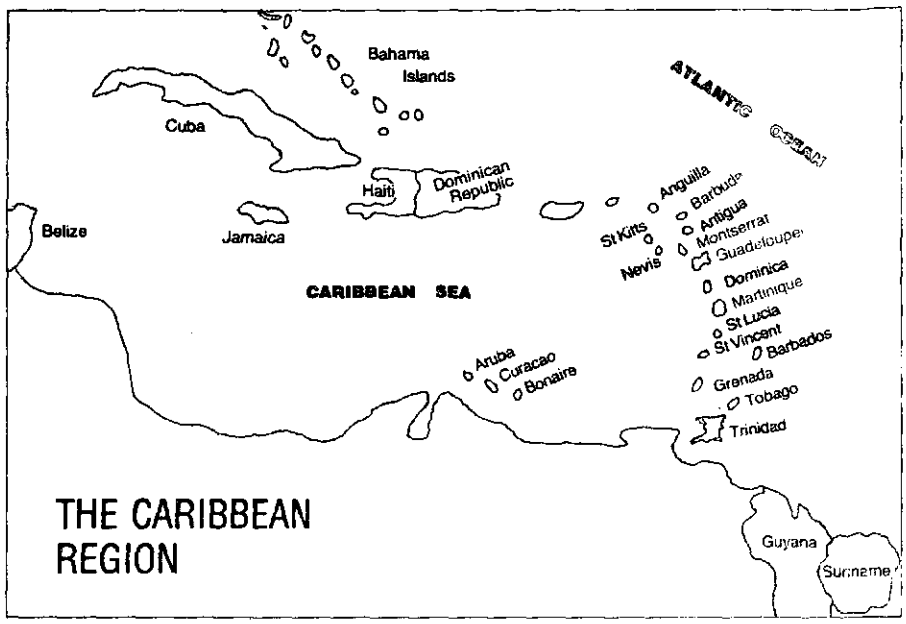
CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION COMMITTEE



THE CARIBBEAN REGION

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CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION COMMITTEE

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WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT

DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 1984 ONWARDS

UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA Office for the Caribbean

WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT

DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 1984 ONWARDS

Legislative Mandates

The CDCC Constituent Documents have established substantive priorities and a general policy orientation which make up the frame of reference of the Work Programme relating to the integration of women in development. Moreover, in the "Strategy for the Caribbean Countries during the Third Development Decade", concrete policies, measures and actions are described and specific reference is made to the need to increase the participation of women as part of the process of achieving higher degrees of equity and of mobilization of available resources.

Strategy of the Work Programme

The objectives of the CDCC are to be achieved through intra-Caribbean technical assistance and the present Work Programme aims at utilizing available resources to foster a self-propelled process for the integration of women in development. Within the basic definition of the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee (CDCC) as a co-ordinating body for activities relating to development and co-operation, the Secretariat of the Committee will attempt to assess the reality of women's lives in the Caribbean as defined by the regional women's movement and the respective member governments, and to submit to the consideration of the Committee such projects geared towards self-propelled integration of women in development. The efforts of the Secretariat for the current year will nonetheless remain very modest owing to limited resources at its disposal.

The Work Programme is designed to capitalize on two parameters:

i) on-going activities of the governments of the region, of the CARICOM Secretariat and of the Caribbean non-governmental organizations, especially UWI, WAND; and

ii) on-going activities of the ECLA Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, other parts of the ECLA system and especially the Women and Development Unit at ECLA Headquarters. Through this linkage, co-ordination with the United Nations family organization is ensured.

National and regional institutions, under the auspices of the CDCC member governments or in their private capacity, are carrying out relevant research and action-oriented projects for the promotion of women. The Secretariat of the CDCC will endeavour, if a research assistant can be funded for this purpose, to utilize the experience accumulated by the Caribbean Documentation Centre, in order to introduce the information produced in the regular publications of the Centre. The data will be easily retrievable and cross-referenced with other facets of social and economic development.

The ECLA Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean is at present developing several activities relating to the survey of the economy of the countries, development planning, external trade, industrial development and social affairs and other activities. An effort will be made to implement specific projects which will either increase the visibility of the situation of the female population participating in these sectors or ensure a specific component attending to the peculiar circumstances of this population.

Besides supporting on-going activities relating to women within the region and promoting the consideration within the different economic analyses of issues of concern for the female population, the Work Programme intends to develop areas of action-oriented research and projects which have not caught the attention of existing institutions.

Methodology

The Work Programme will be implemented through five lines of action which represent substantive, co-ordinational or supportive activities:

i) in-house research relating to selected fields of women's issues and to processing and disseminating information relevant to the integration of women in development

ii) co-ordination of consultant papers on issues of concern for women within specific economic sectors

iii) missions of technical assistance as requested by member governments

iv) attendance at meetings geared towards facilitating the task of co-ordinating the CDCC Work Programme with the activities of relevant organizations and meetings geared towards enhancing the knowledge of the Secretariat of the Caribbean reality in this area

v) search for extra-budgetary resources for projects initiated by or sponsored by CDCC member governments or the Secretariat.

Projects

Six different projects subdivided into two groups dealing with economic issues and the second with social matters have been designed.

The projects relating to economic issues will assist -

i) in documenting, monitoring and reporting on the degree of equity in the distribution of social services between the sexes

ii) in supporting women's self-propelled income-generating activities, and

iii) in monitoring women's participation in industrial activities.

The projects relating to social issues are geared towards enhancing the mobilization of the female population for active and carefree participation in the tasks of development. These projects deal -

i) with obstacles to the development and welfare of the female population originating from teenage pregnancies

ii) with the disruption of women's welfare and disincentives to their development, originating from endemic violence against them as females

iii) with the overloaded agenda of the female population and its availability of time for training from governmental and non-governmental agencies.

ECONOMIC PROJECTS

I. Women and Development Planning

As a follow-up to the regional efforts on the participation of Women in Development Planning, the Secretariat has contracted out of regular budget the economist Joaquin St. Cyr, who completed a pilot study entitled "Women as the Recipients of Services from Resources Allocated in the National Budget of Trinidad and Tobago". The study (ECLA/CARIB/83/9) is being circulated for comments and observations. It contains an analytical proposal for replication of the exercise in the region.

If the Secretariat is successful in securing extra-budgetary funding, it intends to contact similar consultancies in other member states in consultation with the respective Women's Bureaux or appropriate national institutions. Replication of the pilot study will provide quantitative data indicating the type of degree of services contained in the national budgets from which women benefit directly or indirectly.

Two lines of action will be followed:

a) the studies will be assessed at a regional meeting and distributed for the design of projects for the integration of Caribbean women into development planning

b) the Secretariat will try to secure funding for a more ambitious project to be implemented in collaboration with the national machinery and aiming at establishing a regular system of reporting on progress achieved in the delivery of services to the female population. These reports are conceived to complete the Economic Surveys published by the Secretariat. The data necessary to elaborate them will be stored in the CDCC Data Bank. The exercise will be a first step to adequately integrate the analysis of issues concerning women in the overall assessment of the regional economic performance.

II. Women and Trade

It is general knowledge that women have both traditionally and in modern times actively participated in trade and business, both at the national and intra-Caribbean levels. In recent times these movements are even being extended beyond regional boundaries. Though significant, the contribution of women to trade is hardly visible in the official data. Probably as a result of this, few institutions are attending to their circumstances.

There is a need to assess the social and economic impact of the so-called informal sector, from its contribution to regional integration and local employment, to its repercussion on income distribution and cost of living, as well as its impact on health and other living conditions of the traders. Women's accumulated skills in the area of trade is an available resource to be developed in the benefit of their recognized participation in economic development.

During the forthcoming year, the Secretariat will try to procure some extra-budgetary funds in order to initiate a pilot project which compiles and analyzes quantitative and qualitative data at intra-Caribbean level, geared towards action-oriented project formulation.

III. Women and Export Processing Industries

Assembly-line employment in export processing industries, an expanding sector of Third World industrialization, is also a feature in the Caribbean. It is known to absorb particularly the young female labour force. However, little is known of its Caribbean dimensions and of the ways in which Caribbean women benefit and/or are affected by this form of industrialization.

Subject to possibilities of funding, the Secretariat may take the initative to prepare a Caribbean survey which will describe the scope, nature, history, present conditions and future trends of employment possibilities for women in this sector. The survey data will thus provide some basic knowledge of female integration in industrial development in the Caribbean and facilitate identification of relevant training, educational, social and other needs for women's development.

Given the regional mobility of this sector and the high degree of personnel rotation within it, the Secretariat may, on the basis of the survey, assist in the design of a basic data format and collaborate with national institutions in a systematic recording of women's integration in this sector over a set period of time at regular intervals. The recurrent data will be stored in the CDCC Data Bank and may thus be added to the overall assessment of the regional economic performance of women.

In addition, but again subject to available funding of a research assistant for this purpose, the Secretariat may offer the experience of the Caribbean Documentation Centre (CDC) to include the information produced in its regular publications and finally compile a bibliography of published materials.

The survey, the Data Bank and the bibliography will be an important resource for participatory action-oriented project proposals which the Secretariat may design and implement in collaboration with national institutions and organizations, co-ordinated by national machineries for the integration of women in development and the Secretariat.

The Secretariat has initiated close collaboration with UNIDO and CARICOM for the preparation of seminars, training courses and follow-up activities for women in industrial development.

At the present stage, the Secretariat will only assist in the procurement of funds from extra-budgetary sources to undertake the above initiatives.

SOCIAL PROJECTS

I. Teenage Pregnancy

A number of programmes are being carried out in the region with both preventive and curative approaches. In this respect, special mention should be made of the activities in relation to family education programmes of Ministries of Education, of Social Welfare, research and action programmes of national affiliations of the International Family Planning Association, related activities in terms of technical assistance, training and co-ordination through the Women and Development Unit of the Extra Mural Department (WAND).

The Secretariat will establish relevant contacts with a view to assessing the need for putting into place a regional network to review, analyze and assess the documents being published and to promote the organization of an intra-Caribbean mutual assistance programme in this field of action. Meanwhile financial resources will be sought to produce systematized bibliography on teenage pregnancy in the Caribbean, to be

used primarily by relevant institutions concerned with fighting the adverse effects for women's development and welfare.

II. Violence Against Women

On various occasions Caribbean governments, through their Health, Social Welfare and Judicial institutions have expressed concern with the increasing incidence of violence against women. Although the women's movement in the Caribbean tries to deal with the issue and in some instances has done small bits of research in collaboration with Judicial and Social Welfare institutions, the information has so far mainly served the purpose of drawing attention to the matter. Women are (potential) victims of many forms of violence and sexual harassment, which affect their potential to participate in the on-going process of development as positively-oriented, equal social actors.

The Secretariat is initiating contacts with national institutions and machineries for the Integration of Women in Development and with regional organizations such as CARICOM and WAND, to explore the need for and possibility of collaborating and assisting in a regional effort to gather the relevant data and prepare an action-oriented project for the Caribbean.

Subject to the identification of sources for funding, the Secretariat will collaborate with national institutions and regional organizations in

a) the design and implementation of pilot studies at national levels, and

b) the organization and co-ordination of a regional seminar with the purpose of assessing the outcome of the studies and preparing the bases for the formulation of action-oriented project proposals.

While the Secretariat would like to accomplish the major elements of this project before the termination of the contract of the Co-ordinator for women and development programmes, it will only be able to assist in the search for adequate funding to realize the above-mentioned activities.

III. Women's Activities

While we are approaching the end of the "Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace", it may be said that the Governments of the Caribbean have recognized the disadvantageous situation of women and have made an effort to improve it. On the other hand, however, a recurrent theme is also that the potential of women's participation in development has barely been realized. Some improvement schemes have even led to a deterioration in women's capacity for fulfilling even their traditional roles. In many cases women become overburdened to the detriment of their health, while the actual work performed by them is either not considered at all, or not reflected in statistical tabulations upon which development plans are based. Much of women's work cannot be quantified by current methods of data collection. One reason is that most of it is unremunerated or simply invisible. Women's work tends to be fragmented into a variety of tasks in several locations in different parts of the day, week, month or year during different age cycles of their lives.

In an effort to assist in rationalizing developmental interventions from governmental and non-governmental agencies, i.e., to ensure that additional projects do not add to the overloaded schedule of activities in which women are engaged, the Secretariat may undertake to co-ordinate a time allocation study of women's work. In this respect, the Secretariat will initiate contacts with national and regional research institutions, organizations and machineries, as well as with ECLA Headquarters, other UN agencies and research institutions, to explore the status of on-going studies. It will furthermore discuss the need for assessment and follow-up activities in this field with the national Women's Bureaux and organizations.

In the present year, the Secretariat will merely try to procure funding for the conduct of studies at national levels.

Technical Assistance

Technical assistance will be provided upon request of governments for project preparation and implementation; co-ordination of training programmes, workshops and seminars; in general, collaboration in activities related to women's affairs.

Special attention will be given to the need for assistance to governments to prepare for the UN End-of-Decade Conference on Women.

Collaboration and Co-ordination

ECLA Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean will collaborate with ECLA Santiago in the organization of a training course for officers in charge of Units of Women and Development within international, regional and national organizations, as far as the Caribbean subregion is concerned.

These activities will be Submitted to the UN Voluntary Fund for funding administered by ECLA Santiago.

ECLA Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean will furthermore co-ordinate activities in the subregion with WAND, Barbados; CARICOM Women's Desk, Guyana; UNDP and UNIDO, Trinidad and Tobago.

Meetings, Seminars, Workshops, Conferences

ECLA Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean's Social Affairs Officer with special responsibility for women's affairs will furthermore attend all such meetings, workshops, seminars and conferences, upon invitations extended either directly to this Office or through ECLA Santiago, related to women's affairs as long as they are of prime relevance and importance for the performance of her tasks in women and development in the Caribbean and to the extent that finances are forthcoming to facilitate attendance at such meetings.

Proposed meetings to be co-ordinated by ECLA Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean are related to the proposed projects of Women and Development Planning and of Violence against Women mentioned above.