



UNITED NATIONS



Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean

Subregional Meeting on Enhancing Capacity of Caribbean Countries to
Eradicate Violence against Women
15 June 2010
Rodney Bay, Saint Lucia

LIMITED
LC/CAR/L.297
1 June 2011
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

**REPORT OF THE SUBREGIONAL MEETING ON ENHANCING
THE CAPACITY OF CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES
TO ERADICATE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

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A. DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Member States would submit written status reports on data collection on violence against women to ECLAC.
2. Stronger collaboration and coordination to be effected among all agencies involved in data collection.
3. Indicators on violence against women of the Friends of the Chair of the United Nations Statistical Commission, to be adopted and the model survey to be adapted by the member States.
4. Gender focal points to be reactivated.
5. Another regional meeting would be held in a few months on administrative records in data collection on violence against women.
6. All member States, with the assistance of ECLAC, would continue to build capacity to collect data on violence against women.
7. A knowledge community is to be created on the issue of violence against women.

B. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

1. Place and date

8. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) convened the Subregional Meeting on Enhancing the Capacity of Caribbean Countries to eradicate Violence against Women in Rodney Bay, Saint Lucia on 15 June 2010.

2. Attendance

9. Representatives of 14 Member States of ECLAC attended the meeting: Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Belize, Brazil, Dominica, Ecuador, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago
10. Seven Associate Members were represented at the meeting: Anguilla, Aruba, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, St. Maarten and the Turks and Caicos Islands.
11. The following United Nations bodies were represented: United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, United Nations Population Fund, United Nations Children's Fund, and United Nations Development Fund for Women.
13. One specialized agency of the United Nations was represented at the meeting: Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO).

3. Organization of work

14. The meeting adopted the Draft Programme setting out the organization of work.

C. AGENDA

1. Welcome remarks
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Role of statistical data and indicators in order to prevent, sanction and eradicate violence against women
4. Indicators and survey module on violence against women proposed by the Friends of the Chair of the Statistical Commission
5. Discussion on the proposed indicators from a Caribbean perspective
6. Role of administrative registries in the measurement of violence against women: women's deaths at the hands of their intimate partners or former partners
7. Availability, quality and programmatic usefulness of information on violence against women: the case of Trinidad and Tobago
8. Situation of administrative records and indicators on violence against women at national level
9. Main obstacles and proposals to strengthen national capacity to collect data on prevalence, causes, consequences and impact of violence against women
10. Caribbean launching of the Campaign of the Secretary General, Unite to End Violence against Women and Girls: role of data collection
11. Conclusion and final remarks from participants

D. SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

14. At the opening session of the meeting, remarks were made by the following speakers: Mr. Hirohito Toda, Deputy Chief, Officer-In-Charge, ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean and Mr. Edwin St. Catherine, Director, Statistics Department, Saint Lucia.

E. ROLE OF STATISTICAL DATA AND INDICATORS IN ORDER TO PREVENT, SANCTION AND ERADICATE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

17. This presentation was made by the Head of the Division of Gender Affairs, ECLAC, who highlighted the need for violence against women to become visible. She indicated that prior to the 1990s domestic violence was not even recognized as a violation of human rights. She reviewed the history of the struggle to bring that social problem to the forefront for effective action to be taken and emphasized the continuing cultural resistance. She showed where a violation of the right to a life free of violence led to a violation of other rights such as the right to work and access to adequate health care.

18. She expressed satisfaction at the fact that, though it had taken a long time, the Statistical Commission, the highest statistical authority of the United Nations had recognized the capacity to measure violence against women as a priority. She cited the Secretary-General's Campaign, the work of the Statistical Commission on the identification of indicators and the political commitment that was obtained from the heads of national statistical offices, as events that gave momentum to the struggle and increased the importance of this meeting.

19. The various uses of data on violence against women and their importance were explained. In conclusion, she called on the Caribbean Community Secretariat, national statistical offices, women's machineries and United Nations agencies in Latin America and the Caribbean to make a commitment to work together to take urgent steps to collect up-to-date data on the measurement of violence against women.

F. INDICATORS AND SURVEY MODULE ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN PROPOSED BY THE FRIENDS OF THE CHAIR OF THE STATISTICAL COMMISSION

20. In this presentation, facilitated by a representative of the Division for Gender Affairs, ECLAC, the report of the Friends of the Chair of the United Nations Statistical Commission on the proposed indicators and survey module was presented and discussed. The interim set of indicators adopted by the Statistical Commission, are as follows:

1. Total and age-specific rate of women subjected to physical violence in the last 12 months by severity of violence, relationship to the perpetrator(s) and frequency;
2. Total and age-specific rate of women subjected to physical violence during lifetime by severity of violence, relationship to the perpetrator(s) and frequency;
3. Total and age-specific rate of women subjected to sexual violence, in the last 12 months by relationship to the perpetrator(s) and frequency;
4. Total and age-specific rate of women subjected to sexual violence, during lifetime by relationship to the perpetrator(s) and frequency;
5. Total and age-specific rate of women subjected to sexual or physical violence by current or former intimate partner in the last 12 months by frequency;
6. Total and age-specific rate of women subjected to sexual or physical violence by current or former intimate partner during lifetime by frequency.

G. DISCUSSION ON THE PROPOSED INDICATORS FROM A CARIBBEAN PERSPECTIVE

21. During this session, the following countries shared comments on the survey and indicators: Antigua and Barbuda, Suriname, Turks and Caicos, Cayman Islands, Belize, Aruba, Guyana and Jamaica. It was generally felt that:

- The survey module was comprehensive
- The questions all require personal information and therefore are likely to be resisted
- The survey was designed to collect a lot of information
- The reliability of the data was a concern – given the personal nature of the questions and doubts were expressed as to whether the truth would be told

- The survey exercise was costly and the resources must be available
- Non-response rate was likely to be high
- Emphasis was placed on the need for team work involving the police, the national statistics organizations and the gender affairs machineries
- Even though the process of data collection resulted in more questions than answers, the fact that there was recognition of the need for it was celebrated
- The real impacts of data on legislation and State response were still unknown

H. ROLE OF ADMINISTRATIVE REGISTRIES IN THE MEASUREMENT OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: WOMEN'S DEATHS AT THE HANDS OF THEIR INTIMATE PARTNERS OR FORMER PARTNERS

22. The session was facilitated by a representative of the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean. The session discussed the role of the various administrative mechanisms at the national level in the generation of statistics on violence against women. In that connection, the following issues were addressed:

- Administrative registries consisted of a collection of data to capture and include information required by the public, private and social institutions that allowed them to control and follow up the activities related to their programmes and obligations
- Given that it was continuously updated, it could become a useful source of flow statistics
- Drawbacks were related to quality, coverage, definitions and access restrictions to legal provisions, among others
- Other challenges related to reviewing and assessing administrative records from governmental entities such as hospitals and others that provided support and care to victims of violence
- There was a need to consider the inclusion of records from non-governmental organizations
- There was a need to standardize the form for the recording system

I. AVAILABILITY, QUALITY AND PROGRAMMATIC USEFULNESS OF INFORMATION ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: THE CASE OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

23. This was a presentation by the ECLAC Consultant, who outlined the findings of the draft study. Her discourse covered the following topics:

- (a) Overview of the Law and Violence against Women including the initiation of criminal proceedings, civil law: and quasi civil and quasi criminal law
- (b) Availability of data for sexual offences
- (c) Availability of Data for Domestic Violence
- (d) The nature of violence against women
- (e) Data validity and usefulness
- (f) Access to justice

- (g) Conclusions
- (h) Recommendations

J. SITUATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE RECORDS AND INDICATORS ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AT NATIONAL LEVEL AND MAIN OBSTACLES AND PROPOSALS TO STRENGTHEN NATIONAL CAPACITY TO COLLECT DATA ON PREVALENCE, CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES AND IMPACT OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

24. The two sessions were combined into one and moderated by a representative of Saint Lucia. Following are the reports from the various countries:

- Anguilla:** Needed to put a full data collection system in place and required technical assistance and training
- Antigua and Barbuda:** Problems with the reporting system for sexual assault. A new programme had been implemented and specialist trainers would be hired. The new system under the Domestic Violence Act was more complex and required a lawyer. The process was a lot longer, less effective and more expensive
- Aruba:** No relationship existed between the police and the National Statistical Office. Data was collected and compiled by NGOs. There had been a problem in the last three years regarding the definition of violent acts. They were working with PAHO/WHO to construct definitions. Reports were by age, sex and date of birth and not by perpetrator. There were problems of underreporting.
- Bahamas** No central agency was responsible for collecting data. Data was collected by the police, the court, the hospital and the Crisis Centre. There was an issue of non-reporting of violence against women by undocumented migrants.
- Cayman Islands** Information on general crime was published, but not disaggregated by forms of violence.
- Dominica** General crime statistics collected, but was not disaggregated. The National Statistical Office was working with the police to improve data collection, however, technical assistance needed in that area. There was a project in the making to coordinate all data collection on domestic violence since 2002.
- Grenada** Information was collected from the police, Ministry of Social Development and Legal Aid. Information was disaggregated by crime, sex, age, and occupation of the perpetrator. They were looking at building a central registry following the model of Belize.
- Haiti** Collection of information was very difficult in Haiti. Women did not report to the police but to women's organizations which did not share information with the police. Household surveys were the only source of information with a few questions on living conditions surveys.
- Jamaica** Had no current information on violence. There was a 2009 victimization

survey that was being processed. Data could be accessed from the court and the hospital. Women's crisis centres also collected information.

Montserrat

The National Statistical Office did not collect data on violence against women. Statistics were collected by the police and health departments but there was no collaboration among agencies. Women did not report cases because they had no confidence in the system. There was no gender bureau and no lead agency. The Eastern Caribbean Court was proposed as the main agency for the collection of data.

British Virgin Islands

Data was received from the police and the court was also used in the past for collecting data. But there was no link between both. There was a need for more collaboration among agencies. Domestic violence was not disaggregated by age and sex. Coverage was weak and there was uncertainty about the question of duplication.

Saint Lucia

Data was collected by the police, crisis centres and the Women's Bureau. A pilot project highlighted the problem of duplication. It was hoped to develop a system of collecting qualitative data through focus groups. The Bureau was collaborating with the police, family court, and crisis centres on a pilot project to standardise administrative records on violence against women. The progress, however, was very slow.

Saint Kitts & Nevis

The country had not been collecting data on violence against women, however, data on social indicators related to the Millennium Development Goals had been collected. Data collection on violence against women would be activated in the near future through collaboration with the court and the police.

Saint Vincent

The police and the Gender Affairs Bureau were relied on for data on violence against women

Suriname

The country was not collecting data on violence against women specifically. There were regular publications on crime with data from the police. The statistics office had no relationship with the women's bureau on that issue but would initiate one in the near future. Collaboration could be developed between the Women's Bureau, the ministries of justice, education, health, social affairs, and the police to produce a publication with data on violence against women. There was also a need to work towards standard indicators.

Turks and Caicos

Data was compiled by the police, court and non-governmental organizations. There were problems related to access to justice and follow-up regarding perpetrators.

Trinidad and Tobago

Domestic violence data was not broken down by sex. The police had data broken down by sex of the victim and perpetrator but it was not accessible and a special request must be made in order to get the information. A pilot study had been implemented for the establishment of a central registry to coordinate data from all agencies dealing with violence against women. Each agency had a slightly different definition of violence.

Some highlights of the ensuing discussion follow:

- The issue of standardization should be addressed in a regional meeting
- Data gathered needed to cover both perpetrator and victim
- Administrative records were an inexpensive and useful form of data collection but surveys should not be dismissed as an option because they also gathered valuable data
- National statistical offices and women machineries could assist agencies that collected data to see the value of the data and make use of it.
- All relevant agencies needed to collaborate with each other and particularly with the police
- Administrative data and survey data could complement each other
- A definition of violence was linked to legislation
- The places where women sought assistance when abused were the first entry points for collecting data
- Issues of gender violence were linked to many other issues of gender equality
- There was a need to re-stimulate the concept of gender focal points
- Attaching economic costs to acts of violence and their impacts might help to awake political will
- Police officers needed training in data collection

K. CARIBBEAN LAUNCHING OF THE CAMPAIGN OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL

25. The representative of UNIFEM presented this session. Information was shared with the participants on the objectives of the upcoming launch of the Secretary General's Campaign on Unite against Violence against Women. Features of the campaign such as the use of verses from the holy books, the input of Caribbean performing artists, the training of police officers and the promotion of sound data collection practices were discussed.

L. CONCLUSIONS AND FINAL COMMENTS

26. Closing remarks were given by Mr. Sylvan Roberts, Coordinator of the Statistics and Social Development Unit, ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean. The participants were congratulated on their intense work over the duration of the workshop. Appreciation was expressed for the fact that there was a lot more clarity now on the indicators. Participants were reminded to send to ECLAC the available data and to start working on mechanisms to collect missing data. Use would be made of the indicators of the Friends of the Chair. The model survey would be adapted to suit the specific needs of the member States and the collection of quantitative data through surveys and administrative records would be complemented with qualitative data.

Annex**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS****A. Member countries****Antigua and Barbuda**

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Bahamas

- Melvelyn Symonette, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Women's Affairs

Belize

- Icilda Humes, Director, Women's Department, Ministry of Human Development and Social Transformation

Brazil

- Lourdes Bandeira, Subsecretaria de Planejamento, Secretaria Especial de Políticas para as Mulheres
- Fernanda Bittenbourt Vieira, Especialista em Políticas Públicas e Gestão Governamental, Subsecretaria de Planejamento, Secretaria de Políticas para as Mulheres

Dominica

- Rosie Browne, Director, Bureau of Gender Affairs, Ministry of Social Services, Community Development and Gender Affairs
- Prayma Carrette, Chief Statistician, Central Statistical Office, Ministry of Finance

Ecuador

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- Jacqueline Tull, Bureau of Statistics

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Jamaica

- Faith Webster-Daye, Executive Director, Bureau of Women's Affairs
- Kadi-Ann Hinds, Statistician, Research, Design and Evaluation Division, The Statistical Institute of Jamaica

Saint Lucia

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- Melinda Reijme, Staff Member of the National Bureau for Gender Policy, Ministry of Home Affairs/ National Bureau for Gender Policy
- Jo-Ann Fung A Loi, Manager, Social Statistics, General Bureau of Statistics

Trinidad and Tobago

- Shelly-Ann Hart, Project Execution Officer, Gender Affairs Division, Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs

B. Associate member countries**Anguilla**

- Dawne M. Richardson, Parliamentary/Crown Counsel, Attorney General's Chambers

Aruba

- Monique Maduro, Head, Department for Demographic and Social Statistics Central Bureau of Statistics

British Virgin Islands

- Patlian Johnson, Deputy Director Development Unit, Government of the Virgin Islands

Cayman Islands

- Elizabeth Talbert, Deputy Director/Chief Statistician, Economic and Statistics Office

Montserrat

- Katrina Ryan, Director of Statistics, Statistics Department, Government of Montserrat

St. Maarten

- Joy Arnell, Department of Social Development Island Government

Turks and Caicos Islands

- Barbara Higgs, Under Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs

C. United Nations Bodies

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

- Pilar González Rams, Gender Equality Specialist, UNICEF Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

- Jewel Quallo-Rosberg, Programme Manager, UNFPA, Subregional Office for the Caribbean

United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW)

- Amaia Perez, Social Affairs Officer/Officer in Charge

United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

- Tonni-Ann Brodber, Programme Specialist, UNIFEM Caribbean Regional Office

D. Specialized Agencies

Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO)

- Alma Cuellar, Gender Mainstreaming Advisor for LAC PAHO/WHO, Pan American Health Organization Regional Office of the World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO)

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