



CARICOM

TOWARDS REGIONAL POLICY ON GENDER EQUALITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

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ON GENDER
EQUALITY
AND
SOCIAL JUSTICE**



CARICOM

CREDITS

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PREFACE

As early as 1983 CARICOM Ministers with responsibility for the Integration of Women in Development articulated the need for a policy framework to guide activities related to women.

Between 1986-1994, ten CARICOM countries developed Policy Statements on women and, during preparations for The Fourth World Conference on Women which commenced in 1993, a process was initiated towards production of a Regional Policy Framework for Gender and Development.

In early 1995, Ms. Sonja T. Harris, Gender and Development Consultant and former Women's Affairs Officer, CARICOM Secretariat, was contracted by the Secretariat to prepare a draft Regional Policy on Social and Gender Equity. In March 1995, an expert group meeting discussed and reviewed a concept paper. This was later considered by the Seventh Meeting of Ministers responsible for Women's Affairs in May 1995 in The Bahamas.

A final draft of the document was considered by A Special Meeting of Ministers responsible for the Integration of Women in Development held in Trinidad and Tobago in November 1996. The Ministers endorsed the document with minor amendments and instructed the Secretariat to produce the final document.

The Secretariat is pleased to record its thanks and appreciation to the consultant, Ms. Sonja Harris, for preparation of this document: **Towards a Regional Policy on Gender Equality and Social Justice.**

CARICOM Secretariat
June 1997.

1. INTRODUCTION

a) **Emerging Issues and structural responses**

At the First World Conference on Women in Mexico 1975, the United Nations declared 1975-85 the First Decade on Women. Issues of gender inequality, underdevelopment and aggression, were debated relative to their impact on women, relationships, communities and nation-states.

The Women's Movement in the Caribbean became formalized with the creation of the first Women's Desk, later a Women's Bureau in Jamaica in 1975. By 1985, when the Third World Conference on Women was held in Nairobi, all 13 CARICOM countries had some form of National Machinery responsible for "Women's Affairs." These ranged from Desks, Bureaux, and Directorate, to a full Ministry in St. Kitts and Nevis.

CARICOM Secretariat also established a Women's Desk in 1980 to lend support to National level machinery. Meetings of Ministers responsible for Women's Affairs, began in 1981. Although there is no Standing Committee in this subject area, Ministerial Meetings have been convened on a biennial basis.

The pressing issues of that period included -

- Women's economic status - low wages, high unemployment, low level skills.
- Supports needed to women in their reproductive role.
- Man/Woman relations - levels of power sharing.
- The under-representation of women in senior level, and political decision-making.

This period spawned:

- **The Women-in-Development approach**, aimed at integrating by "mainstreaming" women into the Development process. The Government sector positioned itself in this arena, beginning their work on **projects** to deliver skills and services to poor women.

and

- **The Women and Development approach**, which attracted development-focussed NGOs concerned with issues of equity, parity, and an alternative development

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framework. A later concern was isolating "gender" as a critical but omitted factor in national development planning.

Convergence between these two threads in the Women's movement took place through the work of WAND-U.W.I., Barbados, whose activities offered opportunities for complementary exchanges. However, it was evident even in that period that different assumptions and strategies propelled the Government and non-governmental sectors, and that different results would accrue from these efforts.

b) Early results and achievements - Governments

The effectiveness of **National Machineries** to carry out broad national and international mandates, has been a constant source of concern. The Commonwealth Secretariat's Women and Development Unit led the way in 1983, with a series of studies of National Machineries, culminating in the "Ladies in Limbo" publications. At the Sixth Meeting of Ministers responsible for Women's Affairs, 1993, in Trinidad Ministers, still concerned about the functioning of National Machineries, requested an updated evaluation of their effectiveness. This study was commissioned by CARICOM Secretariat, and was completed in 1994. Findings indicate, yet again, that the focus, orientation and inadequate resource complement of the Bureaux remain critical elements in the achievement of goals of the first and second Decades on Women (1975-95).

In 1983, at the Second Meeting of Ministers (Barbados), the need was expressed for a Policy framework to guide activities related to women. Commonwealth Secretariat by 1982/83 also recognized the policy vacuum in their Extension work in the Caribbean, though a range of national level project activities and international mandates were in motion.

Between 1986-90 and 1992-94, ten of the thirteen CARICOM countries, assisted by the Commonwealth Secretariat, and later UNDP and CARICOM Secretariat, developed Policy Statements on Women. The fact of the **establishment** of these National Machineries, and the **development of Policy Statements**, remain two outstanding areas of achievement (despite obstacles to implementation) in the public sector response to issues of gender inequality and underdevelopment.

In 1985, at the Third Meeting of Ministers in Antigua and Barbuda, a framework to prioritize activities of CARICOM Women's Desk, in its relationship with National Machineries, was adopted as follows:

- Strengthening National Machineries
- Data Collection on women's status
- Economic Empowerment of women

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- Public Education on women's issues
- Technical Assistance to women's programmes

c) **Early results and achievements - NGOs**

The non-governmental community is not a homogenous one. While traditional Welfarist organizations dispense charity, training, custodial care and patronage to women and their families, the development-oriented NGOs analyzed structures of inequity; pressured for changes in long outdated Legal systems; facilitated empowerment of grass-roots women, and lobbied for women's strategic interests to be incorporated into the curricula of University campuses and into international development thinking.

Overall, one notable achievement is their contribution to epistemological understanding of the place of gender inequality within the liberal capitalist system of production.

d) **Common Achievements**

In the area of Legal Reform, and in the principles espoused in the **Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination against Women**, the Government and non-governmental arms of the women's movement, found common ground.

Spearheaded by CARICOM and Commonwealth Secretariats, and fully supported by regional NGOs, **Model legislation benefitting women** was drafted in eight areas, between 1988-92. These drafts have been shared with each member state, and have facilitated closer dialogue between Attorneys General Chambers and Women's Bureaux. In addition, public education programmes were undertaken by CAFRA, aimed at influencing countries to adopt needed legislation, and the public to use these instruments (listed below) to protect and defend their rights.

Model Legislation covers the following areas:

- **Equal pay** for equal work
- **Equal opportunity** and treatment in employment
- **Citizenship** (the right to confer citizenship on their spouse and children, formerly restricted to men)

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- **Inheritance** (protecting the rights of common-law as much as married persons on the dissolution of the union)
- **Sexual Harassment**
- **Sexual Offences**
- **Domestic Violence**
- **Maintenance** and enforcement of maintenance orders between reciprocating countries.

e) **Later Outcomes 1990-95**

CARICOM Strategy towards the Fourth World Conference on Women

In 1993, as CARICOM's Women's Desk began preparing for the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, 1995, resources were made available through the British Development Division (Barbados) to the Desk.

Through a process designed and managed by the Secretariat, of assigning consultants to National Machineries and their Coordinating Committees, to assist in data collection, documentation and promotion, CARICOM countries were all able to prepare national reports on Women by mid 1994. Thus, a further system of active Government/NGO engagement was facilitated. The Commonwealth Caribbean was the first sub-region, because of this process, to develop a coherent body of information on changes in women's status since 1985, and to present this data to the regional and global preparatory process towards the Fourth World Conference on Women. UNIFEM and UN-ECLAC worked closely with CARICOM, and WAND offered support in documentary publicity, in this entire process.

Findings from these national level studies indicate that women have made gains, numerically and in their performance, within the education sector. However, gender bias in the education system, coupled with gender segmentation in the labour market, collude to ensure that women remain at the base of the economy. Women comprise the majority of persons falling below the poverty line, and rural households, including those headed by single women within them, can be ranked among the poorest of the poor. In addition, when solely income-poverty indicators are used, the landless urban working poor are similarly disadvantaged. Minimum weekly wages in 1995 for household helpers of US\$15.00 (Jamaica and Guyana) to US\$25.00

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(Eastern Caribbean), place these workers in a worse position than 20 years ago, given the rate of inflation, especially in Jamaica and Guyana.

The issue of violence and abuse against women and children has surfaced as an issue of even greater concern in this decade than before. Caribbean Governments, in recognition of this now global epidemic, have been signatories to international agreements guaranteeing the human rights of all, including the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**, and the OAS/CIM spearheaded **Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women**.

f) **Obstacles to balanced Development**

The World Summit on Social Development, March 1995, as did the Earth Summit 1992, the Human Rights Conference 1993, and the Conferences on Sustainable Development, and Population and Development, 1994, gave clear indicators on the chronic state of uneven development and inequity, globally and regionally, based on the management of class, race, environmental and gender interests. At the core of the imbalanced approaches to development, is the power sharing inequities between men and women. At the heart of the interests of class and capital, and the system of privileging the minority, is the deliberate exclusion of civil society from active participation in relevant decision-making, and the exploitation of the cheap "surplus" labour of women. While there are other groups of disempowered persons, the problem of inequality can be solved only when gender inequality is fully addressed.

Women, as protector of the environment, culture-bearers, childrearers and managers of family interests, remain undervalued, underpaid, overburdened, and overlooked in national development planning.

The imbalance in development strategies is made worse by macroeconomic policies of structural adjustment, which based on neo-liberal principles of free enterprise, have forced governments to reduce their role in social investments, and resource distribution thereof. The World Summit on Social Development is only one clear signal that the social costs of the economic growth approach, at the expense of investments in equitable primary education, primary health and nutrition, may be too great for any country to bear.

Implementation of Policies on Women in the region has been a specific area of low productivity. One difficulty in this area is the actual **measures** (quantitative and qualitative) to be used to determine changes affecting women. Other obstacles to a coherent strategy of implementation are related to the skill level within Women's Bureaux, to influence and monitor change, and their absence of authority to "legislate" changes which other Ministries should carry out. Enforcement of Regional and International Covenants and Agreements has proven to be an even more difficult task than implementing national policies on women.

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2. **CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL CHANGES**

In two main areas concepts and assumptions, relative to the interests of women, have shifted. These include:

- A shift from the "integrative" WID perspective, to one focussed on **women's interests** in development, and a shift currently to **Gender & Development**, which focusses on the power relationship between men and women in the private and public spheres. In each conceptual area, because different assumptions were made and different structures established, the need for coherence remains.
- The shift from income-generating **projects** to a **Policy** approach. Whereas the earlier investments to projects benefitted only a few women as project participants, and only served to improve their **condition**, the shift to influencing Policy design and lobbying to participate in **policy decisions and management**, can lead to changes in the **strategic position** of all women in society.

In addition to the goal of Gender Equality, the concept of **GENDER EQUITY** emerged as one aspect in the Policy Spectrum and is a major component in improving the strategic position of women. In spite of conceptual shifts and differences within the women's movement, there is agreement on the need to work towards greater equity i.e. social justice in development.

Gender Equity is defined as a core principle in public Policy, and a sustainable derivative of true democracy. It speaks to a new development approach based on outputs of justice, improved quality of life, shared participation of men and women in activities in households and in the public arena, and a balanced approach to development, especially related to investments in social as well as economic development and infrastructure.

It is against this background that the Region is taking the opportunity to examine inequality and inequity through the lens of gender.

The basic principles, goals, and strategic objectives of Policy on Gender inequality and social justice, to be discussed below, will challenge the Community to continue the process of re-thinking development, and applying fundamentally new approaches.

3. BACKGROUND SUMMARY OF ISSUES RELATED TO EQUALITY

Civil Society, represented by voluntary and developmental NGOs, Gender Studies Departments, media, and individual social analysts, have been presenting at regional and international conferences a comprehensive and alternative position on the cross-cutting issues related to gender equality and social justice, essentially challenging the dominant development model. The Government sector needs to assess the differential impact on social and gender groupings of the economic policy framework within which the region now functions, evidenced in the following broad examples:

Globalization versus Regionalization

- The over-arching imperatives of global economic restructuring and its required policy of economic liberalization and privatisation which have forced governments to divest much of its responsibility for governance, especially in social and economic development to non-accountable, non-state sectors. This led to a return of ownership and authority to private minority interests.

Social disintegration

- A growing level of social alienation of people from critical policy-development, from political and administrative decision-making, and from global trade agreements in which Caribbean governments play a marginal role.

The Management of Poverty

- The insufficiency of the governmental system of political centralization to meet the basic human needs of the majority of the population, and the weakening structures of accountability at local government level.

The Effects of Poverty

- Deterioration in the standard of living of workers, especially in their access to land, shelter and nutrition, and the chronically high rate of unemployment, especially among women and youth.
- Increase in homelessness and in the incidence of stress related illnesses.

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Violence against women

- Escalation in the reported incidence of domestic violence, especially against women.

Returns on Investment in Education

- The inability of the Education system, though commanding 12 - 18% of national budgets, to deliver more than 20% satisfactory performance with certification to secondary school age cohorts, and the related issue of the high rate of drop-out among male secondary school age students.

In each of the above areas, the effects of the experience on men, women and children differ. Women, uniquely, because of their reproductive role within private households, and the volume of unwaged work performed to support measurable economic activities, experience a parallel low value ascribed to their work in the public domain. This devaluing of women's work, coupled with abuse, determine women's lower status in Caribbean societies, condemns them to inter-generational poverty, and further negatively shapes the culturing process for the next generation. The girl child, therefore, is socialised like the mother, around internalized beliefs of self-sacrifice and self-limitation, while male responsibility in families and households, continue to be an underdeveloped resource.

It is, however, the **structure** of formal power relations between the sexes, much more than individual socialization, that determines outcomes for women's status and for that of future generations.

As a consequence of the dominant system of patriarchy within the power-centres of the region, along with the peculiar feature of strong matrifocality in social responsibility, we see women under-represented in Parliament (13% of Parliamentarians are women) and over-represented in low wage jobs and in household management (40% of households are headed by single women, including grandmothers).

In the Education Sector, numerical aggregates on female **attendance** at the secondary level, mask the persistence of gender segmentation particularly in non-formal technical training opportunities, where Home Economics, Child Care, Hotel Trades, and Secretarial courses are tailored for females. This training inevitably leads to lower paid positions on the job market than the industrial trades tailored for males.

At the tertiary level, women still cluster in Health, Social Sciences and Education which lead to lower paid professions than Engineering and Agricultural Sciences.

The issue then is not solely one of gender but of the value placed by the market on a range of skills; the criteria used to value skills and work; the importance of all work to the functioning of the society; and the uneven stress placed on some members of our population to maximally support families and economies, given minimum compensation.

4. PRINCIPLES OF EQUALITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

The process of transforming social relations based on principles of gender equality and social equity, requires that women must occupy a position alongside men, in negotiating for, distributing and managing the region's material and non-material resources. The principles on which this transformation would rest, include the following:

- Women and men have the right of **participation** in the decision-making process from the community to the national/regional level, and to the resources, rewards and benefits emanating from that process for self-advancement.
- The **re-valuing of all labour** must be based on the **real** contribution of men and women to economic and social well-being and to the national products, and not on the long-standing system of gender subordination.
- **Partnership** between men and women means shared responsibility and respect for all social functions in the private and public spheres.
- A system of **social investments** to the services and opportunities needed by women, youth or poor communities, to compensate for historical neglect, exclusion or uneven development, is a form of social justice.
- An **integrated holistic approach** to social, economic and political development, including environmental concerns, is a pre-requisite to sustainable growth, and involves a non-hierarchical mix of interests and players.

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- **Respect for Cultural heritage and diversity** includes the particular culture of women [her story] and its place in the process of re-claiming and re-shaping our cultural capital.
- The legal and human **rights of women** are **developmental** issues, related to increased output and stability, and are not primarily issues of social welfare.

5. **MISSION STATEMENT**

A Policy Statement on Gender equality and Social Justice offers the region a framework within which structures of subordination can be identified and eliminated. These structures, which operate in the public and private spheres, related to educational opportunities, Legal/Human rights, shared responsibilities, work value and rewards, when applied unequally, deprive women of a balanced share of the region's resources. To reform these systems and practices, based on principles of equality and justice, is to re-invest new energies into the region's productive capital and the governance thereof.

6. **GOAL STATEMENT (Long-term)**

The building of new structures of power-sharing at the household, community, national and regional levels, where both men and women can participate fully in developing a system of cooperation in decision-making, as equal partners in the sustainable development of their societies.

7. **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

To institute a process of STRUCTURAL REFORM by way of strategic data gathering in specific institutions, followed by the testing, at the local and national levels, of an alternative approach to development, based on a comprehensive mix of decentralized, intersectoral, gender-balanced interests.

Institutions that could be prioritized for strategic data gathering and testing, include those focussing on the following:

- (a) EDUCATION AND SKILL TRAINING
- (b) CHILDCARE
- (c) YOUTH PROGRAMMES
- (d) LEGISLATION
- (e) LABOUR, LAWS AND PRACTICES

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- (f) POLITICAL REPRESENTATION
- (g) SOCIAL SECURITY
- (h) COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
- (i) RURAL DEVELOPMENT, LAND USE, THE ENVIRONMENT
- (j) MEDIA AND INFORMATION SHARING
- (k) HEALTH CARE; FOOD AND NUTRITION

Details on the strategic interventions are given in appendix I

The issues of **POVERTY, VIOLENCE and WOMEN's UNWAGED WORK**, prioritized by CARICOM countries, are presented as inter-related themes in the above strategic areas.

8. **IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY**

Gender equality and Social Justice are multi-sectoral issues which impel the region towards an integrated holistic management approach.

Women's Bureaux, as assessed in the latest review commissioned by CARICOM Secretariat, remain under-resourced, and lack the authority, status or influence within the government machinery to legitimately direct other Ministries towards a new approach in development.

As recommended by D. Rowan-Campbell, in the Review of National Machineries, and by Commonwealth Secretariat in the Commonwealth Plan of Action, which Caribbean governments endorsed, new institutional arrangements are needed in the management of Women & Gender issues. The following must be considered.

- (i) A deployment of the technical areas of responsibility to Line Ministries, authorized by the Political Directorate.
- (ii) Technical coordination and guidance vested in Planning Ministries which would be responsible for intersectoral sharing between Line Ministries; for designing (with consultation) instruments to measure progress towards gender equality, and for accountability to Parliament for results in all sectoral areas.
- (iii) Location of the functions of monitoring and data storage within the National Machineries (Women's Bureaux) once these Bureaux are equipped with adequate human and financial resources.

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Technical expertise in **gender planning and gender impact assessments** would be required in Line Ministries and in Planning Divisions, where Gender and Development Desks could be established [for a limited time] to guide the technical process.

Ultimately, commitment of the political directorate to 'mainstreaming' gender in development is of paramount importance.

The process of ensuring gender equality in the identified Strategic Areas would need to be phased, starting with a specific number of sectoral interventions. Women's labour, Education, Child Care & Community Development, could be prioritized, followed by a comprehensive approach informed by national imperatives.

The Role of an Advisory Committee

Coordinating Committees were established in each country to assist Women's Bureaux to prepare information on Women's Status for the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, Sept. 1995. It would be efficient to activate these committees and with constitutional guidelines, expand their functions to include supporting the National Machineries in its monitoring, data storage and public information functions. These committees should be comprised of community "monitors" including active NGDOs and NGWOs, as well as other specialists from within the private business and public sector.

The Role of NGOs

Regional and National level NGOs which have a distinct structure outside of the Advisory Committees, would need to form part of the essential components within a management network, and would continue to be responsible for their watchdog functions "expressed" in lobbying and advocacy, information exchanges with National Machineries, planning, analysis and documentation, in support of the process of change.

The Role of Community Sector

While the NGDOs represent a "community" of interests and the interface between themselves and physical communities is vital, households and neighbourhood/village/communities must be allowed free expression of their interests, which may not be represented by any organization. Women's organizations, community organizations and non-organized citizens need a voice regarding issues of violence; gender relations; infrastructural development; consumer action; unemployment; the system of resource distribution and privileging; and the status of poor women, children and the elderly.

Their participation on Advisory Committees may not offer the level of representation required given the range of interests. It could be the responsibility of National Machineries to coordinate with these groups, meeting them as equal partners in development, and facilitating their transition from the role of client to that of citizen. (see N. Duncan - Success stories in good governance)

Private business interests could also be represented at community level, but should be expressed as a resource to communities not as the centre of power to which communities, especially women, offer their poorly paid services.

Role of International Agencies

The U.N. Agencies; Commonwealth Secretariat, British Development Division, the Inter-American Commission of Women (OAS), the Inter American Development Bank, and even the World Bank have an active interest in programmes related to Gender Equality and Equity in Development. The Government sector can no longer devolve responsibility for setting the agenda for Gender Equality to these agencies but must solicit their coordinated support for a CARICOM Plan of Action related to Equality and Justice. Such a plan needs to outline a programme of Development Cooperation in Social and Economic Policy and Planning, in which regional expertise for technical assistance can be called on with support of international agencies.

Women's Desk- CARICOM Secretariat

The lack of resources within National Machineries is paralleled in the Secretariat, where decisions on staffing can no longer be placed on hold, while issues related to Gender Equality, Justice to Marginalized groups, participation of all interests in the development process, become even more complex daily. CARICOM's role in guiding the transformation process cannot be overstated.

9. SUMMARY/CONCLUSIONS

The success of an alternative approach to development depends on new and bold action including the following:

- (a) Strengthening of the capacity of CARICOM's Women's Desk, regional agencies and restructured national machineries to integrate gender analysis into mainstream development, using methodologies guided by the principles of gender equality and social justice. Tools to measure equality and justice would need to be standardized throughout the region.

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- (b) Building the needed interactive linkages within sectors in CARICOM Secretariat and between this organization, functioning as an integrated unit, and the parallel integrative function areas at national level.

Gender equality does not always mean a 50/50 male/female apportioning of resources or opportunities, but an affirmative decision to correct all imbalances in access to rewards, resources, benefits and information in the region's programmes, and to end all practices of gender segmentation in education, the labour market and the legal system.

This affirmative approach to equality will result in automatic and routine use of a system of checks and balances to ensure equity between all social groupings, beginning with men and women.

(a) STRATEGIC AREA : EDUCATION AND SKILL TRAINING**STRATEGIC ISSUES FOR INVESTIGATION****PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE APPROACH****(i) Challenging the Sexual Division of Labour**

By conducting:

random sample surveys among children and young adults, to identify their perception of masculinity and violence, media and violence and their solutions.

Develop training materials from surveys for use with perpetrators, victims and Security Force: standardize data collection instruments on family violence for inclusion in schools.

By revising :

— teacher training curriculum and practice

Re-design teacher training to eliminate sexist messages, and to build a new sense of active shared citizenship.

— textbook and teaching approaches

— approaches in Training Day Care Staff

— level of sexist practices and instructions in nursery and pre-schools.

Produce new materials, particularly for training young minds, and for use in Social Studies and Family life courses, and test in Urban and Rural schools.

By eliminating :

— Gender Bias in technical training curricula of non-formal institutions.

— Gender Bias in Education planning and Policies.

Design for one major Institution in each country, a curriculum based on open access of male and female students to the most appropriate technological training for the 21st Century. Test and evaluate, using trainees in hairdressing and cosmetology as the control group.

(ii) Career guidance (Formal / Informal) offered in schools & career choices of secondary school students.

Recommend on feasibility of investing in formalized career guidance and approach.

(iii) Cost-benefit analysis of investment in Education and returns/losses from labour market output based on gender segmentation.

Recommend ways to increase Returns on Investment (ROI) in Education given that 1/2 of the labour force are confined to unskilled minimum wage work.

(iv) Socialization practices in the HOME related to gender roles.

Design theatre productions to address re-socialization at local level.

(b) STRATEGIC AREA - CHILD CARE**STRATEGIC ISSUES FOR INVESTIGATION****PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE APPROACH.**

(i) Legislative Framework e.g. on the definition of a juvenile; age of consent; rights of the child & enforcement procedures.

Recommend on the (re) drafting of legislation to ensure coherence in the law; protection for the girl-child and for boys.

(ii) Conditions, including POVERTY which contribute to the phenomenon of street children and to the neglect of children.

Identify and train community monitors to work in a preventative treatment approach with children and families.

(iii) Level of public / private expenditure on daycare, nursery education & pre-school education, including

Identify Strategies to increase investment in pre-school care and education including placing the most, not the

qualification of staff and quality of care / education relative to sex-role identification.

(iv) **Level & effect** of sexism, classism in instructions given to pre-school, primary & secondary age students.

(v) **Willingness of private sector** to provide supports to workers with family responsibilities e.g. in day care, as a means of increasing worker productivity.

(vi) **Capacity of communities** to provide quality day care services based on principles of non-violence and gender equality; assessment of training and employment opportunities.

(vii) **Readiness of CARICOM** governments to adopt ILO Convention No. 156 related to the Rights of Workers with family responsibilities.

(viii) **Capacity of males and females** in households to share equally in childcare; the proportion of unwaged work by age and sex and its economic value.

(ix) **Extent of damage** suffered by children, girls & boys in lockups, government institutions & private residential centres.

least, qualified persons in this service area.

Conduct workshops as part of a long term programme on shared gender role orientation to life.

Support ILO's (Port of Spain) proposed projects on Public/Private/Community sector collaboration on providing day care services to workers with family responsibilities.

Lobby CARICOM Ministers to adopt ILO Convention No. 156, and develop programmes in support services for workers with family responsibilities.

Statistical Departments informed by CARICOM pilot studies to include in their analysis and publications, regionally standardized measures on the value of unwaged work and on childcare and family support systems.

Design programme specifically for children in institutions, with emphasis on self-esteem, gender-role sharing and respect.

(c) STRATEGIC AREA : YOUTH PROGRAMMES

ISSUES FOR INVESTIGATION

(i) **Document the precise percentage** of young persons (female and male) annually who leave school without certification; who receive gender biased vocational training, who continue further training, relative to their economic position on the Labour market.

(ii) **The share of the National Budgets** invested in girls vs. boys as part of youth development and the potential of these programmes to transform the environment of youth from an alienating sexist one to one of engagement and equality.

(iii) **Analyse the factors** contributing to the low-level of personal motivation towards work; the culture of violence and gender differences therein, and detail the vision of youth for a drug free, violence free, non-sexist environment.

(iv) **Assess the attitudes** and motivation of trainers / educators, the messages being transmitted to youth (girls and boys differently) and the circumstances which

PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE APPROACH

Submit findings to Parliament, University campuses, CARICOM Secretariat.

Submit as above, and also to UNICEF.

Share findings with youth in all communities and assist them in sourcing support for their transformative programmes.

Integrate these findings with that of Youth Vision and cost all inputs. Assist trainers, managers, educators to access training which will facilitate their work with youth

generate love of work in the trainers themselves. IDENTIFY resource persons and agencies in each country with expertise in a holistic, human centred approach to productivity and with the ability to listen to and respond to female and male youth and engage them in the productive process

in a non-sexist community based approach, inspired by love of work; rewards to the individual and community, and respect for women.

(d) STRATEGIC AREA : LEGISLATION

ISSUES FOR INVESTIGATION

(i) **National Machineries** and Attorney General Offices to jointly review for adoption and enforcement, CARICOM model legislation starting with domestic violence.

(ii) **CARICOM Secretariat** to spearhead a review of all Social Legislation related to women, religious groups, families and indigenous people, and identify gaps, inconsistencies, areas of de jure discrimination; and action needed to ensure coherence and JUST LAWS for all.

(iii) **Research on the family** linked to areas of improved social legislation and social policy.

PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE APPROACH

Model legislation popularized & promoted among community groups & used as material in the region's communication & gender-based media training strategy.

A joint NGO/Government programme on Legal Literacy supported by international agencies and promoted at all levels of society.

NGOs to lobby for consistency in the law where protection of the girl child is concerned, i.e. raising the age of consent to 18 to make it consistent with the age of marriage, voting or being charged in an adult court of law.

Special groups such as Indigenous people, Rastafari communities, to be assisted in lobbying for amendments in the law which protect their rights while incorporating full respect and justice for all.

Strengthening of the Family Court system.

(e) LABOUR LAWS AND PRACTISE

ISSUES FOR INVESTIGATION

(i) **Identifying the most feasible way** nationally and regionally to count women's unwaged work in National Product Statistics and value their contribution to the Production process.

(ii) **Review and/or establishment** of minimum wage laws and linking wage increases to training & certification at two or more levels, for household helpers & related workers.

(iii) **Ways to standardize** and equate minimum wage guidelines and conditions of work in all countries in the region.

(iv) **Feasibility & cost** of introducing training and certification in "housework", as a means to gradually professionalize this area of service & improve workers' position in the labour market.

PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE APPROACH

NGOs to lobby government to amend laws; adjust labour practices; test new systems to value women's unwaged work; and support private/voluntary efforts to train and certify household managers.

Existing Organizations representing the interests of Household Workers and Informal Traders to be given every assistance by NGOs and international agencies to become a stronger voice for these workers.

(v) **Review for amendment**, legislation & Industrial Relations Acts which discriminate against domestic employees, insofar as their right to organize in unions is concerned. Identify each country's regulations in this area for discussion at the Ministerial level.

(f) STRATEGIC AREA - POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

ISSUES FOR INVESTIGATION

(i) **POLITICAL Education** needed to increase the proportion of female Parliamentarians (13% overall), Ministers & Senators; evaluation of the impact of that process in Jamaica; and needs of females for support-services in order to facilitate their entry into politics.

(ii) **Identify NGOs** and Financial Institutions willing to work in this area towards a new human-centred politics.

PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE APPROACH

NGOs to design a system of accountability for female politicians who emerge as a result of political education and support services.

Developmental NGOs to continue negotiations with Governments (national and regional) on the framework for a new economic order fuelled by a re-orientation in the political culture.

(g) SOCIAL SECURITY

ISSUES FOR INVESTIGATION

(i) **The investment pattern** of National Insurance Schemes, the proportion after pensions re-invested into the priority needs of contributors, and the decision-making mechanism which guides these programmes.

(ii) **The feasibility of contributing** Social Security benefits to mothers of small children for a specified period of time.

(iii) **The status of the Elderly** - those with and without pensions and their representational rights in decision-making.

(iv) **The relevance of the Family Code** developed by CARICOM Secretariat to the design of holistic programmes in Human Security.

PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE APPROACH

NGOs to play a mediating role, where required, between the interests of mothers, the elderly and others in need, and the benefits from National Insurance Schemes.

Heads of Government to appoint a special task force to promote an understanding of the goal of Human Security and its components, as the cornerstone of Sustainable Development.

(h) STRATEGIC AREA - COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

ISSUE FOR INVESTIGATION

(i) **Changes in family forms** in light of migration and economic stabilization programmes and the impact on community stability and empowerment.

PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE APPROACH

NGOs to propose to government a holistic approach in community empowerment and family supports aimed at reducing the incidence of out-migration and street children.

(ii) **Regional study** on the phenomenon of street children and the communities which spawn them.

(iii) **Information** on the total number of community programmes in each country, demonstrating some of participatory decision-making involving a balanced mix of men & women; capability for resource mobilization; communication with local & central government; & transparency & accountability within the management system; and / or potential for sustainable development.

(iv) **Feasibility of Information** and data gathering systems located in communities, involving community representatives. and focusing on local knowledge, usable technology and the role of women, men and youth in the transformation of communities to self-sufficient yet interdependent units.

(v) **The role & capacity** of resource agencies & relationship with communities & with policy makers.

Government (Planning Divisions) in collaboration with NGOs to submit to Parliament, with costing, the critical elements identified in a community participation/poverty reduction strategy for the region.

Government sector to assist in identifying funding for a new community-building management approach: based on equality in gender role sharing, full participation of local people in designing and implementing local programmes & deconcentration of administrative & political authority.

Document the experience of Red Thread (Guyana) in mobilizing community representatives to acquire skills in data gathering, analysis and planning.

(i) RURAL DEVELOPMENT, LAND USE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

ISSUES FOR INVESTIGATION

(i) **The role of women** in Rural Development & environmental protection in specific locations, as the entry point and essential component in a sustainable system of growth with equity.

PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE APPROACH

Government sectors & NGOs (supported by international agencies if required) could be urged to seize every opportunity to work together at the local level to recognize women's role in food production & distribution, in the nurturing of the environment and in their still limited access to land, credit & support services. Promoting a woman-centred approach to Rural Development would be consistent with the unstated reality of rural life.

(j) STRATEGIC AREA - MEDIA AND INFORMATION SHARING

ISSUES FOR INVESTIGATION

(i) **Supports needed** to institutionalize the CARICOM/ UNIFEM spearheaded initiative in Gender Training of Media personnel.

(ii) **Identification of Institutional strengthening** needs of media houses and popular theatre (drama) groups whose policy and focus are on Information & Education for Empowerment and who are sensitive to gender issues and the need for a new contract between men and women. This would guarantee a new system of power-sharing between the public, private & community sectors.

PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE APPROACH

Inform all governments of this CARICOM/UNIFEM initiative, which has received support from CARIMAC, Commonwealth Secr. & UNDP; and garner support of Ministries of Information in institutionalizing a gender sensitive approach to the training of media personnel.

Government/NGO collaboration is needed in this critical area, where new influences on young minds can be achieved by a more gender sensitive & cultural use of our media/popular educational services.

(iii) **Feasible ways** of ensuring greater information sharing between regional agencies working on Women and Gender issues, local libraries and community groups.

Support the strengthening of the Documentation centre at WAND & the linkages with & exchanges between CARICOM Secretariat, UWI, UN/ECLAC & CAFRA where information is also stored.

(k) HEALTH CARE, FOOD & NUTRITION

ISSUES FOR INVESTIGATION

(i) **The supports needed** by NGOs to promote a broad regional strategy on preventative health; informed use of herbal medicines; respect for indigenous systems in health care, & protection from exploitation of the knowledge of herbs & the environment, vested in women & men throughout the Caribbean.

PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE APPROACH

NGOs to spearhead a demonstration of cost-savings in preventative health, and in the savings to women's time if an organized system of health care based on the most appropriate elements of indigenous and allopathic systems in health could be established in each country.

