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Gender mainstreaming in national sustainable development planning in the Caribbean

Gabrielle Hosein
Tricia Basdeo-Gobin
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Abstract

Mainstreaming gender in national sustainable development planning requires integrating gendered analyses and gender equality into planning at the national level. Assessing the status of this process in the Caribbean, while identifying good practices in and challenges to the inclusion of a gender perspective in development planning, provides a basis for identifying the need for technical assistance in strengthening national mechanisms for the advancement of women and other government entities, in successfully implementing international and regional frameworks and meeting their commitments, including to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030.

This study, therefore, assesses the status of gender mainstreaming in the policy framework of the 29 Caribbean member states and Associate Members of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), which are also members of its subsidiary organ for the subregion: the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC). The study defines and explains gender mainstreaming as a factor in national development planning and outlines the regional experiences and trends in mainstreaming gender. It highlights the frameworks and commitments that guide gender mainstreaming in national development planning, identifies how Caribbean States, including national machineries for the advancement of women across the subregion, can draw on each other's experiences. It explains the goals and challenges of mainstreaming gender in planning and offers policy recommendations for advancing gender equality through effective mainstreaming of gender in national development planning and as part of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs. These include fostering coordination and coherence among government institutions as well as with other stakeholders including civil society, women's groups, private sector, faith-based organizations, and youth networks; implementing gender responsive budgeting; building capacity, in particular on gender data; and supporting citizen-led initiative to monitor progress and hold governments accountable for gender equality commitments. The implementation of these recommendations will contribute to gender equality and promote the autonomy of all women.

Introduction

In 1997, the United Nations adopted the first resolution on gender mainstreaming to guide and support member States in the implementation of global commitments related to gender equality and the empowerment of women. On that occasion, member States agreed to assess the differentiated implications, for women and men, of any planned action, including legislation, throughout the entire cycle of policies and programmes from the design phase to the evaluation process.¹

More recently, mainstreaming gender has gained a new impetus with the adoption in 2015 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The new development agenda underscores the importance of systematic mainstreaming of a gender perspective in its comprehensive implementation² since the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls will make a decisive and cross-cutting contribution to progress in all the Goals and targets, in particular in this remaining decade to successfully implement this global agenda. In fact, the 2030 Agenda asserts that “the achievement of full human potential and of sustainable development is not possible if one half of the humanity continues to be denied its full human rights and opportunities”.³ Member States also committed to ensure that development is implemented in “a manner that is consistent with the rights and obligations of States under international law”.⁴

At the regional level, Governments agreed to mainstream gender equality and women’s human rights perspective into all development policies. This commitment is at the core of the Regional Gender Agenda⁵ adopted during the sessions of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean over the last 40 years. At the XIII session of the Regional Conference in 2016, Governments of Latin America and the Caribbean adopted the Montevideo Strategy for implementation of the

¹ ECOSOC agreed conclusion 1997/2.

² A/RES/70/1- Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. para.20.

³ High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, President’s summary of 2017 session, June 2017.

⁴ A/RES/70/1- Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. para.18.

⁵ ECLAC (2017), 40 years of the Regional Gender Agenda. Available at: <https://www.cepal.org/en/publications/40334-40-years-regional-gender-agenda>.

Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030, which includes a specific measure on “establishing permanent government mechanisms, with specific mandates, division of duties, resource allocations and work plans, for intersectoral and inter-institutional coordination, especially between machineries for the advancement of women and central planning and budgeting units, to participate in the preparation and implementation of development plans and public budgets, mainstreaming the gender perspective in planning and budgeting at the national, subnational and local levels”.⁶

The 2030 Agenda and the Regional Gender Agenda provide therefore important frameworks for fostering synergies between the sustainable development and human rights commitments to effectively mainstream gender in order to achieve gender equality, empower all women and girls and strengthen their autonomy and the enjoyment of all their rights, while supporting Governments in meeting their commitments to both agendas at the global, regional and subregional levels.

With Caribbean countries still in the early stages of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs, long-term planning is being repositioned as a critical tool for the sustainable development of countries in the subregion. Some countries are currently formulating or implementing medium- to long-term national development plans⁷ that have partially included a gender perspective in certain sectors or considering adopting specific tools such as gender-responsive budgeting. However, the majority are still in the process of strengthening their capacities to do so and have not yet mainstreamed gender nor have they adopted a rights-based approach in the drafting or monitoring of the plans.

To this end, ECLAC Subregional headquarters for the Caribbean, with the support of ECLAC Division for Gender Affairs, undertook this study to assess the status of gender mainstreaming in planning processes in the Caribbean. This initiative is part of a broader ECLAC project, funded by the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), under its 2018-2020 programme on Planning, Statistics and Financing for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with the expected results of strengthening the institutional capacities of Latin American and Caribbean countries in the areas of planning, statistics and financing, through an integrated perspective, for the implementation and follow-up of the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

The primary aim of this study, which covers the 29 member States and associate members of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) of ECLAC, is to assess how Caribbean countries are mainstreaming gender in national development planning by mapping gender equality plans with development plans and in the process identify good practices in, as well as challenges to, the inclusion of a gender perspective in national sustainable development planning. Based on the findings of this assessment, policy recommendations are provided to national mechanisms for the advancement of women and other government entities in the Caribbean on advancing the inclusion of a gender perspective in national development planning.

⁶ Measures 2.d.

⁷ Antigua and Barbuda, Medium-Term Development Strategy 2016-2020; Bahamas, National Development Plan Vision 2040; Belize, National Development Framework, Horizon 2030; Curaçao, National Development Plan 2015-2030; Dominica, National Resilience Development Strategy 2030; Dominican Republic, Dominican Republic Country Strategic Plan, 2019-2023; Grenada, National Sustainable Development Plan 2030; Guadeloupe, Strategy 2020; Guyana, Green State Development Strategy; Jamaica, Vision 2030 National Development Plan; Montserrat, Sustainable Development Plan 2008-2020; Saint Lucia: Medium-Term Development Strategy (being developed); Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, National Economic and Social Development Plan 2013-2025; Suriname, Policy Development Plan 2017-2021; and Trinidad and Tobago, Vision 2030.

The first part of the study defines and reviews gender mainstreaming in terms of its relevance to national development planning. The next section outlines the regional experience in gender mainstreaming followed by a review of the international and regional frameworks and commitments that provide a guide for cross-sectoral gender mainstreaming at a national level. A regional review of Caribbean countries in relation to their gender equality plans, including case studies of Dominica and Jamaica, are then presented. The study concludes by identifying key challenges and good practices, and providing specific policy recommendations.

I. Gender mainstreaming: concepts and overview

A. Definitions

1. Gender

A commonly agreed definition of gender refers to the roles, behaviors, activities and attributes that a given society at a given time considers appropriate for men and women. The beliefs and social constructs about womanhood and manhood create gender systems which determine women and men's roles, responsibilities, activities, access to and control over resources, and decision-making opportunities.⁸ These systems are socially created and change over time. Yet, they establish resilient norms regarding what is expected, allowed and valued in women, men, girls and boys, shaping their socialisation, institutions such as the family, media, law and education system, how race, class, age, religion, disability, and sexuality are lived, and the ways in which inequality is experienced. Gender does not refer to women, but to relations between and among women and men. Therefore, both women and men "experience relations of gender although they experience these from radically different positions of personal, social, economic, and political power".⁹ Gender systems in the Caribbean reproduce ideals of male domination in women's lives, and the harms they cause. At the same time as they privilege men, however, they also create unrealistic and toxic demands and expectations, that could also harm them. Both women and men have a role in actively advancing gender equality in order to change the unequal power relations created and maintained by these gender systems.

⁸ UN-Women, Gender Equality Glossary.

⁹ Barribeau, Eudine. 1998. "Theorizing Gender Systems and the Project of Modernity in the Twentieth-Century Caribbean." *Feminist Review* 59 (Summer 1998), pp. 186-210.

2. Gender equality

Gender equality between and among women and men, girls and boys refers to the rights, responsibilities and opportunities of individuals that will not depend on whether they are born male or female¹⁰ or whether they meet the expectations of masculine and feminine ideals. It involves both achieving equal representation and equal influence, equal access and control over resources, and equal sharing of care labour. Where there is gender equality, the differing perceptions, interests, needs and priorities of women and men are considered in policies and plans to change gender systems. When these are better understood in terms of how they reproduce inequalities, they can be accounted for in the process of national planning in ways to address them with specific measures aimed at reducing gaps and promoting the autonomy and empowerment of all women to achieve sustainable development with gender equality.

3. The gender and development (GAD) approach

As experiences, needs, issues, roles, resources and priorities of women and men may be different, gender analysis can illuminate who has access, who has control, who is likely to benefit from a new initiative and who is likely to be disadvantaged. This helps identify men and women's developmental needs.¹¹ This analysis "is focused not just on outcomes, but on the concepts, arguments and language used to justify policy... [and]...whether the policy "talk" challenges or reinforces existing power structures based on gender" (Carriere 1995).

At first, issues of women's inequalities were addressed through efforts to integrate women into national economies and to create equal opportunities for women. The main question asked by the so-called 'Women in Development' approach, which emerged in the 1960s, was how to include women in the development process. This approach focused on the importance of sex-disaggregated data and on women's access to education, training and credit, as well as their participation in policy design and implementation. This was the beginning of many countries setting-up offices and bureaux for women's affairs.

Over these decades, many national women's offices (initiated with much enthusiasm and often quite radical agendas) were co-opted or found their roles and capacities diminished through inadequate funding or limited political leverage.¹² Examining attempts to move from an economic and welfare approach to a feminist approach that included attention to reproductive rights and sexual violence, Michelle Rowley (2011) describes this as an example of inclusion as containment. The Women in Development approach addressed women's practical interests, such as their daily needs caring for themselves and their children, but not their strategic interests, which relate to changing gender relations and challenging forms of women's subordination,¹³ and the impact of race and class in women's lives.

The so-called 'Women and Development' approach, which followed in the late 1970s, focused more directly on women-only projects, women's work, support to women's organizations, and recognition of the distinctive roles that women play. It also recognized that women were already economic actors. They did not need to be brought in and their roles and resistances could not be ignored. The goal was not just to integrate women into the existing society and economy, but to

¹⁰ UN-Women, Gender Equality Glossary.

¹¹ See CARICOM Gender Concepts and Approaches: <https://www.caricom.org/gender-concepts-and-approaches/>.

¹² Patricia M. Connelly and others, *Feminism and Development: Theoretical Perspectives*. In *Theoretical Perspectives on Gender and Development*, edited by Jane Parpart, M. Patricia Connelly and Eudine Barriteau, pp. 23-50. (Canada: International Development Research Center, 2000). p. 58.

¹³ Connelly and others, 2000, p.55.

recognize the distinctive roles they were already playing and to attend to their needs for autonomy, empowerment and to transform the status quo.

As attention focused on transformation, efforts moved from attention to women to changing “the accepted norms and values that define women’s and men’s roles and duties in a particular society”¹⁴, and transforming gender inequities that result from these norms, values, roles and duties. This led to the ‘Gender and Development’ approach underpinning gender mainstreaming today. This approach examined how social roles, reproductive roles and economic roles are linked to gender inequalities.¹⁵

The Gender and Development approach, which emerged in the late 1980s, is not just about adding in women or providing welfare and social protections, rather, it is about ending gendered power relations, protecting women’s human rights, transforming masculinities, creating greater social and economic inclusion, empowering civil society, and promoting sustainability and peace through State policies and practices. Integrating a gendered analysis throughout enables these to be achieved as part of addressing all contemporary challenges. The Gender and Development approach explains why, in 1997, the United Nations adopted the first resolution on gender mainstreaming to guide and support member States in the implementation of global commitments related to gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Development policies and plans differently impact the lives of women, men, girls and boys, reproducing or challenging unequal power relations in institutional contexts, as well as in relationships, roles and identities. Without the Gender and Development approach, inequalities could persist in ways that limit girls and women’s, and subordinate boys and men’s, fair access to, participation in, influence over and benefit from development. Therefore, gender mainstreaming begins with a gender analysis, which assesses the differential implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, throughout the entire cycle of policies and programmes from the design phase to the evaluation process.¹⁶ This analysis starts with identifying current responsibilities and contributions of both women and men to social development. It is an examination of the differences in socially constructed roles and socially learned behaviors and expectations associated with females and males; how these differences can lead to inequality in rights, access to resources, and voice; and how, in turn, such inequality affects the quality of life of women and men. Gender analysis is the cornerstone of gender mainstreaming.

4. Gender mainstreaming

The concept of gender mainstreaming was first used at the Third World Conference on Women, which took place in Nairobi in 1985. As a strategy, gender mainstreaming was adopted by the Platform for Action at the Fourth World Conference on Women, which took place in 1995 in Beijing, to include a gender perspective in legislation, policies, programmes and projects.

The United Nations Economic and Social Council, through its Agreed conclusions 1997/2, provided a clear definition of gender mainstreaming as: “the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral

¹⁴ Patricia M. Connelly and others, *Feminism and Development: Theoretical Perspectives*. In *Theoretical Perspectives on Gender and Development*, edited by Jane Parpart, M. Patricia Connelly and Eudine Barriteau, Canada: International Development Research Center, 2000), pp. 23-50.

¹⁵ Mohammed, Patricia, *Gender Equality and Gender Policy-Making in the Caribbean*. In *Public Administration and Policy in the Caribbean*, edited by Indianna Minto-Coy and Evan M. Berman, Boca Raton: Taylor and Francis Group, 2016, pp. 415-441.

¹⁶ Gender mainstreaming was established as an intergovernmental strategy in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in 1995, and again in the ECOSOC Agreed Conclusions in 1997. The mandate for gender mainstreaming was strengthened in the outcome of the General Assembly special session to follow-up the Beijing Conference (June 2000).

dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.”

Gender mainstreaming starts with the recognition that gender equality is a basic development goal and a key objective of development planning. It is therefore a strategy that ensures that both women and men have access to, and control over resources, decision-making, and benefits at all stages of the development process in ways that promote human rights, gender equality and social justice. Its goal is to complement and facilitate women’s empowerment and autonomy. Strategically, it ensures that goals, such as poverty elimination or economic development, also advance gender equality.

As highlighted by ECLAC, equality is an “*idée-force* that has become the fundamental value that the development model must achieve”. It is understood as the entitlement to rights, which requires that the State play a role in attaining thresholds of well-being for the whole population, through applying consistency between economic and social policies, strengthening democratic and participatory institutions, reducing territorial inequalities and promoting profound cultural changes. It, therefore, acknowledges a broader concept of equality, in which all women and girls can exercise the full spectrum of human rights under conditions of full equality with men and boys. In this framework for achieving gender equality in the region, ECLAC has focused on the concept of autonomy, which refers to people’s capacity to make free and informed decisions about their lives, enabling them to be and act in accordance with their own aspirations and desires, given a historical context that makes those possible.¹⁷ The Regional Commission has also recently conducted a study that reviews the evolution of the inclusion of gender equality in public policies from equality of opportunities to gender mainstreaming in the region. These have broadened the State’s institutional sphere of action concerning gender equality and recognize and evaluate its gender-differentiated impact. The focus is to address gender issues right from the early stages of the decision-making process through to the implementation stage, seeking to impact on goals, strategies and resource allocation in order to bring about a substantive change in the way policies and programmes are operationalized. With this type of strategy, policies cease to be a responsibility solely of machineries for the advancement of women and instead become the responsibility of every State player, as well as of the State overall.¹⁸

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) defines gender mainstreaming as “taking account of gender concerns in all policy, programme, administrative and financial activities, and in organizational procedures, thereby contributing to a profound organizational transformation”.¹⁹ Similarly, according to the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat “Gender mainstreaming is a good governance issue – making government more efficient and effective at producing policies and services that will strengthen the social and economic wealth of a nation. It is about rights – women’s and men’s rights to equal opportunities, equal recognition and equal rewards within societies.”²⁰

Mukhopadhyay (2007) divides gender mainstreaming into two dimensions. The first is ‘integrationist mainstreaming’, which integrates gender equality into the analyses of issues across sectors. Integration promotes the incorporation of gender concerns and issues and analysis into the existing development priorities of the government and its development partners, without changing the

¹⁷ Stuart, Sheila, Gény, Lydia Rosa, Abdulkadri, Abdullahi, Advancing the economic empowerment and autonomy of women in the Caribbean through the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, ECLAC, Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, January 2018, pp.14-15.

¹⁸ Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), “Gender equality plans in Latin America and the Caribbean: road maps for development”, Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean. Studies, No. 1 (LC/PUB.2017/1-P/Rev.1), Santiago, 2019, p.18.

¹⁹ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Gender in Development Programme: Gender Mainstreaming Information Pack, 2000.

²⁰ See CARICOM Gender Concepts and Approaches: <https://caricom.org/gender-concepts-and-approaches/>.

overall agenda. The second dimension is 'transformative' or 'agenda-setting mainstreaming', which seeks to understand why women are asymmetrically positioned in the first place and addresses the causes of those inequalities.²¹ Agenda-setting aims to transform the existing development agenda, and enable women and men to be active participants in decision-making processes that affect their daily lives and livelihoods, through the systematic application of a gender perspective.

To illustrate, quotas can be considered an integrationist approach since they advance women's equality without necessarily altering existing patriarchal ideologies or structural reasons for exclusion.²² Ensuring agricultural extension services address both women and men and it integrates gender into agriculture is another example. On the other hand, advocating for women's land rights so that women gain economic autonomy and do not just participate as wives or dependents is agenda-setting.

Hay (2012) defines gender mainstreaming as bringing a feminist lens to policies and policy-making. This requires an awareness that policies can reproduce asymmetrical gender power relations that mostly benefit men and disadvantage women.²³ It also requires recognizing that some voices have been systematically silenced and that those with less power have been excluded from political decision making.²⁴ It is concerned with who has been silenced, how and why this silence is maintained, and how it can be challenged.

Barriteau (2013), therefore, described gender mainstreaming as a process that "attempts to harness political will to remove, or at the least close the political gaps between women's *de jure* right to participate in the governing of their communities and their *de facto* experience of continuing albeit varying, levels of exclusion".²⁵ A feminist lens considers how gender and its intersections with race, class, and ethnicity impact the lives of women, girls, men, boys, and those who do not fit into these categories.²⁶ It also highlights how seemingly 'neutral' policies can both implicitly and explicitly reproduce gender biases.²⁷

According to Barriteau (2003), feminist lens and a gendered lens are not synonymous.²⁸ A gendered lens simply sees its aim as focusing on men, as much as women or boys as much as girls; that is, focusing on everyone equally or assuming that women and men have equivalent experiences of gender inequality. A feminist lens starts from the understanding that patriarchal gender ideals define the policy environment – both what needs to be addressed and resistances to such efforts, which must be strategically negotiated. These ideals subordinate women and girls in relation to men and boys, even as women and girls negotiate and challenge that subordination. These ideals also create contradictory experiences of naturalized dominance and power, harm and feelings of powerlessness in boys and men's lives, which boys and men experience unequally depending on their age, class, race, disability, livelihood and sexual orientation. Feminist evaluation is not only centred on results, but also on the ideas and language used to legitimize policy, and on whether the process, structure and wording of policy challenges or fortifies existing gender power structures. According to Podems (2010), "Feminist

²¹ Ibid.

²² Bari, Farzana, *Women's Political Participation: Issues and Challenges*. Expert Group Meeting, Bangkok: United Nations, Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), 2005.

²³ Hay, Katherine *Engendering Policies and Programmes through Feminist Evaluation: Opportunities and Insights*. "Indian Journal of Gender Studies, vol. 19 No.2 (Spring), (2012), pp. 321-340.

²⁴ Schneider, B. H. (1993). *Children's social competence in context: The contributions of family, school and culture*. Pergamon Press, Oxford.

²⁵ Barriteau, Eudine (2003). "Issues and Challenges of Caribbean Feminism." *Agenda. Empowering Women for Gender Equality* vol. 17 No. 58, pp. 37-44.

²⁶ Hay, Katherine (2012). "Engendering Policies and Programmes through Feminist Evaluation: Opportunities and Insights." *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*, vol. 19 No.2 (Spring), pp. 321-340.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Barriteau, Eudine (2003). "Issues and Challenges of Caribbean Feminism." *Agenda. Empowering Women for Gender Equality* vol. 17 No. 58, pp. 37-44.

evaluation endeavours to...understand why interventions have different impacts on men and women and, at the same time, often seeks to change social inequity in an overtly political manner".²⁹

The Gender and Development approach, and its main tool – gender mainstreaming – therefore goes beyond integrating women or including men to transforming gender ideals and gender relations to create gender equality. The ultimate goal is not achieving women's equality with men (which sets men as a standard), but transforming unjust structures of power in all its forms to promote women's empowerment in relation to opportunities, rights, freedom, decision-making and social justice.³⁰ As such, mainstreaming gender into national development plans is a strategy for enacting the Gender and Development approach. By gender mainstreaming all plans, programmes and projects, even those that are not primarily concerned with gender equality, gender equality will be promoted in addition to sector-specific development objectives.

5. National development plans

Planning for sustainable development has gained considerable momentum in Latin America and the Caribbean over the past few years and many of the countries have begun successful development planning processes at all levels of the State. The main national-level planning tools could have different names, such as national development plans, national development strategies and country visions, but generally outlines how a government intends to meet the perceived development needs of its population. ECLAC has created the Regional Observatory on Planning for Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, which is a dynamic space of analysis, information and collective production of knowledge for governments, academia, private sector and civil society organizations regarding planning for development in the region. The Observatory contains reviews of all long- and medium-term planning instruments in the countries of the region.³¹ It monitors the development and implementation of national development plans and related strategies and their linkages with the 2030 Agenda and the 17 SDGs. In fact, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean have agreed to adopt the 2030 Agenda as a State policy, to establish institutional frameworks for its implementation, follow-up and review and, in parallel, to deploy efforts to mainstream the SDGs into their national development plans and policies and to align their national, local and sectoral budgets with them.³² ECLAC, like other agencies of the United Nations system, has therefore developed methodological tools and guidelines on planning for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean that helps Governments to mainstreaming the SDGs into their national development plans or strategies, including gender related goals.³³

A national development plan or strategy confirms the vision or aspirations of a nation, its foundational values and its existing global and national commitments. In the lexicometric analysis carried out on the development plans of the 33 countries of the region and included in the Second annual report on regional progress and challenges in relation to the 2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean, it was apparent that the four most frequently occurring themes were economy, education, health and employment. In the Caribbean, in particular the most frequent themes addressed in the

²⁹ Podems, Donna R. 2010. "Feminist evaluation and gender approaches: There's a difference?" *Journal of Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation* 6 (14): pp. 1-17.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ ECLAC Regional Observatory on Planning for Development in Latin America and the Caribbean: <https://observatorioplanificacion.cepal.org/en>

³² Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), *Second annual report on regional progress and challenges in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (LC/FDS.2/3/Rev.1)*, Santiago, 2018. ECLAC, p. 17.

³³ *Methodological guide on planning for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean*, Project Documents, (LC/TS.2018/63), Santiago, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), 2018.

national development plans, in descending order, were education, economy, employment and institutions.³⁴ Even in most recent times in 2019, this trend has not changed. In most national development plans, strategies and visions, the greatest linkages are still found to be with SDG 4 (quality education), SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth), SDG 11 (sustainable cities and communities), SDG 13 (climate action) and SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions) and the weakest linkages were found with respect to SDG 3 (health and well-being), SDG 5 (gender equality), SDG 12 (responsible consumption and production), SDG 14 (life below water) and SDG 15 (life on land).³⁵

Successful national development plans also require coordination among a broad range of partners, which includes finance, planning and sector ministries, local governments, parliamentarians, national women's machineries, civil society groups and academic organizations. Soon after the SDGs were introduced in 2016, countries began to integrate the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through the establishment of institutional mechanisms, ad hoc arrangements, or by using existing institutions to coordinate the implementation of the Agenda, and translating it into public policies, national and subnational follow-up and review mechanisms, which include the participation of different actors including civil society organizations. Important to note, however, is that, according to the latest regional report, national machineries for the advancement of women in the Caribbean were not formally included in the institutional arrangements for monitoring the SDGs.³⁶

B. Mainstreaming gender in national development plans, strategies and visions

Gender mainstreaming requires a series of combining and intersecting factors for its successful integration in national development plans, strategies and visions, and their subsequent implementation. Among them it is the political will in order to create consensus on the need to question current gender relations in the public and private spheres, and to create a culture of gender equality. This should encompass, but it is not limited to, the development and implementation of specific national gender equality policy that includes legislative protections, institutional oversight and accountability, a strategically placed national gender machinery, focal points within ministries, awareness-raising and capacity-building. Gender equality policies are roadmaps for the State that indicate the priorities for the country to achieve gender equality. They should be aligned with long and medium-term national development plans for policy coherence and complementarity of goals and objectives. This alignment should be informed by research, using sex-disaggregated data, that establishes the baseline and makes projections for the desired outcomes, as well as by analyses that include cost-benefit analyses, gender impact assessment, and gender-responsive budgeting to provide the evidence base for decision-making. Related to this is the need to allocate corresponding technical, financial and human resources to ensure medium and long-term achievements of gender equality and its integration into sustainable development efforts.

³⁴ Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Second annual report on regional progress and challenges in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (LC/FDS.2/3/Rev.1), Santiago, 2018. p. 100.

³⁵ Quadrennial report on regional progress and challenges in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, LC/FDS.3/3/Rev.1, p.50.

³⁶ Ibid. p.46.

II. Gender mainstreaming in national development plans in the Caribbean

A. Gender mainstreaming in the Caribbean

Formal and informal networks and donor assistance have been crucial to drafting action plans, implementing legal reforms and the introduction of programmes and tools to advance gender equality (Fernós, 2010)³⁷ and gender mainstreaming efforts have produced “mixed results” in the subregion.³⁸ For example, a regional review of the situation in the Bahamas, Belize, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago found that national gender policy-making illuminates “deeply contested policy spaces” with “competing interpretations of women’s and men’s gendered realities, and gender power relations”. The next step of gender policy implementation highlighted difficulties, particularly in relation to sexuality, reproduction and women’s rights, because of challenges to transforming a patriarchal status quo in the very organizations and institutions responsible for implementation³⁹. Additional sector specific reviews focus on areas such as gender mainstreaming in Caribbean disaster management agencies, arguing for “increased integration of men and masculinities in climate change and disaster risk management policies, programs and strategies”.⁴⁰ Other foci include

³⁷ María Dolores Fernós, National Mechanism for Gender Equality and of Women in Latin America and the Caribbean region, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, June 2010, p. 13.

³⁸ Gabrielle Hosein and Jane Parpart, *Feminist Strategies, Masculinist Resistances and Gendered Transformations in Caribbean Perspectives*. In *Negotiating Gender, Policy and Politics in the Caribbean: Feminist Strategies, Masculinist Resistances and Transformational Possibilities*, edited by Gabrielle Hosein and Jane Parpart, pp. 1-22. (New York: Rowman and Littlefield 2017).

³⁹ *Ibid.* 14.

⁴⁰ Leith Dunn, *Integrating men and Masculinities in Caribbean disaster risk management*, In *Men, Masculinities and Disaster*, edited by Elaine Enarson and Bob Pease, p. 209. (New York, Routledge, 2016).

mainstreaming gender in water and wastewater and climate change adaptation projects in the region.⁴¹ Overall, there is a paucity of literature specifically on mainstreaming gender in national development plans in the Caribbean.^{42 43 44}

Nonetheless, there is growing opportunity for Caribbean countries to learn from each other. Table 1 highlights the status of national development planning frameworks in Caribbean countries. The existence of medium- and long-term national development frameworks in these countries offers different opportunities for mainstreaming gender and integrating gender equality indicators of the SDGs in these plans and strategies

B. National development plans in the Caribbean⁴⁵

The Caribbean has made progress in integrating the 2030 Agenda into national, strategies and national development plans. Today, 15 of the 29 Caribbean countries and territories in the region have medium- or long-term development plans (see Table 1).

Table 1
List of Caribbean countries with national development plans

Country	Timeframe	Plan	Type of Plan
Antigua and Barbuda	2016-2020	Medium-Term Development Strategy	Medium-term
Bahamas	2016-2040	National Development Plan of the Bahamas: Vision 2040	Long-term
Belize	2010-2030	National Development Framework for Belize: Horizon 2030	Long-term
Cuba	2016-2030	National Development Strategy 2016-2030 (Vision 2030)	Long-term
Curaçao	2015-2030	Building on Strengths: National Development Plan Curacao 2015-2030	Long-term
Dominica	2030	National Resilience Development Strategy Dominica 2030	Long-term
Dominican Republic	2019-2023	Dominican Republic Country Strategic Plan	Medium-term
Grenada	2030	National Sustainable Development Plan	Long-term
Guadeloupe	2020	Strategy 2020	Medium-term
Guyana	2019-2040	Green State Development Strategy Vision 2040	Long-term

⁴¹ Wainella Isaacs and Maya Trotz, "Good engineering Practices-Gender Mainstreaming in Water and Wastewater Climate Change Adaptation Projects: A Case Study for the Caribbean", (see <http://cwwa.net/publication/good-engineering-practices-gender-mainstreaming-in-water-and-wastewater-climate-change-adaptation-projects-a-case-study-for-the-caribbean/>).

⁴² Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), *Study on Gender Mainstreaming in the Caribbean*. (United Nations 2000).

⁴³ Faith Webster, "Gender Mainstreaming: Its Role in Addressing Gender Inequality in Jamaica", *Caribbean Quarterly*, 52:2-3, (2006), pp. 104-120.

⁴⁴ Gemma Tang Nain and Barbara Bailey eds, "Gender Equality in the Caribbean: Reality or Illusion", (Kingston, Ian Randle, 2003).

⁴⁵ National Development Plans were not found for Anguilla, Aruba, Bermuda, Cayman Islands, Guadeloupe, Martinique, and the United States Virgin Islands.

Country	Timeframe	Plan	Type of Plan
Jamaica	2030	Vision 2030 Jamaica, National Development Plan	Long-term
Montserrat	2008-2020	Sustainable Development Plan	Long-term
Saint Lucia	2019-2022	Medium-Term Development Strategy (being developed)	Medium-term
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	2013- 2025	National Economic and Social Development Plan	Long-term
Suriname	2017-2021	Policy Development Plan	Medium-term
Trinidad and Tobago	2016-2030	National Development Strategy of Trinidad and Tobago: Vision 2030	Long-term

Source: ECLAC Regional Observatory on Planning for Development.

This progress has been accompanied by the preparation of voluntary national reviews (VNRs) by Caribbean countries for presentation at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). Thus far, six VNRs have been presented by Caribbean States, including Belize in 2017, the Bahamas, Dominican Republic and Jamaica in 2018, and Guyana and Saint Lucia in 2019. Four countries have expressed interest in presenting their reviews in 2020: Belize (for the second time), Barbados, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago.

Despite efforts made, more needs to be done by the Caribbean in incorporating the 2030 Agenda in their national development plans. In fact, 14 Caribbean countries and territories do not have a current long-term national development plan. This represents a challenge for sustainable development planning in these small open economies.

C. Gender Equality Policies in the Caribbean

Gender equality plans are tools used by countries to provide direction to the different arms of the State on matters relating to the institutionalization and mainstreaming of gender. Mainly promoted by machineries or mechanisms for the advancement of women in their respective country, these plans serve to give direction to the action of the State and serve as templates for collaborative work between the different sectors.⁴⁶

According to Mohammed (2016), national gender policies for equality in the Caribbean were conceived as a foundation for anchoring a greater gender sensitivity and understanding of the impact of gender on society, at all levels. The idea of a national gender policy was premised on the basis that evidence-driven policies could be developed from sex disaggregated data and widespread consultations, and driven by the political will of the Minister responsible for Gender Affairs to ensure that programmes and actions are rationally determined and executed.⁴⁷

On agreeing to formulate a gender policy, Mohammed explains that States effectively committed to the following goals:⁴⁸

- To assist policy makers in understanding and tracking the gender implications of new and existing policies and to ensure that all policies and planning undertaken by government is informed by a gender perspective;

⁴⁶ Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), "Gender equality plans in Latin America and the Caribbean: road maps for development", Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean. Studies, No. 1 (LC/PUB.2017/1-P/Rev.1), Santiago, 2019, p.13.

⁴⁷ Mohammed, Patricia. 2016. "Gender Equality and Gender Policy-Making in the Caribbean." In *Public Administration and Policy in the Caribbean*, edited by Indiana Minto-Coy and Evan M. Berman. Boca Raton: Taylor and Francis Group.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* pp.434-435.

- To provide government with a dynamic framework to address ongoing issues of gender in society;
- To inform government on strategies in training and education to maximize the country's most important resources—its people, for the benefit of the territory;
- To educate and change attitudes of the public on key concepts such as gender equity, gender equality, social justice, gender roles, and responsibilities toward having them accept the importance of a national policy on gender;
- To review existing legislation aimed at removing measures that place one sex at a disadvantage with the other and to facilitate legislative change and public awareness of relevant legislation and their implications for gender-differentials in the society;
- To develop new strategies and approaches toward eradicating domestic and other forms of gender-based violence in the society;
- To begin training a cadre of persons in the government skilled in the applications of the tools of gender analysis, while strengthening the gender bureaux or offices to implement and monitor the recommendations of the gender policy.

In addition, Mohammed (2016) identifies several areas of concern that demand gender-responsive policy making: education, crime and violence (including gender-based violence), health, female employment and the family, poverty, the law and women's rights, and attitudes toward diverse sexualities.⁴⁹ Gender mainstreaming has been applied in the Caribbean region to these concerns and other issues such as climate change and disaster management.

Writing of her experience in formulating four of such policies, Mohammed (2014) details:

"The process of gender consultation with the various stakeholders - individual, communities, civil society, commerce and members of the government -demonstrates a democratic method of policy formulation. In each sphere of work or occupation examined, participants are asked to break down how male and female, masculinity and femininity are differently affected. For example, if the health sector is approached, how health workers treat with and understand differently the health seeking behaviours of women versus men, the different diseases or conditions that each sex is prone to because of physical differences and the resources that are made available for each as result are considered. The idea is always to have a policy that is shaped by the needs of the local community and accepted by the stakeholders within, thus reflecting closely their own sense of gender identity and visions for change in gender relations".⁵⁰

However, reflection on the Caribbean experience of implementing gender equality policies and mainstreaming gender over the last twenty years leads to the following observations:

- (i) The increase in women's leadership has been marginal and women in leadership positions have not been able to significantly institute policy-making in ways that empower women and strengthen their autonomy and transform masculinities. This calls for renewed emphasis in the public sector on an institutional response to both increase women's participation, leadership and decision-making, and to empower both women and men to transform gender injustice at both political and bureaucratic levels.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Patricia Mohammed, "Gender politics and global democracy: Insights from the Caribbean." In *Global democracy: an intercultural debate*, edited by Jan Aart Scholte. Coventry: University of Warwick, Building Global Democracy Project, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

- (ii) Caribbean governments and the public seem reluctant to support an agenda for the autonomy and the empowerment of women. This results from traditional beliefs in men's right to dominance, from contemporary alarm that women could become too powerful, from fear that gender equality would lead to challenges to heteronormativity (and the special protections given to heterosexual and gender conforming citizens), and from masculine reassertions of primacy, leading to government emphasis on gender mainstreaming in relation to men's needs. Caribbean countries therefore need to find political will and bureaucratic commitment at all levels in order to institutionalize measures that promote gender justice.
- (iii) Budgetary allocations for effective gender mainstreaming throughout the public service are woefully insufficient; national machineries remain understaffed and under-resourced thereby undermining their legitimacy, policy makers remain uncertain about or resistant to what gender is or what it requires them to do, and a paucity of sex-disaggregated data undermines assessment of, and response to, the impact of gender on women's and men's social and economic vulnerabilities.
- (iv) "Abortion rights, sexual orientation, and sexual identity have presented stumbling blocks" as religious and conservative reactions reinforce traditional definitions of "gendered behaviours deemed acceptable" (Mohammed, 2016, p. 437) leading to ambiguity, inertia and containment of gender justice in policy formulation and implementation processes. Interpersonal relations and the identities of those engaged in gender mainstreaming impacts mainstreaming efforts. Acknowledging the personal and interpersonal levels at which buy-in is required is key.

Highlighting the necessity of data, targets and indicators that enable monitoring and analysis in the Caribbean, Harris (2003) writes that, "[i]n the absence of a clear baseline for policy and programme intervention, the relevant institutions and mechanisms often reflect conceptual or ideological conflicts between the dictates of the political administration and the imperatives of social transformation leading to gender equity"⁵¹. Relevant measurements are a priority for gender mainstreaming as they enable governments to track progress and challenges faced in achieving gender equality. As an example, there has been significant legislative reform across the subregion, but limited monitoring of the number and types of women and men who have used such legislation and benefited from them. For instance, in the Bahamas, the Cayman Islands, and Dominica, there are policies on parental leave for both parents, but more research is needed to verify how many men have benefited from these policies and the extent to which they have facilitated women's access to economic activities.

To this end, many Caribbean countries have gender equality policies or plans (see Table 2). Currently, governments are engaged in aligning gender equality plans with gender equality-related SDG targets and, as well as abiding by reporting requirements related to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action and the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030, among others.

⁵¹ Harris, Sonja T. 2003. "Review of Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women and for Achieving Gender Equality 1995-2000." In *Gender Equality in the Caribbean: Reality Or Illusion*, edited by Gemma Tang Nain and Barbara Bailey, Kingston: Ian Randle. p.180.

Table 2
List of Caribbean countries that have existing Gender Equality Policies or related Action Plans

Country	Gender Equality Policies or Plan
Bahamas	Strategic Plan to Address Gender-Based Violence
Belize	National Gender Policy
British Virgin Islands	National Policy for Gender Equity and Equality
Cayman Islands	National Policy on Gender Equity and Equality
Dominica	National Policy and Action Plan for Gender Equity and Equality
Grenada	National Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan 2014-2024
Guyana	National Gender Equality and Social Inclusion Policy 2018-2023
Haiti	Gender Action Plan
Jamaica	National Policy for Gender Equality
Suriname	Gender Vision Policy Document 2021-2035 and Gender Action Plan 2019-2020
Trinidad and Tobago	National Gender Policy (Green Paper)

Source: Prepared by the authors.

D. National Machineries in charge of promoting gender equality in the Caribbean

National development plans represent the State's policy on development priorities and strategies while gender equality policies provide a road map for the State to achieve gender equality. Integrating gender into national development planning process, therefore, requires governments to secure high-level commitment to gender and development priorities, action programmes and resources for implementation, collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data, and targets and indicators directed at the macro and ministerial/sectoral levels, and as informed by the SDGs.⁵² These require a State-led approach, including national gender machineries that could effectively influence and guide gender mainstreaming across the government.

As key coordinating mechanisms for gender mainstreaming, National gender machineries, sometimes called women's desks, gender bureau, departments or divisions of gender, were established as instruments for advancing women's strategic interests and for coordinating government-wide mainstreaming of gender analysis and gender equality in all policy areas.⁵³ They are 'catalysts' for promoting gender equality and justice. However, globally, these machineries are characterized by "vastly different institutional cultures, leaders and leadership styles, degrees of coordination, birthing periods, disciplinary specializations, missions, and staff demographics" (Rai, 2008, p.73).⁵⁴ In practice, these machineries negotiate whose interests become mainstreamed considering their limited financial and human resources.

Five elements are critical to their agenda-setting mandate (Rai, 2008, p. 78):⁵⁵

⁵² LC/CAR/G, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), "Study on Gender Mainstreaming in the Caribbean", funded by The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA)- Gender Equity Fund, p. 27 (2000).

⁵³ United Nations, *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Fourth World Conference on Women*. para. 201. (1995).

⁵⁴ Shirin M. Rai, *Mainstreaming Gender, democratizing the state?*, In *The gender politics of development: Essays in hope and despair*, (London and New York: Zed Books 2008, pp. 71-89).

⁵⁵ Ibid. p. 78.

- (i) Location within the decision-making hierarchy and authority to influence government policy: Often their location and placement in social affairs, welfare, family or labour ministries has led to downsizing in times of economic restructuring while attaching high profile to this machinery can enhance its economic resources and political influence, and credibility. In addition, machineries can be co-opted by heads of State and lose autonomy, though this can be balanced by effective alliances with middle-level state bureaucrats (such as those working in research, budgets and policy departments) who may be more open or whose involvement may be more stable than elected officials;
- (ii) Clarity of mandate and functional responsibility: Although having project implementation responsibilities can lead to cross-sectoral liaising and increase resources for national machineries, they are best suited to playing a catalytic policy advising role even if involved in particular projects. Such role enables ownership of mainstreaming efforts through cross-ministerial structures, raises the profile of gender equality agendas by drawing on resources from individual ministries, and allows national machineries to produce research on policy-implementation, anticipate key opportunities for effective political impact, strengthen civil society participation in gender mainstreaming, engage in training, law reform, policy advocacy, for example, for gender responsive budgeting, monitor implementation, and participate in international fora;
- (iii) Human and financial resources: allocating adequate resources to national gender machineries depends on political will. These machineries may not be considered a priority, especially in the context of high public debt or budget cuts;
- (iv) Links with civil society groups supportive of the advancement of women's rights and enhancement of women's status: National machineries tend to benefit from civil society support, but must carefully negotiate divergent political constraints and strategies. Liaising with civil society also provides national machineries with a constituency that supports its work across ministerial boundaries and cultures, and monitoring and auditing mechanisms;
- (v) Accountability of the national machinery to international and regional commitments and obligations concerning gender equality and gender justice.

Mukhopadhyay (2007) describes how initiatives directed specifically at women are now seen as a failure of mainstreaming, which has become defined by inclusion of men, and male perspectives and needs. Reflecting on more than a decade of gender mainstreaming, Molyneux (2007) writes:

"Among the many myths that populate the field of gender and development is the one that claims that gender has been so successfully mainstreamed into development policy that there is now little need for women's projects and programmes, or indeed for women's policy units. The job of creating 'gender awareness' is done...The view that gender awareness has become part of the common sense of development policy is now so widespread that some NGOs report a growing ennui [boredom], a 'gender fatigue'...with women's programmes increasingly being seen as *passé*".⁵⁶

In the Caribbean, national machineries have faced the fragility of gains, hostile lobbies at home and abroad, continued gender blindness in development policies and plans, reliance on the good will of

⁵⁶ Maxine Molyneux, *The chimera of success; gender ennui and the changed international policy environment*, In *Feminisms: Contradictions Contestations and Challenges in Development*, edited by Andrea Cornwall, Elizabeth Harrison and Ann Whitehead, London and New York: Zed Books, 2007, pp. 227-240.

informal networking among colleagues. As early as 2003, Harris (2003) also noted this by describing a “non-scientific approach to programming, based heavily on public education”, “under-resourcing of the national machineries by governments”, pressures to use scarce resources “in the perceived areas of male marginalization”, and a government structure that makes little reference to frameworks such as the Beijing Platform for Action despite incorporating the language of gender mainstreaming.⁵⁷

Fifteen years later, reflecting on the region, Parpart and McFee (2017) describe gender mainstreaming efforts that mobilise the language of gender equality, but ignore “the impact of gendered assumptions on the ability of women to take on leadership roles”.⁵⁸ They argue for transforming masculine behaviour, and the associations between masculinity and political, economic and cultural power, as this opens possibilities for participation in citizenship and development among both women and men whose authority is not considered legitimate or natural.⁵⁹

However, twenty-five years later, through the Gender Equality Observatory, ECLAC has been monitoring the hierarchical level of the machineries for the advancement of women and their functioning. This level constitutes a qualitative indicator that describes the status that countries have formally conferred on these machineries through laws, decrees and other official measures. It is characterized in three levels which include high, medium and low. The levels of classification for the Caribbean is high, if the mechanism/institution is a minister or whose head has ministerial rank, medium, if it is directly accountable to the prime minister, and low, if accountable to a minister.

The data from the Observatory show that 84% of the machineries are at the hierarchical low level in the Caribbean. These include those in Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia and Suriname. The British Virgin Island was listed at the medium level while, Haiti and Trinidad and Tobago were classified at the high level.

While frameworks, tools and checklists have been developed to aid bureaucracies to integrate gender, there is an absence of accountability mechanisms, creating “a technical exercise without political outcomes”.⁶⁰ As Mukhopadhyay (2007) emphasizes, “the political project of equality requires engagement in politics – the messy business of creating voice, articulating demand, carving out rights, insisting on participation and mobilizing women’s constituencies to demand accountability”.⁶¹ Thus, although, as Parpart and McFee (2017, p. 243) put it for the Caribbean, the “why” of gender has been replaced by the “how”,⁶² empowering national machineries to fulfil their agenda-setting mandate, requires attention to both political and technical strategies, opportunities and limitations, and how these intersect with gender ideologies.

Echoing this in relation to the Caribbean, Mohammed (2016) writes, “a critical ingredient for success of all initiatives...is the internal political will to drive the policy formulation process, the deployment of

⁵⁷ Sonja T. Harris, Review of Institutional Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women and for Achieving Gender Equality, In *Gender Equality in the Caribbean: Reality of Illusion*, edited by Gemma Tang Nain and Barbara Bailey, Kingston, Ian Randle, 2003, pp. 178-200.

⁵⁸ Jane Parpart and Deborah McFee, "Rethinking Gender Mainstreaming in Development in Development Policy and Practice." *Caribbean Review of Gender Studies* (11): (2017), pp. 241-252.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* p. 246.

⁶⁰ Maitrayee Mukhopadhyay, Mainstreaming gender or 'streaming' gender away: feminists marooned in the development business, In *Feminisms: Contradictions Contestations and Challenges in Development*, edited by Andrea Cornwall, Elizabeth Harrison and Ann Whitehead, pp. 135-149. (London and New York: Zed Books, 2007)

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² Jane Parpart and Deborah McFee, "Rethinking Gender Mainstreaming in Development in Development Policy and Practice." *Caribbean Review of Gender Studies* (11): (2017), pp. 241-252.

additional resources and time of individuals involved in the state machinery, and a commitment to implement policies that have been advocated".⁶³

With this in mind, Table 3 shows the existing national machineries for gender equality in the Caribbean. Frameworks such as the 2030 Agenda and related SDGs, the SAMOA Pathway, the Beijing Platform for Action and the Montevideo Strategy offer opportunities for strengthening their legitimacy, integration, influence and measurable impact as they lead and coordinate States' gender mainstreaming efforts. However, these frameworks have not been effectively used or implemented in the subregion.

Table 3
List of machineries in charge of promoting gender equality in the Caribbean

Country	Machineries
Anguilla	Gender Development in the Ministry of Health and Social Development
Antigua and Barbuda	Directorate of Gender Affairs in the Ministry of Social Transformation and Human Resources, Youth and Gender Affairs
Aruba	Centro di Desaroyo di Hende Mujer (CEDEHM) in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor
Bahamas	Department of Gender and Family Affairs in the Ministry of Social Services and Urban Development
Barbados	Bureau of Gender Affairs in the Ministry of People Empowerment and Elder Affairs
Belize	Women's Department in the Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation
British Virgin Islands	Office of Gender Affairs in the Ministry of Health and Social Development
Cayman Islands	Ministry of Community Affairs
Curacao	Sector Director under the Ministry of Social Affairs, Labour and Welfare
Dominica	Bureau of Gender Affairs, Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs, Family and Gender Relations
Dominican Republic	Ministry of Women
Grenada	Division of Gender and Family Affairs in the Ministry of Social Development, Housing and Community Empowerment
Guyana	Gender Affairs Bureau in the Ministry of Social Protection
Haiti	Ministère à la Condition Féminine et aux Droits des Femmes
Jamaica	Bureau of Gender Affairs in the Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport
Montserrat	Social Services Department in the Ministry of Health and Social Services
Puerto Rico	Office of the Women's Procurator
Saint Kitts and Nevis	Department of Gender Affairs in the Ministry of Community Development, Gender Affairs and Social Services
Saint Lucia	Division of Gender Relations, Ministry of Education, Innovation, Gender Relations and Sustainable Development
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Gender Affairs Division in the Ministry of National Mobilisation, Social Development, Family, Gender Affairs, Persons with Disability and Youth
Sint Maarten	Women's Affairs in the Department of Community Development, Family and Humanitarian Affairs in the Ministry of Public Health, Social Development and Labour
Suriname	Bureau of Gender Affairs in the Ministry of Home Affairs
Trinidad and Tobago	Gender Affairs Division in the Office of the Prime Minister
Turks and Caicos Islands	Gender Affairs in the Ministry of Home Affairs, Transportation and Communications

Source: Prepared by the authors.

⁶³ Patricia Mohammed, *Gender Equality and Gender Policy-Making in the Caribbean*, In *Public Administration and Policy in the Caribbean*, edited by Indiana Minto-Coy and Evan M. Berman, Boca Raton: Taylor and Francis Group, 2016, pp. 415-441.

E. National development plans in the Caribbean that mainstream a gender perspective

In general, the existence of a national gender machinery is expected to facilitate gender mainstreaming in national development planning, but some Caribbean countries have advanced more than others in their efforts to mainstream gender in national development planning. Table 4 shows the countries that have mainstreamed gender equality in their development plans.

Table 4
List of National development plans and strategies in the Caribbean that mainstream a gender perspective

Country	Plan
Antigua and Barbuda	Medium-Term Development Strategy (MTDS)
Bahamas	National Development Plan: Vision 2040
Belize	National Development Framework for Belize: Horizon, 2010-2030
Dominica	National Resilience Development Strategy Dominica 2030
Dominican Republic	Dominican Republic Country Strategic Plan
Jamaica	Vision 2030 Jamaica, National Development Plan
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	National Economic and Social Development Plan
Trinidad and Tobago	National Development Strategy of Trinidad and Tobago: Vision 2030

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Country-specific context indicating how gender has been integrated into national development plans will serve a useful purpose in understanding good practices in and challenges to the inclusion of a gender perspective in national sustainable development planning. It will also serve to highlight individual country efforts at integrating the SDGs.

1. Antigua and Barbuda

Antigua and Barbuda's Medium-Term Development Strategy (MTDS) represents a set of strategies and actions to be undertaken over the medium-term (2016 to 2020) to foster "A harmonious, prosperous and modern Antigua and Barbuda founded on the principles of sustainability and inclusive growth; where equality of opportunity, peace, and justice prevail for all citizens and residents". The Strategy's gender analysis identifies gender discrimination as a potential cause for under-utilization of human resources.⁶⁴ It states that "much progress in addressing gender issues" has been made, but that "there is still work to be done to reduce gender-based violence, and to address, premature termination of education by teen mothers, and sexual exploitation of young women and children".⁶⁵ The Strategy singles out "the performance of males within society as it is widely thought that they are becoming marginalized and are generally underachieving in the workplace and academically". Political leaders and key decision-makers are considered to have a "critical need for gender sensitization".⁶⁶ However, the Strategy notes that "a key obstacle to the integration of gender in sector programmes lies in the

⁶⁴ Antigua and Barbuda, Ministry of Finance and Corporate Governance, *Medium Term Development Strategy 2016 to 2020*, September 2015, p. 46.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.* p.57.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

absence of quantitative and qualitative sex-disaggregated data, gender analysis, and gathering and synthesizing of gender-related data across sectors".⁶⁷

Using a sustainable development framework, the development strategy is articulated around four broad Sustainable Development Dimensions (SDD), each accompanied with necessary conditions. These include optimal generation of national wealth (SDD 1), enhanced social cohesion and resilience (SDD 2), improved health of the natural environment and sustained historical and cultural assets (SDD 3), and enhanced citizen security (SDD 4). Gender is mainstreamed across all four dimensions.⁶⁸ The Strategy outlines specific measures to support gender equality and more so gender mainstreaming in relation to such issues as labour force participation, gender-based violence, poverty eradication, disparities in access to education, and the provision of safe and inclusive learning environments for children. Specific measures include: 1) sensitizing senior public sector officials about the impact of gender discrimination on national development; 2) developing a gender strategic plan to create approaches for addressing discrimination and violence against women, male underachievement and encouraging participation of women in politics, and; 3) instituting greater fiscal responsibility and accountability across government to ensure that the needs of women, men, girls and boys are considered. In addition, a gender strategic plan will include "approaches for: reducing negative gender attitudes that fuel discrimination and violence against women; reversing adverse trends regarding the achievement of males academically and in the workplace; and encouraging greater participation of women in politics".⁶⁹

However, the Monitoring and Evaluation Indicator Framework only mentions gender in relation to SDD 1, with the note to monitor unemployment levels by gender, age and locality; and in relation to SDD 2 with regards to reducing the incidence of gender-based violence. However, the baseline values and years, and the corresponding targets, are not identified. Where gender analysis is included, as part of achieving a Human Development Index score in the top 50 out of 187 countries by 2030, it is spoken of generally, for example in terms of reducing "at least by half the proportion of men, women, and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions".⁷⁰ There is no target for increasing the ratio of women to men serving in the National Assembly (Parliament) from two women out of seventeen possible seats. The SDGs and related targets are included at the end of the Strategy, but are not integrated into its goals, key performance indicators or targets. Gender responsive budgeting, a key mechanism for gender mainstreaming, is also not mentioned.

2. The Bahamas

The draft Bahamas' National Development Plan: Vision 2040⁷¹ is the country's long-term development plan and provides a roadmap for the future development of the country. The Plan includes a comprehensive policy framework that will guide government decision-making and investment over the next 25 years. Vision 2040, built around the SDGs, has four pillars: governance, human capital, environment and the economy. Gender has been mainstreamed into the strategies and action steps of Vision 2040. It offers gender related solutions and approaches to address imbalances women and men, girls and boys experience in The Bahamas. These solutions and approaches call for the creation, adoption and maintenance of the "macroeconomic policies and development strategies that address the needs and efforts of women and men so that all policies and development strategies positively

⁶⁷ Ibid. pp. 57-58.

⁶⁸ Ibid. p.94.

⁶⁹ Antigua and Barbuda, Ministry of Finance and Corporate Governance, *Medium Term Development Strategy 2016 to 2020*, September 2015, p.58.

⁷⁰ Ibid. p.94.

⁷¹ This plan is still at the working draft stage.

impact everyone".⁷² Drawing from the country's 2018 Voluntary National Review on the Sustainable Development Goals to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, it is mentioned that in order to ensure that the country is leaving no one behind there is a need to use a gendered lens in all policy planning for solutions and programme development.⁷³

Gender analysis is incorporated into the plan in terms of governance, with "inadequate protections around certain human rights, including rights of migrants and gender equality" identified.⁷⁴ In terms of strategies, increased gender equality and equity on boards, with legislation enacted to ensure that "not more than two-thirds of the members of boards shall be of the same gender"⁷⁵, is highlighted as an indicator of success in achieving well-governed public institutions (Goal 2). Aligned with SDG 10 – Target 10.2 and SDG 16 – Targets 16.1 and 16.3, Goal 3 of the Plan, which focuses on a law abiding and safe society, includes school-based gender-based violence prevention workshops and implementation of a National Conflict Resolution Programme.⁷⁶ An increase in support groups for persons with disabilities, who were victims of violence and a national gender-based violence parenting curriculum are planned. It also includes "the use of faith-based communities to launch male initiatives and workshops on masculinity, gender identity, anger management and conflict resolution within communities" as well as workshops to train service providers. The intended outcome is an "increase in number of men choosing better strategies to address difficulties with masculinity, gender identity, anger control and conflict resolution" as well as "decreases in criminal activity for participants".⁷⁷

Goal 4, focusing on the administration of justice, is addressed through Strategy 4.2, "Zero Tolerance", which is aligned with SDG 16 – Targets 16.1, 16.2, 16.3, 16.4 and 16.a. It includes "revised police protocols for sexual offences, a sexual offence case tracking system under the oversight of the Director of Public Prosecutions, greater awareness of the level of domestic violence and more victims willing to come forward as part of its outputs and outcomes. Other outcomes in relation to violence, include "greater coordination between the courts and other social support stakeholders to ensure protection of domestic violence complainants".⁷⁸

Some success indicators may mention gender, but not in a disaggregated way. For example, the success indicator for Goal 5 (a modern, sustainable and universally accessible health care system) is broken down into strategies. Strategy 5.1, which focuses on universal access to health (and connects to SDG 1 - Targets 1.3, 1.4 and 1.b), SDG 3 - Targets 3.7 and 3.8, SDG 9 - Target 9.1, and SDG 10 – Targets 10.2, 10.3 and 10.4, includes the success indicator of a "reduction in obesity (disaggregated by age groups and gender), but no further gender analysis. Strategy 5.6, on Reproductive and Sexual Health, is aligned with SDG 3 – Target 3.7, SDG 5 – Target 5.6, and SDG 10 – Target 10.2 and 10.3. It includes encouraging private sector provision of child care facilities, amendment of legislation to improve access to family planning for persons 16 to 18 years old, and provision of support to women facing unwanted pregnancies, but does not include amendment to legislation regarding safe and legal termination. Goal 6 focuses on education, and is aligned with SDG 4, Target 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 as well as SDG 16 – Target 16.6. It highlights increasing the number of girls applying to tertiary level schooling to take Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) or vocational subjects.

⁷² Bahamas, National Development Plan Secretariat, *Vision 2040 National Development Plan 2nd Working Draft*, May 2017, p.17.

⁷³ Bahamas, *Voluntary National Review on the Sustainable Development Goals to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development of the United Nations Economic and Social Council*, July 2018, p. 9.

⁷⁴ Bahamas, *Voluntary National Review on the Sustainable Development Goals to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development of the United Nations Economic and Social Council*, July 2018, p. 13.

⁷⁵ Ibid. p. 56.

⁷⁶ Ibid. p 41.

⁷⁷ Bahamas, *Voluntary National Review on the Sustainable Development Goals to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development of the United Nations Economic and Social Council*, July 2018, p. 13.

⁷⁸ Ibid. p.86.

In relation to human capital, freedom from discrimination on the basis of gender is highlighted as Goal 7, which focuses on poverty and discrimination. Its wide-ranging Strategy 7.7, focusing on eliminating discrimination and protecting human rights, is aligned with several targets under SDGs 5, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 16. The ambitious array of outputs include a gender equality referendum, implementation of a national strategic plan to address gender-based violence, strengthening of a Domestic Violence Unit in the Ministry of Social Services, the establishment of a Department of Gender Affairs, a Family Court and Child Registry, and the launch of a public transportation policy which takes into account the needs of older persons (but not women and children). The policy also includes language intended to help men with criminal records gain employment. This is to fulfil Strategy 7.2, which aims for full participation of poor and vulnerable groups in economic opportunities, and is aligned with SDGs 1, 5, 8, 9, 10 and 16. Finally, Strategy 7.9, on improving data collection on poverty, includes investigating the gender nature of poverty in the country, and will focus on research outputs on women's access to reproductive health care, women's access to income, women's ownership/control of land or assets, women subjected to violence/insecurity, women's exclusion from decision-making, women and time poverty, and women exploited in the labour market including those working in the informal economy.⁷⁹ This Plan offers an example of Caribbean best practice in mainstreaming gender in national development planning.

3. Belize

Horizon 2010-2030 is the National Development Framework for Belize within which all sectors are required to carry out development planning. Gender equality and non-discrimination in access to opportunities are included as core values and guiding principles throughout the Framework. For example, a strategy identified to promote healthy lifestyles and establish family and community health care programmes is to "implement the mental health policy (2010) by developing a comprehensive and gender responsive mental health programme."^{80, 81} Gender analysis is included in a number of areas. For example, Belize's vision for 2030 includes a vibrant democracy with "women performing at the highest levels of political leadership". The Framework under Pillar 1 entitled 'Democratic governance for effective public administration and sustainable development', includes the introduction of "special temporary measures to increase the number of women political parties included in their slate of candidates for national elections".⁸²

Economic resilience is another pillar and its main gender-responsive strategy is to "create greater opportunities for women and youth employment". Having a society of healthy people is one of the final pillars. To this end, the Framework highlights the implementation of a Sexual and Reproductive Health Policy, and the provision of financial and other support to civil society organizations that address critical health-related issues affecting women and children, especially pregnant teenagers and young women who are vulnerable to, or are victims of, gender-based violence and/or HIV.⁸³ Interestingly, a "Women's Development officer" (along with a District Agricultural officer and a Rural Development officer) has been assigned to the District Committees that ensure that the distinct priorities are addressed in policy and planning efforts. However, it is not clear how the district committees are involved in the process of implementation, for example at the level of the Coordinating Unit, the Commission or the ministries), and what level of influence and accountability accompanies this role.

⁷⁹ Bahamas, Voluntary National Review on the Sustainable Development Goals to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, July 2018, p. 241.

⁸⁰ This is explained in the Revised National Gender Policy.

⁸¹ Belize, Ministry of Economic Development, Horizon 2030, National Development Framework for Belize 2010-2030, (Belmopan 2010), p.38.

⁸² Ibid. p.16.

⁸³ Ibid. p.38.

4. Dominica

Dominica's long-term development plan, the National Resilience Development Strategy 2030, presents the country's priorities in pursuit of sustainable economic growth while maintaining a prudent fiscal stance in the face of global realities, in particular climate change. Of highest priority is poverty reduction and progress towards achieving the SDGs by 2030.⁸⁴ The impact of tropical storm Erika and hurricane Maria have worsened the issues around gender equality, for example there has been an increase in gender-based violence and limited access to health care for women.⁸⁵ The Government has therefore reiterated its commitment to mainstream gender in national development and has outlined eight strategies to advance gender equality. Dominica's approach to gender mainstreaming is discussed further as one of the three case studies.

5. The Dominican Republic

The Dominican Republic has made significant efforts to align the SDGs with its National Development Strategy 2010-2030: A Journey of Transformation towards a Better Country and other planning instruments. One of the objectives of the National Development Strategy is "to build a culture of equality and equity between men and women".⁸⁶ The Plan includes measures designed to strengthen women's autonomy as assessed in the ECLAC study on Gender Equality Plans in Latin America and the Caribbean: Road maps for development.⁸⁷

6. Grenada

In Grenada's Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy 2014 to 2018,⁸⁸ gender equality was a priority area with focus on mainstreaming gender and developing policy intervention to support gender equality through the implementation of Grenada's National Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan 2014-2024. The Plan was approved in 2014. Gender equality is presented as a cross-cutting theme in the Medium-Term Agenda (2019 to 2021)⁸⁹ and in the National Sustainable Development Plan (2020-2035), which is still being drafted. Although the current Plan is still in draft, there are other aspects of gender mainstreaming, include the establishment, in 2017, of an Inter-Ministerial Council of Gender Focal Points which was expanded and launched in 2019. The Council is coordinated by the Gender Machinery, which is the Division of Gender and Family Affairs. It is chaired by the Head of the National Gender Machinery. More recently, in the Budget Speech 2019, the Prime Minister confirmed that "Grenada remains firmly committed to gender mainstreaming in our decision-making and development planning".

The draft National Sustainable Development Plan (2020-2035) comprises three goals and eight outcomes, and is described as "climate proofed as well as gender proofed", meaning that it integrates climate-related and gender-related considerations and it points out challenges and opportunities that should be considered for development planning at national to community levels.⁹⁰ Outcome 3 of the

⁸⁴ Dominica, Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, *National Resilience Development Strategy 2030 of Dominica*, Roseau 2018, p. 3.

⁸⁵ Dominica's National Resilience Development Strategy 2030, p. 127.

⁸⁶ Dominica Republic, Ministry of Economy, Planning and Development, *Ley 1-12: Estrategia Nacional de Desarrollo 2030*, Santo Domingo 2012, p. 6.

⁸⁷ p.49.

⁸⁸ The Strategy outlined the government of Grenada's aims to implement paternity leave, encourage more family-friendly work environments, establish programmes which develop women's leadership skills, strengthen legislation and enforcement which combats domestic violence and sexual harassment at work, and consider special measures to achieve greater balance in the representation of males and females.

⁸⁹ Presentation by Elaine Henry-McQueen, Senior Programme Officer for Gender and Family Affairs, Ministry of Social Development, Housing and Community Empowerment, Grenada, at ECLAC subregional preparatory meeting towards the XIV Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, Port of Spain, June 2019.

⁹⁰ Grenada, National Plan Secretariat, Ministry of Finance, Planning, Economic and Physical Development, *National Sustainable Development Plan 2020-2030*, St George's, 2019, p. 4.

draft Plan is aimed at achieving a “resilient, inclusive, gender-sensitive and peaceful society”. This outcome aligns with SDGs 1, 5, 10 and 16, but the specific targets under each are not identified. Examples of strategies to achieve Outcome 3 include the institutionalization of systematic risk and resilience assessments that incorporate gender and social inclusion, the application of gender analyses to each priority in the National Plan, and the implementation of the Gender Equality Policy and Action Plan. It also encompasses the strengthening of responsiveness to gender-based violence, the development of a system for collecting data on intimate partner violence and sexual abuse, and taking steps to achieve gender parity at all levels of decision-making. The Plan does an analysis, which could be considered a good practice, of the parity issues, stating:

“As at February 2019, there were 15 female Permanent Secretaries and eight male Permanent Secretaries. The Heads of Six of the non-Ministerial Departments were males and five were females. As a result, the Senior Managers Board of the Public Service is made up of 20 females and 14 males, with males exceeding a critical mass of 41 percent. Statutory Bodies and State-owned Enterprises also play a major role in decision making with regard to social and economic development. Based on the list of Board Members of Statutory Bodies and State-owned Enterprises from the Cabinet Office, of the number of chairpersons of the 38 named entities, 28 percent were women. In addition, only 68 (or 23 percent) of the total of 286 Board members identified by name were women. An assessment of the management authorities of trade unions, the private sector, and NGOs are needed to determine the extent to which there is gender parity (50 percent), or at least critical mass (33 percent) of women in leadership and representation. Gender equality cannot be a function of Government only; therefore, all social partners should account for gender equality”.⁹¹

There is also focus on addressing young women’s higher rates of unemployment and providing gender-sensitive career guidance. The Plan observes that barriers to women’s economic empowerment include: (a) stereotypes regarding gender roles, which impact on women’s, men’s and employers’ perceptions of suitable jobs and tasks for women *versus* those for men; (b) discrimination related to women’s reproductive and family/care giving responsibilities, which must be measured within the context of women’s traditional burden of care for the family, and the physical/biological realities of menstruation and pregnancy; (c) employers’ reluctance to make adequate provisions for male and female employees, such as toilet facilities; (d) lack of public transportation throughout the country during the night given the ever-present threat of sexual abuse and other forms of violence against women and girls; and (e) the potential for sexual harassment, with a higher risk in male-dominated work places.⁹²

Finally, the Plan contains detailed analysis of gender disparities in relation to ownership of assets,⁹³ based on the 2012 Census of Agriculture which found, 71% of farms were headed by men and 29% by women; men owned or controlled 10,303 parcels, while women owned or controlled 3,458 parcels; and women managed about 4,000 acres of land compared to the 17,000 acres managed by men. Female farmers had significantly smaller farms than male farmers. The average area of farms headed by women was 1.57 acres, while for men it was substantially higher at 2.66 acres. While it is clear that programmes will be funded in ways that address these realities, a gendered approach to budgets and fiscal planning is not incorporated.

In terms of mainstreaming, Outcome 1, which focuses on a healthy population, is aligned with SDG 3, and addresses “gender differences in sport through public education programmes to attract and

⁹¹ Ibid. p. 7.

⁹² Ibid. p. 42.

⁹³ Ibid. p. 43.

retain both girls and boys in various sporting activities". Outcome 2, focusing on educated, productive, highly-skilled, trained and conscious citizens, is aligned with SDGs 4 and 8, and includes strategic actions to eliminate gender disparities in education, by building and upgrading education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and affective learning environments. Single-sex mentorship programmes for girls and boys, with support from churches and communities, are also planned under this outcome. The context for the Plan identifies the need for gender mainstreaming in the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases and in the promotion of wellness, with a specific focus on men's issues. In this Plan, all goals, outcomes, strategic actions, targets and responsible organizations are aligned with the SDGs, and also incorporates a gender perspective.

7. Jamaica

Vision 2030 Jamaica is the country's long-term development plan with a vision of Jamaica as "the place of choice to live, work, raise families, and do business." Gender equality is mainstreamed throughout the seven guiding principles: transformational leadership, partnership, transparency and accountability, social cohesion, equity, sustainability, and urban and rural development.⁹⁴ Jamaica's approach to gender mainstreaming is discussed further as one of the three case studies.

8. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines' National Economic and Social Development Plan 2013 to 2025 outlines the country's long- and medium-term strategies for national development, and offers a vision for an improved quality of life for all citizens. Gender issues are recognised as a hindrance to development in the plan and a gender mainstreaming approach has been employed with the establishment of a Gender Affairs Division and a Family Court. Under chapter 3 entitled the 'Domestic Economy', the Plan highlights that whilst significant strides have been made in terms of women's participation in development in the country, they remain among the most vulnerable and economically powerless. Indeed, 53% of the unemployed are young females.⁹⁵ Despite this inclusion, gender differences are only recognised in certain areas, in terms of girls' and boys' unequal performances in English and Mathematics examinations at the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate (CSEC) level, but no strategic actions are outlined to address this inequality. The category 'youth' is also treated as having no gender differences in vulnerabilities.

9. Trinidad and Tobago

Trinidad and Tobago's National Development Strategy speaks to the broad policy framework for development: the overarching national vision to 2030 and national development priorities in the form of short-term goals to 2020. Gender is mainstreamed through the policy cycle framework in the five development themes: Putting People First- Nurturing our Greatest Asset; Delivering Good Governance and Service Excellence; Improving Productivity through Quality Infrastructure and Transportation; Building Globally Competitive Businesses; and Placing the Environment at the Centre of Social and Economic Development.

10. Summary

A review of these national development plans in the Caribbean suggests that gender equality or equity is cited as a goal in national development plans of several countries, but the measures are still limited to certain areas, such as employment, education or gender-based violence. For a proper strategy of mainstreaming gender, it is important to fully align national development plans with the SDGs targets and indicators in order to comprehensively address gender inequalities. In most of these plans, gender

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, National Economic and Social Development Plan, 2013-2025, p. 45.

is discussed as a stand-alone category, sometimes integrated across several sectors, usually in relation to development, inclusion, violence, and the economy. Thus, these plans may include responses to issues of children, family, welfare and violence. It is rare that all areas of development are gender-responsive. Where gender is mentioned across sectors, often with other cross-cutting issues, such as the environment, and human security, it does not shape the discussion of how, *inter alia*, the economy, health, agriculture, industry and tourism are differentially experienced by women, men, boys and girls, requiring an approach to development that takes such inequality into account at all stages. In fact, only a few national development plans sufficiently integrate a gender analysis or gender mainstreaming approach in transformational ways. Global and regional strategies, such as the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030, could be used to guide Member countries towards mainstreaming a gender perspective in planning. So far, no national development plan in the subregion has yet made reference to it.

F. Case studies of Dominica and Jamaica

Four years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, it is noted that very few countries in the subregion are taking steps to ensure that gender is mainstreamed in development planning. However, notable steps have been taken to implement gender mainstreaming in national development planning in Dominica and Jamaica. These countries were selected as forerunners in institutionalizing both gender equality and development plans in the Caribbean and as examples of good practice in this area. The section also discusses successes and challenges that these countries have faced in mainstreaming gender in their national development plans and the lessons learned.

1. Dominica - Successes and challenges in mainstreaming gender in the National Resilience Development Strategy

Dominica has a long-term development framework, the National Resilience Development Strategy 2019 -2030, and a gender equality plan and policy, the National Policy and Action Plan for Gender Equity and Equality. The Mechanism for the Advancement of Women in Dominica is the Bureau of Gender Affairs, a unit of the Ministry of Social Services, Community Development and Gender Affairs. It is the primary body responsible for advancing gender equality in Dominica.

The National Resilience Development Strategy represents a broad framework, which provides the development road map and guidelines for Dominica to 2030. The Strategy uses the sustainable development framework model and incorporates gender components throughout. It includes a monitoring and evaluation reporting system accompanied by cross-cutting actions through public awareness, capacity building and data analysis. In addition, in terms of territorial planning, the Government is decentralized from the municipalities to the urban and rural areas. Socioeconomic planning and development are being focused and dispersed across sectors and communities all at the same time.⁹⁶

The National Policy and Action Plan for Gender Equity and Equality was approved in 2006 and later revised in 2014 to the National Policy (2014-2024). It is guided by the Government's recognition that gender equality is a fundamental aspect of both human and national development. This Policy creates a framework for the formulation and implementation of gender policies for national development and improving gender relations in Dominica. It highlights six main areas: i) Gender and economics; ii) Gender stereotypes, cultural beliefs and practices; iii) Gender and political decision-

⁹⁶ Presentation made by Ms. Gloria Joseph, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development of Dominica during the XVI Conference of Ministers and Heads of Planning of Latin America and the Caribbean, Montevideo, 29 August 2019.

making; iv) Education and human resources development; v) Health and medicine; and vi) Family, sexuality and gender-based violence.

According to Biholar (2016), the national gender equity and equality policy for Dominica “provides a space for the regional discourse on equality and gender justice for women and men, which is meant to influence state policy”.⁹⁷ This Policy takes a gender mainstreaming approach and recognizes the responsibility of all Government ministries, statutory bodies and other agencies; the private sector and labour unions; and the wide cross-section of civil society organizations including faith-based organizations for its implementation and monitoring. The policy dictates that the following gender mainstreaming processes be systematically put in place:

- Gender equality is mainstreamed in all policy-making processes at the national and sectoral levels, including a diverse range of stakeholders.
- Gender-responsive planning and budgeting are introduced at the national level (i.e. through the mid-term national development plan and annual national budgets) and sector ministries.
- Clear systems are adopted to integrate gender equality into ministries’ sector programmes, including collecting data disaggregated by sex, undertaking a gender analysis of the key issues in the sector, and developing gender-responsive indicators and targets.
- Clear procedures for gender monitoring and evaluation are put in place in ministries, departments and agencies, facilitated by Gender Focal Points.

In the English-speaking Caribbean, Dominica is the third country to start developing a Gender Policy and one of the few countries to integrate and combine its gender policy commitments with national development planning. Gender is mainstreamed using several strategies throughout the National Resilience Development Strategy. These reinforce priorities around improvement of women’s social status, protection of their rights and promotion of opportunities to improve their health and eliminate the feminization of poverty. Below are examples of the strategies used in the development plan for mainstreaming gender:⁹⁸

- Linkages are made by highlighting the importance of approving the National Policy and Action Plan for Gender Equity and Equality, which makes special consideration for emerging and relevant gendered issues specific to the national context;
- Attention is drawn to strengthening capacity building opportunities for women, girls, and vulnerable groups to scale up their participation in decision making and in the labour market as a priority and gender-specific programs are designed for men while ensuring these do not put women at a disadvantage;
- Sustainability of efforts is highlighted by promoting gender sensitivity education and training to build a society that champions gender issues;
- Priorities around poverty reduction, promotion of justice, and economic and social empowerment of women and girls in the informal sector work and contraceptive use to ensure sustainable development are reinforced;
- Supports for gender-sensitive research, analysis and development of a highly disaggregated statistical base and information for implementation strategies are highlighted and the

⁹⁷ Ramona Biholar. 2016. “Feminist Strategies, Masculinist Resistances and Gendered Transformations in Caribbean Perspectives.” In *Negotiating Gender, Policy and Politics in the Caribbean: Feminist Strategies, Masculinist Resistances and Transformational Possibilities*, edited by Gabrielle Hosein and Jane Parpart, p.145. New York: Rowman and Littlefield.

⁹⁸ Taken from the National Resilience Development Strategy for Dominica.

importance of enhancing the capacity to monitor and assess progress in meeting gender equality commitments specified in international and regional treaties and conventions, as well as in the implementation of the recovery programme post- Hurricane Maria are emphasized.

The Government identifies that these gender considerations are cross-cutting and non-negotiable, and that women and men have different needs and experiences. The State is of the view that the success of its programmes is more inspiring when society remains steadfast in its pursuit of greater gender equity and equality on all fronts, and when there is the active participation and inclusion of all income and social groups in national plans and programs.⁹⁹

However, according to Baksh (2014)¹⁰⁰ the process of developing other national and sectoral policies has not been adequately informed or guided by the National Gender Policy (Baksh 2014, p. 59-60). The impact of Tropical Storm Erika and Hurricane Maria have exacerbated the challenges Dominica faces in mainstreaming gender. For example, the impact of natural disasters and weather events on Dominica's GDP was 93% after Tropical Storm Erika in 2015 and 226% after Hurricane Maria in 2017.¹⁰¹ Post Tropical Storm Erika, the majority of damages were sustained in the transport sector (60%), followed by the housing sector (11%) and agriculture sector (10%). From a population of 72 340 inhabitants, 33 people lost their lives and 574 were made homeless. The impact of Hurricane Maria was even more destructive. 90% of both housing and agriculture were destroyed; 40% of the tourism infrastructure were destroyed; 83% of school buildings; 15% of hospitals and health centres were destroyed, while 74 residents lost their lives. The post-disaster reality leads to long-term challenges in accessing resources for women farmers; for housing, health care; in addressing increasing levels of gender-based violence, as well as rising unemployment and underemployment, especially among the population in lower socio-economic brackets.¹⁰²

2. Jamaica - Successes and challenges in mainstreaming gender in Vision 2030 Jamaica

Jamaica has a long-term national development framework, Vision 2030 Jamaica, which is complemented by the National Policy and Action Plan for Gender Equity and Equality.

Vision 2030 Jamaica is the country's long-term plan and is guided by the following principles: "a people-centered and transformative approach", buttressed by "strong leadership". Thus, as Vision 2030 states, "enhancing the quality of life for all Jamaicans, could only be done by critically addressing – education, health and nutrition, the basic amenities of water, housing and infrastructure, access to environmental goods such as clean air and water and civility and social order".¹⁰³ It is a plan that enjoys bi-partisan support and ownership, where both political parties played a significant role in the plan's development; and administrations of both political parties have ensured the uninterrupted implementation of the long-term national development plan. It applies the principles and practice of evidence-based processes – including empirical and scientific evidence as well as stakeholder consultations and expert perspectives. The underpinned guiding principles are implementation and results-based Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E). It is also policy-driven and strategy-based – not based on programmes and projects (actions), built on a Results-Based Management (RBM) Framework – outcome and not output driven as it has an Implementation Framework that has clearly defined

⁹⁹ Dominica 2030- National Resilience Development Strategy, p. 127.

¹⁰⁰ Rawwida Baksh. 2014. *Country Gender Assessment - Dominica 2014*, Caribbean Development Bank.

¹⁰¹ Presentation made by Ms. Gloria Joseph, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development of Dominica during the XVI Conference of Ministers and Heads of Planning of Latin America and the Caribbean, Montevideo, 29 August 2019.

¹⁰² Dominica, *Post Disaster Needs Assessment Hurricane Maria*, p. 125. (September 18, 2017).

¹⁰³ Presentation of the NDP to the Ministry of Justice, 2006.

systems, mechanisms and tools for continuous improvement. It also utilizes the Plan Do Check Act management model to utilize evidence to inform medium-term prioritization in implementing the plan.

The three components of Vision 2030 Jamaica¹⁰⁴ are: a) The Integrated National Development Plan, which presents the overall plan for Vision 2030 Jamaica, integrating all 31 sector plans into a single comprehensive framework for long-term national development. The Integrated National Development Plan presents the National Vision, the 4 National Goals, 15 National Outcomes, and the National Strategies required to achieve the national goals and outcomes; b) The Medium-Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework (MTF) is a 3-yearly plan, which summarizes the national priorities and targets for the country and identifies the key actions to achieve those targets over each 3-year period from fiscal year 2009/2010 to fiscal year 2029/2030; and c) Thirty-one sector plans, which cover the main economic, social, environmental and governance sectors relevant to national development.

ECLAC through the Regional Observatory on Planning for Development in Latin America and the Caribbean has conducted an alignment of the Vision 2030 Jamaica's goals with the SDGs and observes the following:

- (i) Jamaicans are empowered to achieve their fullest potential. This goal has four national outcomes: a healthy and stable population (related to SDGs 2, 3 and 6); world-class education and training (SDG 4); effective social protection (SDGs 1, 2 and 10); and authentic and transformational culture (unrelated to any particular SDG).
- (ii) Jamaican society that is secure, cohesive and just. This goal has two national outcomes, which are treated as a single one for the purposes of SDG alignment: security and safety and effective governance, which are linked to SDGs 5, 10, 11 and 16.
- (iii) Jamaica's economy is prosperous. This goal has six national outcomes: a stable macroeconomy (SDG 8); an enabling business environment (SDGs 4 and 8); strong economic infrastructure (SDG 9); energy security and efficiency (SDGs 7, 11 and 12); a technology-enabled society (SDG 9); and internationally competitive industry structures (SDGs 2, 8, 9, 12 and 14).
- (iv) Jamaica has a healthy natural environment. This goal has three national outcomes: sustainable management and use of environmental and natural resources (SDGs 6, 7, 12, 14 and 15); hazard risk reduction and adaptation to climate change (SDGs 7, 13 and 15); and sustainable urban and rural development (SDGs 1, 9, 10 and 11).¹⁰⁵

Vision 2030 Jamaica incorporates a gender perspective and aims at reducing gender inequalities in different aspects. It seeks to accelerate the process of creating and implementing a standards-driven and outcomes-based education system by recognizing that learning at all levels encompasses the acquisition of skills and attitudes. To do this, the Government recommends a strategy to ensure that schools become gender sensitive. It also mainstreams a gender component in health, by including gender differentials in health conditions and health-seeking behaviors to address issues such as the reluctance of men to seek health care.¹⁰⁶ Vision 2030 also takes into consideration those who are affected by vulnerable issues and poverty and recognizes the need to integrate this across all public policies. It states that all public policies will give consideration to their impact on vulnerable groups, noting that gender differences will be addressed through mainstreaming gender concerns in all public policies and by creating public awareness of issues in relation to the rights of children, youth and other vulnerable groups.

¹⁰⁴ The Gender Sector Plan 2009-2030, p.72.

¹⁰⁵ Presentation of the Four Yearly Report on Regional Progress and Challenges in Relation to the 2030 Agenda, p. 49.

¹⁰⁶ Jamaica, Planning Institute of Jamaica, *Vision 2030 Jamaica National Development Plan*, (Kingston 2010), Chapter 3, p. 50.

The Gender Sector Plan 2009- 2030 is one of the 31 sectoral plans that forms the basis for implementing Vision 2030 Jamaica. Gender is treated as a cross-cutting issue that impacts all of the other thematic areas of the plan. It includes a situational analysis and a detailed SWOT analysis, as well as a series of outcomes, strategies and actions aimed at promoting gender equity in the country. The Plan reflects a long-term vision to create a society that treats each gender equally and provides equal opportunities for all and one in which each gender is represented proportionately in all spheres including governance structures. For example, its goal is to reach “a society free of sex and other forms of discrimination in all spheres that creates and maintains a socioeconomic, cultural, political and legal environment, in both the public and private domains free of sex discrimination, where all males and females, at all stages of the life cycle can enjoy full human rights and develop their full potential as productive citizens” and includes four main outcomes: 1. Socioeconomic, political, legal and institutional environments and arrangements that facilitate and promote gender equity; 2. Women’s unpaid labour that is valued and rewarded; 3. A judicial system that is free from gender biases and ensures that the reproductive health and rights of men and women that are fully protected; 4. Appropriate policy frameworks that ensure that gender inequities are mitigated; 5. Governance structures and processes that reflect gender equity in representation and decision-making. Importantly, it makes references to international and regional human rights frameworks and strategies related to women’s rights.

In addition, Jamaica has adopted the National Policy and Action Plan for Gender Equity and Equality, originated in 2004 by the Bureau of Women’s Affairs and the Gender Advisory Committee, and then approved in 2011. The main objective was to begin mainstreaming gender in the national development planning through this policy, more specifically to include gender in public policies, plans and programmes. Through these frameworks, Vision 2030 Jamaica reiterates the State’s commitment to addressing long-term systemic gender inequalities by making linkages with the National Policy and Action Plan for Gender Equity and Equality. In this process, the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) established a National Gender Task Force to integrate the vision of gender equality into the National Development Plan Vision 2030. This was also facilitated by the existence of a Gender Advisory Committee with specific mandates, which included, but was not limited to, advising the Government and the National Machinery on strategic policy directions for the gender portfolio, as well as the establishment of Gender Focal Points in key government ministries, departments and agencies. Through the implementation of approved action plans, Gender Focal Points are to ensure that gender is integrated in all national policies, plans, programmes and operations using a gender equality framework. The Gender Focal Points also contribute to data and information to inform both regional and international reporting processes. There is also a Gender Analysis Checklist to increase the capacity to incorporate a gender perspective. The Checklist is designed to ensure that government policies and programmes are responsive to the gender differential needs in keeping with commitments outlined in the Beijing Platform for Action. The Government also reported that it recently launched in March 2019, the Gender Ambassadors Programme with students in secondary and tertiary institutions across the island who have been selected to participate in the pilot programme. This initiative is being implemented by the Bureau of Gender Affairs in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information. This programme seeks to raise awareness and facilitate activism on gender issues in schools and is expected to promote self-care, healthy relationships and leadership development among the youth. It also aims to engage the youth on what is gender-based violence, and ways to reduce the prevalence in Jamaica.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁷ National Report on Progress in the Application of the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030, Jamaica (2019), p.8.

Their robust achievement notwithstanding, Jamaica faces challenges similar to those affecting the rest of the Caribbean in mainstreaming gender in national development planning, which is financing development, considering the specific vulnerabilities faced by Small Island Developing States. These vulnerabilities include, but are not limited to susceptibility to the impacts of climate change and extreme weather events' lack of economies of scale in production; proneness to external shocks; excessive reliance on external financial inflows and on few export/import markets; limited options for and high costs of transport and communications; reduced scope for output diversification and limited skilled human resources compounded by high levels of migration of skilled individuals. In acknowledging this reality, Vision 2030 Jamaica is aligned to the broader Post-2015 Development Agenda, which includes the Paris Climate Agreement (2015), Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development (2015), and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015).

G. Addressing obstacles to gender mainstreaming

Mainstreaming gender in development planning can only be accomplished with the requisite political will and commitment to transforming administrative structures and modes of decision-making. Gender equality policies and programmes must be supported by capacity-building of all staff so that they have the necessary skills and information to engage in gender analysis of public sector policies and programmes.

Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, the British Virgin Islands, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Suriname, Turks and Caicos Islands recently submitted their national reports on the progress made in the application of the Montevideo Strategy for Implementation of the Regional Gender Agenda within the Sustainable Development Framework by 2030¹⁰⁸, to mark the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the approval of the Platform for Action¹⁰⁹ and the XIV Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean. Three common challenges are distinguishable in these reports.

First is the persistent and limited number of technical staff trained in gender mainstreaming within the national machinery and across the Government, particularly in areas, such as climate resilience, adaptation, mitigation and disaster risk management, as well as in gender responsive budgeting, programming and monitoring.

Second is a misconception and restricted view or unclear perception of the mandate and role of the national machineries, often limited to a negative approach due to their gender-based related initiatives and activities.

Third and lastly, it is clear that national machineries have not been included or involved in the process of developing their long or medium-term national development plans. With the exception of the Bahamas, Dominica, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago, there is no formal mechanism that involves national machineries in the committee in charge of developing and monitoring the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

¹⁰⁸ National reports are available at: <https://www.cepal.org/en/work-areas/gender-affairs/montevideo-strategy-country-reports>.

¹⁰⁹ National reports are available at: <https://www.cepal.org/en/work-areas/gender-affairs/la-plataforma-accion-beijing-cumple-25-anos>.

III. Recommendations for gender mainstreaming in national development plans

Caribbean countries are only at the early stages of integrating gender analysis in their national development plans. Where gender is mentioned, the implications of a gender analysis across sectors are insufficiently elaborated, and, often, gender becomes relegated to the Women and Development approach of treating with women's (and sometimes men's) issues where these are most visible, for example in terms of family, welfare and violence. Sectors such as trade, tax, food security, energy, the environment, and tourism, as well as fiscal policy-making remain virtually gender-blind despite the ways that they also reproduce gendered beliefs, values and inequitable power relations. At present, in the Caribbean, few national development plans sufficiently integrate a gender analysis or gender mainstreaming approach in transformational ways. No Caribbean country is currently undertaking gender-responsive budgeting, which is a key starting point in mainstreaming gender. The majority of national development plans can, therefore, go further in using frameworks that already exist, such as the 2030 Agenda, using the reporting process on both the SDGs, human rights treaty bodies, including CEDAW, the Universal Periodic Review, as well the Beijing Platform for Action and the Montevideo Strategy to assess progress made and identify challenges that still remain to greatly integrate gender as a cross-cutting issue in sustainable development.

Mainstreaming gender in development planning can bring several benefits to Caribbean governments as it fosters intersectoral and inter-agency coordination. The goal of achieving gender equality should drive all parts of the Government, including those responsible for development planning, macroeconomics, social, environmental, information, sciences and technologies-related policies, in collaboration with the national machineries for the advancement of women. The incorporation of gender perspectives in national policies and strategies should not be seen as an added burden, but as a means of identifying the different challenges faced by women and men at all ages, which will help in adopting targeted measures to address existing challenges and in ensuring that both women and men can contribute to and benefit from national sustainable development.

Since gender is a cross-cutting issue addressed by a range of development platforms, the inclusion of a gender perspective will also promote coherence in pursuing the SDGs in alignment with international and regional commitments within the next decade.

In addition, promoting and implementing gender equality could strengthen financing for development. Gender mainstreaming strategies could be used as the cornerstones for domestic resource mobilization, and for the identification of external public-private partnerships to finance programmes in areas of particular interest to stakeholders. Through gender-based budgeting, governments are able to highlight public expenditures and the relative benefit that men and women derive from government-funded programmes. In this process of budgeting with a gender perspective, transparency and accountability help strengthen the case that the government may have for financing sustainable development with equality.

Similarly, there is another added value. By mainstreaming gender, the National Statistical Offices in the Caribbean would benefit from capacity building for the collection, processing, and dissemination of sex-disaggregated data and the promotion of gender indicators in surveys, censuses and administrative records. Institutionalizing gender mainstreaming will ensure that instruments for the measurement of unpaid work through time-use surveys and collection of data on violence against women become systemized. These will also help countries to promote evidence-based policies and measure the inequalities as well as monitor progress in the implementation of the SDGs and other international and regional frameworks with a gender lens.

Finally, the adoption of a gender perspective will promote inclusiveness. The creation or strengthening of channels for multi-stakeholder participation, including civil society organizations, feminist and women's movements, youth organizations, academia and the private sector in rural and urban areas alike will be facilitated when gender mainstreaming is established by governments. This participation at all stages of the development planning, from its design, implementation and evaluation will build national ownership of the sustainable development agendas and translate these commitments to local progressive changes on the ground towards gender equality.

For all of these reasons, the following recommendations offer some guidance for Caribbean countries to accelerate the inclusion of a gender perspective in national development planning:

A. Coordination and coherence

While institutional mechanisms for advancing gender equality do exist in the Caribbean region, they continue to suffer from several shortcomings that prevent effective gender mainstreaming in national development planning. For example, line ministries and relevant government agencies work in silos, and in most cases, they operate with insufficient resources for mainstreaming gender. This creates duplication and overlapping of responsibilities, leading to wastage of limited available resources. Challenges to greater gender mainstreaming are mainly due to traditional stereotypes and attitudes that reproduce pervasive gender blindness and injustice; limited human and financial resources within State machineries; Limited technical capacity to defend a goal of gender equality and women's empowerment within a context of traditional male domination; Insufficient political will; limited monitoring and evaluation mechanisms including gender indicators and sex-disaggregated data relevant across sectors for evidence-based policy making; and limited establishment of coordinating and monitoring bodies, which include civil society, women's groups, private sector, faith-based organizations, and youth networks.

States should therefore ensure that there is more effective coordination between governmental institutions, including the national gender machinery, the private sector, social partners and civil society, for the overall implementation of gender equality strategies and development planning. These

processes require a long-term vision of what constitutes the nation and therefore a proper and inclusive consultative framework should be considered a priority for national ownership.

Related to the aspect of coordination, it is important that Caribbean countries provide sound accountability and oversight on gender mainstreaming initiatives through effective monitoring and evaluation to avoid “consultation fatigue” among the population to provide evidence of the effective impact of these measures in their well-being. Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are key for ensuring that gender equality strategies through national policies, action plans or national development plans achieve their intended impacts and outcomes. The mechanisms should assess progress, improve decision making, allow programmes and plans to be adjusted and enhance accountability. Therefore, each line ministry should establish a monitoring mechanism or team as part of their national gender mainstreaming strategy, but at the same time these ministries should adopt sector gender impact indicators to guide the monitoring and evaluation process. This would address a need for a formal coordination mechanism to guide collaboration and information exchange among ministries whose work impacts on gender equality. The case presented in Jamaica with the establishment of the Gender Advisory Committee, Gender focal points, the creation of the Gender Analysis Checklist, and the National Gender Task Force under the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ), could provide concrete guidance to other countries of the subregion.

B. Gender responsive budgeting¹¹⁰

The application of gender responsive budgeting approach in all phases of the budget cycle in national budgetary planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation processes is critical to effective gender mainstreaming. Gender responsive budgeting can be advanced through the use of budget call circular to communicate the goals and the processes for gender budgeting. The budget call circular could be distributed to ministries with the supporting templates and spreadsheets as a formal invitation to start preparing budget submissions; the integration of a statement (generally called a gender budget statement) on how gender-related considerations are reflected in the budget and including this statement as part of the official budget documentation. For instance, Trinidad and Tobago has produced a Toolkit for Gender Responsive Budgeting for Institutionalizing Gender Equality and Gender Mainstreaming Practices in Government Ministries, which can be used as a guide to these steps. In the British Virgin Islands, a Child and Gender Responsive Budgeting Workshop was held in 2015 as a joint venture between the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (UKAID), Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and UN Women. The session contained information to guide the way forward for child and gender responsive budgeting to become integrated into the current budgeting process. The main points taken from this exercise were that the strategy for Child and Gender Responsive Budgeting makes gender concerns (including those of children) an integral part of the design and implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes with the ultimate goal of achieving human rights. The Macro-Financial Unit of the Ministry of Finance in the country also conducts gender-budgeting sessions in collaboration with the Office of Gender Affairs in an effort to assist with the implementation of the SDGs among other developmental area for the country.¹¹¹ These are some good practices that could be replicated in the region.

¹¹⁰ According to Budlender (2006), gender responsive budgeting is about ensuring that Government budgets and the policies and programs that underlie them address the needs and interests of individuals that belong to different social groups. Thus, gender responsive budgeting looks at the biases that can arise because a person is male or female, but at the same time considers disadvantage suffered as a result of ethnicity, caste, class, or poverty status, location and age. It is not about separate budgets for women or men nor about budgets divided equally. It is about determining where the needs of men and women are the same, and where they differ. Where the needs are different, allocations should be different.

¹¹¹ British Virgin Islands, Office of Gender Affairs, Ministry of Health and Social Development, (Tortola, 1 May 2019).

C. Capacity building

Though there has been an increase in the number workshops and seminars available to Government officials and civil society organizations, there is still a fundamental need for capacity building specifically for gender mainstreaming in national development planning in the subregion, including in gender data. For example, the Ministry of the Home Affairs in Suriname provided training and capacity building workshops on gender, women's rights, violence and other gender-related issues to various ministries, religious organizations and NGOs.¹¹² Jamaica, Suriname, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Trinidad and Tobago, have also engaged in extensive training of gender focal points. Antigua and Barbuda developed an Action Plan for Gender Equality and undertook gender sensitization training sessions. Nonetheless, it was recognized that the extent to which the different government bodies are implementing gender-sensitive and gender-responsive budgets was unclear and often considered limited due to budget restriction. It is sometimes limited to a project or initiative without effectively providing the tools and knowledge for mainstreaming gender in a daily basis. In addition, overall, all Caribbean countries considered in this study face data challenges.

ECLAC and other United Nations organizations are very responsive to requests for technical assistance from Governments. At the international level, the UN Statistical Commission adopted in 2013 the Minimum Set of Gender Indicators, which is a collection of 52 quantitative indicators and 11 qualitative indicators addressing issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment. These indicators are aimed at guiding national production and international compilation of gender statistics.¹¹³ The UN has also recently published guidelines for integrating a gender perspective into statistics¹¹⁴ and for collecting data on violence against women that emphasizes the need for specialized surveys in this area.¹¹⁵ Other initiatives exist, including those by UN-Women and the UN Foundation's the Data2X, which is a platform dedicated to improving the quality, availability and use of gender data worldwide.¹¹⁶ The conduct of time-use surveys should also be seen as an essential component of any comprehensive plan to improve gender statistics in the Caribbean. At the regional level, ECLAC serves as the technical secretariat to the working group of the Statistical Conference of the Americas charged with preparing a methodological guide on time-use measurements in Latin America and the Caribbean. The work group will systematize regional experiences in measuring time use and provide guidelines for implementation of these tools, including the calculation of indicators on time use and unpaid work. At the recent Tenth Meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas it was reinforced that gender issues are cross-cutting and the conference asked that all its working groups mainstream the gender perspective into their work.¹¹⁷

The ECLAC Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean¹¹⁸ is a reference point for gender statistics and indicators, studies, analysis and public policies on gender in the region. The Observatory maintains an extensive repository of indicators related to women's economic, physical and decision-making autonomies that could serve as a rich source of gender statistics for Caribbean countries. In addition, ECLAC also houses a statistics repository (CEPALSTAT) with more than 100 indicators under a gender tree that contains comparative information on all Latin American and

¹¹² Suriname, Ministry of Home Affairs, (2019). *Suriname Report on the Implementation of the Montevideo Strategy October 2016 - May 2019*, Suriname.

¹¹³ For more information: <https://genderstats.un.org/#/home>.

¹¹⁴ For more information: <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/genderstatmanual/> and <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/demographic-social/Standards-and-Methods/files/Handbooks/gender/Integrating-a-Gender-Perspective-into-Statistics-E.pdf>.

¹¹⁵ UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2014). "Guidelines for Producing Statistics on Violence Against Women." Available at: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/gender/docs/Guidelines_Statistics_VAW.pdf.

¹¹⁶ For more information: <http://www.data2x.org>.

¹¹⁷ Resolution 11 (X), Tenth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

¹¹⁸ For more information: <https://oig.cepal.org/en>.

Caribbean countries. In addition, there is a portal on the Sustainable Development Goals —SDG Gateway— being developed in an inter-agency effort with the agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system in the region under the leadership of ECLAC, which will be a key tool for supporting the countries in the implementation and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and for strengthening the capacities to that end.

At the subregional level, the CARICOM Gender Equality Indicators Model, jointly developed by UN-Women and CARICOM Secretariat, is aimed at identifying, assessing, measuring and tracking the persistent gender equality concerns and disparities across the subregion. For instance, Dominica has recently published the first Gender Equality Indicators Report in 2016. Complementary to this is the list of core SDG indicators for the Caribbean which includes selected gender indicators, adopted last year by CARICOM countries. The recently endorsed CARICOM Regional Strategy for the Development of Statistics (2019-2030) presents another opportunity to address the data gaps and strengthen national statistical capacity in the subregion.

D. Support citizen-led initiatives to monitor progress and hold governments accountable for gender equality commitments

Governments, the UN System and other international organizations should provide an enabling environment for civil society organizations and coalitions to conduct their own appraisals of progress at the global, regional and national levels, making sure that women's organizations play a leading role in their preparation. For example, governments can use the process of preparing and presenting their progress made during the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, their the Voluntary National Reviews at the High-level Political Forum, the Universal Periodic Reviews at the Human Rights Council, the Montevideo Strategy and the Beijing Platform respective reporting mechanisms as a means for creating a shared vision of progress for gender equality and identifying challenges that stand in the way. Holding broad-based consultations during the preparation of the VNR and making it available to the public before submission to the HLPF should be considered in this process. The recently established Caribbean Civil Society SDGs Knowledge Platform, as an online virtual space to connect people and organizations with information on the 2030 Agenda is a good practice to be further expanded and supported.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ For more information: <https://hub.canari.org/sdg/>.

IV. Conclusion

This study has identified good practices and lessons learned in gender mainstreaming in the Caribbean that could be replicated across the subregion. It has also identified notable challenges that need to be overcome in effectively promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls through gender mainstreaming. Overall, long-term development planning that includes a gender perspective, through coordination and policy coherence, strong political commitment and leadership, and consultative processes on common challenges and priorities, is key if the subregion wishes to accelerate the pace towards achieving sustainable development with gender equality by 2030. Learning from other countries and exchanging experiences is fundamental in this process. Equally important is the strengthening of existing partnerships and the expansion of new ones. By placing gender equality as a priority in the state's agenda, countries of the subregion will be in a better position to ensure that no one is left behind in the pursuit of sustainable development.

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