

DRAFT CARICOM GENDER EQUALITY STRATEGY

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MAJOR ISSUES ADDRESSED

- 1) Equality and social inclusion
- 2) Freedom from violence
- 3) Economic empowerment
- 4) Good Governance
- 5) Access to health services
- 6) Inclusive quality education

EQUALITY & SOCIAL INCLUSION HIGHLIGHTS

- 1) Gender equality is an intrinsic human right and the foundation of democracy and good governance. (Good for business) It's both a core objective and an important instrument for achieving inclusive sustainable development.
- **Gender inequality intersects with other inequalities resulting in multiple layers of discrimination. (e.g. rural women/HIV +)**
- Need to strengthen institutional mechanisms in order to focus on equality and social inclusion... implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, monitor and report on actions to advance gender equality and eliminate all forms of discrimination against women under CEDAW along with the Montevideo Strategy ...
- All member states except Montserrat has signed & ratified CEDAW.
- Optional Protocol-only three countries have signed & ratified (Antigua & Barbuda, Belize & St. Kitts)

FREEDOM FROM VIOLENCE

- **Ranks among the principal threats and obstacles to social and economic development in the Region and impacts citizen security, including the stability and health of a family and community.**
- VAW is rooted in gender inequality and reflected in women's subordinate legal, social or economic status in society.
- **In the Caribbean the most common forms include; intimate partner violence and sexual violence; economic exploitation of girls and women; child, marriage.**
- Prevalence data: The Jamaica Women's Health Survey 2016
- More than one in every 4 Jamaican women between the ages of 15 & 64 years have experienced intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence.
- 25.2 % have experienced physical violence by a male partner; 27.8 % experienced intimate partner physical and/ or sexual violence; 28.8 % suffered emotional abuse; and 8.5 % experienced economic abuse.
- Who are most vulnerable (experienced lifetime or current physical, sexual & emotional abuse)?
- women with either no or low education, women who have been pregnant and women who began cohabiting with a male partner when they were minors.

FREEDOM FROM VIOLENCE

- Trinidad's Prevalence Survey shows similarities with Jamaica.
- 30 % of ever-partnered women experienced lifetime physical and/or sexual partner violence; with emotional violence presenting as the most common type among (35% of women over their lifetime; as opposed to 28.8% in JA).
- Men and women experience violence differently. Men are more likely to die as a result of violence from other men, interpersonal and strangers; and from suicide.
- Women are more likely to die at the hands of someone close to them, including husbands and other intimate partners whom they are often emotionally involved with, and economically dependent upon.

YOUTH VIOLENCE HIGHLIGHTS

- Much of the youth violence is associated with high youth unemployment, violence in the home, school drop-out, crime and drug abuse.
- stereotyping male youth as violent. “Stereotyping contributes to the adoption of heavy-handed and rights-violating security responses that foster youth exclusion and unnecessary institutionalization through the criminal justice system.
- Punitive rather than rehabilitative response, with a lack of a proper juvenile justice system in the Region.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT HIGHLIGHTS

While both women and men can be sexually harassed; women and girls suffer disproportionately. Many young women are exploited and forced into sexual liaisons with their male employers to obtain or retain employment.

Sexual favours are the “quid pro quo” for permanent job security or advancement. This type of harassment in the workplace frequently destroys a productive working environment and the self-esteem of those who experience it.

A key factor is “the authority/power which the harasser wields over the victim who is usually at a disadvantage owing to her fragile economic position

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT HIGHLIGHTS

- Although more women are entering the paid work force, the region MUST raise the LFPR of women (CEDAWs recommendation).
- **occupational stereotyping has persisted for both sexes highlighting the need for more proactive policies and programmes to fulfill commitments to CEDAW and the SDGs to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women.**
- A gender analysis of the LF in 6 CARICOM countries; namely Barbados, Grenada, Guyana, St. Lucia, Jamaica & Trinidad cautions that the unemployment rate for women is higher than the rate for men across all focus countries. Conversely, men are more likely than women to be part of the labour force across all the countries. This is expected given women's disproportionate responsibility for unpaid care work as well as their greater longevity. (UN Women draft).
- The proportion of the employed male working-age population ranges from 57% in Grenada to 67% in Jamaica and Trinidad, while for women, the range is from 35% in Guyana to 55% in Barbados. In all countries, the employment rate is lower for women than for men. The gender gap is especially large in Guyana, and smallest in Barbados.
- *However, varying forms of social protection could mean for women; educating their children and feeding the family...*

GOOD GOVERNANCE HIGHLIGHTS

leadership and decision-making that is participatory, accountable, transparent, effective, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law. It assures that corruption is minimized and the views of the most vulnerable are taken into account in decision-making.

More women in senior positions of in the public service. Gains in Political participation have slipped. (two PM in CARICOM in 2015) to one, newly elected. Governance remains tilted in favour of male leadership in the public and private sectors.

A cultural shift must occur regionally to remove structural barriers to enable women's full and equal participation with men.

ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES

- Sexual and Reproductive Rights (taking a life cycle approach and not discriminating against any sexually diverse populations)
- STI/HIV reduction (seeing this in a holistic manner and not with HIV as a stand along issue) this includes prevention of mother to child transmission
- Overall access to quality healthcare services (in both urban and rural locations)
- Maternal mortality is an issue in the region with ratios in excess of 100 per 100,000 persons reported in Jamaica, Guyana, and Suriname and around 46-43 per 100,000 persons in Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, Belize, St Vincent and the Grenadines and the Bahamas.
- Teenage pregnancy...Guyana, DR, Suriname and Belize have the highest rates.
- Male participation (how to ensure that services cater to the needs of men)
- Mental health for men, women and children as an overall health issue
- NCDs (diabetes, hypertension)
- Adolescent health...an issue of access.

INCLUSIVE QUALITY EDUCATION

- Caribbean countries have made great strides in achieving near universal enrollment at the primary and secondary levels, however, low completion rates at the secondary level remain a concern.
- Considered an area of success for women in the region as their achievement of higher levels of secondary and tertiary certification in most countries continues to surpass that of males. (top jobs dominated by men) owing to structural/systemic barriers.
- CARICOMs **Regional Education and Human Resource Development 2030 Strategy** (HRD Strategy) which aims to look at a 'whole systems' approach to educational transformation including the architecture and governance of the education system in addition to curriculum content to better prepare our youth to compete regionally & globally.

SYNERGIES

- CEDAW (1979)
- The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 1995 & The Beijing +20 Review, 2015
- The Caribbean Joint Statement on Gender Equality and the Post 2015 and SIDS Agenda
- ***The SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (S.A.O.M.A) Pathways***
- International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the Cairo Programme of Action (PoA)
- *The Montevideo Consensus for Population and Development & Strategy (SDGs)*
- The Convention on Belem do Para



THE DRAFT STRATEGY

- To be adopted by CARICOM Member States

VISION

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- The CARICOM Gender Equality Strategy will be guided by the Vision of the Caribbean Community articulated in the CARICOM Strategic Plan:
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- *A Caribbean Community that is integrated, inclusive and resilient; driven by knowledge, excellence, innovation and productivity; a Community where every citizen is secure and has the opportunity to realize his or her potential with guaranteed human rights and social justice; and contributes to, and shares in, its economic, social and cultural prosperity; a Community which is a unified and competitive force in the global arena.*
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GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- *Rights-based*
- *Good governance*
- *Harmonization*
- *Transformative*
- *Partnership of women and men*
- *Systematic mainstreaming*

WHY A REGIONAL STRATEGY?

- protect the human rights of women and men, boys & girls as enshrined in national Constitutions and in relevant International Conventions
- ensure regional accountability for commitments made in national policies and programmes as well as relevant International Conventions like CEDAW
- provide national policy-makers, civil society organizations and international development agencies with a reference point for recognizing and addressing gender issues and making gender responsive, human rights-oriented policy decisions.;
- address the fundamental causes of gender inequality and inequity and place the family and the community at the centre of this process of change;
- act as a basis for transforming gender relations regionally, within the family and the community, and across all levels of public and private institutions;
- Provide an impetus and framework for national policy development



OVERALL GOAL

- The goal of the CARICOM Gender Equality Strategy is to accelerate the effective implementation of priority actions through a regional coordinated approach *to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.*

CROSS CUTTING STRATEGIES

- Mainstream gender into all national policies, programmes and projects to facilitate the achievement of human-centred and sustainable regional development.
- Engage in legal reform to ensure de jure and de facto gender equality and equity.
- Build human resource capacity for active participation (at the policy, technical and administrative levels) in developing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the achievement of gender equality and equity
- Conduct gender sensitive research (disaggregated by sex, age, ethnicity and geographic location) and gender analysis to provide evidence for policies and programmes that are gender responsive.

COMMITMENTS...

- Consultation with the member states will inform commitments to be made in the six priority areas...



THANK YOU!