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Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean

CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND CO-OPERATION COMMITTEE



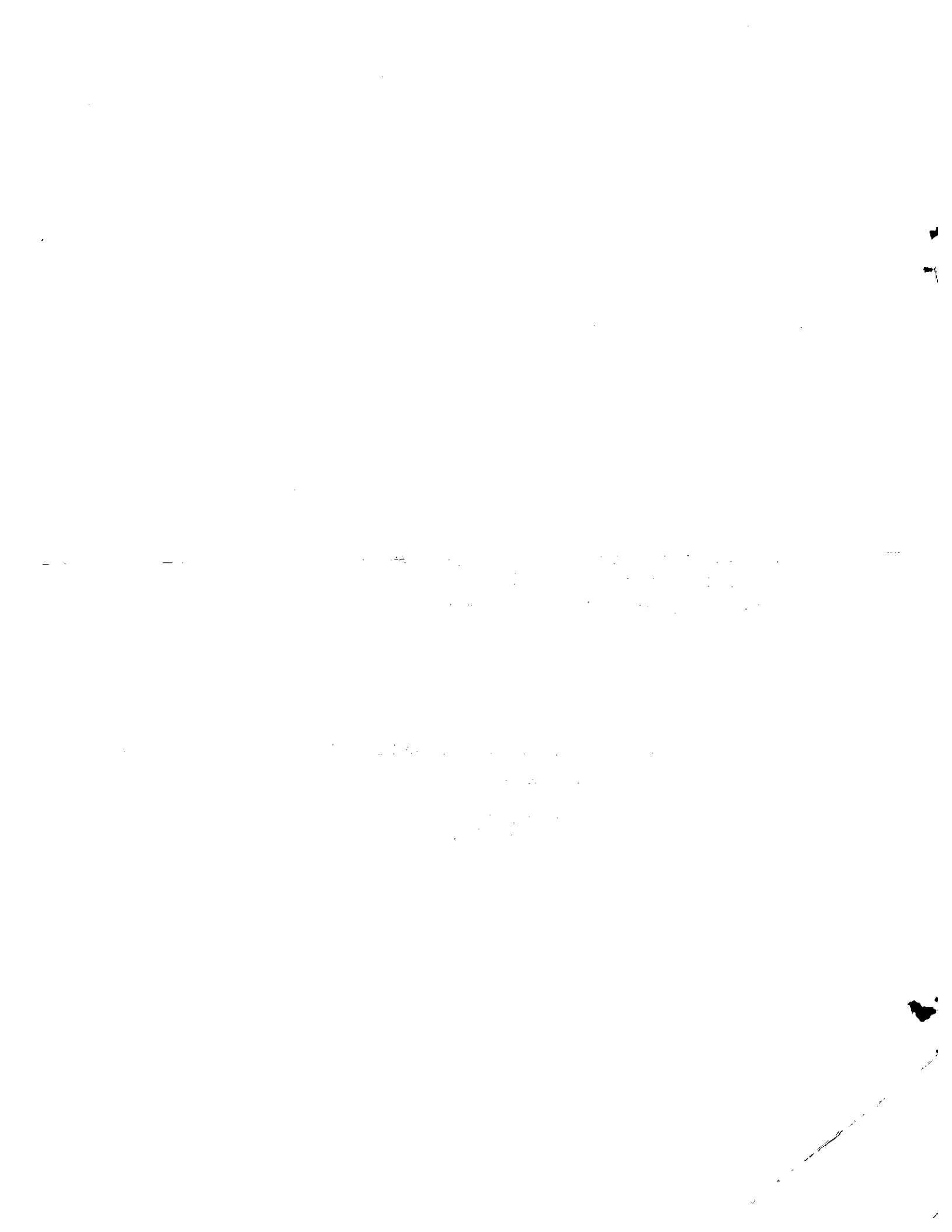
REPORT ON A TRAINING SEMINAR FOR RESEARCH ON
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Roseau, Dominica
23-27 March 1987



UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN
Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean



I. BACKGROUND

1. At the request of the Women's Bureau, Ministry of Community Development, Housing and Social Affairs a training seminar for Research on Violence Against Women was held at the Red Cross Headquarters, Goodwill, Roseau, Dominica, 23-27 March 1987.

2. The topic also relates to one of the priority areas covered by the Women in Development Work Programme endorsed by the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee (CDCC).

II. OBJECTIVES

3. The seminar was designed to:
 - (a) Assist the Women's Bureau in the formulation, organization and planning of its research project on Violence Against Women in Dominica;
 - (b) Offer a general introduction to social research and research methods;
 - (c) Discuss the issue of Violence Against Women in the wider socio-economic context as well as in the context of Caribbean society;
 - (d) Provide training on instruments and techniques for research planning and implementation, including an opportunity for practical exercise and experience;
 - (e) Examine and interpret data gathered.

III. ORGANIZATION OF THE SEMINAR

4. The seminar was jointly organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Women's Bureau; Ministry of Community Development, Housing and Social Affairs; and the National Council of Women.

IV. ATTENDANCE

5. Participating in the seminar were research persons nominated by seven Governmental and Non-Governmental institutions upon the invitation of the Government Women's Bureau, which also invited some candidates in their personal capacity. Twenty-one participants attended the seminar.

V. OPENING SESSION

6. Ms. Hyacinth Elwin, Director of the Women's Bureau welcomed participants and other invited guests and exhorted them to prepare themselves to a week of hard work, dedication and commitment. In her opening remark she explained the rationale for the seminar as the stepping-stone towards implementation of a research project on the issue of Violence Against Women in Dominica.

7. Mrs. Neva Edwards, President of the National Council of Women, observed in her remarks that the National Council of Women highlights Violence Against Women in its Programme. In manifestation of its focus on family violence, the National Council of Women had recently organized a series of Open Discussions which included the aspect of sexual abuse of children. Referring to recent criminal incidences, Mrs. Edwards proceeded to read the text of a notice entitled "Searching Questions", published in the local newspaper.

8. Referring also to the effects of public forums, mention was made of recommendations to foster research, establish a committee to centralize relevant information, explore penalties given to cases which reach the Courts and the need for a Family Court.

9. Attention was drawn to the notion of a negative role that religion brings to bear on the situation of women implying restrictions on women to function and advance in the public sphere outside the home.

10. Mrs. Edwards expressed the hope that the seminar would assist in the need to address the problem at national and regional levels.

11. The Social Affairs Officer of ECLAC noted that the effects of socially harmful behaviour through acts of violence against women, seriously affected the process of individual and collective advancement of women in society. She commended the initiative of the Women's Bureau to search for training and development of local human resources and assured that ECLAC was pleased to contribute to the national endeavours in addressing the problem. In conducting the training seminar, ECLAC was assisting the Government of Dominica in its implementation of the Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women as adopted by the World Conference on the United Nations Decade for Women. She stated that the Dominica experience will be very important for other CDCC Member States as regards promotion of regional co-operation in this field. ECLAC would focus on factors which would most effectively equip the participants to carry out the research project of the Women's Bureau and encourage the development of a database on Violence Against Women in Dominica and the CDCC subregion.

12. She also expressed the desire that participants would be successful in incorporating the theoretical aspects of social research and the field exercise into the practical realities of Dominica.

13. In his opening address, the Minister of Community Development, Housing and Social Affairs, the Honourable Heskeith Alexander, complimented the organizers on holding the seminar at such an opportune time. He noted the diverse composition of participants and invited them to benefit from the training experience offered.

14. The Minister expressed concern at some of the alleged causes of violence against women. In this regard the Minister referred to the incidence of separate religious beliefs between spouses as a possible reason for violent acts of men and to the myth about the need for corrective actions to prove love. Indulgence in drugs and unbalanced minds of rapists/abusers were seen as possible reasons as well.

15. Finally the Minister reiterated the Government's commitment to continued guarantee of equal opportunities for women in Dominica.

VI. THE PROGRAMME

16. An assessment of research expertise showed that few participants had some experience with census research or surveys. The majority had no research training or experience whatsoever. The course material prepared by ECLAC had to be adapted to provide a more detailed elaboration of each training module through an expanded method of small groups and role-playing.

17. For the purpose of reviewing existing data, an operational framework and research methodology, which appears in a subsequent document was constructed to determine aspects of violence (rape, carnal abuse, battering, incest); primary and secondary sources of data, including institutions, organizations and individuals; time-frame (historical/contemporary); location (street, home, work, etc.).

18. In a preliminary exercise the following were identified as sources of data:

(a) Police, Prisons, Hospital, Health Clinics, Psychiatric Wards, Private Medical Practitioners, Medical Social Workers, Social Welfare Counsellors, Church School, Youth Organizations, Women's Organizations, Women's Bureau, Family Planning Association, Community Centres, Village Councils, Radio Station, Service Organizations, Statistical Department; and

(b) Census, Social Surveys, Books, Newspapers, Pamphlets, other publications, Legislation, Court Reports, etc.

19. It was agreed that initially a database should be produced relative to the operational framework established (see paragraph 17) including such specifics as age, sex, target group, residence, etc.

20. The importance of drawing up a list of significant facts and events in the history of the country was recognised. In order to promote understanding in this area and facilitate an analysis of data to be collected in a research project, such a provisional list was drawn up covering the period 1930-1980s as an exercise.

21. In an address on the issue of Violence Against Women in the Caribbean, the ECLAC Social Affairs Officer noted that the seminar added to the list of activities initiated within the framework of this subject area. Legislation has been reviewed, Family Courts have been established in some countries, and support mechanisms have been put in place through the establishment of crisis centres and halfway houses. She pointed out that the causes for increased acts of violence against the female population constitute a complex question, the analysis of which requires in-depth studies, among others, into the breakdown of traditional community and family support systems, social effects of the economic crisis, and the dynamics of power in man-woman relationships.

22. Lively discussions followed the viewing of the film WHY MEN RAPE. Participants noted that the major motive for rape seems to be that men do not take no for an answer. Most rapists seem to be driven by anger and personal problems of self-accomplishment and social recognition. However, convicted rapists do not seem triumphant about their act, but are regretful and feel particularly sorry for their victims.

23. A detailed introduction was provided as regards the planning, formulation and elaboration of a research project. Participants were instructed in the instruments and techniques of project formulation and implementation. Special emphasis was accorded to training in techniques of interviewing and design of questionnaires. The effect of the instructions was strengthened through applied exercise in several role plays, whereby participants operated in five (5) groups of four (4).

24. A Work Plan for the research project Violence Against Women, to be implemented by the Women's Bureau was approved.

25. Participants received extensive instructions in preparation of the field exercise, whereby they operated in teams of two to carry out research at the institutions selected for the field study.

26. The field study comprised:

(a) Questionnaires and interviews completed with various institutions, such as: Police, School, Church, Local Government Office for Community Development, Health Centre, Social Service Organization;

(b) Documentation research at the Library; and

(c) A case-history in an urban community.

27. As in the case of role-plays, reports on field exercises, when presented by respective teams, were commented upon by members of a different team, assigned by the seminar leader. Participants were instructed on methods, criteria and procedures of commenting and evaluating the exercise of teams.

28. The results of the field exercise to a great extent informed the recommendations for substantial and organizational aspects of the research project of the Women's Bureau and were reflected in the final draft Work Plan adopted at the end of the seminar.

VII. CLOSING SESSION

29. The seminar was formally closed by Mr. Arden Shillingford, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Community Development, Housing and Social Affairs, who thanked participants and sponsors for the innovative and critical exercise to initiate work in such an important area of social problems.

30. Participants reported their satisfaction that the training seminar was a well organized, informative, educational and productive exercise, which provided new approaches and instruments for research planning and implementation in the area of women's issues.

31. Participants also commented that the teaching methods used during the seminar had forced them to reflect deeper on many aspects of the local reality concerning women's issues and to identify the gaps in their knowledge about their own society. The detailed illustrations and the structured practical sessions were considered most beneficial.

Annex I

UNECLAC/WOMEN'S BUREAU/NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN
TRAINING SEMINAR
RESEARCH ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN DOMINICA

Roseau, Dominica
23-27 March 1987

P R O G R A M M E

Monday, 23 March 1987

- 8.30 - 9.45 a.m. Opening Ceremony
- Opening remarks by the Director of the Women's Bureau
- Address by President, National Council of Women
- Address by the Honourable Heskeith Alexander, Minister of Community Development, Housing and Social Affairs
- Address by Social Affairs Officer UNECLAC
- 9.45 - 10.00 a.m. C O F F E E B R E A K
- 10.00 - 1.00 p.m. Introduction
- Review of existing data
- Assessment of research expertise
- Identification of relevant institutions, organizations/individuals at national level
- 1.00 - 2.00 p.m. L U N C H
- 2.00 - 4.00 p.m. The Issue of Violence Against Women
- Violence Against Women in the Caribbean - Sonia M. Cuales, UNECLAC
- Film: WHY MEN RAPE
- Discussion

Tuesday, 24 March 1987

- 8.30 - 9.45 a.m. Relevant Theoretical Approach and Methodologies
Objectives
Concepts and Definition
- 9.45 - 10.00 a.m. C O F F E E B R E A K
- 10.00 - 1.00 p.m. Research Techniques
Overview
Selection
Role Play
- 1.00 - 2.00 p.m. L U N C H
- 2.00 - 4.00 p.m. Role Play (continued)

Wednesday, 25 March 1987

- 8.30 - 9.45 a.m. Research Planning
- General guidelines
- Subject areas
- Components
- Linkages
- Geographical areas
- Time budget
- 9.45 - 10.00 a.m. C O F F E E B R E A K
- 10.00 - 1.00 p.m. Draft Work Plan for National Research
Preparation for Field Exercise
- 1.00 - 2.00 p.m. L U N C H

2.00 - 4.00 p.m. Preparation for Field Exercise (continued)
H. Elwin, Women's Bureau/N. Edwards, National
Council of Women

Thursday, 26 March 1987

8.00 - 4.00 p.m. F I E L D E X E R C I S E

Friday, 27 March 1987

8.30 - 9.45 a.m. Reports on Field Exercise

9.45 - 10.00 a.m. C O F F E E B R E A K

10.00 - 1.00 p.m. Consideration of draft work plan

1.00 - 2.00 p.m. L U N C H

2.00 - 3.00 p.m. Approval of final work plan

3.30 p.m. C L O S I N G

Annex II

UNECLAC/WOMEN'S BUREAU/NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN
TRAINING SEMINAR
RESEARCH ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN DOMINICA

Roseau, Dominica
23-27 March 1987

List of Participants

Ms. Joan Constance
Social Centre

Ms. Jacqueline Stedman
Social Centre

Ms. Sandra Stowe
Women's Bureau

Mrs. Beverly Vital
Anse de Mai Women's Group

Mrs. Phyllis Pascal

Mrs. Denise Defoe
Social Centre

Mrs. Rose Daniel

Ms. Augusta Denis
Ranger Unit

Ms. Paula Isaac
Small Project Assistance Team (SPAT)

Ms. Mary Thomas
Ranger Unit

Ms. Constance Norris
Social Centre

Ms. Josephine Phillips
Pre-school teacher

Ms. Marjorie Lewis
Women's Organization for the Development of the
Carib Reserve and Atkinson (CARIAT)

Ms. Idline Burton
Women's Organization for the Development of the
Carib Reserve and Atkinson (CARIAT)

Mrs. Madilia Sylvester
Paix Boucher Women's Group

Mrs. Mildred Vidal
Social Centre

Ms. Rosie Brown
Women's Bureau

Mrs. Joan Lisetor
Women's Bureau

Ms. Annie Alexander

Ms. Oxie Paul
Social Centre

Ms. Martha Joseph
Small Project Assistance Team (SPAT)

Annex III

Historical Data

In a testing exercise to review historical events which may be significant in order to analyse and understand the social phenomenon under research, the following were listed:

Time period of events

1930s	Hurricane and Carib War. Changes in the production of crops from sugar, cocoa and vanilla to banana.
Early 1950s	Women Suffrage. Presence of French refugees especially in the Portsmouth area during disturbances in Guadeloupe and Martinique.
1956	Outbreak of malnutrition in relation to large-scale out-migration of women.
1950s/1960s	<u>Lime production and export (major economic activity).</u>
1963	<u>Carnival fire (three important men lost their lives).</u>
1978	Independence.
1979	Change of Government; hurricane David; steps eradication of Dread Cult; <u>increased concentration on bananas.</u>
1983 onwards	Introduction of cable television without development of national television; discontinuation of relay tv programmes from Barbados after hurricane David.

Annex IV

Institutions

In a testing exercise to review existing data and identify local institutions from which relevant information may be obtained. The following provisional list was introduced.

<u>Institutions</u>	<u>Number</u>
Health Centres	7
Community Development Districts (centres)	7
Medical	
Private medical practitioners	10
District medical practitioners	10
Parishes	10
Police stations	19
Primary schools	60 +
Secondary schools	10
Service Organizations	
- Social Centre	
- SPAT	
- Domnik Save	
- Save the Children Federation	
- REACH	
- Jaycees	
- Lions	
- Rotary	
- Red Cross	
- St. Vincent de Paul	
- Candy Stripers	
- Pastoral Centre	
- Dominica Planned Parenthood	
Documentation Centres	
- Library	
- SPAT	
- Committee for Progress in Democracy	
- Women's Desk	
- Social Centre	

From the above-mentioned institutions the following were selected for the field research based on location in Roseau or surroundings.

Tertiary Schools (Extra-Mural)	1
Teacher's Training	1
School of Nursing	1
Vocational	2

