this area.

HIV/AIDS

Focus was given to considering how poverty, the lack of essential information and access to education and gender inequality can increase the vulnerability of youth to HIV/AIDS. Action points are recommended on:

- Promotion of good sanitation and hygiene practices and prevention of disease and illness among youth resulting from poor health practices.
- Promotion of healthier lifestyles, including through discouraging substance abuse.
- Taking measures to protect children, adolescents and youth from neglect, abandonment and all types of exploitation and abuse, such as abduction, rape and incest, and pornography, trafficking and acts of paedophilia and prostitution.
- Combating malnutrition among young people.

Only Barbados has a separate policy goal to "enable young people to tackle lifestyle diseases, especially HIV/AIDS", with the NYP reflecting the HIV/AIDS pandemic as being of critical concern. Policy

measures recommend prevention strategies to cope with lifestyle diseases; a legal framework to prevent discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS; and aligning the age of consent with the age of access so that young persons have the right to get tested for HIV/AIDS and other Sexually Transmitted Infections (STI) from age 16 without their parent's consent. Most NYPs addressed HIV/AIDS in policy actions under Youth Health and Wellbeing specifically in terms of awareness, prevention, testing, counselling and treatment, with linkages to active programmes of the Ministry of Health and other Departments. Belize spoke of apps developed to increase HIV/AIDS awareness and supports among youth. Cayman Islands prevention strategies are managed by the Red Cross and by the Cayman AIDS Foundation that educates students and adults. Grenada's NYP advocates for youth representation on the National HIV/AIDS Committee. Belize has included the work of peer educators and youth leaders in HIV/AIDS education and behaviour change under the HIV/AIDS PANCAP programme.

Most Caribbean countries operate within a legislative agenda of Children Protection Acts and Sexual Offences Acts that contain explicit provisions to protect children, adolescents and youth from abduction, rape and incest. Given their overarching protections and sanctions, such legislation should be integrated into NYP frameworks. It would be generally useful if NYPs could incorporate these within the enabling environment of child protections. Child pornography, trafficking and acts of paedophilia and prostitution are however issues of growing concern for Caribbean governments, and there is a responsibility under NYPs for a proactive programme of education, awareness building, peer support and other services so that adolescents and youth are empowered as part of their own care and support system against these crimes that carry health and safety risks to youth. It was noted that the NYP of Saint Kitts and Nevis in the domain of youth health and wellbeing recommends actions to manage the negative impacts of pornography on young people, and to enhance health outcomes for fringe populations and marginalized or vulnerable youth at risk of HIV/AIDS, including members of LGBTI young persons, adolescent sex workers, young Men Who Have Sex with Men, homeless youth, among others.

Drug Abuse

Drug abuse is an issue that intersects with young people's health, civic and economic participation, and delinquency and crime and violence that may lead to justice-involved scenarios. WPAY recommends an inclusive agenda to:

- Reduce the demand for and supply of illicit drugs at regional and international levels.
- Integrate young people and their networks in education and advocacy on drug use and addiction supports.
- Provide care, drug rehabilitation and treatment of youth, mindful of specific needs of chronic users and vulnerable youth populations.

In the Caribbean combatting the illicit drug trade and its effects on societies commands high-level political focus, legislation and policy, investments and long-term cooperation agreements such as the Caribbean Basic Security Initiative with CARICOM and USAID. Drug and substance abuse prevention is managed as a national security, economic development issue and health priority. Provisions on drugs and substance abuse in NYPs tend to focus on education and advocacy to prevent and reduce drug use, to promote expressed linkages to supports established in the national ecosystem to treat addiction, and to promote re-entry and second chance options for youth abusing drugs.

Education, awareness, and peer programmes are integrated into schools. In Belize, there is a drug week established in most high schools for awareness and education on drugs and substance abuse. The British Virgin Island's National Anti-Drug Strategy of 2009 integrates the Department of Youth Services and youth outreach within its multi-agency agenda.

National Drug Units established in Ministries of Health, or under other sector responsibility, tend to lead these initiatives in most countries. A challenge will be to ensure that youth as main stakeholders are mainstreamed into comprehensive national programming solutions. Another challenge for NYPs will be to change prevailing behaviours and youth-sub-cultures that normalize marijuana and alcohol abuse. NYPs working with national drug programmes, will also have to develop specificity to manage education and advocacy around the use of new designer drugs.

Youth justice

As with drug abuse, youth justice is not a stand-alone sector. WPAY recommends measures to address issues that perpetuate inequality, youth apathy and societal alienation which contribute to delinquency. Recommended responses include:

- Comprehensive programming that ensures inclusion of diversity, equality of access and opportunity among youth in social, civic, and economic spheres.
- Controlling access to guns and small arms.
- Rehabilitation and alternatives to detention using, among other things, community-based approaches that promote social inclusion and strengthen the overall wellbeing of youth.

The concept of comprehensive programming to build protective factors in response to juvenile delinquency reflects the positive youth development approach evident in several Caribbean youth policies, notably Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Saint Lucia. Positive youth development approaches are those that afford young people access to a variety of social resources and opportunities that facilitate healthy mental development, and caring connections with people and systems, such as families and communities. Programmes that reinforce positive social orientation and provide psychosocial support for young people living with the effects of trauma, victimization, and violence, and involve parents, are arranged across several priority areas in Caribbean NYPs. These are mainly youth care and protection, youth safety and security, education, and health wellbeing.

Caribbean NYPs also have developed priority areas on social cohesion, culture and identity, using life skills, sports, the arts and culture, mentorship programmes, volunteerism training and other schemes to promote positive development environments for youth. These combined initiatives are designed to help young people develop resilience and protective factors, and to provide psychosocial benefits such as fostering social integration, while promoting active community involvement and building social capital.

Jamaica's NYP makes a specific recommendation for "support in the prioritisation of preventative policies and programmes aimed at juvenile delinquency". Barbados's NYP includes a separate goal on Gangs, Drugs, and Violence with two main recommendations (a) to support and strengthen the work of social groups in all educational institutions from primary to tertiary level that contribute to building positive connections such as Scouts Girl Guides and 4H Clubs to name a few, and (b) to provide "counselling and personal development training for at risk youth".

There were no NYP measures on the control of guns and small arms, nor to control young people's access to them. However, such measures are usually within the remit of crime prevention and suppression. Still, more attention should be given to integrating such measures in the context of youth development.

Peace and security

This priority examines care, safety and protection for youth both as victims and perpetrators in times of insecurity and instability. It also addresses the need to protect young women and girls exposure to

sexual violence or exploitation. A social environment heavily influenced by conflict can deprive young people of educational, social, economic, and socialization opportunities. Recommended measures in this area should therefore focus on:

- Removing the factors that predispose some youth to engage in conflict.
- Contributing to an environment that prevents youth from engaging in conflict.
- Supporting full youth reintegration into society.

Measures to address youth crime and violence are included as a dedicated policy priority in the NYPs of Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Saint Lucia, and are integrated as sub-themes in the priority goals of all other NYPs under review. Where the Trinidad and Tobago Youth Policy has no explicit goal on Crime and Violence, the NYP is aligned to the Government's Medium-Term Policy Framework which promotes action on human security and the maintenance of law and order. This coverage is reflective of the clear presence of violence and insecurity in the Caribbean. In times of social unrest and insecurity, GBV is often more prevalent.

Most NYPs reviewed did not include provisions to support adolescent and youth crime and violence prevention consistent with WPAY guidelines. There is therefore a mix of provisions on restorative justice and alternative sentencing options, which call attention to the enabling legislative environment needed to support juvenile justice reforms, while the softer aspects of achieving peace and security are managed through social crime prevention programming. This is in line with Positive Youth Development approaches and reflective of the Social Ecological Model (SEM) for achieving behavioural and positive social change to build protective factors and pre-empt or reduce risky behaviours and violent impulses that land youth in conflict with the law. In Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the National Commission on Crime Prevention Unit in the Ministry of National Security is mandated to engage youth in various activities, and their Plan Against Crime campaign operating for over 10 years has taught young people to play the steel pan, while also providing mentoring and social skills to build their self-esteem. In Belize, the National Anti-Drug Council applies a multi-agency approach with the police, the probations department, the courts system, the Youth Department and youth organizations to work on demand reduction for drug use and associated negative behaviours. In Jamaica, the Safe School Programme (Anti-Gang Initiative) is a collaborative initiative of the Ministry of National Security. Police Officers are placed in select (at risk) schools as School Resource Officers to reduce incidents of violence and respond promptly where they occur. The programme includes a psycho-social component that "will help in changing the behaviours of the youth involved". Jamaica's National Police Youth Club Council (NPYCCJ) also works specifically on fostering a better relationship between Communities and the Police through the Community Safety and Security Branch of the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF).

Social crime prevention efforts require a strong partnership with the police within safe spaces to build healthy relationships with at risk youth, justice-involved youth, and youth living with trauma who do not normally have positive experiences with the police. NYPs of Dominica and Saint Kitts and Nevis, recommend enhanced capacity and systems building in the police for community policing and a pro-youth and pro-community partnership agenda.

While efforts at peace and security building for youth are often located outside of Youth Ministries and Departments, the Barbados Youth Department manages a crime prevention strategy that connects young people to programmes to strengthen their protective factors and offers other opportunities for self-development and personal wellbeing. Belize manages a programme to prevent low risk offenders from engaging the justice system and trains at-risk youth to act as peacekeepers in urban and rural communities. Dominica has identified the same peacekeeper goal for its Champions of Peace programme, while the Saint Kitts Youth Volunteer Corps engages at risk young women and men

in community-building activities. The British Virgin Islands implements continuous healthy relationships sessions for youth across the education system to prevent violence and anti-social behaviours. These initiatives combine to enhance youth engagement as peace-builders and agents of positive social change.

The policy measures on Peace and Security also include initiatives to address re-entry and reintegration of justice-involved youth, and to manage recidivism amongst juveniles. The NYPs of the OECS referred to ongoing efforts to reform the comprehensive legislative framework for child care and protection, probation and related support under the OECS Juvenile Justice Project. Belize's Community Action for Public Safety project offers a holistic approach to the juvenile justice system, comprising cognitive behavioural therapy, reintegration, and linkages to programmes for skill development, and education re-enrolment for employment. Most NYPs contained policy actions on restorative justice and alternative sentencing options for young offenders.

Some NYPs contain GBV provisions as part of overall crime and violence prevention. Saint Kitts and Nevis recommends steps to "address the abuse, exploitation, trafficking or other forms of violence against children and young people, especially young women in the sex trade", and also recommends in its wider gender priority area "to safeguard and protect youth from abuses such as human trafficking, sexual abuse, grooming, incest, casual sex work, child abuse in all forms, and GBV". Dominica's NYP recommends joint action between the Youth Department and the National Youth Council to "implement strategies and programmes geared towards empowering young people in preventing GBV". In most cases, NYPs recognize the role of the Bureau for Gender Affairs in managing youth-appropriate GBV prevention programmes as well as the role of Governments in enforcing applicable legislation on gender-based violence where such exists (Jamaica Green Paper).

Overall, NYPs tended to articulate the distinct domains of WPAY relating to crime, violence and their contributing or compounding factors under one all encompassing main priority area.

3. Youth in civil society

Priority areas: Participation; Girls and young women; Environment; ICT; Personal development; Intergenerational relations.

Participation

WPAY frames this priority area within a rights-based approach that promotes youth engagement in all aspects of society, with main recommendations to:

- Provide a conducive environment for freedom of association, the right of assembly, freedom of expression, and right to information.
- Facilitate the capacity building of youth organizations and associations including enhancing sources of financial, educational and technical support for their effective functioning.
- Promote and include youth in government, policy formation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- Encourage participation in all spheres and sectors of society.

This construct of "participation" helps to define not only who is a youth, but the "what" and "how" of youth, through the elaboration of participation avenues and contexts for individual and community development, for economic enfranchisement and for framing the national and global governance agenda. This is referenced in NYPs as youth empowerment. All Caribbean NYPs under review have elaborated measures for youth participation and empowerment in this context.

Enhanced youth participation and representation is mainly enabled in the Caribbean NYPs under review through youth-led governance movements and networks. Such networks are intended to engage more and diverse youth cohorts as part of decision-making on issues that impact youth. From information contained in NYPs and the results of the subregional survey, there are youth-led agencies such as National Youth Councils, Youth Parliaments or country Ambassador Corps. There are also youth structures in all CARICOM countries such as Sint Martin, Martinique and Guadeloupe, although the extent of their activism and influence is not known. National youth movements have a role in youth policy formulation, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation as provided for in NYPs of Anguilla, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Saint Lucia, and Saint Kitts and Nevis. There are recommendations for strategic investment in these agencies and youth policy measures recommend funding and other supports to strengthen them to play their full roles.

Barbados and Belize have also established a Youth Volunteer Corps, or a National Youth Service to build youth leadership and connections to community, focusing on the benefits of such schemes to enhance young people's civic participation, while grounding in their rights and responsibilities as citizens. Young people's economic participation in the context of social justice is provided for under priority areas relating to education and employment.

Youth participation as a human right is a principle that is gaining credence in the world of public policy and programming. It is a concept that is fundamental to youth mainstreaming especially in sectors where youth voices, concerns and solutions should influence policy directions, including in agriculture, the environment, tourism, technology and national security. Indeed, there are recommendations in some NYPs for young people to sit on boards and committees across a range of sectors of national influence.

Finally, most NYPs speak to greater inclusion and diversity in youth participation, and most NYPs target "at risk", "vulnerable", or "marginalized" youth populations in discrete priority areas and actions as beneficiaries of programmes, opportunities and services. However, the genuine participation of these groups in framing their own development appears limited in practice.

Girls and young women

This priority area is meant to emphasize the need to achieve gender equality in key areas such as education, health and employment and tackle systemically all forms of discrimination in conformity with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), as referenced in the WPAY, through appropriate measures to:

- Scale up protective services for victims and eliminate all forms of violence against women.
- Enforce national laws that protect young females from violence, abuse and exploitation, in all their forms.
- Ensure gender balanced environments within schools – from educational material to gender mainstreaming.
- Eliminate discriminatory laws and practices throughout society.
- Ensure equal access to employment opportunities for young women and men mindful of traditional gender roles and stereotypes.

CEDAW as the framework for achieving gender equality is integrated in NYPs of several countries whose Governments are party to the Convention. However, discrete provisions for girls and women in the domains of education, health, employment and ICTs were underrepresented in Caribbean NYPs, even though the majority of policies refer to the inclusion of the principle of gender equality for youth development, which is also recommended in the Baku Commitment to Youth Policies. The articulation

of the issues of women and girls in the responses are symptomatic of a very confined understanding of the topic, which is borne out in the related NYP provisions. The challenges presented for girls and young women are within context of GBV prevention and awareness, and parity for pay and education. There are helpful measures for example in the NYP of Dominica for a role for all young people in managing GBV. The British Virgin Islands seek to ensure “sport and recreational planning and programmes are gender-aware and diversity sensitive”. For the most part, programming responses for girls and women referenced Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, consistent with CARICOM’s current policy and programming such as PANCAP.

St. Lucia’s NYP recommended gender mainstreaming provisions to (a) ensure gender equality and gender education in national programming is youth-friendly and age-appropriate, targets all levels of the formal education system, and promotes gender rights and equality as a national cultural practice, (b) promote gender equality and gender diversity for wellbeing and to educate, advocate and address the elimination of discriminatory practices and attitudes towards LGBTI youth in schools, workplaces and across communities, and (c) support females in choosing career paths in the field of ICT, including by mapping and mitigating the gender-related dynamics of interest, motivation, efficacy, acceptance and role modelling that can contribute to low participation.

The two countries with stand-alone national youth policy goals for gender are Antigua and Barbuda and Saint Kitts and Nevis. Antigua and Barbuda’s Gender Relations and Gender Equity priority area promotes the value and principle of gender equality as the basis for the delivery of services for educating teen mothers, motivating boys and young men; addressing prostitution, domestic violence, and increased HIV/AIDS infections in young women. Saint Kitts and Nevis’ NYP cross-cutting gender priority area seeks to “ensure youth development is grounded in human rights, and gender equality is fully integrated into all development work and practice targeting young people” mindful of issues “faced by distinct populations of girls and women that prevent their full, effective and equal enjoyment of rights” (Saint Kitts and Nevis (NYP). However, gender equality and intersectionality and its impacts on all spheres of access and participation for girls and young women were generally under-represented, pointing to the need for more detailed guidance to Governments in framing gender equality provisions in NYPs.

Environment

The natural environment is important for young people’s health and opportunity. Youth therefore should be fully integrated into the planning and implementation of strategies geared towards ensuring environmentally sustainable growth and development through the following measures:

- Integrating environmental education into school curricula and youth programming.
- Making materials on environment related information available for youth networks and fostering youth-led exchanges and action on the environment.
- Integrating youth in media on environmental sustainability issues.
- Enhancing the role of the media as a tool for widespread dissemination of environmental issues to youth.
- Providing a mechanism for youths to network in order to develop home-grown solutions to environmental challenges.

This priority area is significantly underrepresented in NYPs. While NYPs of Barbados, Cayman Islands, Dominica, and Saint Kitts and Nevis contain a separate policy goal on Youth and the environment, Barbados identified the challenge common to Caribbean countries with youth and the environment in terms of a need for “continuous education and involvement of more stakeholders in the promotion of healthy practices to sustain the environment”. Traditionally youth participation in

environmental preservation has tended to be relegated to end level actions such as beach clean-ups. With the global high-level focus on young people for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, the scope and context for integrating environmental sustainability within national development priorities has grown. At national level, increased investment in the green and blue economies also generates more opportunities for the general public to get involved, including young people.

Dominica's measures on climate change and the environment seek to develop youth capacity in environmental research and sciences, and to support youth enterprises that promote sustainable environmental practices. Barbados implemented opportunities to allow entrepreneurs to create innovative green jobs. Furthermore, green careers in primary and secondary schools were encouraged under a Garden Project. Belize recommended outreach activities in communities to support youth-led initiatives in environmental awareness and action. Belize also supports youth participation in conferences and capacity building initiatives on environmental sustainability.

In general, NYPs referred to school programmes, Earth Day observance and activities such as school and community gardens, tree planting, and community clean-up drives to engage young people's knowledge and talents in protecting the environment. Larger national campaigns such as the ban on plastics (Cayman Islands) and on Styrofoam (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) managed by the private sector and the media in both cases, engaged youth populations in environmentally sound and ethical consumerism. Barbados and Saint Lucia recommended measures in partnership with the Caribbean Youth Environmental Network (CYEN) to integrate more young people in the environmental protection and sustainability agenda. CYEN⁵³ is the regional NGO that focuses on empowering young people and their communities to tackle socio-economic and environmental issues.

Information and communication technologies

For ICT, WPAY gives attention to actions intended to remove disparities in access, to increase opportunities for young people to become digital natives, and to use ICTs strategically in young peoples' spaces and environments for information, to promote education and employment, and for social inclusion.

Access to and use of ICTs is seen as an important indicator of human development. Most NYPs tended to integrate the use of ICTs for education, consistent with Governments' investments in enhancing access to computers for schools and for families, such as the Caribbean-wide *One Laptop per Child* initiative. Policy actions on ICTs and education also required a range of reforms of school curricula and teaching methods to incorporate ICTs for enhanced student retention and educational attainment.

Three NYPs (The Bahamas, Saint Lucia, and Saint Kitts and Nevis) identify a separate priority area for ICTs, concentrating policy actions on young people as "digital natives" and on using and innovating ICTs to improve young people's lives and communities. There were also innovative provisions supporting the use of ICTs in national governance to "ensure elected officials maintain up-to-date links with young people on their work and portfolios", and in entrepreneurship, to establish a virtual space for youth entrepreneurs to grow their business and market their services (Saint Lucia). In the areas of ICTs and youth employment, Saint Kitts and Nevis's policy recommends using ICTs to stimulate youth entrepreneurship to foster technology-based business, and to promote more opportunities for young people to innovate mobile applications to keep them connected, safe and informed on national issues. In general provisions and measures on ICTs stress access for youth, with a focus on youth who are out of the mainstream.

⁵³ CYEN members are drawn from Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Dominican Republic, Dominica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint, Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

Personal development

Sports, leisure and recreation are important in the development of all aspects of an individual, in the promotion of social inclusion, in defining young people's identities, and in exploring their culture. WPAY guidelines recommend the following:

- Inclusion of leisure time comprehensively in youth programming and youth policy development to build resilience and protective factors, fight against social ills and provide opportunities for youth to interact positively with adults and their peers and make a difference in their societies.
- Providing facilities that give opportunities to young people active in the fields of drama, the fine arts, music and other forms of cultural expression.
- Promoting the participation of young people in tourism, international cultural events, sports and all other activities of special interest to youth.
- Integrating leisure-time activities as elements of educational programmes, urban planning and rural development and the media to promote youth understanding and awareness of all aspects of social integration, including tolerance and non-violent behaviour.

All Caribbean countries are signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). CRC imposes obligations on States parties in four areas relating to the rights of the child up to 18 years of age: rights to rest and leisure, to play and engage in recreational activities appropriate to their age; and to other rights regarding access to, and enjoyment of, cultural and artistic activity

Historically, most Departments of Youth are located within a parent Ministry which typically also includes the national sports portfolio, and in some instances the culture portfolio. As such sports as a leisure activity in primary and secondary schools is usually integrated with youth programming to the extent that it institutionalizes co-functionality in both spheres. This phenomenon has also occasioned a higher quality and quantity of state-sponsored leisure options for younger youth cohorts. More recently, sports as a tool for peace and development has been included in the youth policy actions of Barbados, British Virgin Islands, Guyana, and Saint Lucia. Programmes using sports in its fullest sense for high risk youth who distrust or are uncomfortable with formal "classroom" settings give attention to learning outcomes that include participation, inclusion, promotion of human values, acceptance of rules, discipline, health promotion, encouraging non-violence, tolerance, gender equality, teamwork, among other skills for development and coping.

Sports, the arts, and other cultural and heritage pursuits are recommended measures in NYPs to provide young people with leisure and recreation for youth wellbeing outcomes. Other policy actions recommend improved access to quality programmes which provide opportunities to interact positively with adults and peers, build interpersonal skills and contribute to social capital. These recommendations target young people who would not normally access well-established programmes that present favourable youth outcomes. Examples of such programmes are Rotaract, Duke of Edinburgh Awards and 4 H Clubs.

There were no innovative options or recommendations noted within the scope of the review but a clear admission of the need for more diversity in the type, scheduling, and location of leisure options available to youth.

Intergenerational relations

Acknowledgement of an ageing population juxtaposed within the current youth bulge, this priority area focuses on the need for strong ties, social cohesion, and mutually supportive relationships between both populations, among other things, through:

- Government support for intergenerational cohesion including for skills and knowledge mentorship; for apprenticeship of youth businesses; youth transfer of technologies.
- Intergenerational programmes which provide services that benefit youth and older people mutually and increase social cohesion.
- Support to young people who are caregivers to siblings, parents or grandparents, especially where trauma and adversity are involved.
- Partnerships between youth organizations and local and national governments to promote suitable mentorship programmes.

In diverse provisions on education, health, youth crime and violence, participation, employment and entrepreneurship, Caribbean NYPs recognize the importance of intergenerational relationships. In the areas of education and health, for example, NYPs recommend building capacities of parents as agents of positive health and wellbeing.

In other specific provisions, Belize recommended the promotion of “spaces for intergenerational dialogue”. Cayman Islands and Saint Lucia called for the development of intergenerational good practice models to ensure appropriate child protections and safety, and healthy youth-adult partnerships. Saint Kitts and Nevis included policy actions to build community capacity and support for intergenerational programmes that reflect community interests and talents in sports, games, and traditional activities, and “to ensure youth-ownership of cultural heritage”. The British Virgin Islands and the Cayman Islands referred to mentorship models such as Big Brothers/Big Sisters and the role of service clubs in fostering strong and lasting relationships between youth and adults. Jamaica’s long-standing programming of the Police Youth Clubs also represented good practice for intergenerational partnerships where building healthy and trust-based relationships among at risk youth and communities with the Jamaica Police Force is concerned.

Under the priority area of employment and entrepreneurship, intergenerational relationships were encouraged to ensure viable mentorship programmes to support young entrepreneurs from perspectives of business and personal development. While provisions on gender equality and health made special mention of the needs of teen mothers and fathers, there was no specific mention of other youth with responsibilities as caregivers.

4. Specific observations on the formulation and arrangement of thematic priorities

In general, the NYPs under review were largely faithful to the scope and purpose of the WPAY and to the principles of rights-based youth development that shaped the overarching policy framework. The supportive regional framework of CARICOM’s CYDAP and the Commonwealth’s PAYE were significantly influential in the framing of the NYPs and the issues addressed in thematic priorities. International legal frameworks to which Caribbean countries are State parties notably the CRC and CEDAW, were relevant in provisions of some NYPs. NYPs developed after 2015, recognised the 2030 Agenda and recommended building youth capacity and connections to support the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. Belize has hosted a World Youth Conference to raise youth awareness, and participation in achieving the SDGs, and is working to secure UNDP support for dedicated national programming on SDG education for young people.

Core commitments of Governments in the Lisbon Declaration relating to education, employment, health, especially safety, security, peace and justice, and rights of youth to participation are comprehensively addressed and articulated with the WPAY. However, the priority area relating to girls and young women was not sufficiently reflective of the scope of WPAY provisions. Even though most NYPs theorised youth development as a gendered issue, there were few deliberate policy actions aimed at gender equality outcomes using intersectional lens. Programming in education, health,

employment, and all other functional priority areas, did not consider whether any special measures for girls and young women were required to ensure their access and enjoyment of supports and services were equal to those of boys and young men. The adoption in 2016 by Latin American and Caribbean Governments of the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework includes specific measures to accelerate gender equality by 2030 and could guide member countries in this process.

While provisions on the environment in NYPs tended to be basic, Dominica's youth policy and that of Saint Kitts and Nevis offered a more comprehensive coverage of the role for young people in all aspects of environmental sustainability and climate change. Given recent catastrophic events in the Caribbean with the passage of hurricanes Irma and Maria in September 2017, it is expected that Governments will give renewed focus to a more strategic role for young people in climate change, disaster management and ecological remediation and restoration. NYCs and other such national organisations should be encouraged and supported to sign on to the Youth for Climate Action initiative under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) for better informed youth led-advocacy and action-setting on climate change.

Policy actions on hunger and poverty related generally to enhancements in access to young people for employment and livelihoods. However, hunger and poverty and the overarching associated constraints of lack of access to rights, increased exposure to stigmatization and victimization, and constraints associated with small island developing states, rapid and unplanned urbanization and stagnating options in rural life, should be deliberate on supports for young people as customized country-specific initiatives to combat hunger and poverty. The SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and the UN Human Settlements Programme's (UN-Habitat) New Urban Agenda (2016) offer expert guidance and opportunities for youth-specific actions to accelerate human development outcomes in the sub-region.

SIDS leaders have acknowledged that the essential requirements for sustainable development are poverty eradication; changing unsustainable and promoting sustainable patterns of consumption and production; and, protecting and managing the natural resource base for economic and social development. The SAMOA Pathway makes linkages between SIDS commitments focused on sustainable energy, natural resource management, an ocean-based and green economy approach and partnerships, thereby providing a holistic view on adaptation measures for SIDS. SIDS Youth have a particularly crucial role to play in contributing meaningful new solutions to find new modes of governance for oceans, green growth and Ecosystem-based Approaches (EbA) to building resilience and Climate Change Adaptation. Caribbean NYPs are typically sparse on the issue of climate change and its impacts on SIDS, so this is critical for the review and appraisal work especially as issues of SIDS under the SAMOA Pathway were considered in the finalization of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. Under the New Urban Agenda, leaders have committed to provide basic services for all citizen such as access to housing, safe drinking water and sanitation, education, culture and access to ICT.

There were policy themes and priorities in a broader sampling of NYPs that are not included as WPAY priority areas. The specific themes and countries are mentioned below. They can be grouped into two main categories:

- a) Thematic priorities reflecting the scope and intent of CYDAP Goal 4 – Culture:
 - Restore Core Values – Barbados
 - Identification & Self-Awareness – The Bahamas
 - Identity, Culture and Social Cohesion – British Virgin Islands
 - Socio-cultural identity for all youth of the Cayman Islands

- Youth Identity and Empowerment – Guyana
 - Youth and Culture – Montserrat
 - Youth and Religion – Montserrat
 - Youth Excellence – Saint Kitts and Nevis
 - Investing in youth social capital and strengthening their resilience – Grenada
- b) Thematic priorities reflecting the scope and intent of Goal 5 – Policy and Institutional Framework for Youth Development, and reflecting PAYE 3 – Strengthening Youth Ministries; and PAYE 12 – Professionalize the Youth Work Sector:
- Restructuring the Ministry Responsible for Youth Affairs – The Bahamas
 - Strengthened Capacity and Partnership in the Youth Sector – Jamaica
 - Professionalising Youth Work – Dominica
 - Institutional strengthening of the Youth Development Division (YDD) and the National Youth Council (NYC) – Dominica
 - Youth Development Work and Youth Mainstreaming – Saint Kitts and Nevis
 - Provision of quality services for young people by youth-serving agencies – Cayman Islands

In both instances, these priorities were shaped to respond to two acute realities of Caribbean youth development programming not considered within the global soft policy agenda. Specifically: (a) integrating young women and men within a shared vision and agenda for enhancing the development and appreciation of Caribbean culture and identity and commitment to regional integration; and (b) restructuring the organisational system for youth policy and development in the Caribbean with a focus on People, Tasks, Structure and Technology to achieve professional and technical efficiencies in the public management of youth affairs, consistent with the principles and practice of youth development work.

In respect of (a) above, in Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Saint Lucia, young people were also trained and deployed to collect data to inform the national youth policies. All the foregoing accounted for relative homogeneity in Caribbean NYPs relative to the WPAY agenda. In respect of (b) the attempt to identify the best-fit institutional mechanisms for policy implementation often commenced at the policy drafting stages with the appointment of inter-ministerial mechanisms that were expected to be sustained as national youth policy implementation and monitoring structures.

From the review process, it is clear that more attention should be paid to framing unambiguous policy actions that align, as far as practicable to international good practice. WPAY thematic priorities such as the environment and climate change, girls and women, and hunger and poverty (including housing and agriculture), drug abuse, and ICTs are in the domain of UN system agencies. Several of them have established a special unit or guidelines for integrating young people into their work which are evidence-informed and offer more robust material for developing programmes with relevant indicators to feed into strong national results framework for youth policy and programming.

Table 8 summarises WPAY priority areas in Caribbean NYPs and shows UN system and other agencies working in the respective priority area from whom technical references and guidelines are available.

Table 8
UN Agencies and International Sources for NYP formulation on WPAY Priority Areas

WPAY	Priority Areas	Summary of how thematic area is represented in NYPs of Caribbean countries	UN System Reference and Others
Youth in the global economy	Education	Credible. Guided by education sector reforms, and universal targets on primary and secondary education well. The importance of TVET, informal education, and lifelong learning are more focused in policy and programming	UNESCO, UNICEF
	Employment	Good coverage of the topic inclusive of entrepreneurship. Economic participation of diverse youth is a persistent issue. Gender, sexual orientation, and age discrimination complexities in employment are not adequately included. Agriculture and potential of other sectors (globalisation impacts) for youth economic participation are not sufficiently integrated.	ILO/ YEN, UNIDO, UNCTAD, World Bank, Commonwealth
	Hunger & poverty	Some references to agriculture (food security) and income generation but not comprehensive treatment to address persistent barriers and systemic impairment of rights and Access. Housing, settlements, rights to amenities and specific youth and gendered inequities to be addressed.	UN-Habitat - New Urban Agenda, FAO, SDGs, UN Human Rights
	Globalisation	Represented as a concern and threat but no articulation of outcomes to leverage the advantages for youth.	WPAY, SDGs, IOM, SAMOA, UNESCO
Youth in civil society	Participation	Well represented for Youth Councils and parliaments and opportunities for youth at the head of youth-led governance processes. Not enough focus on enabling greater youth diversity, inclusion of vulnerable and hard to reach populations. No references to expanding decision-making to vulnerable and hard to reach groups. More focus on building culture and capacity for peer to peer and youth and community-based/NGO participation. The driving inputs into youth participation programming must be tailored for different audiences, interests, orientations and circumstances. Special focus necessary on an accountability agenda for youth-led networks on whom public funds are invested. More opportunities for consolidation of youth-led multi-sectoral supports into a common development agenda.	ALL, CRC, UNICEF
	Environment	Mainly basic youth participation in environmental conservation (clean-ups). 4 H clubs and the work of the CYEN in some countries on environmental issues. However, the comprehensive environment and climate change agenda, managed in public sector as a "hard issue" is not youth-focused and youth-inclusive, notwithstanding the excellent record of UNEP and its <i>Children and Youth</i> project. With the global profile and public education agenda on the SDGs, there is emerging focus on youth as agents of sustainable consumerism, and environmental practices, with a voice to shape the global agenda.	Youth in Climate Change, UNFCCC, SDGs, UNEP, SAMOA Pathway
	ICTs	Enhanced access to ICTs in school curriculum. Youth ICT centres in communities are underutilised. More deliberate focus on youth as digital natives, use and abuse of ICTs, safety and security concerns of ICTs, addressing cyber-bulling, using ICTs for youth participation and decision making and integrating ICTs in all priority themes especially for education and wealth creation.	ITU, SDGs
	Leisure-time activities	Mainly integrated into health and wellbeing priority area. Sports as a tool for development and peace.	UNESCO, UNICEF, UNODC
Youth and their well-being	Intergenerational issues	Parenting and enhanced family support programmes. Attention to mentorship models to build partnerships for business and interpersonal relationships. More action areas to use the arts and culture to build identity, belonging and social cohesion as mutually beneficial intergenerational programming.	UNICEF, UNESCO, SDG
	Health	Good with more recent focus on CNCs, and issues of youth mental and emotional wellbeing, guided by work of international agencies and health sector reforms.	UNFPA, PAHO, WHO
	HIV/AIDS	Regional coverage and youth leadership under the PANCAP, peer education for HIV AIDS prevention. More attention to youth-friendly counselling and responsiveness. National HIV/AIDS responses still do not effectively integrate young people nor sufficiently reach youth in their spaces.	
	Girls & young women	The articulation of the issues of women and girls in NYP provisions are in the context of GBV prevention and awareness, parity for pay and education, SRHR, including issues of teen mothers and single mothers, and representational balance. Programmes to focus on gender equality and intersectionality, issues for education, health, employment etc as well as more focus on gender norms and stereotypes.	CEDAW, UN Women, SDGs, UNFPA, UN Human Rights, CRC

WPAY	Priority Areas	Summary of how thematic area is represented in NYPs of Caribbean countries	UN System Reference and Others
Youth and their well-being (cont.)	Drug abuse	National campaigns target youth vulnerabilities and availability of drug treatment support. Youth-focused projects using sports and arts. Focus on engaging youth with key partners in managing effects of substance abuse.	PAHO, WHO, UNODC - Youth Initiative, SDGs
	Juvenile delinquency	Greater focus on juvenile justice reforms and revised legislative frameworks translated into NYPs. More promotion of alternative sentencing and restorative justice, managing recidivism, re-entry and reintegration. Gaps - support for justice-involved youth and intersectionality concerns for female justice involved youth.	UNODC - Youth Initiative, SDGs, WPAY, CRC, UN Human Rights
	Youth & Conflict	Employment options for unattached youth, managing youth impulsive behaviour, enhancing relationships between youth and justice actors and training an activities for behaviour transformation. More evidence-based work to build resilience and protective factors and address victimization.	SDG, WPAY, UNODC - Youth Initiative, World Bank

Source: Authors' compilation.

C. Institutional mechanisms for youth policy implementation, programming, follow-up and review

1. Comparative analysis of institutional mechanisms

Information on institutional arrangements available for youth policy implementation in 23 of the 29 countries indicated that the responsibility for youth development rests with a government youth department or Ministry. In Cuba, for example, there is a permanent commission established by law to manage youth affairs (Youth and Social Inclusion, 2013).

Successful policy implementation requires a strong coordination mechanism and an accountable focal point. However, the responsibility of youth policy implementation remains vested in Caribbean youth departments, which tend to be small, with generally weak institutional infrastructure. Nevertheless, there is very encouraging commitment in NYPs, consistent with the institutional framework of the Lisbon Declaration, for youth departments and governments to be more proactive and professional in the management of youth portfolios. Given the tremendous groundwork put into youth development programming by CARICOM and the Commonwealth, among other agencies, youth work is recognized as a stand-alone professional area which demands key enablers. The partnership agenda with National Youth Councils and other youth-led networks in support of youth policy is discussed further in the review on the role of youth in policy implementation

Youth Mainstreaming

Mainstreaming is a key youth principle and result-area for CYDAP and the PAYE. It is evident in Caribbean NYPs. While all NYPs established the principle, ten made special recommendations for mainstreaming as part of their respective institutional mechanisms for policy implementation. The Bahamas called for a National Institute of Youth Development to support evidence-based policy and programming. The British Virgin Islands recommended the creation of a National Youth Commission by an act of Parliament, vested with the authority to manage the mainstreaming agenda, and to receive annual reporting from all stakeholders in youth policy implementation for submission to Parliament. Belize, the Cayman Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Saint Lucia recommended similar high-level inter-agency initiatives to manage youth mainstreaming, linking youth rights and results to a national accountability agenda involving each implementing partner.

Youth policies of The Bahamas, Dominica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Saint Lucia developed recommendations for institutional change and the repositioning of youth departments to function as effective organizational systems for mainstreaming youth development. The model proposed in these NYPs provided for an interdependent organization model to realign and optimize the following:

- Tasks (essential functions for youth development (including for policy and programme design, research, project management, conduct of youth work, performance management, monitoring and evaluation, training design and delivery, communications and community relations);
- People (new job specifications, multifunctionality, people skills for results-based management in all task areas, inclusive, participatory, gender sensitive youth work, young people as implementers);
- Structure (assignment of spaces and linkages for youth in programming; units for cross-support and functionality, for managing external stakeholders and joint projects, and for monitoring and reporting on performance results); and
- Technology (software and systems, learning organisation and knowledge management architecture, media and communications for internal and external publics).

Professionalisation of Youth Work

Ten CARICOM countries whose implementation arrangements were reviewed defined their enabling environment for youth policy and programming as a hybrid mechanism comprising professional youth work, youth mainstreaming, youth as enabling partners, and a main coordinating body. According to The Commonwealth,⁵⁴ promoting the professionalisation of youth work means facilitating youth work education and training, setting competency standards, celebrating good practice, and advocating for national and international youth worker associations. However, the professionalisation of youth work also refers to terms and conditions under which youth workers operate in small under-resourced Departments. As such, investment in strengthening a youth department's structure, systems, human capacity and programme resources, and a solid grounding in positive youth development work and principles were emphasized in reporting on good practices as the contribution of the professionalisation of youth work to significantly enhance the effectiveness and impact of the national youth development.

2. Youth in Policy Implementation

Caribbean countries have a long history of public sector support to national and regional youth movements, and they have traditionally played a dedicated role of strategic interface with wider youth populations in policy development and implementation. CARICOM and The Commonwealth established their own regional youth development structures as part of implementation mechanisms for the CYDAP, and for the PAYE and wider Commonwealth programming.

Youth asset-based and human rights-based principles, the Lisbon Declaration and the WPAY, imply equality in diversity, inclusion, and participatory approaches for youth in all aspects of policy formulation, monitoring and implementation. These principles are usually translated into recommendations for the establishment or strengthening of discrete youth-led movements for policy implementation support, such as National Youth Councils, Student Councils, and Youth Parliaments. Young people's views on the priority issues affecting them are also reflected in policy actions for an accelerated menu of supports to be developed. In this regard, Dominica, Grenada, and Saint Kitts and Nevis recommended the establishment of youth entrepreneur networks to boost the local access and supports for sustained business growth and development and market penetration. Belize recommended enhanced supports to young people working in the areas of environmental sustainability.

Working as part of established movements or in individual capacities with the Youth Departments, young people have forced youth policy formulation in Caribbean countries under review.

⁵⁴ Commonwealth Secretariat (2017), *Youth Work in the Commonwealth: A Growth Profession*.

In The Bahamas and Belize, a group of interested young people managed the accountability agenda for NYP completion. The Permanent Regional Conference of Youth in Guadeloupe produced the multi-sectoral youth policy agenda for persons 16-25 years old in 2014 (Schéma des Politiques de Jeunesse, 2014). Young people received training and were mobilized to assist in data collection and social research for youth policy formulation in Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Saint Lucia.

Regrettably, the level of impact and penetration of these youth movements as genuine partners in development is not always ideal. Some NYPs noted that youth movements / youth leaders need a wider menu of support to perform adequately, especially in some priority areas, for example Dominica recommended more capacity building for youth advocating against youth violence as “peacebuilders and agents of positive social change”. In other instances, NYPs and youth leaders functioning in regional movements such as the CARICOM Youth Ambassadors Corps, the Caribbean Regional Youth Council (CRYC), the Commonwealth Youth Council (CYC) and The University of the West Indies Vice Chancellor’s Students Today Alumni Tomorrow (UWI STAT) Ambassador Corps are perceived as operating within a very narrow sphere of influence with limited grounding in the issues that affect grassroots, fringe and underserved youth populations. Managing this representation divide must be led equally from within, and by Governments. Care should be taken to ensure youth participation is truly representative and diverse beyond young academics and more “seasoned youth”, who admittedly have vital roles to play in shaping national and regional youth development agendas.

It is argued that for meaningful WPAY implementation, there should be the widest possible engagement of youth in implementing NYPs. Efforts should also be made to enhance youth awareness of their human rights and fundamental freedoms. Minimizing the “messiah” effect in youth participation and representation where one “youth leader” represents all interests would be transformational. A more participatory approach should be encouraged.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development contains 20 youth specific targets spread over six key SDGs. These are Goal 2 (hunger), Goal 4 (education), Goal 5 (gender equality), Goal 8 (decent work), Goal 10 (inequality) and Goal 13 (climate change). All of these are key concerns of human development in the Caribbean and are priority areas in NYPs. If young people are to contribute towards shaping national macro-economic policies that drive investments in these sectors, then young women and men will need to become subject matter specialists who work to integrate youth perspectives into key productive sectors like tourism, agriculture, banking and finance, as well as in urban and rural development planning, citizen security and other critical areas of development. It was recognized, during this review process, that youth-led organizations in the subregion are not familiar with this new global development platform. Youth are therefore not making the important linkages between their activities and the 2030 sustainable development Agenda.

Additionally, a role for youth is sometimes not clearly articulated in the implementation of national youth policies and related programmes.

3. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation frameworks for Caribbean NYPs are implied but have not been found to exist in most NYPs sampled. The WPAY does not contain indicators for all of its fifteen priority areas, and while some youth development goals and targets are included in the SDGs the guidance in the two global documents is not comprehensive. Some guidance in managing the M&E requirement for Caribbean NYPs were provided in the CYDAP 2012-2017 and in the PAYE 2008-2013. These “blueprints” suggested core indicators under each priority area, which countries could use in elaborating their own plans. CYDAP’s goals in the domains of education, employment, health and wellbeing, and safety and security, were aligned to relevant sections of the MDGs, PAYE, and UNFPA Action Plan (CYDAP Report). The PAYE used the MDG indicators for youth policy domains and suggested other practical targets for

Governments in PAYE (unique domains such as Action Point 13, Monitor and Evaluate Progress in Youth Development).

This review did not locate any M&E plans expressly elaborated for NYPs. However, most Caribbean countries had a good idea of what they wanted their M&E plan to achieve, what was to be measured and reported on, and the systems and capacity that would be required to sustain the effort. For example:

- Dominica called for increased capacity in the Department of Youth to collect, disaggregate and analyze youth data for M&E, noting the desirability of a sustained partnership with the Statistics Department to achieve this objective.
- Grenada stated that baseline data “must be a pre-requisite to projects and programme implementation” and that young people should be fully trained and integrated for social research.
- Belize proposed that “a set of indicators be agreed upon to accompany the policy but more generally to monitor youth development in Belize – Youth Development Index”.
- The British Virgin Islands committed to developing an M&E Plan to assess the (a) progress and impact of programmes of support on youth; (b) the role of youth in policy implementation; and (c) good practices in the policy implementation.
- The Bahamas mandated that monitoring and evaluation “be conducted at the community, local, island and national levels”, in which “performance indicators are to be identified at the beginning of the implementation of this policy” and proposed that relevant “stakeholders will identify individual benchmarks, timeframes and indicators specific to each action”.
- Saint Lucia committed to develop its M&E Plan guided by available indicators and targets in regional and global M&E frameworks and resolved to seek technical assistance to secure an M&E expert in the Youth Department to support M&E planning, systems and related capacity enhancement.

Observations on the difficulties experienced by States in implementing the WPAY 2000 and the MDGs point to the lack of a clear action agenda and M&E Plan. CARICOM is currently working on a discrete M&E Plan to “facilitate measuring progress towards the implementing the CYDAP” and “to institutionalize the use of M&E as a tool for improving programme implementation and management, transparency and accountability”. The Commonwealth’s 2016 composite index of youth indicators does not include all the priority areas of the WPAY. However, the YDI provides a good starting point to a world of sustained M&E. Governments can look at national averages in the domains to understand where more focus and investments are needed for youth development. They can also apply the YDI methodology to construct country-specific data sets that are more suited to a country’s youth development context.

The challenges that persist are the paucity of data, the limited capacity and budgets to collect, collate, and periodically update data on the status of youth, and a still inchoate approach to collecting and using evidence to inform the design, implementation and review of youth policies and programmes. Several Caribbean countries were not represented in the YDI because of shortcomings in the quality and quantity of data available on young people. While Departments and Ministries of Youth have embraced the need to collect and use data, National Statistical Offices (NSOs), in which this portfolio is vested, tend to have priority mandates for the census, household surveys, poverty assessment, national labour market surveys, among others, and may not be responsive to youth data demands. Instituting a genuine evidence-based approach to youth policy and youth development will require attention to several of these gaps, including introducing a standardized approach to disaggregating youth cohorts in national

census data and ensuring sustained research on issues of youth to guide overall youth development in the Caribbean.

4. Specific observations on institutional arrangements, mechanisms and special strategies established for the implementation of National Youth Policies

The institutional arrangements and strategies for NYP implementation in the subregion all demonstrate a clear understanding of the importance of the fundamental constructs. The theory of change summarized from the experiences and practices reviewed suggest that if a country commits to establishing a framework of development and support for young people consistent with youth rights as human rights; if a community of practice across all sectors and interests of national development has the requisite capacity and commitment to establish and implement a shared national programme of youth policy and rights; if young people receive the access, tools and freedoms to engage broadly with each other and with other stakeholders to construct solutions for their progress in varying domains of development; and if technical systems, programmes, products, information, resources and investments are deployed for youth progress consistent with agreed national benchmarks and regional and global targets in youth policy domains, then young people will be well-adjusted and content, living fulfilling lives and contributing to better societies.

However, there seems to be a wide disconnect between producing a youth policy and achieving policy outcomes. Grenada puts it best in their lessons learned on NYP implementation and evaluation: "The Ministry's programmes must fit the framework of the policy". In other words, after the euphoria of commitment and engagement that accompanies the formulation of youth policy, there must be a clear linkage to an integrated accountability framework and budget that translates excellent strategies on paper into life-transforming options for young people who need them the most.

This review has already established that Youth Departments generally do not enjoy high level political influence in national administrations and budgets assigned to youth development are usually disappointing. There are no known cases informed by this review where NYPs of Caribbean countries have been given force of law. For policies to become effective, further measures are required in terms of devolving legislative authority to an institution that will maintain policy oversight on youth issues. In the British Virgin Islands, the National Youth Commission has been recommended to be a legally established body for that purpose. Saint Kitts and Nevis also vests similar oversight and authority in a Commission. Its work will be supported by a Youth Investment Fund that is to be established. This latter provision seeks to answer the perennial issue of insufficient funds for policy implementation.

Considering that a caucus of Directors of Youth already exists among CARICOM States, there is certainly scope for more thorough interrogation of implementation mechanisms and horizontal support to meet the needs of member states, through continued engagement with this group.

D. Lessons in youth policy implementation

A national youth policy may be defined in simplest terms as the sum of all the initiatives aimed at young citizens. Youth policy integrates a Government's political intent and commitment to young people's social, economic, and political participation in the national macro-development agenda as a human right and prescribes dedicated programmes, legislative reforms and customized strategies involving one or several interdependent domains necessary to affect improvements in the life and wellbeing of young people.

Though variations exist in the circumstances, challenges, and culture of young people around the world, their physical, psychological, intellectual, and emotional changes are universal (WPAY 2000). As

such, policy priority areas elaborated in the WPAY present evidence-informed options for States to consider and customise in formulating NYPs.

1. Policy implementation challenges and terms of its analytical underpinning, flaws and merits

There are a number of identifiable shortcomings in the implementation of youth policies and programmes in the subregion. These weaknesses, which point to the need to improve on the implementation of the Lisbon Declaration, are highlighted as follows:

- Not all respondents to the questionnaire recognized that Youth coordination mechanisms are responsible for ensuring opportunities for widest participation: civic, economic and political.
- Some countries appeared to implement and monitor their NYP routinely. Others, with similar levels of development activity and similar possibilities to implement National Youth policies and programmes, appeared to be more reluctant or unable to embark on consultations and so limited their experience in the application of the Declaration.
- Few countries have undertaken post-project analysis.
- There was a continuing need for countries to achieve coherence in the structure and content of NYPs across the subregion; in requirements for evaluation, and to the shaping of partnership agreements to advance youth policy implementation.
- Themes of Gender equality, Hunger and Poverty, and Globalization, under-represented in earlier youth policies, still do not appear to be adequately represented in discrete policy actions and programmes, considering the importance of these issues in the Caribbean.

Coupled with these, there are institutional challenges across a broad spectrum that impact the implementation of NYPs that are common to most countries. Some are country specific, some are people-centric, but most relate to the absence of an enabling environment and coordinated support for youth development. Directors of Youth specifically identified their main implementation challenges as follows:

- Most youth departments are small and have low ranking among national development imperatives.
- Given existing constraints, youth departments may build partnerships in reactionary ways to target high profile “national issues” that require a youth presence sometimes sacrificing viability for visibility.
- Fundamentally and *a priori*, youth departments are ill-prepared and resourced to transition to embrace a coordinating and monitoring role for the NYPs. There is a piece meal approach to youth development characterized by events and activities that target a specific “problem” to be addressed for youth, and for which a treatment is applied in isolation of composite contextual realities. After the significant investments in youth policy formulation and design, Youth Departments have been observed to continue to focus on short-term events and one-off projects as opposed to adapting their youth work portfolio and approaches in accordance with the policy.
- Departments of Youth need help to identify and implement evidence-based work. Work that connects research and practice must be more than a concept. The ideal would be to create spaces that help practitioners manage the challenges and opportunities of integrating youth work practice with researchers. Youth Departments also need support, including external

support to document good practices and apply and adapt regional and other good practices models.

- Although conceptually articulated within a youth mainstreaming approach, the design and management of the youth development agenda within a formal NYP construct does not facilitate or enable mainstreaming.
- Implementing and measuring youth development and positive youth development consistent with social ecological and public health approaches rely on data and research driven youth programming, which are largely outside of the reach of Departments of youth.
- Youth development policy and programming for “at risk” or “vulnerable youth” as a one size fit all approach reinforces the thinking that youth are a problem to be fixed, and not that they are influenced by individual, complex and recurring factors, positive and negative in their lived spaces, as well as “historical vulnerabilities” in Caribbean social justice constructs.
- There is generally inadequate youth involvement and support for policy implementation given low interest among youth cohorts, insufficient diversity in youth representation and some overtaxing of the small pool of youth leaders and activists who may be attached to youth movements.
- Youth departments are not adequately consulted in development planning and programme design on high-level/ high-investment programmes that target youth.
- Countries are not equipped to manage holistic youth programming that is integrative. NYP policy and programming tend to be sector-specific without reference to intersectionality, to youth experiences and foundational youth inputs as contributors to the agenda.

It was also observed that there is a major challenge in how policies are formulated so that their intent for young people is unambiguous. Policy and programmes need to be centrally youth focused as opposed to generic policy initiatives aimed at the entire population without any youth specific considerations.

2. Emerging good practices in national Youth Policies

While no definitive Youth Policy evaluations were available to assess how NYPs have impacted young people and their development, Directors of Youth were able to contribute their professional observations on what has worked in their respective national contexts, in the event that these may prove useful in determining recommended practice in policy development and implementation:

- Sustaining overall political support for a national youth policy formulation requires a committed ‘youth champion’ at the Cabinet level. The effort is more likely to succeed if well-structured through the establishment of an interdisciplinary committee or National Youth Policy Implementation Committee that manages the effort and enjoins accountability and responsiveness across the national eco-system. This is an ideal mechanism to engage all relevant and strategic stakeholders in cross-sectoral programme design and action planning and sets the culture and practice for youth mainstreaming that will be a critical success factor.
- Youth policy design must analyze and include the management system and organizational structure that would optimally contribute to successful implementation and results. Some elements of an integrated success model for policy implementation will be a professional and competent youth worker base, sound research capacity and systems for evidence-based youth development at all stages, and for monitoring and evaluation.

- Young people are at the heart of a youth policy and should be integrated in myriad ways in the work of youth department, and in wider cross-sectoral decision-making in the national ecosystem. Keeping young people engaged at all times is beneficial to a youth policy development exercise, and young people are best suited to work within and across other youth agencies and networks to connect other youth populations to ensure formulation of the policy is inclusive and integrates diverse youth. Youth support is also ideal in managing social and participatory research that should be essential elements to inform youth policy formulation.
- Successful and relevant policy implementation relies on dedicated funding for programmes. A youth policy must be adequately funded so that once completed a Ministry or Department can manage programmes in the policy. Wherever substantial capital investments are to be allocated for youth-centric programmes managed by other ministries, the Youth Department should be strategically consulted to ensure the programme embraces the concept and practice of asset-based youth development, underserved youth populations benefit, and development is managed consistent with all policy aims.
- All Youth Policies should be supported by an Action Plan that establishes clear indicators of success and time frames.

III. Conclusions and recommendations

This review has identified progress in the Caribbean towards positive rights-based youth development grounded in country commitment to the World Programme of Action for youth and subregional youth policy frameworks such as CYDAP and PAYE. However, some critical gaps and limitations remain in Caribbean youth policy development. Youth mainstreaming should become a critical consideration in the national development strategy of every country to ensure that the youth agenda is comprehensive and multi-sectoral in nature.

Twenty years following its adoption, the guiding framework of the Lisbon Declaration remains valid. The Declaration provided a comprehensive accountability framework for youth development. That framework for young people aged 15-24 committed to their transformational development in six broad areas, underscoring the need for high-level action, commitments and enabling frameworks by Government, a UN system-wide agenda of programming and resources dedicated to young people, and a network of private sector and civil society partners to collaborate in the common pursuit of youth development as an essential element of national development.

The Lisbon Declaration emphasized Participation, Development, Peace, Education, Employment, Health, Drug and substance abuse, as essential elements that Governments should take into consideration in bringing about youth development in the Caribbean.

A. Summary findings

Caribbean countries have made encouraging progress in developing youth policy. Using the blueprint of the WPAY, there is clear evidence of increased attention being given towards professional youth development. This is reflected in improved research and analysis, strong partnerships supplementing resource gaps in Youth Departments and in the development of country-specific interventions that address key WPAY priority areas for the benefit of youth.

The survey conducted at subregional level with Youth Directors on the National Youth Policies and Programmes found concrete examples of promising youth policy and implementation, including

the integration of youth concerns into development strategies, institutional changes to accommodate the operationalisation of National Youth Policies and Programmes of Action; recognition of the enhanced role of youth organisations; increased involvement of civil society; and improved partnership among United Nations agencies.

While there has been good progress on this transformational agenda, the current study highlights persistent trends as follows:

1. Young people require more relevant education and training to adequately manage the realities of more complex transitions from childhood to adult life;
2. Youth are disproportionately affected by high unemployment and are over-represented in marginal and precarious employment;
3. Youth have high dependency rates with reliance on family structures and social support systems that are mostly inadequate;
4. The educational systems do not adequately prepare youth for life or life-long learning;
5. Increasing violence suffered and committed by youth negatively impact their personal and social wellbeing;
6. Increasing vulnerabilities of youth, particularly the poor and rural youth, to the impact of climate change, highlighting the need for resilience building.

Countries have begun initiatives to promote the participation of youth at policy and decision-making levels and progress has been made in advocating for the protection and promotion of the wellbeing of youth. Recognizing the important role of civil society in implementation of the NYPs, many governments have adopted significant measures to promote the involvement of civil society groups in policy formulation, implementation and monitoring. Some Governments have taken measures to strengthen the institutional capacity of civil society, including the provision of funds and creation of the appropriate legal environment.

Support for national and regional youth councils and youth platforms that promote wider youth networking and participation demonstrate the evolving role for youth in the development process. However, there is still need to give attention to the experiences of grass-roots and community-based youth as well as LGBTI and other marginalised youth populations, reflecting cultural biases and inequities.

Youth development in the Caribbean has also been influenced by varying national policy environments. Some the critical policy development constraints include:

- Inconsistent political support and funding mechanisms, including insufficiency of resource mobilisation and inconsistency of budgetary allocations. A serious lack of financial resources remains one of the primary obstacles to full implementation of the NYPs. Heavy national indebtedness and fiscal constraints have impeded efforts to implement comprehensive interventions for youth development.
- The capacity and relevance of the institutional frameworks in support of youth development practitioners and of research capabilities. The institutional arrangements to manage youth development programmes and to support the delivery of youth development services are relatively weak and often lacking in strategic focus.
- The lack of coordination mechanisms and funding constraints may prevent more extensive multi-stakeholder collaboration. Often, there are no legal frameworks, regulations or

guidelines to facilitate partnerships with youth organisations. The private sector continues to remain under involved in population and development activities.

- Inadequacy of youth groups and role of youth organisations. The youth policy processes analysed in this report illustrate the need for a flexible definition of youth, allowing for contextualized and coherent policy analysis as well as for tailored interventions taking into consideration the needs of heterogeneous groups and minorities. However, youth actors' roles are often not comprehensively identified. Youth organisations, as well as national youth institutions are not systematically mentioned and analysed: their roles and structure are not adequately captured within the youth policy architecture, hindering the implementation of programmes and projects.
- In many instances young people's contribution to youth development processes are minimal. Indeed, youth participation should not be a tokenistic construct but one where youth are actively engaged in the process from conception to implementation. Too frequently Caribbean young people are simply the beneficiaries of services and products rather than strategic partners in the policy formulation, implementation and evaluation phases.
- Mainstreaming gender in national youth policies is as critical to policy relevance and success as mainstreaming youth across all sectors of development. Priority areas in youth development such as education, health, ICTs, employment and entrepreneurship, sports and recreation are not gender neutral. Special attention should be paid to programme design to ensure girls and young women equal access and benefit from such opportunities, and to ensure, where necessary, that measures guarantee the participation of boys and men.
- The NYP provisions make explicit references to key principles outlined in Lisbon Declaration, most of them refer to international instruments and reaffirm the Baku Declaration. While those principles encourage a positive vision for youth empowerment, they do not necessarily lay the ground to tangible indicators, mechanisms or governance tools. The lack of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms (including well-defined targets, indicators and access to baseline data, as well as an adequate system to collect lessons learned), results in NYPs being viewed as idealistic reference frameworks rather than as operational policies able to be used to direct measurable action for youth development.

B. Recommendations

1. From policy to action: seven key principles

Appropriate strategies and mechanisms for implementation are required to facilitate the transformation of youth policies into action. The following key recommendations are proposed:

Ensure high-level political commitment and championship for policy implementation and investment.

This fundamental principle was an expressed commitment of governments under the Lisbon Declaration. Strategic collaboration and partnerships in youth policy development should be pursued by the Caribbean territories to enable inclusive, multi-sector stakeholder involvement in youth policy development with agencies such as CARICOM, The Commonwealth, the UN system, the Caribbean Development Bank and other development partners, regional youth networks and the academia. Governments and development agencies should work together to realize more consistent and targeted funding and programming for youth development priorities.

Strengthen institutional capacity building of youth development agencies and youth networks so that they can play a more effective role in the youth development process.

This should include but not be limited to capacities in the following areas: research, strategic planning, private/public sector partnerships and stakeholder engagement, building resilience and managing vulnerabilities in the face of climate change, managing gender equality and mainstreaming in development, and managing effective community-based arrangements to achieve local solutions and ownership of development.

Promote and implement a coordination system for youth mainstreaming and improved synergies among different policy areas.

Coordination mechanisms should ensure that the youth agenda is implemented as a coherent, integrated multi-sectoral platform. Efforts to promote youth mainstreaming strengthening may include:

- Support to the creation and regular functioning of inter-ministerial and multi-sector stakeholder committees, with national youth mainstreaming framework and reporting.
- Strengthening synergies between youth policies and broader development platforms, particularly the SDGs, and the SIDs sustainable development agendas as well as with national development plans. In this regard the youth policies should ensure synergies from all development platforms of those strategies that impact youth.

Promote the participation and active engagement of youth in all phases of the NYP.

The ownership process will contribute immensely to the relevance and inclusiveness of the youth policies. Efforts to promote the effective participation of youth could include:

- Promotion of support for Youth Organizations (such as Youth Councils) within the National Youth Development Framework (NYP) including where appropriate, through legislative action.
- Ensuring that this participation is extended to different policy domains, in particular through the inclusion of the Youth Council as a partner in the National Planning mechanism and the possible contribution of a Youth advisory body for the Minister responsible for Youth, or the creation of a National Youth Think-Tank for research in Youth Development.

Update, reinforce or develop new areas of youth development within the NYPs.

Encourage youth development in areas such as youth entrepreneurship in green growth and the creative industries.

Adopt a comprehensive knowledge-based approach, integrating measures to develop and utilize appropriate tools, indicators and research methodologies to facilitate the development of evidenced-based, inclusive and integrative youth policies.

Promote specialized research to guide policy development, in particular on areas that require more attention, such as intergenerational relations; mental health and suicide among young persons; the role of youth during the relief, recovery and reconstruction process after hurricanes and other disaster-related situations; the role being played by new social media platforms on girls and young females in migratory processes, including victims of human trafficking and sexual exploitation; as well as the situation of specific groups of young persons, who by virtue of their age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, and migratory status, could be at risk. An adequate knowledge-based approach for youth development should also ensure youth participation in research teams, in particular young female researchers and statisticians, who continue to be underrepresented in research and statistics fields.

Ensure that effective results-based frameworks are integrated in all policy development.

A continuing concern surrounding a National Youth Policy is its diminished relevance to young people and national development if it is not implemented in a way that can be measured and adjusted. Monitoring and evaluation systems should form an integral part of a robust NYP, supporting:

- M&E frameworks that are kept up to date. Both quantitative and qualitative assessment of NYPs should be undertaken with the participation of all relevant stakeholders.
- An evidence-based approach in order to have access to up-to-date, regular disaggregated data that will inform the design, implementation and review of youth policies. This could include the creation of a central repository on youth data with standardized questionnaires and methodologies.

2. Strategies to enhance progress in implementation of the WPAY

A basic strategic requirement for successful NYP implementation is high-level political ownership. More importantly, youth policies and programming should be allowed to propel youth development for the long-term, beyond political cycles. To further this aim, while remaining true to country needs and aspirations, countries should as far as practicable demonstrate that NYPs are genuinely inclusive and framed within global youth policy contexts to achieve identified results for enhanced participation and enjoyment of rights and opportunities of all youth equally.

Strategic actions suggested to enhance progress in implementation of the WPAY are as follows:

- Appoint a National Youth Planning Commission with oversight for producing a National Youth Development Annual Work Programme, in alignment with the NYP, as well as for coordinating the implementation, monitoring and evaluation process, as a necessary step to increase the delivery in the implementation of NYPs.
- Establish intersectoral youth policy coordination committees to interrogate policy and programming in all sectors of national development, and related policy actions, targets, and indicators in the light of the SDGs and applicable treaties, to contribute to evidence-informed integrative and cross-sectoral actions and targets that are youth-focused.
- Ensure NYPs are framed within a common national evidence-based youth empowerment agenda using the WPAY and other applicable regional policy guides such as CYDAP and the PAYE, among others, ensuring that priority areas reflect a diversity of issues of national concern for youth.
- Articulate priority areas for youth within the technical domain of UN system agencies and other partners using guidance available to support the formulation of evidence-informed strategies and corresponding performance measures, and especially to manage gaps in coverage in SDG related areas.
- Ensure all policy formulation exercises are completed with the development of an accompanying Action Plan or Performance Management Plan (PMP). This should be part of a results-based framework around the youth policy work and to ensure policy actions remain unambiguous. Multi-layered strategies and implementation should be relegated to the accompanying Action Plan/Agenda. Action Plans should integrate all applicable indicators including those of the SDGs for alignment of policy to global targets, mindful of targets for girls and women, health, education, violence and victimization and the range of other issues pertinent to young people and their development.
- Review and integrate the legislative agenda for youth development.

- Implement a national youth policy database and tracking system that captures policy programming and implementation capacity and initiatives of all agencies in the public sector, private sector and civil society and facilitates evaluation of investments, especially in areas of high national and global priority.
- Introduce a standard suite of tools to support implementation, monitoring and evaluation of NYPs including:
 - A mainstreaming strategy with suggested resources and cross-functionality for NYP implementation, and mandatory monitoring and reporting on progress.
 - A standard design methodology and checklist of qualitative and quantitative markers to inform how key NYP principles should be represented within hard policy objectives and programming.
 - A standard format for NYP Action Plans / PMPs, which would offer the advantage of supporting regional reporting, sharing of experiences and lessons.
 - A Responsibility Matrix for the Action agenda that delineates policy outputs by priority (high, medium, iterative) by thematic areas, and by responsible (lead) partner, and contributing partners and respective inputs, as a main accountability guide to the main coordinating body and all implementation functionality and cross-supports.
 - A NYP Risk Assessment that identifies cascading impacts of unmet outputs and results in priority areas, who owns these risks, and what contingency measures can be activated so all delivery and related results in any area are not lost.

3. Strategies to involve youth in the 2030 Agenda implementation

The optimum social, civic, and economic participation of all young people is the overarching goal of all NYPs, and the international development agenda of the WPAY and the SDGs, among other frameworks. Young people need to be able to make this vital connection in their spaces, so that their education and awareness can translate into action for change and they can also serve as agents of change. This education and preparation should be the dedicated focus of agencies at national level, coordinated by Youth Ministries and Departments, with the support of other partners.

Recommended strategic actions to involve youth in the 2030 Agenda implementation:

- Support the development of a comprehensive youth-friendly mechanism, including a web platform, to foster collaboration, coordination and synergies among youth organizations, governments, civil society organizations, the private sector, international and regional organizations and academic institutions.
- Implement, at national level, a youth/community relations strategy on NYPs that integrates clear responsibilities for youth leaders, networks and youth-serving agencies for each NYP priority area, according to their talents and interests and related advocacy and action platforms, and which articulates within a wider national accountability agenda that locates lead/sectoral responsibility for planned investments and supports for young people.
- Enhance the ability of youth-led networks, youth leaders and youth-serving agencies to manage peer to peer and youth development within a framework of human rights, social justice and related accountability and responsibility.
- Ensure marginalized, fringe and other under-served youth populations engage equally in decision-making processes so to avoid elitism in youth opportunities and access.

- Enhance the sustainability agenda and strategic impacts of regional governance structures, youth-led grassroots and faith-based organizations among others, for effective mobilization, visibility and outreach so they are able to monitor and influence the Caribbean youth development agenda.
- Enhance youth participation and innovation in policy formulation, advocacy and in integrating diversity in discourse and decision-making on all aspects of development in schools, communities and other youth spaces through the use of ICTs and other innovations that equip young people for legacy roles and responsibilities in achieving national and global targets such as for the 2030 Agenda.

This review of NYPs in Caribbean countries suggests very good country knowledge of the role of a National Youth Policy. Youth Ministers and Youth Departments have placed commendable weight on formulating or updating documents as borne out by evidence available for this review. Generally, policy setting has been guided by secondary data, global, and regional policy instruments, and there is evidence of increasing attention to social research within youth populations and using highly participatory methods led to some extent by young people.

The record of implementation is not as easy to ascertain as the interests in having a policy. The fact that only two countries of those reviewed have Implementation Plans with performance measures may be interpreted as a procedural accomplishment and not an actual indication of inadequate policy implementation. Since the scope of youth empowerment and development proposed in the Lisbon Declaration extend across many sectors, it may also be inferred that individual sectoral policies contribute significantly to this goal, although there is no reliable way to measure the comprehensive impacts to young people and their wellbeing.

From survey results available for this review, Directors of Youth reported that sectors implementing programmes for youth fail to integrate them adequately in the process. This may be because in many instances youth departments have not been resourced to transition beyond original labels and perceptions as places offering random short-term skills-building and leisure events for youth. Governments must make youth policy implementation a well-resourced investment, delegated within a clear accountability construct.

Unless governments require that all sectoral policies and national macro-development frameworks include a section specific to youth development outcomes, the solution returns to the need for strong and adequately resourced coordinating mechanism within the national ecosystem to mainstream youth development. In this way the commitment of the Lisbon Declaration two decades ago towards “ensuring the mainstreaming of national youth policy and international development, plans and programmes” assumes more urgency today than ever. If Caribbean countries are to harness the social and economic dividend of the Caribbean youth bulge, especially in fulfilling the aspirational objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the time appears opportune for this second generation of NYPs to delineate a future where governments and young people may work together to integrate strategic actions and investments for youth development. This integrative youth agenda should promote more deliberate mainstreaming and accountability policies to impact the fullest access and enjoyment of all young people to sustainable development as their right.

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Annexes

Annex 1

Subregional Survey on Youth policies and programmes



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LIMITED
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SUBREGIONAL SURVEY ON YOUTH POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES FOR THE REVIEW OF THE LISBON DECLARATION AND OTHER YOUTH RELATED FRAMEWORKS

The **Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes** was adopted in 1998, committing nations and the international community to implement numerous measures related to national youth policy, participation, development, peace, education, employment, health and drug abuse. Complementary to global initiatives on youth development, the Caribbean subregion adopted in 2012 the CARICOM Youth Development Action Plan (recently reviewed for the period 2017-2022), which advances the 2010 Declaration of Paramaribo on the future of Youth in the Caribbean. Furthermore, member States of the Caribbean are currently implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the associated 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In the planning, implementation, and follow-up and review stages of this global Agenda, the crucial role of youth in the Caribbean cannot be overemphasized.

Twenty years after the adoption of Lisbon Declaration, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean is conducting a Study on its implementation. In order to collect data to inform this study, ECLAC has developed this survey on youth policies and programmes in your country. The survey contains questions on the measures taken to promote national youth policy formulation, implementation and follow-up processes.

As part of the review process, there will be a preparatory meeting for Caribbean member states to be held in June 2018. Recommendations from this meeting will inform the Caribbean position paper to be presented at the International Conference on Population and Development to be held in Lima, Peru in July 2018.

The Caribbean preparatory meeting will assess the status of implementation of the Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes (1998) and the most recent regional agreement, the Montevideo consensus on population and development (2013). It will provide an opportunity for multi-stakeholder dialogue; networking; exchange of experiences and best practices; and will identify future priorities and policy responses.

It would be appreciated if you could kindly complete the attached questionnaire by **Monday 16 April 2018** and return it by email, together with relevant attachments, to Ms. Candice Gonzales (candice.gonzales@eclac.org), with copy to Ms. Catarina Camarinhas (catarina.camarinhas@un.org), Statistics and Social Development Unit, ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean.

Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have any questions. Thank you in advance for your collaboration.

PART I. NATIONAL YOUTH POLICY (NYP)

1. Please provide information about your Government's national coordinating unit/department/focal point for youth⁵⁵ policies and programmes.

Member / Associate Member State	Choose an item.
Name of the coordinating unit/department/focal point	Click or tap here to enter text.
Description – include the agreed mission or mandate, governance (whether a stand-alone agency or part of which wider structure), main objectives or functions and activities	Click or tap here to enter text.
Contact information, including mailing address, telephone, email and website	Click or tap here to enter text.

2. Does your country have a National Youth Policy (NYP)?

Yes No

If yes, provide name; the year of adoption, provisions for implementation and information on updates or revisions, if applicable. [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

If “no”, please elaborate on any effort towards the preparation and adoption of such a national policy. Does your country have any other document that contains a national strategy or programme of action for youth? [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Please attach a copy of any relevant documents (or links).

3. What is the legal definition of “youth” in your country and was it included in the NYP?

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

4. Has there been any specific survey or research on youth in your country?

Yes No

If “yes”, please provide information:

Focus and coverage: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Year of survey/research: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Institutions involved: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Was it used for the preparation of the NYP? [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Please attach a copy of any relevant documents (or links).

5. Were consultations organized to get the views of young people:

⁵⁵ The United Nations, for statistical purposes, defines ‘youth’, as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years, without prejudice to other definitions by member States.

a. on all phases of the NYP? Yes No To some extent

b. in all provinces/regions of the country? Yes No To some extent

If “yes”, please describe:

Mechanisms put in place for youth participation: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)
 Assessment of the participatory process: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

6. What are the key priority issues addressed in the NYP?

Please list the key priority issues: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

7. What are the most important achievements in your country in addressing issues related to youth that may be directly or indirectly linked to Youth policy? [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

8. What are the most relevant issues regarding youth that are anticipated to receive further public policy priority over the next five to ten years?

List up to five issues.

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

PART II. IMPLEMENTATION

9. Was a national youth coordinating mechanism put in place (with relevant partners and stakeholders) to support the implementation of youth policies and programmes?

Yes No

If “yes”, please provide information and describe the impact of such mechanism.

Contact information (mailing address, telephone, email and website): [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)
 Name of the focal point at the National Youth coordination mechanism: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)
 Description (governance, main functions and activities): [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)
 Impact of the mechanism for the implementation process: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

10. Was adequate youth work and youth-leadership training undertaken in the implementation of the NYP regarding capacity-building for:

a. representatives of the Government and/or Ministry responsible for Youth?

Yes No

b. for the National Youth NGO coordinating platform?

Yes No

If “yes” to either of the above, please describe the type of training and impact it brought to the implementation process. [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

11. Is there a real partnership between youth NGOs and the Government at all levels (national and sub-national) in all phases of implementation of the NYP?

Yes No To some extent

If “yes”, please provide examples of how this partnership is working. [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

12. Was a National Youth Action Plan formulated and adopted in the implementation of the NYP in your country?

Yes, drafted Yes, drafted and adopted No

If “yes”, please describe the main features and impact of such an Action Plan. [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Please attach a copy of any relevant documents (or links).

13. What has been the progress achieved and main obstacles encountered regarding the impact of the NYP? (Please indicate all applicable, multiple choices possible)

NYP implementation Not started Ongoing Implementation Completed
 In review Other situation, please explain: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Please describe what has been the impact of the NYP on improving:

Society: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

The situation of young people, in general: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

The situation of sub-groups of youth, in particular (young women and young men, urban youth, rural youth, students, young workers, youth with disabilities, refugee and migrant youth, juvenile delinquents, youth with HIV/AIDS): [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Main challenges: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

PART III. THEMATIC AREAS

14. Please describe the measures implemented by your Ministry and/or Government regarding the following thematic areas:

For each thematic area indicate what are the specific challenges and in your country. Please describe the measures implemented and provide an example of a programme or other initiative established in your country to address this objective.

Thematic Area
a. <u>Youth empowerment and participation</u> in all spheres of society and decision-making processes (e.g. support to marginalized, vulnerable young women and young men, especially those who are separated from their families, and children living and/or working in the streets; building of communication channels with youth; measures to encourage youth voluntarism).
b. <u>Peace and security</u> (e.g. any measures aiming at preventing the participation and involvement of

<p>youth in all acts of violence, particularly acts of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, xenophobia and racism, foreign occupation, and trafficking in arms and drugs; measures to integrate into the system of education and training aspects related to peace, social progress, fighting inequalities and recognizing the importance of dialogue and cooperation, etc).</p>
<p>c. Youth employment and entrepreneurship (e.g. measures to help young people to enter the labour market or start their own business, for example, provision of training or resources; laws against sex-based discrimination in the labour market; measures to protect including migrant workers, against other forms of exploitation, for example sex tourism, prostitution, with due regard to the particular situation of young women).</p>
<p>d. Information and communication technologies (e.g. measures to promote equal access to and use of new information technologies).</p>
<p>e. Personal Development (e.g. new partnerships to enable young women and young men to learn, create and express themselves through cultural, physical and sports activities).</p>
<p>f. Intergenerational relations (e.g. measures to reinforce and design new partnerships to improve the relationship between different generations; creation of mentoring programmes, etc.).</p>
<p>g. Poverty and hunger (e.g. policy to combat poverty and any actions on the alleviation of poverty; specific programmes and mechanisms within an integrated perspective of families, etc).</p>
<p>h. Education in all its aspects, namely formal and non-formal education as well as functional literacy and training and life-long learning (Explain guarantees taken regarding the equal access and continuity of basic good quality education, especially in rural areas and among the urban poor. Do time-bound goals exist for the expansion of equal access for young women and young men to secondary and higher education and for the improvement of the quality of education?).</p>
<p>i. Health development for young women and young men (e.g. measures to combat treatable diseases, preventing and responding to non-treatable diseases, programmes to reduce the consumption of tobacco, exposure to environmental tobacco smoke, and the abuse of alcohol; special health needs; safe water supply, sanitation, and waste disposal; establishment of a database on youth reproductive health; prevention of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse; measures to ensure full protection from all forms of violence, including gender-based violence, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation; measures regarding health relief under natural disasters and other emergencies, etc.).</p>
<p>j. HIV/AIDS (e.g. measures to ensure access to free and confidential voluntary counselling and testing; providing accessible treatment and counselling with special care to children infected and affected by AIDS, including orphans; programmes to end stigmatisation and discrimination, etc.).</p>
<p>k. Drug and substance abuse (e.g. strategies aiming at preventing abuse, reducing the demand for drugs, combating trafficking and promoting support for treatment for and rehabilitation of drug abusers focusing on their social reintegration; efforts to fight illicit production, supply and trafficking; awareness of youth, etc.).</p>
<p>l. Environment (e.g. measures to encourage awareness and commitment to sustainable development principles and practices, especially in regard to environmental protection; environmental education; the elevation of environmental issues amongst young people).</p>
<p>m. Urbanisation and housing (e.g. measures to enhance the role of youth organisations in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of national and local development plans; measures to ensure safe, healthy and secure living, environmental and working conditions, including shelter; etc).</p>
<p>n. Youth justice (e.g. measures for the rehabilitation and reintegration of youth from juvenile detention; engaging youth in crime prevention activities; emphasizing leadership training; promoting crime prevention with focus on life skills education and positive self-development).</p>
<p>o. Girls and Young women (e.g. measures to eliminate discrimination against girls and young women; development of educational materials and practices that are gender balanced and promote an educational setting that eliminates all barriers impeding the schooling of girls and young women, including married and/or pregnant girls and young women; removal of discriminatory laws and practices against girls and young women in food allocation and nutrition, as well as in access to health</p>

services, etc.).

p. Others (please indicate any other thematic areas that may be relevant to your Ministry and/or country).

PART IV. MONITORING, REPORTING AND REVIEWING

15. Has the NYP and/or Action Plan been evaluated?

Yes No

If “yes”, the NYP is being evaluated (check all that apply):

- on a regular basis on an ad hoc or irregular basis
 with measurable performance indicators
 with few or no measurable performance indicators

If “yes”, please describe how the NYP and Action Plan have been re-directed after such evaluations:

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Please attach a copy of any relevant documents related to the evaluation (or links).

16. Has there been sufficient attention to the full participation of young people in this evaluation and re-direction process?

Yes No

If “yes”, please specify the type of participation in both informal and formal settings of young women and young men: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

17. What are the main lessons learned regarding the formulation, adoption, implementation and evaluation of the NYP and Action Plan in your country? What advice would you give to enhance NYP formulation or implementation? [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Please attach a copy of any relevant documents related to lessons learned (or links).

18. Has there been a sharing of your country’s experiences?

Yes, with Other Caribbean countries Yes, with Latin American countries
 Yes, Outside the region No Not applicable

If “yes”, please describe:

Name/date of initiative/conference: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Degree of Participation of Youth NGOs: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Participation of other countries: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

This survey was completed by:

(Please indicate details of the focal point and the name of all other Ministries/agencies involved in the completion of the questionnaire).

Name: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#) Title/designation: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Ministry/Agency: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#) Country: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Date: [Click or tap to enter a date.](#)

Annex 2

Matrix of Youth Policy Constructs of Caribbean countries in keeping with commitments of the Lisbon Declaration 1998

WPAY 2000 and beyond ¹		Anguilla 2012	Antigua & Barbuda 2007	Bahamas 2014-2021	Barbados 2011	Belize 2012-2022	BVI 2014-2019	Cayman Islands 2011	Dominica 2017-2022
Age ²	15-24	13-30	00-35	15-35	15-29	15-29	15-29	10-25	15-35
PRIORITY AREAS	Education ³	✓	+Training	Education, Technology & Capacity Building	✓	Lifelong Learning	+ Training	✓	✓
	Employment	Employment	Employment and Sustainable Livelihoods	Employment Social Enterprise & Young Professionals	Reduce Unemployment	Socio-economic opportunity	Employment and Entrepreneurship	Training, employment and career-advancing opportunities	Youth as Partners in Economic and Sustainable Development
	Globalisation ⁴	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗	✗
	Poverty and Hunger ⁵	✗	✗	✓	Decent, affordable housing for youth	✓	✗	✗	✗
	Health	Health	Health	Health, Sustainable Livelihoods & Environment	Lifestyle diseases	Health and wellbeing	Health & Wellness	Healthy behaviours and lifestyle	Youth health and wellbeing
	HIV AIDS	✗	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
	Youth in Armed Conflict ⁶	Crime, Violence, and Drugs	Crime Violence and Rehabilitation	Youth in Conflict with the Law, Youth Justice & Safety	Prevent the spread of gangs	Care, Safety and Protection	Crime, Violence & Drugs	✓	Youth as Agents of social change and architects of safe and peaceful communities
	Participation in Decision-Making	Community & Social Responsibility	Participation and Empowerment	Inclusion in the Decision-Making Process & Youth Empowerment	Participation in the political process.	Participation	✓	Legitimate and active partners in decision-making processes	Youth civic engagement and participation in democratic processes

WPAY Priority Areas	Anguilla 2012	Antigua & Barbuda 2007	Bahamas 2014-2021	Barbados 2011	Belize 2012-2022	BVI 2014-2019	Cayman Islands 2011	Dominica 2017-2022
Youth and Drug Abuse	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗
Juvenile Delinquency	✗	Care and Protection	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓
Girls and Young Women ⁷	✗	Gender Equality and Gender Relations	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	Youth Social Inclusion and Diversity ⁸
Information & Comm. Technology ⁹	✗	✗	ICT	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
Youth & The Environment	✗	✗	✓	Youth Protecting the Environment	✗	✗	Social, economic and environmental sustainability	Youth in action on climate change, environmental sustainability, and disaster mitigation
Youth and Leisure Time	Recreation, Physical Education, Sports and Culture	✗	✓	✗	✓	Sports and Recreation	✗	Youth Participation in Sport and Recreation
Intergenerational Issues	Community and Social Responsibility	Strengthening Social Environments	✓	Strengthen the Family	✓	✗	✗	✓
ADDITIONAL PRIORITY AREAS NOT IN WPAY¹⁰			Identification & Self-Awareness Restructuring the Ministry Responsible for Youth Affairs	Restore Core Values		Identity, Culture and Social Cohesion	Socio-cultural identity for all youth of the Cayman Islands Provision of quality services for young people by youth serving agencies	Investing in youth social capital and strengthening their resilience Supporting Youth Professionalising youth Work Institutional strengthening of the Youth Dev. Division (YDD) and the National Youth Council (NYC)

WPAY 2000 and beyond	Grenada 2015-2020	Guyana 2015	Jamaica 2017 - 2030	Montserrat. Revised 2013	St Kitts & Nevis 2017-2022	Saint Lucia 2016-2021	Trinidad & Tobago 2012 - 2017	Turks & Caicos 2012
Education	✓	Education and Market-Driven Skills Development	+ Training	+ Training	+ Lifelong Learning	+ Lifelong Learning	Participate for personal and wider/ national development ¹¹	✓
Employment	Enabling Environment for Economic Empowerment	Youth Employment and Entrepreneurship	Employment and Entrepreneurship	Economic Participation	Economic Participation	Economic participation	Specific Action for Youth Empowerment ¹²	Sustainable Employment
Globalisation	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗
Poverty and Hunger	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗
Health	Youth resilience and wellbeing ¹³	Youth Safety, Health and Wellbeing	Health & Well-Being	Health	Health and Well-being	Health and Wellbeing	Promote Healthy Lifestyles ¹⁴	Healthy behaviours and lifestyles
HIV AIDS	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓	Reduce spread of STIs and HIV/AIDS	✗
Youth in Armed Conflict	✓	✓		Drugs, Violence and Crime	Safety, Security and Protection	Safety, Security and Peaceful Co-existence	National and Personal Security ¹⁵	✓
Youth and Drug Abuse		✓	✗	✓	✓		Reduce alcohol and substance Abuse	✗
Juvenile Delinquency	✓	✓	Social Inclusion and Reintegration	✗	✓	✓	National and Personal Security	✗
Girls and Young Women	✓	✓	✓	✗	Human Rights and Gender Equality	Gender equality integrated in all policy goals	Access and resources for widest participation Gender Relations ¹⁶	✓
Information & Comm. Technology	✗	✗	✗	✗	ICTs and Mass Media (cross cutting)	ICT and Mass Media	ICTs	✗
Youth & The Environment	✗	✗	✗	✗	Youth and Sustainable Development	✗	✗	✗
Youth and Leisure Time	✓	✓	✗	Sports and Recreation	Sports and leisure for wellbeing	Sports and recreation	✗	✗

PRIORITY AREAS

WPAY 2000 and beyond	Grenada 2015-2020	Guyana 2015	Jamaica 2017 - 2030	Montserrat. Revised 2013	St Kitts & Nevis 2017-2022	Saint Lucia 2016-2021	Trinidad & Tobago 2012 - 2017	Turks & Caicos 2012
Inter-generational Issues	✗	✗	✗	✗	Social Cohesion, Belonging and Patriotism (cross-cutting)	✗	✗	✗
ADDITIONAL PRIORITY AREAS NOT IN WPAY	Enhanced institutional arrangements for youth development and professionalised youth work sector in Grenada	Youth Identity and Empowerment	Institutional and Youth Sector Arrangements.	Youth and Culture Youth and Religion	Youth Development Work and Youth Mainstreaming Youth Excellence (cross-cutting)		Citizenship and Pride in national identity and the spirit of volunteerism- Goal 5 Effective collaboration among youth development stakeholders (Government, non-government, private sector and youth) to ensure all youth-related programmes are integrated and synchronised	

Source: Authors' compilation.

- ¹ There are 15 priority areas of the WPAY that have been grouped into three clusters that reflect the challenges youth encounter across borders and cultures: Youth in the Global Economy, Youth and Their Well-Being, and Youth in Civil Society.
- ² Age indicates the legal definition of "youth" in the relevant policy.
- ³ Education, Employment, and Health are the core WPAY themes found in all Caribbean NYPs. Participation is a stand-alone goal in 82% of the NYPs reviewed with the exception of BVI and Jamaica, where it is integrated into another thematic area.
- ⁴ Globalisation is the sense of the WPAY priority area refers to "impact on youth employment opportunities and on migration patterns "and the "deep changes in youth culture and consumerism, and in new manifestations of global youth citizenship and activism". Most NYPs sampled generally referenced the impacts of globalization on youth culture, and way of life. Provisions on identity and culture, social cohesion and belonging are represented expressly in The Bahamas, BVI, Guyana, Montserrat, Cayman Islands, St Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago) to ensure belonging and connectedness for youth, and there is an additional section on Youth and Immigration in The Bahamas.) In some cases, provisions on youth participation e.g. in Barbados, Dominica, St Kitts, St Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago) embrace a larger perspective of preparation and readiness for responsible (global) citizenship.
- ⁵ Poverty and Hunger provisions are not expressly stated in the majority of Caribbean youth policies but are not expressly integrated in terms of access and rights to services. According to WPAY, youth "experience poverty not only through financial limitations, but also through limitations in access to public services and non-fulfilment of, and a lack of protection of fundamental human rights". "Poverty is inextricably linked to a lack of access to or control over resources, including land, skills, knowledge, capital and social connections (WPAY Guide). Some specific provisions exist e.g. in Barbados (affordable housing); The Bahamas (poverty and housing) and St Kitts and Nevis (financial inclusion and access to acquire land and housing)
- ⁶ Youth in Armed Conflict (WPAY) is included for the Caribbean context with the rubric of Youth Crime and Violence /Justice /Protection/Safety and Security as a dedicated policy goal in Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Jamaica, Montserrat, St Kitts and Nevis and Saint Lucia. Youth Violence prevention is included as sub-themes or objectives in all other NYPs under review.
- ⁷ Girls and Women – Most NYPs situate youth development in a context of gender equality, gender diversity or gender mainstreaming. The two countries with a stand-alone policy goal for gender are Antigua and Barbuda and St Kitts and Nevis. Saint Lucia's gender equality provisions are integrated as a cross-cutting issue. BVI seeks to ensure "sport and recreational planning and programmes are gender-aware and diversity sensitive and Dominica focuses on preventing GBV, and on gender mainstreaming as a policy objective.

- ⁸ This priority area contains the objective: Develop and implement gender sensitive youth programmes. The Policy also recommends action to empower young people on preventing GBV.
- ⁹ Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and Youth and the Environment are important indicators of human development. Only 3 NYPS (The Bahamas, St Lucia and St Kitts) contain discrete provisions on young people as “digital natives” and using and innovating ICTs to improve their lives and communities. NYPs of Barbados, Cayman Islands, Dominica and St Kitts and Nevis contain a separate policy goal on Youth and The Environment.
- ¹⁰ Seven of the NYPs sampled (47%) contain a separate goal relating to creating an enabling environment for youth development work, through youth mainstreaming or the professionalisation of youth work. These same principles were detailed in the implementation arrangements most NYPs referenced, inclusive of recommendations for the establishment or strengthening of discrete youth-led agencies (e.g. National Youth Councils, Student Councils etc.) or youth serving agencies e.g. National Youth Commission.
- ¹¹ Trinidad and Tobago NYP Policy Goal 1 seeks to “enable young men and women to initiate, lead and participate in actions” for personal and wider national development, with the objective to assist young people in attaining skills to participate effectively in national development and society as a whole. includes for all educational and training initiatives and activities to promote personal and career development
- ¹² NYP Goal 4- Specific Action for Youth Empowerment in Accordance with the Laws of Trinidad and Tobago includes the objective to provide opportunities for youth employment and initiatives.
- ¹³ The policy goal is stated as: Supportive families, communities and social networks for youth resilience and wellbeing.
- ¹⁴ Included under NYP Goal 4 - Specific Action for Youth Empowerment in accordance with the Laws of Trinidad and Tobago Youth empowerment.
- ¹⁵ Trinidad and Tobago Youth Policy has no explicit goal or objective on Crime and Violence. The Policy makes the link to the Government’s Medium-Term Policy Framework and aligns the youth policy development context, among other things to Pillar - which promotes action on human security and the maintenance of law and order, also addressing social conditions that contribute to criminal activity, and reform of the prison and justice systems.
- ¹⁶ Trinidad and Tobago’s pillars of the country’s Medium-Term Policy Framework relevant for youth integrated into the NYP.

Annex 3

Summary Status of Institutional Arrangements for Implementation of National Youth Policies of Caribbean countries¹

Country	Main Coordinating Body	Youth Coordination Mechanism ² or Inter-agency Body	Youth-led agencies ³	National Youth Action Plan	Youth Mainstreaming ⁴	Professional Youth Work	Special NGO	Youth Fund ⁵
Anguilla	Department of Youth and Culture (DYC), Ministry of Social Development	Research and Planning Unit	National Youth Council (IS) (somewhat active) National Youth Parliament (P) (not known) National Youth Ambassador Corps	National Youth Development Strategy (not known)	No	No	No	No
Antigua and Barbuda	Youth Department, Ministry of Social Transformation and Human Resource Development	National Youth Development Steering Committee recommended	CARICOM Youth Ambassadors (in place) (IS) and (P)	No	No	No	No	No
Bahamas	Department of Youth, Ministry of Youth, Sports and Culture	Recommended are: National Youth Commission (recommended statutory body with oversight for all youth matters)	Bahamas National Youth Council (IS) National Youth Service (P)	No	Inter-ministerial Committee (recommended) National Institute of Youth Development	Youth Practitioners Association of persons trained and certified in conduct of work recommended	No	1% of annual budget recommended for youth policy, research and development as National Youth Endowment Trust Fund
Barbados	Division of Youth, Ministry of Culture, Sports and Youth	National Policy Implementation Committee established Oct. 2012	Barbados National Youth Parliament Barbados National Youth Service (proposed programme) CARICOM Youth Ambassadors (in place) (IS) and (P)	No	National Youth Commission	National Youth Commission	No	No

Country	Main Coordinating Body	Youth Coordination Mechanism or Inter-agency Body	Youth-led agencies	National Youth Action Plan	Youth Mainstreaming	Professional Youth Work	Special NGO	Youth Fund
Belize	Department of Youth Services	National Youth Commission (recommended)	Belize National Youth Council (IS) (P) CARICOM Youth Ambassadors (in place) (IS) and (P)	Yes, drafted and adopted. DYS also operationalises youth work in line with its 2012-2015 Strategic Plan	No	No	No	No
Bermuda	Department of Youth, Sport and Recreation	No	The Bermuda Youth Council for youth ages 16 – 25 years old will set the standard of empowerment through participation and engagement.	No	No	No	No	The Children and Youth sponsorship program will provide financial sponsorship for short-term programs in arts, culinary & STEM, etc.
BVI	Department of Youth Affairs and Sports	National Youth Commission to be created by Act. Of Parliament for	Virgin Islands Youth Parliament established 2015 (P) National Youth Council (IS) (P) ⁶	None. Policy recommendation	National Youth Commission to manage the mainstreaming agenda	Code of ethics for Youth Workers recommended	No	National Youth Commission to mobilize resources
Cayman Islands	Youth Services Unit	National Youth Commission	Cayman Islands Youth Assembly (P)	No	National Youth Commission	National Youth Commission	No	No
Dominica	Youth Development Division, Ministry of Youth, Sports and Constituency Empowerment.	Cabinet appointed Inter-ministerial Committee on Youth Development	National Youth Council of Dominica (IS) CARICOM Youth Ambassadors (in place) (IS) and (P)	Draft	Cabinet appointed Inter-ministerial Committee on Youth Development	Strengthened Youth Development Division	No	No
Grenada	Ministry of Youth, Sports and Ecclesiastical Affairs	National Youth Mainstreaming Technical Committee (NYMTC) to be created to oversee youth policy programmes and projects	National Youth Parliament (P) National Youth Ambassadors Programme (P)	Drafted and adopted	National Youth Mainstreaming Technical Committee (NYMTC) to be created to oversee youth policy programmes and projects	Professional Youth Workers Organization recommended	National Youth Mainstreaming Technical Committee (NYMTC) to be created to oversee youth policy programmes and projects	Resource mobilization Strategy recommended targeting international development agencies, private sector and the Grenadian diaspora. (Grenada NYP 2015)

Country	Main Coordinating Body	Youth Coordination Mechanism or Inter-agency Body	Youth-led agencies	National Youth Action Plan	Youth Mainstreaming	Professional Youth Work	Special NGO	Youth Fund
Guyana	Department of Youth, Sports and Culture, Ministry of Education	Not known	Guyana National Youth Council established 2013 Youth Parliament Youth Ambassadors Programme Junio Toshao/ Village Captain Programme (recommended under NYP)	Preparation of 5-year National Youth Empowerment Action Plan (NYEAP) ongoing	No	No	No	No
Jamaica	National Centre for Youth Development (NCYD) Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture	National Youth Development Act (recommended) Inter-ministerial Committee chaired by Minister recommended	National Youth Council of Jamaica (already established) CARICOM Youth Ambassadors (in place) (IS) and (P)	Implementation Plan recommended in Policy	Youth and Adolescent Division of Ministry - recommended	Youth and Adolescent Division of Ministry - recommended	No	No
Montserrat	Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports	Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Sports	Re-establish a National Youth Council (IS) Re-establish the National Youth Parliament (P)	Draft National Strategic Plan: for Adolescents; and out of school youth.	No	No	No	No
Saint Kitts and Nevis	Departments of Youth and FCY	Federal Commission on Youth (FCY) high-level body to ensure effective implementation of the NYP established as a legal entity recommended	St Kitts and Nevis National Youth Parliamentary association (in place) Federal Youth Council (FYC) (IS) recommended CARICOM Youth Ambassadors (in place) IS and (P)	Federal Action Plan for Youth recommended	Formal Inter-Agency Initiative proposed to manage cross-sectoral and multidisciplinary stakeholder engagement	Yes- Code of Ethics for the conduct of all Youth Work	No	A Federal Youth Investment Fund - extra budgetary funds for youth development under management of the FCY recommended
Saint Lucia	Department of Youth and Sports Ministry of Equity, Social Justice, Empowerment, Youth Development, Sports and Local Government	Department of Youth, Ministry of Equity, Social Justice, Empowerment, Youth Development, Sports and Local Government	National Youth Council (IS) (active) National Youth Parliament (P) managed by NYC CARICOM Youth Ambassadors (in place) IS and (P)	Recommended	Restructured Youth Department to manage mainstreaming recommended (separated from Sports)	Restructured Youth Department and Code of Ethics for Youth Work - recommended	No	No

Country	Main Coordinating Body	Youth Coordination Mechanism or Inter-agency Body	Youth-led agencies	National Youth Action Plan	Youth Mainstreaming	Professional Youth Work	Special NGO	Youth Fund
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Youth Affairs Division, Ministry of National Mobilization, Social Development, Family, Gender Affairs, Persons with Disabilities and Youth	Youth Division	No	No	No	No	No	No
Suriname	Department Youth Affairs, Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs	Inter-ministerial responsibility among Ministries of: Sport & Youth Affairs, Housing and Social Affairs, Justice and Police, Education, Science and Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Youth Institute (NJI) (located within the Department of Youth Affairs) • The National Youth Parliament • CARICOM Youth Ambassadors Program (CYAP). • The UN SDGs Youth Ambassador Program (UN SDG YAP). • Youth advisory council. 	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known
Trinidad and Tobago	Department of Youth, Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs	Recommended National Youth Commission to be established as independent Statutory Body.		Not known	Not known	Not known		Youth Development Financing Strategy proposed for sustainable funding for youth programmes

Source: Authors' compilation.

- ¹ The information was sourced from National Youth Policies and country reporting on the United Nations Subregional Survey on Youth Policies and Programmes for the review of the Lisbon Declaration and other Youth Related Frameworks.
- ² For this purpose, National Youth Coordinating Mechanism refers to the specific institutional arrangements that countries have established or proposed for establishment under their NYP to support policy implementation and reporting on impacts. The mechanisms are differentiated as programmes (P) or Implementation Supports (IS)
- ³ Some youth-led agencies (e.g. National Youth Councils) already function in sampled countries and are integrated as policy implementation support (IS). In other cases, NYPs recommend the strengthening or establishment of youth-led structures that promote greater youth participation and access to development and decision-making (P).
- ⁴ Governments committed to mainstreaming of national youth policy and international development, plans and programmes in the Lisbon Declaration, 1998.
- ⁵ Lisbon Declaration 1998 pays attention to the availability and appropriate of funds for youth policy implementation and (a) "invites" UN and other international agencies and regional financial institutions to "give greater support to national youth policies and programmes" and (b) urges interested Governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to "make increased financial contributions to the United Nations Youth Fund".
- ⁶ Support for establishment of a NYC recommended under the Policy to ensure "greater youth participation in decision-making" and for "policy implementation and monitoring processes".



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