

An outlook on Caribbean youth policies and programmes

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The Youth Dialogues

- Nine preparatory youth dialogues took place during May to July
- Three were geared at national youth policies
- For these; the youth leaders and representatives of Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Cuba, Curacao, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Martinique, Montserrat, Puerto Rico, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sint Maarten, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos and United States Virgin Islands were invited to participate and share their views on their national youth policies and related frameworks.

Where we are

- Several Caribbean countries have already established national youth policies and programmes
- However, some of the youth policies are outdated
- The definition of youth varies from country to country
- Most of the youth policies contain provisions related to education and lifelong learning with a focus on achieving universal access to primary and secondary education
- In terms of the youth institutional framework, the majority of the countries has established a mechanism for youth representation.

Where we are cont'd

- Youth national policies often focus on participation, meaning the creation of structures that will facilitate the participation of young persons, but no references are made concerning the participation as a social inclusion process where youth have a right to participate in all phases of the decision-making processes.
- Employment and entrepreneurship issues are also mentioned.
- Sports, recreation, and culture are other thematic areas addressed in the national youth policies in the subregion.
- Regarding health, policies focus mainly on physical health and HIV/AIDS, but there is a positive trend with the inclusion of mental health and emotional wellbeing in some countries.
- Concerns related to youth and crime/violence, as victims and perpetrators, as well as issues on drugs and substance abuse, were included in most of the youth policies.
- Montserrat inserted a provision on youth and religion in their policy

Room for improvement

- National youth institutional frameworks often lack autonomy and resources
- The role of youth and/ or youth organisations is sometimes not clearly mentioned in the implementation of national youth policies and related programmes.
- There is a lack of follow-up, monitoring and evaluation processes in order to assess progress made in the implementation of current national youth policies and /or related frameworks. This was highlighted by almost all participants
- No information was provided under the thematic areas on fostering intergenerational relations, and limited information was shared on promoting gender equality
- Under education, concerns were raised on the decrease in the quality of education, including due to the limited number of trained teachers in primary and secondary schools

Room for improvement cont'd

- Concerning the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, it was recognised that youth-led organisations in the subregion are not familiar with this new global framework and are therefore not making the linkages between their activities and projects and the 2030 Agenda

Room for improvement cont'd

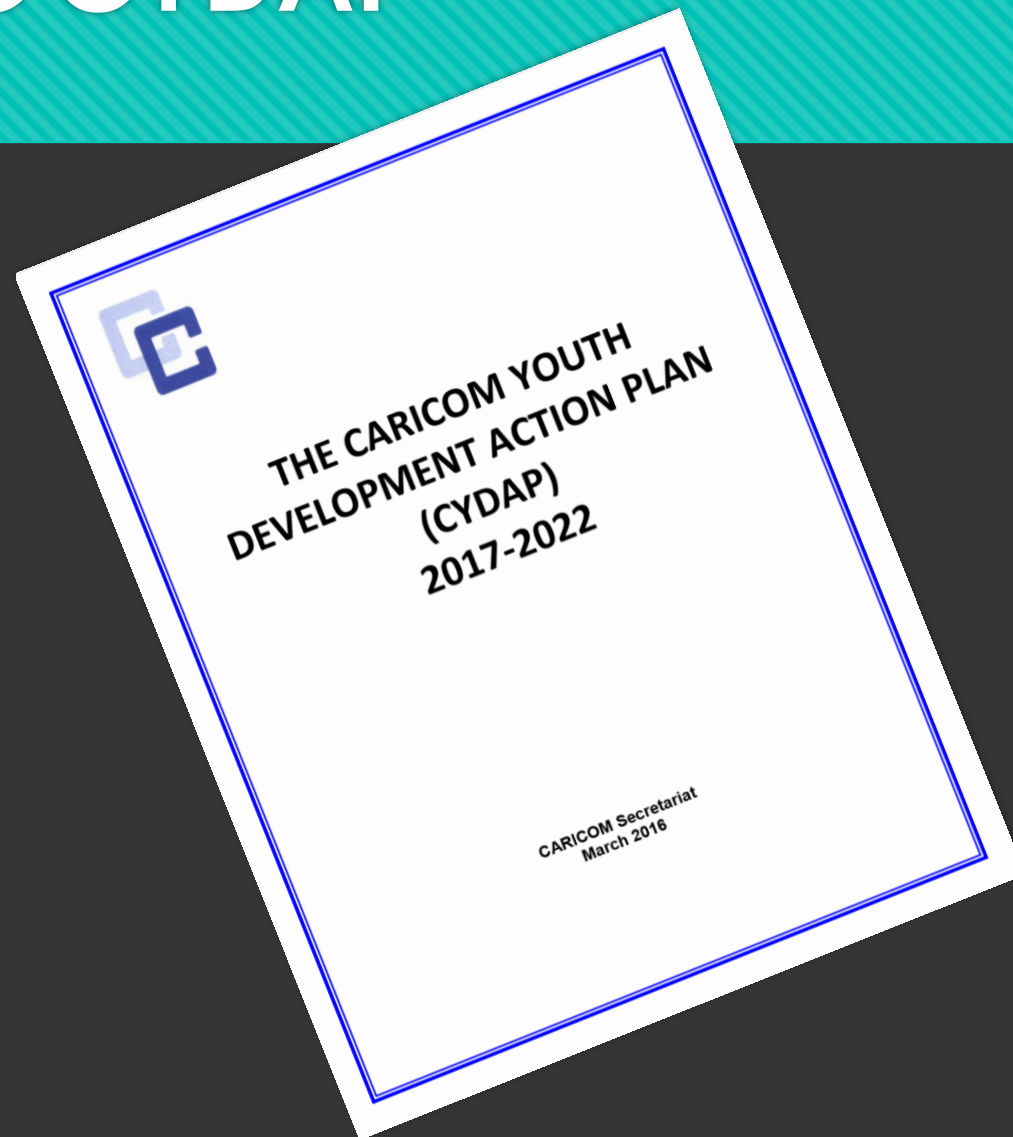
- In relation to the national youth institutional frameworks in charge of implementing national youth policies and related frameworks, it was reported that these mechanisms **vary from country to country**, however **a common concern** that was shared is the fact that these institutional mechanisms **are often non-functional, not active** or **sometimes no longer exist**

What now?

- We need a youth development action plan tailored for the Caribbean Community
- This action plan must help youth and youth workers focus on the SDGs and other global frameworks at a regional and national level
- We need to leverage good practices and the skills of our region to help each other achieve the goals for development
- And we must be able to measure our achievement

But we already have that!

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- **Objectives:**

- (i) Create an appropriate institutional framework to facilitate the delivery of an integrated and mainstreamed agenda for adolescent and youth development at the national and regional levels;
- (ii) Guide effective and efficient delivery of adolescent and youth development policy, programs and services on the basis of evidence based approaches;
- (iii) Mainstream adolescent and youth development into multi-sectoral policy and programming arrangements within governments and institutions;
- (iv) Foster genuine participation of and partnership with young people in all aspects of national and regional development;
- (v) Ensure that investments in adolescents and youth are appropriate to their life stages and circumstances;
- (vi) Guide the development of a sustained regional research and information and knowledge management agenda on the situation of adolescents and youth;
- (vii) Foster adolescent and youth awareness and appreciation of Caribbean identity, culture and citizenship.

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- **Frameworks:**
- (i) The 2010 Declaration of Paramaribo on the Future of Youth in the Caribbean Community - which sets out commitments from CARICOM Head of Government to implement the recommendations of the CARICOM Commission on Youth Development;
- (ii) The CARICOM Strategic Plan Priorities (2015 -2019) - The Community's Five Year Strategic Plan identifies Youth Development as a key element of Social Resilience, one of the eight Integrated Strategic Priorities, which is in keeping with the Declaration of Paramaribo on the Future of Youth in the Community (2010).
- (iii) The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) - which establishes a comprehensive legal framework of rights in a broad spectrum of domains to ensure positive adolescent development and well-being;
- (iv) The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - a globally-agreed set of goals and targets aimed at improving the lot of and guiding investments in young people;
- (vi) The Commonwealth Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment 2007-2015 (PAYE) – which is an enhanced framework guiding governments and civil society in empowering young women and men aged 15 and 29;

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○ Monitoring and Evaluation:

THE CARICOM YOUTH DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN (CYDAP) IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

GOAL 1: EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT: ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE AND LIVELIHOOD AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH (CARICOM Strategic plan Priorities - ECN, SOC, ENV and TEC; SDGs 2, 4 & 8)			
PRIORITY ACTIONS 2012 - 2017	Indicators	Means of verification	Benchmarks
1.1: Member States in CARICOM employ advance mechanisms to provide increased access to quality and equitable education at all levels.	Core National Level		1. Member States have financing and other mechanisms in place to facilitate youth access to quality at primary, secondary, post-secondary education level - including TVET. 2. Member States have professional standards and development for teachers at all levels including TVET. 3. Member States have initiatives to increase students' knowledge of national and regional development & CARICOM in >70% schools. 4. Member States have curricula that incorporates entrepreneurial skills at all levels. 5. Member States have mechanisms for engaging private sector enterprises in providing on-the-job learning opportunities for youth. 6. Member States have initiatives in place to orient youth to career options and opportunities. 7. Member States have targeted interventions to support unemployed youth. 8. Member States have education and employment
	1.1.1: Number of merit and need incentives, scholarships, financing mechanisms provided.	Reports from Ministries of Education and Youth and Health	
	1.1.2: Number of mentorship and other support services available for youth disaggregated by sex.		
	Core Regional Level		
	1.1.3: Number of Member States with National education policies. <i>(Policies should include sports, culture and comprehensive health and family life education and standards for staff qualifications and time allocation for these areas in national curricula at the primary, Secondary and post-Secondary levels).</i>	Education Policies	

The CYDAP

It's the Action