INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATION IN THE CARIBBEAN

Towards a framework for collaboration

Background document prepared by ECLAC

Inter-Agency Coordination Meeting
8-9 March 2001, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

In July 1997, the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, initiated a system of wide-ranging reforms within the United Nations. An integral part of the reform process is predicated on projection of the image of “one UN”, with the attendant key objectives of greater unity of purpose, and enhanced collaboration and coordination among organizations within the United Nations system. As part of the reform initiative, the Secretary-General introduced the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) as a framework to strengthen the effectiveness of the United Nations system’s contribution to the development efforts of countries. Over the past few years this fairly structured framework, together with the process of formulating Common Country Assessments (CCAs), while not without inherent limitations, is setting the stage for enhanced cooperation between and among organizations within the United Nations system.

There is also, however, another approach to collaboration currently in place in the subregion, one which is dynamic and fluid, but at the same time more ad hoc and less structured. This approach is initiated solely at the discretion of the agencies themselves on the basis of compatibility of interests and mandates. While unstructured, these initiatives nonetheless further the objective of increasing efficiency within the United Nations system while at the same time furthering the image of “one UN”. Within the subregion, organizations within the United Nations system have undertaken joint projects, as well as subregional and national level meetings, research and publications, quite successfully.

2.0 PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

This document provides a conceptual framework for greater collaboration within the United Nations system operating in the Caribbean subregion both within the structured process of the CCA and UNDAF, as well as the "informal" process referred to above. It will form the background paper for discussion at the inter-agency meeting to be convened by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in Port of Spain on 8-9 March 2001.

This meeting is being convened under the auspices of the mandate given to ECLAC by the Deputy Secretary-General to take responsibility for overall monitoring of the new cooperation and coordination mechanisms and for convening an annual coordination meeting of all United Nations bodies and agencies involved in activities in the Latin American and Caribbean region. This is to be the third of such meetings. See Annex 1.
Prescriptions for inter-agency collaboration will, of necessity, differ from region to region. However, an attempt has been made, in articulating the framework being presented here, to incorporate those successful elements of the existing modus operandi for informal inter-agency collaboration within the subregion.

3.0 STRUCTURED PROCESSES FOR COLLABORATION: CCAs AND THE UNDAF PROCESS

United Nations system Country Teams, coordinated by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Resident Coordinator, are at the core of the process leading to both the formulation of CCAs and the UNDAF and represent the formal expression of collaboration within the United Nations system. The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC), however, for several years have stressed the importance of the regional and subregional dimensions of development cooperation. Quite recently the General Assembly "stressed the growing need for incorporating the regional and subregional dimensions in United Nations operational activities for development". The ACC further speaks of the need to "inject a regional and subregional dimension into country-level activities".

There are, however, some inherent, structural problems in the process. The first is the fact that, despite the valuable contributions being made at the regional and subregional levels, it is not always possible for the work of regional organizations such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO), regional commissions, such as ECLAC, and others to be reflected in the UNDAF process, unless such agencies have a particular country specific programme or project operating at the time. The role of subregional and regional organizations in this process is therefore not as clearly defined as for others delivering services and technical assistance at the national level. Thus, while such subregional agencies commit time, effort and resources to the formulation of CCAs and the UNDAF exercise, the full weight of their input is not always easily reflected.

Secondly, agencies operating subregionally service a particularly large area (See Annex 2 for agency coverage in the subregion). They are also called upon to provide assistance to all Country Teams operating in the region within which they serve. At the current time, there are seven Country Teams in the subregion and it is simply not possible for regional organizations to service them all to the same degree. In the subregion, for example, while the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean is an active participant in the Country Team covering the four countries, Aruba, Netherlands Antilles, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago, involvement with the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Country Team is less, and even less so with the teams operating in Guyana and Jamaica (although requests for information are routinely serviced). Involvement with the Country Teams in Belize, Cuba, Haiti and the Dominican Republic is almost non-existent.

It is not usual for regional commissions to be considered part of Country Teams, though, with respect to the Country Team covering Aruba, the Netherlands Antilles, Suriname and Trinidad

1 ACC Guidance Note on regional and subregional development cooperation, approved on behalf of the ACC by the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ) at its 14th Session, Geneva, 10-12 March 1999.

2 Ibid.
and Tobago, ECLAC is considered and has functioned as an integral part of the Country Team, perhaps as a result of the location of the Caribbean Subregional Headquarters in Trinidad and Tobago, the home base of this Team.

3.1 A possible approach

The General Assembly in its resolution 53/192, calls for the greater involvement of regional commissions in UNDAF. The strength of regional and subregional entities lies in the diversity of their expertise and the 'intelligence' which they gather across the subregion which they serve, and the ability to put national issues and concerns within the wider perspective of regional and global issues and trends. Therefore, they are uniquely poised to play a key role in providing the wider lens through which developmental issues may be viewed and their possible resolution, constructed.

Given the structural limitations highlighted in preceding sections, an operating framework for the involvement of the regional commission and other regional and subregional entities, which can interact with the Country Teams through the Resident Coordinator, may be the following:

(a) Identify their areas of competencies and special areas of expertise which can support country level programming;

(b) Discuss their work programmes, especially those which are being delivered directly at the country level, or through which, individual countries may benefit through participation at activities at the subregional and regional levels;

(c) Provide the subregional and regional context within which the CCA and UNDAF are to be formulated. In the case of ECLAC, such input may relate, for example, to regional economic performance trends, or the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) framework for development assistance; for the ILO, it may be a discussion on regional or national level labour issues, at the organizations' discretion;

(d) Regional/subregional entities may also wish to support the work of thematic groups operating within the ambit of the Country Team framework;

(e) In cases where financing is actually used to hire a consultant to formulate a CCA, for example, such contracts can be executed by an entity like ECLAC since it is a depository for much of the needed information, on behalf of a Country Team.
4.0 INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATION: THE 'INFORMAL PROCESS'
THE EXPERIENCE IN THE CARIBBEAN

4.1 Introduction

The articulation of a framework for inter-agency collaboration is informed by the subregion’s experience in relation to the respective “Plans of Action” adopted at recent global conferences, among them:

- The International Conference on Population and Development, (ICPD), September 1994;
- The United Nations Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, (UNGCSIDS), 26 April-6 May 1994;
- The World Summit for Social Development, (WSSD), 6-12 March 1995;
- The Fourth World Conference on Women, (WCW), September 1995; and

4.2 Process of collaboration

The basic current methodology for the review of subregional implementation of the Plans of Action adopted at global conferences may be summarized as follows:

(a) Preparation and circulation by United Nations Headquarters, ECLAC (and other agencies, depending on subject matter) to member countries and all other relevant regional or regionally-based agencies of a submission embodying, inter alia:

- Background information on the arrangements for the review: dates, venue, scope, format, level of representation, expected outputs and others;
- Type of participation that might be envisaged by the region;
- Suggestions with respect to the modalities of subregional preparation: preparation of national reports, convening of national consultations, the application of questionnaires and other modalities;

In the past there has been some duplication of effort in this regard, since, as the regional commission, ECLAC is mandated to engage in regional activities in following up or supporting various review processes. Quite often, however, United Nations Headquarters requests UNDP, through the Resident Coordinator, also to provide similar types of support to member States. On occasion, other agencies are also given mandates by their Governing Bodies to carry out such regional activities.
(b) Preparation by ECLAC of a background document reviewing subregional progress in implementation, obstacles, achievements, as well as recommendations for future action, including any additional measures that might be identified;

(c) Assistance to member States:

- Assistance to member States quite typically is provided at four levels, national, subregional, regional, and global. At times assistance is provided to member States by agencies such as the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Department for International Development (DFID), UNDP, the United Nations Populations Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) for the preparation of national reports. However, when funding from the latter has been unavailable, ECLAC has met the needs of member States directly. At times, funding has been provided by some of these agencies to ECLAC directly to provide support at the national level.

- ECLAC also provides assistance to the delegations of member States in preparing for subregional and regional reviews preparatory to international discussions. This is facilitated by convening subregional meetings at which consensus is derived on major issues. In support of this, ECLAC formulates a "Regional Brief" incorporating the findings of national reports where these are available, or otherwise uses its own sources. Quite typically, this document incorporates a strategy for participation, including the identification of strategic allies, issues on which trade-offs might be entertained and the conditions of such transactions; reviews the status of implementation of the Programmes of Action under review, identifying any special challenges and weaknesses and provides directional guidelines for future action.

- ECLAC also provides assistance to the delegations of member States during the actual review process at the global level, within the constraints of financing with which to do so. Assistance has also been provided by other agencies such as the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and at times the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). ECLAC also provides briefing kits, as well as briefing sessions to member States’ Permanent Representatives to the United Nations as part of the preparatory process leading to the various reviews.

- ECLAC also prepares and disseminates copies of subregional reports and any other major documentation coming out of the review process.

(d) As part of the preparatory process, ECLAC engages in formal consultations with relevant United Nations national, regional, subregional and international agencies with respect to their availability and willingness to support the subregional process, whether through the provision of technical, financial or other forms of support, such as the provision of funding for consultancies, or facilitating the participation of delegates to subregional and regional meetings, or other modalities.
5.0 A POSSIBLE AGENDA FOR INTER-AGENCY COLLABORATION

The framework described above is applied to three major areas which lend themselves to collaboration among the agencies operating in the Caribbean subregion, namely:

- Preparation for Rio+10;
- Post-Beijing/gender issues;
- Natural disasters.

5.1 Preparation for Rio + 10
UNCED, UNGCSIDS and the SIDS Programme of Action

In the Caribbean, the major element in relation to the implementation of "Agenda 21" that was adopted at the UNCED, is the implementation of the SIDS POA. Indeed, the UNGCSIDS, which convened in Barbados over the period 25 April-6 May 1994 and at which the SIDS POA was adopted, was the first global conference on sustainable development and the implementation of "Agenda 21".

The "Barbados Declaration" and the SIDS POA adopted at that Global Conference by 111 governments, elaborate principles and set out strategies for development that are intended to protect the fragile environments of small island States. They build on the "Rio Declaration on Environment and Development" and "Agenda 21". Moreover, the UNGCSIDS itself was seen as the first test of global partnership formed at UNCED, by virtue of which, rich and poor countries agreed to work together for sustainable development.

It is in the convening of the UNGCSIDS that the perceived need to direct particular attention to "the special situation and needs of developing countries", as set out in Principle 6 of the Rio Declaration, has found its maximum expression, to date. That Conference was convened at the request of the United Nations General Assembly in December 1992 on the recommendation of UNCED itself. The UNGCSIDS represented an attempt to translate "Agenda 21" into specific policies that are set out in 14 Chapters, each representing a priority area relevant to addressing the special challenges faced by SIDS in the context of their sustainable development. The policies comprise actions to be implemented at the national, regional and international levels.

5.1.1 The SIDS POA in the Caribbean 1994-1999

As reported to the Seventh Meeting of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-7) which convened in 19-30 April 1999, the Small Island Developing States of the Caribbean have attached the greatest priority to such issues as "Coastal and Marine Resources"; "Natural and Environmental Disasters"; and "Tourism", as they pursue the implementation of the SIDS POA. In addition to the substantive areas, a number of cross-sectoral issues have acquired high degrees of salience, chief among these being those relating to "National Institutions and Administrative Capacity". Nevertheless, among Caribbean SIDS, there is consensus that all 14 Priority Areas enshrined in the SIDS POA are profoundly relevant to their sustainable development and significant progress has been made by many regional SIDS in their implementation. Reviews conducted on an
individual country basis by preparation for the Caribbean Ministerial Meeting on the implementation of the SIDS Programme of Action, which convened in November 1997, nevertheless served to highlight the unevenness of progress in the implementation as a marked feature of the Caribbean experience. Accounting for this factor was, clearly, the difference in capability among the respective countries.

Notwithstanding this state of affairs, encouraged by the generally acceptable levels of progress in the region, Caribbean SIDS have been striving to maintain and even enhance the contribution of the implementation of the SIDS POA to national, as well as regional development, through a focused and sustained effort.

**Box No. 1**

The Caribbean Ministerial Meeting on the Implementation of the SIDS POA, 10-14 November 1997: An outstanding example of inter-agency collaboration

This Meeting which was hosted by the Government of Barbados, was convened by the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean with the support of a number of regional and international agencies, among them the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD), CARICOM, the Caribbean Conservation Association (CCA), the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB), Department for Economic and Social Affairs-Division for Sustainable Development-Small Island Developing States (DESA-DSD-SIDS), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Organization of American States (OAS), OECS, the United Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS), UNDP and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). It was attended by 10 United Nations bodies; 18 other intergovernmental organizations; 24 non-governmental organizations (NGOs); and four developed country observers, in addition to Special Guests. The meeting convened with an eye to the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly and provided the region with an opportunity to review the status of the POA to date, identify and prioritize actions, to effectively allocate resources, to share information and to re-commit to the process of implementation of the SIDS POA.

### 5.1.2 Towards a Caribbean regional process to prepare for Rio +10

With respect to preparations for Rio+10, it was agreed at CSD-8, that the Tenth Session of the Commission, which will convene in 2002, be converted into an open-ended Preparatory Committee in order to facilitate the full and effective participation of all governments. This will be the First Meeting of the Preparatory Committee. In effect, therefore, the CSD, acting as the preparatory committee, will undertake the comprehensive review and assessment of the implementation of Agenda 21 and the other outcomes of UNCED and of the Summit that is to follow. In accordance with this agreement, CSD-9, which convenes in 2001, will mark the formal commencement of the process. The process is to be "open-ended", so as to accommodate all interested countries. The initial meetings will be held following the conclusion of CSD-9, in May 2001. Given the expectation that the agenda for the review session will be "action-oriented", Caribbean countries were urged to present proposals for the organization, as well as for the content of the session, at the earliest opportunity. A "regional process" is recommended in this regard, for the identification of themes, objectives and strategies, as well as for the introduction of these into

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the CSD and other levels, culminating with the proposed Summit.

Against this background, the idea of a "regional process" for the purpose indicated, prompts the idea of a process that might culminate with a Second Caribbean Ministerial Meeting along the general lines of the 1997 event, to feed into the Summit that will be Rio+10.

By way of preparation for Rio+10, recourse might be had, in the first place, to a system of national consultations that would contribute to the eventual formulation of a subregional position, reflected in a document to be prepared by ECLAC as secretariat for SIDS POA in collaboration with other agencies with respect to current subregional priorities and to new initiatives for the further implementation of "Agenda 21".
Inter-agency collaboration in implementing the outcomes of the SIDS Caribbean Ministerial Meeting

Through its adoption, though in most cases, the formalization of pre-existing arrangements, the Ministerial Meeting established the Caribbean Model for implementation of the POA. The model comprises an Interim Secretariat, a SIDS Bureau, and an Inter-Agency Collaborative Group (IACG) for the implementation of a Joint Work Programme (JWP).

The Interim Secretariat
The Interim Secretariat is in the nature of a regional coordinating mechanism whose functions are performed by the ECLAC and CARICOM secretariats with the former functioning as the operational or technical secretariat, while the latter engages in the political outreach needed. The principal functions of the Interim Secretariat are in respect of the coordination of follow-up activities, the convening of meetings, the dissemination of information, reporting and acting as an intermediary body between the Inter-Agency Collaborative Group and the SIDS Bureau.

The SIDS Bureau
The Ministerial Meeting entrusted its Bureau, popularly referred to as “the SIDS Bureau”, with political oversight of the implementation of a Joint Work Programme (JWP) extrapolated from the several Chapters of the SIDS POA and, also, with preparations for the 1999 review of the SIDS POA.

The Inter-Agency Collaborative Group
The Joint Work Programme (JWP) was envisaged for implementation by an Inter-Agency Collaborative Group (IACG) comprising, inter alia, some 24 regional institutions, regional NGOs and United Nations agencies, among them, CDB, Caribbean Policy Development Centre (CPDC), the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), UNDP, the OECS Secretariat, the University of the West Indies (UWI), CCA, the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), CARICAD and UNEP/RCU. The concept of an IACG, conceived by ECLAC and formalized by the Ministerial Meeting, represents another innovative device to promote inter-agency collaboration of a scope unprecedented in the region. Significantly, the agencies concerned supported the JWP, fully aware that no extrabudgetary funds would be forthcoming for its implementation. The IACG supports the Interim Secretariat and facilitates the convening of meetings as well as the reporting function, in the context of which Lead Agencies have been identified in the implementation of projects. Through the IACG, ECLAC, in partnership with the CARICOM Secretariat, is centrally involved in the coordination of implementation at the regional level. ECLAC’s basic contributions also span the convening of meetings for the development of regional positions for presentation at international forums; representation of regional concerns at international meetings such as the Donors’ Meeting; CSD; and the Special Session of the General Assembly; the preparation of documents and publications; and the provision of briefings to Caribbean representatives in such strategic diplomatic centres as Brussels, New York and Washington.

The Joint Work Programme
In an effort to accelerate the modest rate of implementation of the SIDS POA as perceived up to the time of its convening, the Ministerial Meeting adopted a Joint Work Programme comprising some 130 concrete activities extrapolated from the several Chapters of the SIDS POA and agreed to for implementation by the IACG. In the context of inter-agency collaboration, mention might be made of the Small Island Developing States Information Network (SIDSnet) which represents the response to the need for a mechanism to facilitate the exchange of information and experiences among SIDS, and which also provides a very useful tool in the tracking of inputs and related activities. Attention might also be drawn to the project being implemented by ECLAC with UNDP funding, which is directed towards the identification of projects related to the implementation of the SIDS Programme of Action by reference to, inter alia, their operational area of focus; their status - whether already implemented, in progress or envisaged; and the source and quantum of their funding. The amplified scope of implementation of the SIDS POA, through the explicit incorporation of socio-economic issues, by the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly, presents the region with new opportunities as the JWP is revised and updated.
5.1.3 Caribbean SIDS and Rio + 10: The overall process, its methodology and content

As is evident from the foregoing, the implementation of the SIDS POA has generated its own process, often referred to as "the SIDS Process". In this context, mention might be made of, inter alia, the activities of the CSD, the Donors' Meeting, the twenty-second special session of the United Nations General Assembly and the "full and comprehensive review" envisaged for 2004. Mention might also be made of the possibility of convening a Second United Nations Global Conference on SIDS as provided for in Chapter 17.13.1 which provides for “periodic regional and global meetings on sustainable development of small island developing States.” Such a Conference would permit the international community to further address those issues whose treatment was not as thorough as might have been at the 1994 UNGCSIDS and, also, those issues that have emerged since 1994, with due account being taken of, inter alia, the conclusions of the twenty-second special session of the UNGA. In this regard, the proposal might be to the effect that the Meeting to undertake the review of the SIDS POA in 2004 as proposed at the twenty-second special session, be subsumed under this proposal.

Against this background, preparations for Rio + 10 need not be a complex or strenuous exercise. In essence, attention should be focused on reporting on the progress of implementation of the SIDS POA, with particular attention to the constraints encountered, including the evident retreat by the international community from the commitments and principles adopted at UNCED. At UNCED the international community agreed, inter alia, on the need to optimize the availability of "adequate, predictable, new and additional resources using all available funding sources and mechanisms as stipulated in Chapter 33 of Agenda 21". A number of recommendations may be formulated or reiterated in this regard.

Attention might also be focused on the socio-economic issues introduced at the twenty-second special session and on the measures recommended by the CSD, supplemented, as appropriate, by those recommended by the region for implementation to advance its unique concerns.

5.2 Gender issues

As a result of the overlapping mandates of the ECLAC/CDCF secretariat and the CARICOM secretariat in assisting their respective member States and of the efforts to streamline activities, the preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women within the Caribbean subregion were characterized by a high degree of collaboration between ECLAC, CARICOM and UNIFEM. The regional networking in preparation for the FWCW was coordinated by these three agencies along with the Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA), the subregional NGO focal point for the FWCW. The following activities were co-hosted by ECLAC, CARICOM and UNIFEM:

- The Subregional Meeting Preparatory to the Fourth World Conference on Women, 1995, 28-29 June 1994, Curacao, Netherlands Antilles;

In addition, the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat played a major role in the preparation of a subregional report comprising a synthesis of the report of the Commonwealth Caribbean commissioned by CARICOM and the national reports of the remaining CDCC member countries.

The ECLAC/CDCC secretariat provided technical assistance to the delegations of its member countries to the Sixth Session of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America, Mar del Plata, Argentina, 25-29 September 1994. The secretariat also negotiated and facilitated the attendance of governmental and non-governmental personnel and provided substantive servicing to governments in attendance at the FWCW, 4-15 September 1995 as did the CARICOM Secretariat.

The participation of delegations from the Caribbean throughout the preparatory processes was supported by agencies in the subregion such as UNIFEM, UNICEF, DfID, CIDA and the CARICOM Secretariat. The collaborative framework resulted in the attendance of approximately 500 women and men from 21 countries at the FWCW who were able to participate in the conference negotiations with a high level of consensus.

5.2.1 Post-Beijing follow-up

In the immediate post-Beijing period, a number of initiatives were taken aimed at ensuring a coordinated regional effort in supporting the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. An inter-agency meeting on follow-up activities to the Fourth World Conference on Women was held at the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat on 25 October 1995. The meeting was attended by the following agencies: DfID; Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Organisation of American states/Inter-American Commission of Women (OAS/CIM), UNDP, UNIFEM, UNFPA, FAO and the ILO.

It was agreed that there was much overlap between activities of the respective agencies on identical topics and that the programmes were fully compatible. At that meeting, recommendations were made for the development of a coordinated communication strategy and for the convening of a further meeting to promote joint actions and the mechanisms to be adopted.

In November 1995, the CARICOM Secretariat initiated the preparation of a post-Beijing Regional Plan of Action. This Regional Plan of Action was intended to integrate nationally and regionally established priorities and to document the mandates and programme priorities of regional and international agencies.

In August 1997, ECLAC, CARICOM and UNIFEM co-hosted a Caribbean Subregional Ministerial Conference in preparation for the seventh session of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Social and Economic Development of Latin America and the Caribbean. The “Georgetown Consensus” was adopted at that meeting which recommended the direction of the work of governments of the subregion over the period until the year 2000.

5.2.2 Preparatory activities for the Special Session of the General Assembly for the Beijing +5 review from 5-9 June 2000

Neither of the recommendations made at the inter-agency meeting in October 1995 was pursued. These recommendations related to the development of a coordinated communication
strategy and the convening of a further meeting to promote joint actions and the mechanism to be adopted. The largely unstructured, but effective collaborative modalities, which developed in the FWCW preparations, unlike the SIDS POA, were not formalized or strengthened.

The subregional preparations for the Special Session were not attended by significant levels of inter-agency coordination and several of the agencies reported a decline in resources available to support governments in their preparations for the Special Session.

Given the mandate of the regional commissions to assist governments in their preparation for the Special session, the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean convened a number of preparatory meetings as follows:

- Two technical meetings in 1999 to assist governmental technical personnel in the task of completion of the national reports. These meetings were funded by DFID;
- A meeting technical officers from national machineries for women in Antigua on May 5 2000 in collaboration with CAFRA.

The ECLAC/CDCC secretariat and the CARICOM secretariat provided technical assistance to Caribbean delegations in attendance at the Eighth Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean held in Lima, Peru 8-10 February 2000, at the Preparatory Committee meetings and at the Special Session.

UNIFEM, employing the services of a consultant, held a briefing for representatives of the Permanent Missions to the United Nations prior to the Preparatory Committee meeting in March 2000.

Participation of delegations and resource persons from the Caribbean at the preparatory activities as well as at the Special Session was facilitated by ECLAC, UNICEF, UNIFEM, UNFPA, DFID Caribbean, DFID (UK) and CIDA. In addition, CIDA co-financed the attendance of the representative of the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat at the Preparatory Committee meeting convened 29 May-4 June 2000.

5.2.3 Activities arising from the Beijing Platform for Action and the Port of Spain Consensus: Inter-agency collaboration at the subregional level

Since the Third ECLAC/CDCC Ministerial Conference on Women, the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat has pursued inter-agency collaboration in three main areas:

(a) Gender mainstreaming;
   (i) Preparation of a study on gender mainstreaming. The research was supported by the CIDA Gender Equity Fund;
(ii) Regional Training Workshop on Gender Mainstreaming for technical officers from national machineries for women (May 2000). This workshop was co-hosted by the Commonwealth Secretariat.

(b) Poverty and the economy:

(i) An Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting on Gender and Macroeconomic Policies and Planning in the Caribbean (October 2000). This meeting was supported by UNDP and the CIDA Gender Equity Fund. The meeting agreed that the secretariat would develop a project proposal for consideration by agencies for the purpose of identifying areas of inter-agency collaboration.

(c) Violence against women and women’s human rights:

(i) The ECLAC /CDCC secretariat has committed to providing technical assistance to the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court in the execution of a Family Law and Domestic Violence Legislative Reform Project. The secretariat will be undertaking a review of the implementation of the domestic violence laws in Antigua and Barbuda, British Virgin Islands, Saint Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

5.2.4 Inter-agency collaboration: National level

The ECLAC/CDCC secretariat is the vice-chair of the Country Team Group on Gender of the UNDP Port of Spain Office. The main objective of this mechanism, which is chaired by UNIFEM, is to support the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.

5.3 Natural disasters

As recognized in the SIDS POA, the small size of SIDS means that development and environment are closely interrelated and interdependent. The POA also recognizes that many disadvantages deriving from small size are themselves magnified by precisely the fact of the smallness of these entities. Among the disadvantages attaching to the small island developing States of the Caribbean, is their vulnerability to extremely damaging natural disasters, particularly in the forms of hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, extended droughts and extensive floods. Due mostly to climate change, many of these events are perceived to be occurring with increasing frequency and intensity. Moreover, natural disasters are of special concern to SIDS, given, inter alia, their small size, their dependence for the most part on agriculture and tourism, which are particularly vulnerable to natural disasters, their narrow resource base, and the pervasive impact of such events on their people, environment and economies. For countries affected by these events, the relevance of these characteristics lies in the fact that the economic, social and environmental consequences are long lasting and that the costs of rehabilitation are high as a percentage of GNP.

In an attempt to meet the needs of its member countries in this area of natural disasters, the Subregional Headquarters of ECLAC for the Caribbean has identified as a priority and has commenced action on two main fronts, namely:
(a) The conduct of post-disaster assessments utilizing the ECLAC Methodology for Assessing the Macroeconomic, Social and Environmental Impacts of Natural Disasters. This Office has conducted assessments in Anguilla, Belize, the British Virgin Islands and St. Kitts and Nevis. As regards the wider ECLAC system, such assessments have been executed throughout Central America, the countries of the Caribbean and of South America, including Venezuela, which was severely affected by heavy rains, mudslides and floods in December 1999;

(b) The conduct of training workshops at regional and national levels on the use of the methodology developed by ECLAC. To date, workshops have been conducted at the Subregional Headquarters for regional participants; and in the British Virgin Islands, for personnel of that member country. The purpose of these workshops is to develop a core of expertise with multidisciplinary skills across the region for rapid deployment of assessment teams comprising personnel from within or in close proximity to affected countries. Such personnel would also constitute a nucleus whose assistance might be enlisted by ECLAC itself for undertaking assessments in regional countries. In the British Virgin Islands, participants in the Training Workshop represented a range of private and public sector agencies, including government departments, the Chamber of Commerce and Hotel Association; and a number of insurance companies.

More generally, within the subregion, a number of agencies continue to be active in the area of natural disasters. These include, in addition to ECLAC, the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA), IDB and UNDP. The first two of these agencies are recognized in the main for their provision of technical assistance whereas the latter two are more recognized for their provision of funding to these efforts. The ACS has also incorporated natural disasters into its work programme.
Inter-agency collaboration in post-disaster assessment and follow-up of the impact of Hurricane Keith by a mission from the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean

The mission was undertaken over the period 12-20 December 2000 and was mounted in response to a request of the national authorities following the passage of Hurricane Keith from 30 September-1 October 2000. The assessment embodied sectoral analyses leading to an overall damage assessment and in addition to appraising the macroeconomic, social and environmental impacts, it also proposed guidelines for rehabilitation and reconstruction in the form of a number of Project Profiles. The mission was supported not only by the national authorities, but also by a number of international agencies, among them, the IDB and the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA). Consultants from PAHO/WHO and UNICEF also joined the mission. The Mission Report was presented to a meeting of bilateral donors and international financial agencies, among them, DFID, IICA, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, which convened at the IDB on 7 December 2000 to discuss the damages resulting from Hurricane Keith as well as rehabilitation plans including financing and technical assistance requirements. The ECLAC Report, which had been earlier identified as a key document for the discussions, was well received and pledges were made in respect of some of the accompanying project proposals.

6.0 TOWARDS A FRAMEWORK FOR COLLABORATION

6.1 Framework for Preparing for Rio +10

Background: The United Nations Preparatory Process in outline 2001-2002

30 April-2 May 2001: CSD-10 Acting as the First Meeting of the Preparatory Committee, New York. The major outcomes of this meeting are expected to be decisions on the organization of work for further preparatory sessions and on the involvement of major stakeholders. The meeting will also receive a progress report on national and regional preparations as well as thematic “review” reports from the Secretary-General.

28 January-8 February 2002: CSD-10 Acting as the Second Meeting of the Preparatory Committee, New York. This meeting will receive the results of national/regional preparatory processes; the main policy report of the Secretary-General; and the results of the multi-stakeholder dialogue segment. The main outcomes of the meeting are expected to be the first draft of the “review” document to be negotiated during the third preparatory session.

18-29 March 2002 or 1-19 April 2002 (information as at 9 January 2001): CSD-10 Acting as the Third Meeting of the Preparatory Committee, New York. At this Meeting, the first draft of the “review” document will be negotiated as well as elements of the future work programme of the CSD itself.

6-17 May 2002: CSD-10 Acting as the Fourth Preparatory Committee, Indonesia. The ministerial segment of this meeting will provide “strategic vision and policy guidance”. There will
also be a Multi-stakeholder Dialogue Segment and other contributions from major groups. The anticipated outcome of the meeting is the adoption of elements for a concise political document to be submitted to the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

**Summer 2002** (information as at 8 January 2001): World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa. The outcomes of this Summit are expected to be the adoption of final documents; and “new national, regional and interregional and stakeholder commitments which do not require global negotiations”.

Against the background of the foregoing, the following concrete steps might be considered in the development of the Caribbean Subregional Preparatory Process:

**March-3rd Week in April 2001**: ECLAC, in close collaboration with other regional agencies and regional countries, to develop proposals for the organization and content of the preparatory process in the context of the preliminary identification of themes, objectives and strategies, including strategies for the introduction of regional concerns into the CSD culminating with the Summit. The output of this process is to be channelled into CSD-10 Acting as the First Prepcom (30 April-2 May 2001). The output would also provide a common set of considerations which might be taken into account in the national consultations that should take place across the region.

**May-September 2001**: System of national consultations to undertake detailed consideration of issues identified in the course of the inter-agency /member state process outlined in the preceding paragraph: current national/regional priorities and initiatives for the further implementation of Agenda 21.

**End of September, 2001**: Second Caribbean Ministerial Meeting on implementation of the SIDS POA including the formulation of a regional position in relation to current regional priorities and new initiatives for the further implementation of Agenda 21. The results of this meeting are to be channelled into CSD-10 acting as the Second Meeting of the Preparatory Committee (28 January-8 February 2002 at which the first draft of the “review” document will be negotiated.

6.1.1 Opportunities for inter-agency collaboration

The format depicted above in connection with the implementation of the SIDS POA, more specifically, the Caribbean Ministerial Meeting at which the Caribbean Model was formalized comprising a SIDS Bureau, an Interim Secretariat and a Joint Work Programme to be implemented by an Inter-agency Collaborative Group might be followed. In this context, the hosting of the proposed ministerial meeting might be a joint effort with agencies contributing technical, financial, manpower, logistical and other resources, including equipment, as appropriate, taking into account that ECLAC and CARICOM, have been acting as Interim Secretariat of the implementation of the SIDS Plan of Action since 1994. Similarly, the organization of national consultations and the processing of their output invite the assistance of regional and regionally-based agencies, in collaboration with each other, as well as with regional countries and relevant non-governmental organizations. In the documentation issued in relation to preparations for Rio +10, reference is made to “Regional PrepComs” as being “intergovernmental with participation of stakeholders (Multi-stakeholder Dialogues) and international institutions (organized by UNEP and RCs in consultation with DESA and UNDP)”. The process outlined for the Caribbean in this paper
recognizes the wide scope of collaboration that already exists in the region and seeks to derive the greatest advantage therefrom.

6.2 Gender issues

6.2.1. Strengthening inter-agency collaboration

The Beijing Platform for Action addresses the institutional and financial arrangements which must be made to ensure effective implementation of the recommendations at national, regional and international levels. In addressing the mandate of the United Nations agencies, the Platform for Action specifies that:

"Implementation of the Platform for Action by national, subregional/regional and international institutions, both public and private, would be facilitated by transparency, by increased linkages between networks and organizations and by a consistent flow of information among all concerned." (Paragraph 288).

The regional commissions are urged to promote and assist the pertinent national institutions in monitoring and implementing the global Platform for Action within their mandates and to collaborate on gender issues with other regional intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, financial and research institutions and the private sector.

Consequentially, the regional commissions not only have the mandate to support intergovernmental activities, such as the convening of ministerial meetings, they are also required to assist in the implementation of the Platform for Action at the national level. In meeting this latter mandate, the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat has worked closely with the national machineries for women.

The Platform for Action recommends that UNIFEM review and strengthen its work programme to focus on women’s political and economic empowerment. UNIFEM is also urged to concentrate on fostering a multilateral policy dialogue on women’s empowerment. (Paragraph 335)

While effective ad hoc collaboration is ongoing, there is a need to consider the recommendations made at the inter-agency meeting held in October 1995. Perhaps as a result of the mandate for all United Nations agencies to mainstream gender analysis and planning in their substantive work programmes, there is a perception of duplication and overlap. In this context the need for greater mandate clarity and inter-agency coordination has been voiced by governmental representatives within the region.

One area in which all relevant agencies are attempting to assist governments is in the area of gender mainstreaming and in strengthening the national machineries for women. However the absence of a coordinated approach appears to have hampered continuity in capacity building and, therefore, to a limited effectiveness of outcomes. This example highlights the need for greater inter-agency harmonization not only of work programmes but also of approaches to thematic issues.
6.2.2 Modes of collaboration

Regular inter-agency meetings to share and harmonize respective work programmes with respect to gender equity should be instituted. Within ECLAC, prior to the biannual meetings of the Board of Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women, a meeting of Specialized Agencies and Other Bodies of the United Nations System on the Advancement of Women in Latin America and the Caribbean is convened. It is recommended that a similarly structured meeting be convened at a subregional level prior to the meetings of the Board of Presiding Officers. These meetings would provide the opportunity for greater collaboration in the identification of priorities for action and in the deployment of resources. Through these meetings, clarity of mandate would be strengthened and duplication avoided.

Consideration should also be given to the use of expertise within the agencies for the conduct of research and technical assistance prior to the hiring of external consultants. Such meetings could be held at a subregional level prior to the meeting of the Board of Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women which is convened by ECLAC twice yearly. These meetings would provide the opportunity for greater collaboration in the identification of priorities for action and in the deployment of resources. Through these meetings, clarity of mandate would be achieved and duplication discouraged.

6.2.3 A Caribbean regional process to prepare for the Fifth World Conference on Women

Unlike the preparations for Rio + 10, a defined collaborative methodology presently does not exist for the Fifth World Conference on Women. However discussions have already started on the need to define a cohesive process at both national and subregional levels. At a CARICOM Secretariat meeting of technical officers from the national machineries for women held in Jamaica 5-8 December 2000, the participants urged greater inter-agency coordination in the areas of planning, training and facilitation of country delegations.

While there is a need to work out the mechanics of inter-agency coordination, a framework already exists. This framework is provided by the ECLAC mandate to convene at the regional level sessions of the Regional Conference on Women (and the intervening meetings of the Board of Presiding Officers) and at the subregional level, Caribbean Ministerial Conferences. Both these conferences provide important opportunities for arriving at subregional and regional consensus on the critical actions to be taken to further gender equality and equity within the region.

The preparations for the Fifth World Conference on Women should therefore be informed by the need to support governments at the national level in meeting their evaluative and reporting requirements in supporting the attendance of Caribbean delegations and in building regional consensus.

The support needed includes:

- Capacity building in negotiation and diplomacy skills;

- Funding of attendance of technical officers at all stages of the preparatory process;
• The provision of critical thinking in emerging areas of concern and advocacy on the importance of Caribbean participation at the United Nations global conference.

6.3 Framework for collaboration on natural disasters

As exemplified in the adoption and implementation of the Joint Work Programme in the context of the SIDS POA, there is ongoing collaboration between ECLAC/CDCC CDERA in the management of natural disasters. Further, more recently, CDERA was represented at the highest level at an ECLAC-sponsored training workshop on the use of the methodology developed by ECLAC for undertaking social, economic and environmental post-disaster impact assessments. The issue remains, therefore, one of expanding the scope for collaboration between the two organizations bearing in mind that their respective focus is different: that of CDERA directed to the "emergency phase", while that of ECLAC directed to the evaluation, assessment and reconstruction. Further areas of collaboration might be defined through dialogue between the agencies. Areas which suggest themselves in this regard include:

• Undertaking of joint missions in the aftermath of natural disasters (CDERA/ECLAC and others) with funding possibly from IDB, UNDP;

• Continued collaboration in the implementation of the SIDS POA;

• Structured exchange of information and publications;

• Collaboration in appropriate areas of research, including the joint formulation of technical assistance packages for presentation to prospective donor agencies;

• Coordination of regional positions for presentation to forums, such as the now institutionalized “General Meeting between representatives of the United Nations system and the Caribbean Community and its Associate Institutions”; and

• The reciprocal issue of invitations to relevant meetings. A similar approach might be envisaged vis a vis the ACS whose mandate also encompasses the field of natural disasters

• Both IDB and UNDP have, in the past, provided partial funding to countries for either the "emergency response" missions of CDERA or the macroeconomic/social assessment work of ECLAC.
Annex 1

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING

In a note dated 4 March 1994, the Secretary-General of the United Nations announced his decision to work to achieve closer coordination among the agencies of the United Nations system, including those concerned with cooperation at the regional level. Accordingly, the first Inter-Agency Meeting of Members of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) in Latin America and the Caribbean was held in Santiago, Chile, on 25 and 26 May 1995, with the participation of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), UNFPA, UNDP, UNEP, UNICEF, ILO, FAO, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization (WHO/PAHO), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), and ECLAC.

The main points stressed in the conclusions of the meeting were the following:

1. Meetings of this type provide a useful opportunity for reflection, socialization, exchange of ideas and comparison of regional programmes of work and facilitate inter-agency cooperation.

2. One of the issues of common concern was that of the limited availability of resources. Suggestions were made regarding joint or coordinated action that might be taken to strengthen the position of Latin America and the Caribbean in the forums responsible for resource allocation.

3. Even though Latin America and the Caribbean have a long history of inter-agency cooperation, there is still room for improving coordination at the regional level.

4. Without detriment to national and global programmes, some activities should be carried out as complementary actions at the regional level.

5. There was agreement on the description of regional activities included in the note prepared by the secretariat for the meeting, in which the following points were stressed:

   (i) Support for governments to carry out initiatives that promote regional or subregional integration or cooperation;
   (ii) Support for concerted action directed outside the region;
   (iii) Follow-up to agreements reached at the global level
   (iv) Search for solutions to problems that are common to several countries;
   (v) Support for efforts to solve national problems that are common to several countries through the application of a single methodology in all the countries concerned.

6. The definition of countries as beneficiaries of cooperation was understood to include the government, the private sector and civil society at large.

7. These meetings should be used to develop types of cooperation that will facilitate follow-up to world summits.

On 6 May 1999, another United Nations inter-agency coordination meeting for the Latin American and Caribbean region was held in Santiago, Chile. This meeting was convened by the Deputy Secretary-General, pursuant to the provisions of Economic and Social Council resolution 1998/46 of 30 July 1998 on further measures for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields. ECLAC acted as the secretariat for the meeting.

The meeting was attended by representatives of the following United Nations bodies: Office of the Deputy Secretary-General; Regional Commissions New York Office (RCNYO); United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean of the Department
of Disarmament Affairs (DDA); UNDP; UNIFEM; UNEP; UNHCR; UNICEF; UNFPA; World Food Programme (WFP); United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP); United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD); United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS; ILO; FAO; UNESCO; International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO); WHO/PAHO; IMF; Universal Postal Union (UPU); International Telecommunication Union (ITU); World Meteorological Organization (WMO); World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO); International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD); and ECLAC.

The following agreements were adopted at the meeting:

1. Collaboration among the agencies should centre around the following basic issues: (a) equity; (b) governance; (c) integration into the global economy; (d) the environment; and (e) mobilization of resources for development.

2. Particular attention should be given to coordination of activities in the Caribbean, and a survey should be made of the resources of the United Nations system in the subregion.

3. The Deputy Secretary-General requested ECLAC to take responsibility for overall monitoring of the new cooperation and coordination mechanisms and for convening an annual coordination meeting of all United Nations bodies and agencies involved in activities in the Latin American and Caribbean region.

In response to the aforementioned request by the Deputy Secretary-General, ECLAC organized the second United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Meeting for the Latin American and Caribbean Region. This meeting was held in Santiago, Chile, on 15 May 2000.

The second meeting was attended by representatives of UNCTAD; UNDP; UNEP; UNICEF; WFP; UNAIDS; ILO; FAO; UNESCO; WHO/PAHO; ICAO; ITU and ECLAC.

At the aforementioned meeting, a decision was taken to convene a meeting in the Caribbean with a view to optimizing inter-agency coordination within the subregion.

Accordingly, the secretariat of ECLAC has organized the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Meeting for the Caribbean Subregion, to be held in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, on 8 and 9 March 2001.
Annex 2  
GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE OF UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

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<tr>
<th>Geographic Coverage</th>
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## Annex 3

**UNITED NATIONS AND NON UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES**
**THAT HAVE FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS**
**IN GLOBAL CONVENTIONS**

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N = National  
R = Regional  

Source: ECLAC.