



UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN
Subregional Headquarters For The Caribbean
CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION COMMITTEE

GENERAL
LC/CAR/G.577
29 October 1999
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

**CARIBBEAN IMPLEMENTATION OF WSSD+5/POA
AT NATIONAL LEVEL BY CORE ISSUE
(Poverty Eradication, Employment Creation, Social Integration)**

INTRODUCTION

Despite a wide range of obstacles and adversities, Caribbean governments have performed fairly well in their efforts to meet the commitments made during the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen in 1995. It has not been an easy task because, traditionally, social development has not received the degree of attention that it deserves. To compound the challenges, economic resources have not increased in recent years and there are limited resources for investment in this area. Nevertheless, efforts aimed at creating an enabling environment for the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action continue.

Many programmes have been put in place in the various member countries of the subregion, aimed at the reduction and eradication of poverty, the creation of productive employment and the integration of vulnerable groups into Caribbean society, both at national and subregional levels. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), together with the United Nations family of agencies and other intergovernmental bodies and organizations, active in the subregion, have collaborated to assist governments and NGOs in the subregion in their efforts at social development.

This document highlights some of the policies and programmes reported to have been implemented in the latter part of the 1990s at national level in compliance or furtherance to the World Summit for Social Development Programme of Action.

**Caribbean Implementation of WSSD+5/POA at national level by core issue
(Poverty Eradication, Employment Creation, Social Integration)**

GOOD PRACTICES

Country	Good Practices
Aruba	<p>Social integration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Immigration is a controversial issue in Aruba. Some migrants are invited to work in the tourism industry and in construction; others enter illegally. Immigrants comprise about 30 per cent of the population. A good practice has been to drop the period required for nationalization from 10 to five years. <p>Pension:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Restructuring of pension plans is in the making to benefit the Older Person. At the same time, retirement age will be increased from 55 to 60.
Antigua and Barbuda	<p>Promotion of employment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Through interventions of the Government, many young people have been employed in the public and private sector at lower and middle levels. Same was done on behalf of Older Persons, many of whom got jobs in the domestic service in offices. Further initiatives in 1999 include a new Vendors' Mall and a new Fisheries Mall and Market, where people can use appropriate space to sell their products. <p>Available data:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Antigua and Barbuda maintains an up-to-date publication of crucial health statistics. The country established a data management section within the Planning Division aimed at improving the collection and management of data in the social sector.
Bahamas	<p>To improve childcare, education and health:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Universal access to education programmes. - Universal access to health programmes. <p>Creation of employment and income:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of 14,000 new jobs. - Legislation enacted granting unemployment insurance. - Establishment of one-stop shop for small business, including business plans, funding and follow-up. - Appropriate legislative and administrative structures put in place to create an enabling environment for business and enterprise. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Provision of start-up capital for small business in the Family Islands. -Adoption of a comprehensive ILO employment strategy. - Increased assistance to older persons, the disabled and indigent, both from Government and through National Insurance Board.

Country	Good Practices
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - White paper prepared on disabled persons on education, health care, housing, employment and recreation. - Private sector, as social partner with Government, achieved development programmes to benefit persons living independently. <p>Steps taken to reduce crime:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A UK consulting company, CDR International, was asked by the Government to review the country's Police Force and reorganize its criminal investigation department. This was prompted by the escalating rate of crime in the country, which seriously affects the tourism industry and other economic sectors. The official reporting of 28 murders committed in New Providence in the first seven months of 1999, compared to 29 for the entire year 1998, has given major causes for concern related to criminal gangs in the country. - Increased economic performance and demand for both residential and tourist accommodation led to expansion of construction activity.
Barbados	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The rationalization of social services and welfare agencies formed the basis for the establishment of the new Ministry of Social Transformation. This Ministry allows for a coordinated and integrated approach to social policy formulation and implementation with specific focus on the needs of the poor, the disadvantaged and the disabled in Barbadian society. - The Ministry of Social Transformation promotes the provision of social services by community-based organizations and non-governmental organizations. - Poverty eradication: The Ministry has established an average per capita poverty line, taking account of relevant dimensions such as gender and geographic location. - Employment/labour: Recognition of the need to reshape the existing Continuous Labour Force Sample Survey to provide information on different social and economic aspects of the Barbadian population at regular intervals was achieved. - Development of export-oriented manufacturing and an offshore information sector helped the country to cope with the instability of the tourism market. This raised the female employment growth rate estimated at 2.6 per cent per annum in 1998 compared to the male employment growth rate which averages 1.46 percent over the same period. Barbados can also boast of the dominance of women in the highly skilled professions such as law, medicine and accountancy. (However, there are twice the number of men in management positions). - Some of the good practices mentioned have led to economic recovery, with which a general reduction in unemployment is associated. - A poverty alleviation programme embarked upon by Government through a Creative Workshop in 1997 sufficiently targeted and assisted marginalized individuals and families. The programme explored the use of sports and cultural involvement as practical gateways to constructive social and economic development for low-income and marginalized groups. - NGOs have contributed with Crisis Centres and other shelters and also with hot-line services for women victims of domestic violence and for other vulnerable groups.

Country	Good Practices
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government took measures to redress problems of child abuse. In this context, qualified persons dealt with the issue, through a pilot and other mandatory projects in primary schools, and established a National Committee for the monitoring and implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. - In an effort to address the question of income, Government has offered incentives for micro-enterprise such as access to credit. A Micro-Credit Growth Fund (Ministry of Labour) was also set aside. The Ministry of Trade set aside a Micro-Enterprise Growth Fund as well. - The Government included a fund in the budget, from which a non-contributory pension is available for persons in the informal sector when they reach the age of 65. - There is a National Assistance Board that looks after the needs of Older Persons. This service is also linked to a specially created Disability Unit. - A Drug Abuse Unit has been established as well as a Shelter for Women escaping domestic violence. - The Ministry of Education has undertaken an 'Edu-Tech' programme to teach children (and teachers) computer skills and prepare as many of them as possible for the more technological workplace of tomorrow. Complete computerization of the Public Service and training of public servants in information technology has been a key to building efficiency and institutional capacity for the monitoring and evaluation of social programmes. Barbados ranks high in the rate of use of computer technology in the Caribbean subregion. - Public sector reform has been a key initiative in capacity-building at the institutional level. - Recently, children and youngsters with special needs have been integrated into the school system and higher education. Braille boards are available as part of the Edu-Tech programme. - In order to circumvent the negative Anglophone Caribbean experience with placements of children in secondary schools, following the Common Entrance examination, students can use a 'Flexible Transfer' system. - Recognizing the importance of assessment and evaluation, the Government has a built-in research component in all of its new projects. - Social Investment Fund assists in generating income and employment for small business. - Poverty Alleviation Bureau monitors implementation of anti-poverty strategies. - Publication of Social Report on Status of Households aims to target and help vulnerable groups graduate out of welfare. - Allocations for Reproductive Rights and Health included in National Health Budget.

Country	Good Practices
Belize	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poverty assessment carried out. - Education and training improved. - Credit for small business ventures including provision for rural enterprise. - Home building project success. - Textile industry incentives. - Free zone project implementation. - Protection and support for women, youth and children in social services. - Initiatives of family-owned business in tourism oriented products. - Mainstreaming illegal immigrants (through documentation) and disabled persons (through job creation).
Cayman Islands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved economic performance and accompanying fast growing construction sector in the region with increased activity, derived from strong demand for both residential and tourist accommodation, led to expansion of over 10 per cent in construction activity.
Dominica	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government made available funds and training for marketing techniques, accounting and book-keeping to small and medium size entrepreneurs. - The National Insurance Scheme makes provision for the self-employed. - Government provided grants and subventions to needy students and increased welfare allowance for Older Persons. - Convention on the Rights of the Child has been ratified. - The Ministry of Women's Affairs has designing programmes to address the advancement of women. - Universal secondary education was achieved through the OECS Education Reform Project.
Dominican Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improvement of social programmes in terms of efficiency and impact, through a focalized planning strategy targeting vulnerable sectors, allowing for significant reduction in extreme poverty among the large mass of poor people in the country. - Major achievements have been made in the field of education through the Programme, "Universal Access to Education and Health Care with Equity". From 1992-1999 these include: elevation of the quality of education; curriculum transformation; application of national tests; implementation of the National Supervisory System; establishment of a network of libraries, installation of laboratories for physics and chemistry; construction, repair/refurbishing and equipping of classrooms and assembly halls. - Establishment of a school breakfast programme. Further development of community participation through strengthening associations of parents and friends of the school. - Increased expenditure in education, elevating such expenditure to 15.5% of public social expenditure.

Country	Good Practices
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ratification of the General Law on Education No. 66-97, which provides the legal framework of the education sector. - In the area of health, Government has subscribed to the objectives of reform in the health sector. Major achievements have been obtained in the process of modernization and decentralization of the health sector and formation of directorates at provincial and municipal levels. - Implementation of the new Model for Primary Health Care is on stream and the programme for essential medication has been strengthened and services in pharmacies and health centres and in popular medical dispensaries in outer locations have been improved as well. - The coverage of vaccination programmes has been expanded and public hospitals and rural clinics have been targeted for improvement. - The non-governmental organization, Profamilia, set up a male reproductive health service. <p>Creation of employment and income:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Free Zone industry employment for many young women. - Tourism sector opening employment. - Rapid increases of micro enterprise resulting from active and informed stimulation. - Increased levels of productivity in all sectors of economic activity (relevant institution, INFOTEP). - POA for eradication of poverty, "<i>Programa Comunidad Digna</i>", combines generation of income with provision of services and turns civic society participation into the main factor in overcoming poverty, through integrated social interventions. <p>Services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Subsidies for female heads of households. - Community child-care facilities. - Government/SEEBAC Commission reduced hunger in schools through food programme. - Improvement of social programmes in terms of efficiency and impact.
Grenada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government made available funds and training for marketing techniques, accounting and book-keeping to small and medium size entrepreneurs. - The National Insurance Scheme makes provision for the self-employed. - Government provided grants and subventions to needy students and increased welfare allowance for Older Persons. - Convention on the Rights of the Child has been ratified. - A poverty assessment survey has been conducted. - Health needs assessment prepared. - Poverty situation analysis led to focus on informal economy, unemployment, self-employment for the poor.

Country	Good Practices
Guyana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation of Social Investment Amelioration Programme (SIMAP) to cushion effects of stringent measures taken for economic recovery (late 1980s to early 1990s). - Funding facilitated a three-year Adolescent Reproductive Rights and Health (RRH) programme.
Haiti	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High-intensity labour programme established. - Administrative reform and decentralization had a positive impact on productivity and a better distribution of social services at the national level. - Increased investment in education and the provision of school meals have improved learning conditions and have been accompanied by an increase in school attendance. - Agrarian reform impacted positively on poor farmers who had few dependants and who enjoyed additional income from other sources. -Reforms to the judicial system have resulted in improvements in performance of the judicial system and penal conditions.
Jamaica	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Minimum wage legislation enactment. - Labour market reforms and implementation of employment programmes. - The Micro Investment Development Agency provides training and credit assistance to the unemployed and poor youth who would otherwise have no access to sources of income to further generate income. - Special Training and Empowerment Programme (STEP), non-formal training for 17-24 age group successfully completed. - HEART Foundation special type of community-based vocational training has been successful. - Decrease in poverty levels following the implementation of the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NPEP). - Formation of Monitoring and Coordinating Unit in Prime Minister's Office for quarterly monitoring of NPEP. - Community policing to reduce crime and violence. - Emphasis on males in national family planning programmes. - Integrating sexually transmitted diseases (STDS) programmes, baby friendly initiatives as well as life cycle approach of sexual and reproductive health into family care.

Country	Good Practices
Montserrat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-help programme for housing. - Representation of youth in national development committees. - In moving from emergency planning (eruption of volcano) towards development planning, a social welfare review has been completed which enhances efficiency in programme planning and project implementation
Netherlands Antilles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Call for participation by local government in the design of monitoring systems for poverty eradication received positive response, thus raising level of efficiency of interventions. - This monitoring system followed a foregoing inventory at inter-departmental level and through the bottoms-up approach in all the islands of the Netherlands Antilles. - Encouragement of the business community to take greater social responsibility at local level has stimulated other private organizations and civil society to join efforts for poverty eradication. - Social integration: Democratization of migration policy facilitated universal access to humanitarian services, particularly for illegal migrants who are living in the Netherlands Antilles. This policy has had a positive impact on housing as well, since many migrants from Haiti and the Dominican Republic who had been living in inhospitable conditions now have normal access to housing services. - Education: The move towards introducing the local vernacular, Papiamentu, as the language for teaching in schools has resolved the longstanding discussions between school boards and the central government. - Increased provision of vocational training in secondary schools. - The integration of special education into the primary school setting with specially trained teachers for children with special needs. - The implementation of a programme entitled "No Violence in Schools". - Teaching Papiamentu is expected to reduce the number of drop-outs and repeaters in primary schools. - Health: Curacao Family Planning Association (FPA) started project on adolescent sexual and reproductive health. - Poverty eradication: The National Social Programme, established in 1995, has facilitated social development policy processes and closer collaboration between levels of government. It has produced a National Social Report and capital funds for various social projects, consolidated and now known as the Social Safety Net. - In terms of a National Strategy, several large social funds are operational at national level. These funds also triggered the acquisition of a Youth Fund and a Criminality Fund. However, coordination among funds needs strengthening.

Country	Good Practices
St. Kitts and Nevis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased economic performance and demand for both residential and tourist accommodation led to expansion of construction activity.
Saint Lucia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government made available funds and training for marketing techniques, accounting and bookkeeping to small and medium size entrepreneurs. - The National Insurance Scheme makes provision for the self-employed. - Government provided grants and subventions to needy students and increased welfare allowance for Older Persons. - Convention on the Rights of the Child has been ratified. - The Ministry of Women's Affairs has been very active in promoting women's issues, designing programmes to address concerns. A Domestic Violence Act has been established. - Integration of Older Persons in mainstream development is promoted through special programmes. The programme "Adopt a Granny" to integrate the Older Person and the pre-schoolers has been successful. - A poverty assessment has been conducted. - National legislation was passed in the Poverty Reduction Act 1998.
Saint Vincent and The Grenadines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Government made available funds and training for marketing techniques, accounting and bookkeeping to small and medium size entrepreneurs. - The National Insurance Scheme makes provision for the self-employed. - Government provided grants and subventions to needy students and increased welfare allowance for Older Persons. - Convention on the Rights of the Child has been ratified. - The Ministry of Women's Affairs has been very active in promoting women's issues, designing programmes to address concerns. A Domestic Violence Act has been enacted. - Integration of Older Persons in mainstream development is promoted through special programmes.
Suriname	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An Ombudsman Unit was established to promote and monitor social security and safety for citizens in relation to the services provided by the Government. - An NGO Fund, which is a partnership between the Governments of Suriname, The Netherlands and the NGO Forum in Suriname, provides financing for small-scale activities focused on the reduction of poverty. Funding is mainly provided to non-governmental organizations. Over the period March 1996-March 1999, 13 projects have been approved. These projects cover the area of food-distribution, primary health care, micro entrepreneurs, education and utilities.

Country	Good Practices
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Technical assistance is given to micro-entrepreneurs as well as training in business management. - Five special youth projects are being implemented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social Investment, Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (SIPME): This programme will support the Government's efforts to increase its investment in basic social services and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public expenditure in programmes for women and children. - Education for Child Development and Participation (ECDP): This programme consists of two main projects, namely Early Childhood Development and Basic Education. The overall goal of the ECDP is to support actions in education for children under 12 years, and to help provide the necessary knowledge base to ensure the transition to a higher level. - Health and Community Life Promotion (HCLP): This will target main survival priorities through activities in health, nutrition, water and sanitation. This programme consists of two components, namely Basic Life Skills and Health and Nutrition Programme. - Child Rights Promotion (CRP): This programme conducted a media workshop in June 1999 on the awareness of the rights of the child. There are also radio programmes that promote the rights of children. - Integrated Area Based Programme with special focus on the interior and four peri-urban neighbourhoods. This programme incorporates low cost community based interventions focusing on water and sanitation, district and village capacity building, early childhood development, health and nutrition, child's rights, immunization, basic equipment and supplies for child care centres. In some communities efforts are made to create "real" markets for their produce.
Trinidad and Tobago	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some of the various programmes aimed at poverty alleviation, employment creation and social integration are interrelated and therefore provide scope for success from their inception. For example, graduates from the Youth Training and Employment Promotion (YTEPP) can apply to the Youth Employment Support Programme (YESS) for loans to start a business. - Improved access to early childhood care, while increasing cost recovery and ties among parents, communities and students, has greatly impacted on social integration. - The Family Planning Association established a special clinic for services to men in terms of male reproductive health.

Caribbean Region General

GOOD PRACTICES

The following are examples of Good Practices applied in most countries of the Caribbean:

- Strategies for empowerment of the poor (several countries) through, for example, small loan grants for income generating projects.
- Safety Net Programmes (temporary ameliorative measures, for example, food stamps).
- Planning councils/committees to advise on and monitor poverty eradication efforts.
- Implementation of Reproductive Rights and Health Programme.
- Biggest gains in poverty reduction have taken place with youths that had 7-12 years of schooling.
- The expansion of production facilities, particularly in Trinidad and Tobago, helped the sector to recover. The mining sector (gold, bauxite and alumina) performed creditably throughout the region, except in Guyana. This positive development provided employment to many, otherwise unemployed, poor people.
- Some governments increased regulatory capacities to attract more registered mutual funds and international business corporations, which implies more income for the country and its people.
- Windward Islands: The Certified Farmers Programme (CFP) allows Saint Lucia and other ACP banana producers to target a niche market for bananas, whereby select farmers who meet certain criteria can sell directly to supermarkets at higher prices than available on the wholesale market, thus restoring viability to the banana industry, by according direct access to supermarkets which control 80% of the UK market. This practice has yielded great benefits for farmers and their families.
- Cayman Islands, among other Caribbean countries, experienced increased economic performance and accompanying growth in construction sector, with demand for both residential property and condominiums/apartments, which led to 10% expansion in construction industry.
- In the Windwards, areas for production are targeted more and more after careful analysis of the situation of unemployment, poverty and land productivity.
- Incorporation of all divisions of the Ministries of Agriculture and all Non-Governmental Organizations in the activities of agricultural production took place.
- Adoption of a "marketing to production" approach to crop development and more care to give direction to the agricultural community so that people and communities understand that efforts are made to create "real" markets for their produce.

- Attention for reproductive rights and health has been provided through three major health system reform policies in the Caribbean: Restructuring services delivery, reorganization of the health system, and financing options. While these have different dynamics in implementation, they have similarities in their agendas and framework in terms of reproductive rights and health.
- Following post-ICPD developments, reproductive health services now also include men as target group in several Caribbean countries, while most services also include HIV/AIDS prevention.
- Two clinics for services to men in terms of reproductive health have been established in the Caribbean, namely in Trinidad & Tobago and in the Dominican Republic.
- Most countries have integrated reproductive health care into primary health care.

Caribbean Region General

POLICIES

The following are examples of policies implemented in some countries of the Caribbean:

- WSSD implementation included a policy assessment based on social statistics as well as an ongoing Good Governance project.
- Aruba's economic boom in recent years has facilitated universal access to social services and has moved its policies from poverty alleviation/eradication to poverty prevention.
- National policy for Senior Citizen.
- Public sector and health reform.
- Women and employment.
- Human Development, with emphasis on children.
- Policy to revisit social development programmes with a view towards more effective implementation, targeting and evaluation.
- Policy to promote economic and social growth simultaneously.
- Cultural Policy in Saint Lucia following national consultation
- Comprehensive Youth Policy
- Housing policy which includes low-income housing: (1) for households with plot of land, but financially incapable of construction, repair or maintenance of adequate housing; (2) for needy households, with no access to land at all.
- Enhanced Productive Employment through: vocational training for job seekers; sharing of expertise with micro entrepreneurs; strengthening of the Social Investment Fund; access to overseas markets for local entrepreneurs through national Export and Marketing Board;
- Increase employment for women and for first time job seekers: through on-the-job training where job opportunities are guaranteed; placement of job seekers in private enterprises for which government subsidizes 60% of relevant salaries (this policy has not yet been very successful, but was welcomed by the population).
- Special policy for Children and for the Youth, including Social Investment, Education, Health and Community Life Promotion.

- Policy for the Older Person: situation analysis; basic subsistence; medical service and home care; train geriatric assistants; review Old Age Fund.
- Policy for the Disabled: promote social integration; access to education, especially for minors; train relevant service providers.
- Advancement of Women: Equal participation in decision-making; regional post-Beijing Programme for Dutch-speaking Caribbean; gender mainstreaming in government policies; expansion of information through creation of internet website.
- Illicit Drugs: Development of strategic Master Plan; regional and international collaboration on drug control.
- HIV/AIDS: Promote change of sexual behaviour; public information campaigns.
- Economic Reform to benefit social development.
- Participation of Civil Society in Trinidad and Tobago in efforts towards poverty eradication: in this regard, for example, popular consultations were held in numerous communities in all regions of the country; a Change Management Unit was established within government to monitor the process of dialogue and equity building.
- Several programmes on community education.
- Several programmes to discourage rural exit.
- Protection of the displaced and homeless people, the disabled and older persons, street children and vulnerable adolescents, vulnerable single mothers.
- All assisted and developmental initiatives into sustainable development interventions.
- Policy to promote non-discrimination, tolerance and mutual respect for and value of diversity.
- Overall commitment to address problems of violence, crime and drug and substance abuse.
- Sustainable growth and development of all Surinamese people is a priority, whereby emphasis is placed on vulnerable groups, for example, Older Persons, the Disabled and Low and Middle-Income groups. In addition to economic development, much attention should be given to social development. Everyone should have access to means that improve their living conditions.
- Government approval of the Law of Foreign Investment; adoption of IMF resolutions on action to finance micro enterprise, small and medium enterprise; move towards implementation of various programmes of infrastructure in order to support direct and indirect employment in the informal sector.