

ECLAC SUBREGIONAL HEADQUARTERS FOR THE CARIBBEAN



UNITED NATIONS

**ECLAC**

# FOCUS

Newsletter of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC)



CHARTING DEVELOPMENT –  
ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF UNITED  
NATIONS GLOBAL CONFERENCES IN  
THE CARIBBEAN



ECLAC HOSTS EXPERT GROUP  
MEETING ON DISABILITIES



ESTABLISHING THE CARIBBEAN  
WATER PARTNERSHIP

April–June 2003

# CDCC

## CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION COMMITTEE

In 1975, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) – then known as ECLA – established the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) as a permanent subsidiary body at the governmental level. The ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean provides secretariat services to the CDCC.

The CDCC functions as an intergovernmental organization that meets annually at the technical level and every other year at the ministerial level. Its operational activities are carried out under the regular ECLAC work programme in the Caribbean, which includes economic and development planning, demography, economic surveys, the environment, international trade and trade-in-service, information for development, statistics, small island developing States, science and technology, women in development, tourism, training, and assistance with the management of national economies.

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## CHARTING DEVELOPMENT – ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL CONFERENCES IN THE CARIBBEAN



**D**uring the past decade, the United Nations has organized major global conferences dealing with the most significant economic and social issues of our times, including sustainable development, population, women, financing of development, poverty, unemployment and marginalization. These conferences involve significant international expenditure, not only financially but also in all the time and effort that member Governments and all the other stakeholders have dedicated to making them successful. After looking at the basic problems involved and building from the national, to the regional and finally the global scenarios, these Conferences generally develop and approve an action plan, designed to identify and overcome obstacles and bring to bear new Government policies to change life for the better. The principal challenge lies there – to ensure that all the time, money and effort spent on the global conferences does not end once the final gavel falls.

ECLAC has a major role to play in the Caribbean and Latin American area, not only in the preparatory activities for United

Nations conferences, but in supporting Governments in the implementation of decisions taken and policies adopted as a result of these meetings. Support to Governments takes many forms. It frequently involves technical assistance missions or presentations to Governmental authorities to seek implementation of specific policy recommendations; for example, our work with the police forces in the Caribbean to implement the recommendations of



the Beijing Conference on Women regarding domestic violence. Since action on

agreements reached at global conferences involves multidisciplinary action in a number of substantive areas, ECLAC also seeks to collaborate actively with other United Nations and intergovernmental agencies, building coalitions to support Governments more effectively and trying to eliminate duplication of effort. Examples of such interagency coordination may be found on a Web site dealing with summit follow-up (<http://www.eclac.cl/cumbres/default.asp?idioma=IN>) where many UN agencies list the activities that are being carried out to implement the recommendations of global conferences.

ECLAC has also developed a system of indicators to measure

progress achieved in the implementation of the programmes of action produced by these conferences. This system sets forth a number of specific subject areas (such as population, health, education, poverty levels, unemployment and vulnerable groups) and allows Governments the opportunity to request figures from various Ministries and measure overall performance. On the basis of these country indicators, as well as census data, household surveys, Government statistics and other sources of information, ECLAC prepares regular reports covering the Caribbean region and periodically convenes regional and subregional follow-up meetings to ensure that the momentum generated by global events is not lost. Governments can learn about successful programs in other countries and receive encouragement to make appropriate policy commitments.

In the coming months, the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean will be focusing on subregional preparatory activities related to several global United Nations Conferences:

### **SIDS + 10**

In 2004 - the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (UNCGSIDS) - a global conference (SIDS + 10) will

convene in Mauritius for a comprehensive review of the implementation of the UNCGSIDS Programme of Action that was agreed to in Barbados. The Caribbean Regional Preparatory Meeting for the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action will be hosted by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago and held at the Ambassador Hotel in Port of Spain, from 6 to 10 October 2003. It is being co-ordinated by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) and ECLAC, and co-sponsored by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat. The provisional agenda and the principal working document for the meeting are being drafted by ECLAC and will be available prior to the meeting at: <http://www.eclacpos.org>. The working document, entitled "*Review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States in the Caribbean subregion, 1994-2004*", considers the status of the Barbados Programme of Action, 10 years after it was adopted, and measures progress made by Caribbean countries in meeting its goals. The main object of this preparatory meeting is to adopt a subregional position that will guide CDCC member countries at the SIDS+10 conference in Mauritius.

### ICPD REVIEW

The twenty-year Programme of Action (POA) produced by the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), held in Cairo in 1993, was

the subject of a Caribbean review in 1998. Five years later, ECLAC and the United Nations Population FUND (UNFPA) have been jointly mandated to coordinate another subregional appraisal of the POA in preparation for the global review that will be held in 2004. The subregional preparatory meeting will convene in November 2003 and will review the implementation of the Cairo POA in CDCC countries over the past ten years. ECLAC will prepare the working document for the meeting based on the results of its own data collection exercise as well as a field inquiry currently being conducted by the UNFPA. The document will assess progress made and obstacles to be overcome by member countries in their implementation of the Cairo POA.

### REGIONAL FOLLOW-UP TO THE SECOND WORLD ASSEMBLY ON AGEING



During the Second World Assembly on Ageing, held in Madrid in April 2002, the Caribbean and Latin American countries agreed to hold a regional meeting designed to adapt the International Plan of Action on Ageing 2002 to a regional program of action on ageing, taking into account demographic, cultural and economic realities in this area of the world. The regional conference will be held at ECLAC Headquarters in Santiago, Chile in November 2003. Provision is being made to obtain funding so that a number of Caribbean delegates can attend without cost to their Governments.

### BEIJING+10

The Ninth ECLAC Conference on Women in Development will be held in Mexico in mid-2004. As is

customary, the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean will convene a Caribbean preparatory meeting prior to the regional conference. Each meeting will focus on two main themes: "the economy, poverty and gender equality" and "empowerment, institution building and gender equity". The meetings will also assess the implementation of the Beijing Programme of Action (which emerged from the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995) – in terms of countries' achievements as well as the obstacles they have yet to overcome. The Caribbean and Latin American positions that will be represented at the international ten-year review of the Beijing POA will be decided at these subregional and regional meetings in 2004.



The ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean is also currently preparing for the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), which will be held in two parts - in Geneva, Switzerland in December 2003 and in Tunis in 2005. Regional preparations have included the Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Conference held in Bávaro, Dominican Republic in January 2003, which was jointly organised by ECLAC and the Government of the Dominican Republic. In addition, Regional Commissions and the Regional Banks are expected to have an important role in the implementation of the WSIS Plan of Action, which is currently being elaborated by preparatory committees in Geneva.

*continued on page 7*

# ECLAC HOSTS EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON DISABILITIES



**O**n 10 June 2003 in Port of Spain, the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean hosted an expert group meeting on the “Comprehensive and integral international convention to promote and protect the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities”. At this meeting, participants developed recommendations to be placed before the United Nations Ad Hoc Committee on a Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities. These recommendations were sent subsequently to the Ad Hoc Committee for consideration at their second session, which was held in New York from 16 to 27 June 2003.

## OPENING SESSION

In her welcoming remarks to the Port of Spain meeting, Officer-in-Charge, Helen McBain, noted that approximately two-thirds of the 600 million persons with disabilities, worldwide, lived in developing countries; and in some countries of the Caribbean, persons with disabilities represented more than ten per cent of

the population. It was in this context and in response to the request of the United Nations General Assembly for proposals (by Regional Commissions such as ECLAC) for the Convention, that this meeting had been convened. Ms Mc Bain assured participants that the outcome of the meeting would be sent to member states for their consideration and then onto the Ad Hoc Committee in time for its upcoming session.

When delivering the feature address, Senator the Honourable Christine Kangaloo, Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister (Social Services Delivery) in Trinidad and Tobago observed that an ongoing protest in Port of Spain by persons with disabilities, which had begun 34 days earlier, served to underscore the training and employment needs of persons with disabilities. She stressed that ensuring equality of opportunity, in order to meet such needs, was not an act of charity but a vindication of the inalienable rights of persons with disabilities. Trinidad and Tobago had therefore established a National Co-ordinating Committee on Disability as well as a Disabilities Affairs Unit, which had already implemented a number of projects to address the specific needs of the disabled community.

Ms. Joy Brathwaite, speaking on behalf of the Resident Coordinator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), referred to six human rights treaties in which issues of disability were addressed:

- *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;*

- *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;*
- *The Convention against Torture; Convention on the Rights of the Child;*
- *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;*
- *International Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.*

She urged greater and more targeted use of these instruments to “influence the change process in addressing the spectrum of issues concerning disability”.

## CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

The meeting was structured around two panel discussions - each of which addressed specific issues relating to the rights of persons with disabilities - and a formal round table discussion, which addressed specific recommendations of the draft convention (known as the “Mexico Working Paper”).

The first panel, chaired by Ms. Roberta Clarke, Social Affairs Officer at the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, examined civil and political rights. Other panellists included Mr. Darrel Allahar, Attorney-at-Law, and Mr. Lincoln Myers, Consultant and former Minister of Agriculture in the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. During this session, proposals within the Mexico Working Paper were compared with provisions of the Constitution of Trinidad and Tobago and the Equal Opportunity Act 2000 of Trinidad and Tobago, which had been identified as two pieces of legislation that addressed

## The Ad Hoc Committee on the Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities

At the conclusion of the World Summit on Social Development (WSSD), held in Copenhagen in 1995, global leaders agreed that the social integration of all groups was essential to the achievement of national development goals. Following upon this declaration, the United Nations General Assembly in its Resolution 56/168 of December 2001, established an ad hoc committee, open to all States Members of the United Nations and observer States, to consider proposals for the comprehensive and integral international convention to protect and promote the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities.

The convention was to be based on the holistic approach of the work done in the fields of social development, human rights and non-discrimination, taking into account the recommendations of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and the United Nations Commission for Social Development.

In a subsequent Resolution, the General Assembly allowed for the participation of the Regional Commissions of the United Nations (such as ECLAC) and intergovernmental organizations - within their respective mandates - as well as non-governmental organizations, national disability and human rights institutions, and independent experts with interest in the matter. These bodies were invited to forward to the ad hoc committee suggestions and possible elements to be considered in proposals for a convention.

the civil rights of persons with disabilities. This comparison was meant to highlight the strengths and deficiencies of the Trinidad and Tobago legislation and, in so doing, stimulate recommendations for a comprehensive convention.

In this assessment, the Equal Opportunities Act was regarded as the more significant of the two legal documents since it conferred protection from not only the State and its agencies, but also private individuals and private organizations. It was also felt that the establishment of an Equal Opportunities Commission and an Equal Opportunities Tribunal, as were called for in the Act, could provide redress to victims of discrimination. At the same time, however, this legislation remained limited in its treatment of the rights of the disabled to employment, education and goods and services.

### ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

Dr Emmanuel Hosein, Vice Chairman of the Trinidad and Tobago office of Disabled Peoples International and former member of the United Nations world panel of experts on disability, chaired the panel on economic, social and cultural rights. Also contributing to this panel were Ms Kathleen Guy, Coordinator of the Disabled Women's Network of Trinidad and Tobago; Ms. Angela Edwards, Director of the Disability Affairs Unit, Office of the Prime Minister in Trinidad and Tobago; and Dr Kathleen Valtonen, coordinator of the Social Work Unit in the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of the West Indies, St Augustine.

It was argued that the language of the draft convention should be strengthened to ensure the widest possible protection to persons with disabilities. Article 17, which spoke of "safeguarding" the rights of the disabled, was cited as a case in point: provision should also be made here for

the "development" of such rights. In addition, panellists discussed employment, housing and medical care issues; greater State support to caregivers of persons with disabilities; and the need for government policies that would guarantee the enjoyment of fundamental citizenship rights. The right to employment was identified as an important component of this group. Suggestions for enabling approaches that could honour this right included: expansion of employment opportunities; provision of education and skills training for persons with disabilities; affirmative action in the hiring of persons with disabilities; and the provision of incentives to employers for hiring persons with disabilities.

This panel also discussed many of the obstacles that disabled children encountered within the education system. These included poverty and lack of access to special transportation services, as well as inadequate physical and teaching facilities at schools. Children with disabilities often had to depend on their classmates to take them from one room to another, and to help them read and write classroom material (which was not available in alternative formats). Such children also suffered discrimination from those teachers who were not prepared to teach persons with disabilities. Many persons with disabilities were therefore poorly qualified for employment.

In her presentation, Ms Guy appealed for measures that would ensure full access to education and employment, such as, the availability of readers in schools and the development of affirmative action and incentive programmes that could increase the number of jobs available to persons with disabilities.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Participants endorsed the Mexico Working Paper, with the recommendation that in instances of

# EVALUATION OF THE FOCUS NEWSLETTER

The ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean would appreciate your kind cooperation in completing the questionnaire on these pages, and returning it to us after you have read this issue of the FOCUS Newsletter, but not later than 31 January 2004.

## DISTRIBUTION

1. When did you receive this issue of the FOCUS Newsletter?

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2. How did you receive the Newsletter? Through:

- Direct Mail
- Permanent Mission to the United Nations
- Government Office
- Library
- Other (Please specify)

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## QUALITY

3. Please rate the following components of the Newsletter by checking the appropriate box in the grid. Use this scale:

5 = excellent, 4 = very good, 3 = good, 2 = poor, 1 = very poor, 0=no opinion

	5	4	3	2	1	0
Presentation/format						
Timeliness of information						
Readability						
Objectivity						
Subject Coverage						
Level of analysis						
Overall quality						

## USEFULNESS

4. How useful was the Newsletter to you? Use this scale:

5 = extremely useful, 4 = very useful, 3 = useful, 2 = not useful enough, 1 = not useful at all

	5	4	3	2	1
Information content					
Clarification of issues					
Findings					

5. Please give any particular comments you may have on the usefulness of the Newsletter, citing examples if possible.

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6. What proportion of the Newsletter was relevant to your work?

- Most of the material  Less than half
- About half  Hardly any

7. If you checked either of the first two boxes in Item 6 above, please give examples of how the Newsletter has contributed to your work, referring specifically to the relevance of material in such areas as development planning, legislation, institution and capacity building.

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## EFFECTIVENESS

8. The FOCUS Newsletter reports on ongoing and upcoming work of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean (ECLAC/CDCC Secretariat). It is meant to keep readers up-to-date with the activities of ECLAC in the subregion. The Newsletter is also one of the means of reporting on fulfilment of the ECLAC mandate to the 23 member countries of the CDCC, and on the achievement of specific work programme objectives developed in collaboration with donors countries and organizations, counterpart agencies and other partners. Additionally, this publication is meant to furnish the wider academic and research community with a primary source of material on development research conducted by ECLAC throughout the Caribbean.

Please indicate the extent to which you believe the Newsletter has achieved its purpose:

- Completely  Sufficiently
- Insufficiently  Not at all

9. If you answered either "Completely" or "Sufficiently" in Item 7, above, please comment on the ways in which the Newsletter has best achieved its purpose

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10. If you answered either "Insufficiently" or "Not at all" in Item 7, above, please comment on the ways in which the effectiveness of the Newsletter could be improved.

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11. How many other people usually read your copy of FOCUS?

More than 20  10 to 20  1 to 10  N.A.

12. If anyone besides you reads your copy, please indicate whether these other readers consider the Newsletter to be a useful publication.

Useful  Not useful  No opinion

13. In which of the following subject areas would you be interested in having greater coverage?

- Economic and Trade issues
  - Sustainable Development
  - Gender issues
  - Environmental issues
  - Science and Technology
  - Information and Statistics
  - Social Development
  - Other (please specify)
- 

14. Please identify any changes to the Newsletter that you believe would increase its value to you.

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15. Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Office address: \_\_\_\_\_

Field of work: \_\_\_\_\_

Position/function/occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Government agency/organization/institution: \_\_\_\_\_

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This questionnaire is part of an exercise designed to assess the quality and relevance of the FOCUS Newsletter. The aim is to enhance its usefulness for you and other readers. Your responses will also help us to determine the level of interest in the continued distribution of this Newsletter.

Your responses will be treated confidentially.

The questionnaire may be detached from the newsletter, folded and stapled for mailing.

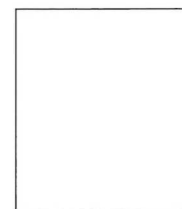
Radcliffe Dookie  
Associate Programme Officer  
July 2003

CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE



The Newsletter of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee  
ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean

PO Box 1113, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago



State obligation, the language used in the convention should be changed from “promote” to “adopt”. The meeting also recommended,

- Specific emphasis in the Convention on the need for affirmative action measures.
- Support incentives to the private sector – such as tax relief and special recognition – that would encourage the hiring of persons with disabilities.
- Conduct of research that would seek to identify the obstacles faced by children with disabilities who had been integrated into the school system and consider the impact on the disabled of new free trade agreements and trade policies
- Development of explicit, written guidelines for application when planning public buildings for persons with disabilities. ■

#### CHARTING DEVELOPMENT – ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL CONFERENCES IN THE CARIBBEAN

*continued from page 4*

ECLAC will shortly embark on an extensive study of information technology issues in Caribbean countries with a view to identifying obstacles to be overcome and policy recommendations to be identified. At the subregional level, the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean is updating its 2001 review of government information and communications technology policy and services in Caribbean Countries, and is currently conducting a study of young entrepreneurs in the information and communications technology sector. It is anticipated that the material produced by both of these projects will support the WSIS objectives of promoting widespread participation by Caribbean people in the information society. ■

## ESTABLISHING THE CARIBBEAN WATER PARTNERSHIP



**In June 2003 environmental specialists from the public, private and non-governmental sectors joined representatives of regional and international organizations, as well as private individuals with an interest in water management, to discuss the establishment of a Caribbean Water Partnership (CWP). The meeting, entitled "Towards the Creation a Caribbean Water Partnership", was held in Tobago from 5-6 June 2003 through the support of the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, the Caribbean Council for Science & Technology (CCST), the Water and Sewerage Authority of Trinidad and Tobago, and other partners.**

The meeting provided an update to participants on the issues affecting the establishment of the Caribbean Water Partnership. These included the status of integrated water resources management (IWRM) programmes, water governance strategies and the role of the Global Water Partnership in the Caribbean project.

#### INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN THE CARIBBEAN

Organizations whose work already promotes integrated water resources management in the Caribbean include the Caribbean Council for Science and Technology (CCST), the Organization of American States (OAS), the Caribbean Conservation Authority (CCA), the Caribbean Environment Health Institute (CEHI), the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). The presentations of these organizations revealed some overlap – as well as gaps – among their various IWRM projects and programmes and pointed to the need for closer collaboration in their work, which a Caribbean Water Partnership could facilitate.

Some Caribbean countries also reported on their national water resources management activities. The presentation by Haiti was of particular interest since it identified specific challenges that many other countries also experienced (if less severely), such as, the unequal distribution of water resources, inadequate supply and unsustainable management practices. Such problems were being addressed through comprehensive planning programmes, the development of inter-sectoral approaches to IWRM and the empowerment of people to manage their water resources at the local community level. These strategies had yielded some distinct successes, such as the Cooperative Extension Services at the University of the Virgin Islands,

which had been established to educate young people, government agency personnel, home-owner associations, community organizations and the general public in water-related issues.

**THE WATER PARTNERSHIP EXPERIENCE**

Members of the Global Water Partnership (GWP) executive lauded the Caribbean Water Partnership initiative and agreed to provide technical support for the establishment and maintenance of the CWP. They reminded participants of the structure and role of the GWP, which functioned as the hub of a network that included those government agencies, public institutions, private companies, professional organizations, multilateral development agencies and others who were committed to principles of integrated water management. Support would therefore come through access to the technical expertise available within the GWP network.

The meeting later heard from groups in regions outside the Caribbean that had already established water partnerships. Presenters from regional partnerships in Central America, East and West Africa, Asia and Central Europe shared their experiences on the establishment of their respective partnerships and on such specific issues as membership and sustainability. Chinese and Mexican representatives spoke about the formation of their country partnerships.

**WATER GOVERNANCE**

Participants also considered issues of governance in water resources management. The presenter on this agenda item suggested that a good water governance framework would be one that was designed to satisfy the competing needs of various stakeholders, whether institutions or individuals. He also advised the meeting that any governance model adopted by the CWP should be adapted to Caribbean circumstances while ensuring fairness, accountability and

openness in the practices of the Partnership. The CWP should also aim towards widespread participation, efficiency, effective communication, coherence, equity and the sustainability of its work.



**THE CARIBBEAN WATER PARTNERSHIP**

The ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean presented a draft proposal for the establishment of the Caribbean Water Partnership, which addressed its terms of reference, scope, administrative and financial structure, work programme and sustainability. Open discussion prompted by this and earlier presentations focused on the following issues:

- Small islands and their vulnerability;
- The blurred distinction between inland and coastal areas;
- The "ridge to reef" or "white water to blue water" concepts and their particular relevance to small islands of the Caribbean;
- Sanitation and waste disposal;

- Training;
- Technology transfer; and
- Mainstreaming of water and gender issues in environmental management programmes.

On the second day of the meeting, participants separated into three working groups to discuss these and other issues related to the establishment of the CWP. The groups focused on the following subject areas:

1. Mission statement, objectives, scope, membership and structure
2. Operations and work programme;
3. Financing, development and sustainability.

Based on the presentations of each working group and further plenary discussion, the meeting agreed on improvements to the draft proposal and took the following decisions regarding the CWP process:

1. Institutions and agencies were identified as partners in the CWP
2. An Interim Committee was established to develop specific proposals on the recommendations arising from the working groups.
3. The countries not represented at the meeting would be contacted and encouraged to participate in the process.
4. A programme for the inauguration of the CWP would be prepared and circulated by the end of 2003, prior to the launch date.
5. Links between the CWP and other regional and national partnerships, worldwide, would be established through the Global Water Partnership (which is based in Stockholm, Sweden). It was anticipated that such linkages would, to a great extent, ensure the sustainability of the Partnership and enable it to function as a global network, bringing much needed technological knowledge and resources on integrated water resources management into the subregion. ■

# THE IMPACT OF MACROECONOMIC STABILISATION POLICIES IN LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN ECONOMIES: A GENDER PERSPECTIVE\*

The explosion of the international debt crisis in 1982 dried up countries' supply of external funds and forced debtor developing countries to adjust their economies. The adjustment process consisted in restoring macroeconomic equilibrium and the adoption of policies aimed at imposing the discipline of the free market on the different spheres of economic activity (the trade, financial, capital – and eventually labour – markets). Such policies have six important effects on economies in which they are introduced: inflation and inflation growth are low; import growth tends to surpass export growth; traditional export agriculture is displaced by low value-added export activities; domestic investment is crowded-out by foreign capital flows; composition of output changes toward the services sector; fiscal policy has a contradictory role. Each of these effects has a gender dimension.

## THE GENDER DIMENSION

Low growth implies that, overall, the rates of unemployment will remain at high levels and that in principle there is no driving force that pushes for equity between men and women in the labour market. As shown in *Table 1*, stabilisation has not significantly narrowed the disparity between the earnings of male and females in countries of Latin America.

The greater growth of imports over exports means that stabilisation favours importing activities, both at the

production and the consumption levels. At the production level, importing activities are male-dominated. At the consumption level, the evidence indicates that more than 40 per cent of Caribbean imports are final consumer goods (*Table 2* next page) and that perhaps this helps to maintain the established social hierarchy between men and women.

The displacement of traditional agricultural exports by low value added non-traditional exports may have partly contributed to the trend of increased female participation in the

\* This article is excerpted from a working paper prepared by ECLAC Officers, Esteban Perez and Karoline Schmid as an interdisciplinary exercise, in keeping the objectives of the United Nations, though conducted outside the current ECLAC Work Programme. The opinions expressed here are the authors' own and may not coincide with those of ECLAC.

**Table 1**  
RATIO OF WAGES BETWEEN FEMALES AND MALES

Country	Year	Years of schooling				
		Total	0-5	6-9	10-12	>13
Argentina	1990	82.7	....	....	....	....
	1999	88.7	86.5	71.3	81.6	74.6
Bolivia	1992	69.5	36.8	52.5	77.4	72.5
	1999	79.4	62.6	48.1	68.6	78.8
Brazil	1990	66.3	53.6	55.0	56.8	59.2
	1999	73.8	63.7	60.1	63.8	62.8
Chile	1990	69.9	60.0	68.8	72.2	57.2
	1998	77.5	80.8	75.4	78.7	62.6
Colombia	1990	82.3	84.9	83.1	84.5	67.7
	1999	86.9	84.4	83.9	82.1	79.4
Costa Rica	1990	80.9	68.5	72.3	78.6	75.1
	1999	84.9	74.1	70.3	78.1	75.8
Ecuador	1990	67.6	44.6	53.8	77.2	57.1
	1999	92.3	64.6	64.6	91.1	81.5
El Salvador	1995	81.2	60.9	64.5	83.2	84.3
	1999	86.0	79.3	79.3	88.6	74.7
Guatemala	1986	74.6	88.8	85.5	81.0	56.7
	1998	74.4	63.2	64.1	69.3	73.6

Table continued on next page

labour force (Table 5), since agriculture encompasses a series of productive activities that do not count in official statistical records as work. This explanation complements the usual argument stating that female labour force participation has increased because adjustment policies have forced females out of the domestic sphere into the labour market.

In addition, the expansion of low-value exports generally associated with free trade zones has positive implications for female employment. By far, the majority of employees in free trade zones are women. Thus, other things being equal, the increase in the female labour force participation in free trade zones should go hand in hand with an overall increase in female employment.

Countries with an important free trade zone sector (El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, even Mexico) have some of the lowest rates of unemployment differentials between men and women (Table 3); in some cases, the rate of unemployment is actually lower for females than males. The most obvious exception to this finding is the Dominican Republic.

Interpreting the ratio of female to male unemployment as a 'probability' of female unemployment relative to males would indicate that countries with a large free trade zone sector are less prone to discriminate against women in the labour market. We believe, however, that since jobs in free trade zones are low paying, this finding may simply reflect the fact that women are more willing than men are to accept low paying employment.

The displacement of domestic by foreign investment and its impact on gender is at first sight difficult to ascertain. For one thing, in the case of smaller economies there is a marked absence of reliable data on foreign direct investment and domestic gross capital formation. In the case of Jamaica, foreign private investment appears in the balance of payments

**Table 1 (continued)**  
RATIO OF WAGES BETWEEN FEMALES AND MALES

Country	Year	Years of schooling				
		Total	0-5	6-9	10-12	>13
Honduras	1990	72.8	58.4	57.4	78.0	64.1
	1999	76.7	73.7	67.0	75.1	76.0
Mexico	1992	78.2	82.2	85.5	96.6	67.1
	1996	76.4	75.1	81.5	79.3	69.2
	2000	71.7	60.5	84.2	80.6	57.6
Nicaragua	1993	79.2	71.9	74.4	87.5	72.2
	1998	73.5	69.8	72.5	50.4	72.1
Panama	1991	85.7	46.8	66.8	81.9	79.1
	1999	88.4	61.8	62.7	82.8	75.3
Paraguay	1990	63.4	46.7	52.5	74.8	62.5
	1999	85.4	67.2	73.0	87.4	72.9
Peru	1997	83.5	56.9	51.1	95.2	79.8
	1999	93.2	124.8	85.5	88.5	94.1
Dominican Republic	1997	88.0	67.4	68.2	96.7	75.3
	1998	73.5	56.0	66.8	67.4	66.9
Uruguay	1990	74.2	66.8	68.4	68.2	70.9
	1999	76.7	64.9	68.6	71.8	63.0
Venezuela	1990	80.4	69.8	75.6	78.9	74.8
	1999	92.0	83.1	73.5	76.7	76.3

Source: ECLAC (2003)

jointly with errors and omissions, which provides a misleading picture of the foreign investment flows in that country. This reflects, in part, a resource constraint. For Central America, it is also the result of the belief that liberalisation would lead to optimal allocation of resources and that it would be useless, therefore, to maintain a sound statistical foreign direct investment record. Also, during the 1980s, governments in the Caribbean and Central America did not require the official registration of

foreign capital flows. Finally, the behavioural pattern of foreign direct investment may differ according to the type of economy under consideration. As an example, foreign direct investment exhibits abrupt changes in service-based economies (such as, Barbados). The start of capital formation projects is associated with an increase in foreign direct investment. The completion of projects results in the sudden disruption of foreign capital flows.

**Table 2**  
THE IMPORTANCE OF CONSUMPTION IN TOTAL IMPORTS IN THE CARIBBEAN  
1994 – 1998

Percentage	Countries
Above 60% of total imports	Dominica
Between 50% and 60% of total imports	Bahamas, Belize, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
Between 40% and 50% of total imports	Barbados
Between 30% and 40% of total imports	.....
Between 30% and 20% of total imports	Suriname, Jamaica, Guyana
Below 20% of total imports	Trinidad and Tobago

Source: Itam et al. (2000)

Empirical evidence presented by Seguino (2000) using cross-sectional data for the Caribbean, shows that foreign direct investment as a share of gross fixed capital formation is not significant in explaining female unemployment. However, the services sector, which in fact has been one of the largest recipients of foreign direct investment, is found to be significant in reducing both female and male unemployment. This last result reflects a stylized employment fact: female employment is largely concentrated in the services sector. In Jamaica, more than 50 per cent of the female labour force is employed in the services sector.

By changing the composition of output towards services, therefore, stabilisation policies have a positive effect on rates of female employment. In the case of Jamaica, as Figure 1 shows, the change in the composition of GDP towards services is associated with a decline in female unemployment. However, the skilled female labour force in services represents only 29 per cent of the total as indicated in the last labour force survey of Jamaica (2002).

In the case of Barbados, the drastic decline in the overall unemployment rate from 1997 to 2001, which affected both women and men alike, can also be attributed in part to the expansion of the services sector.

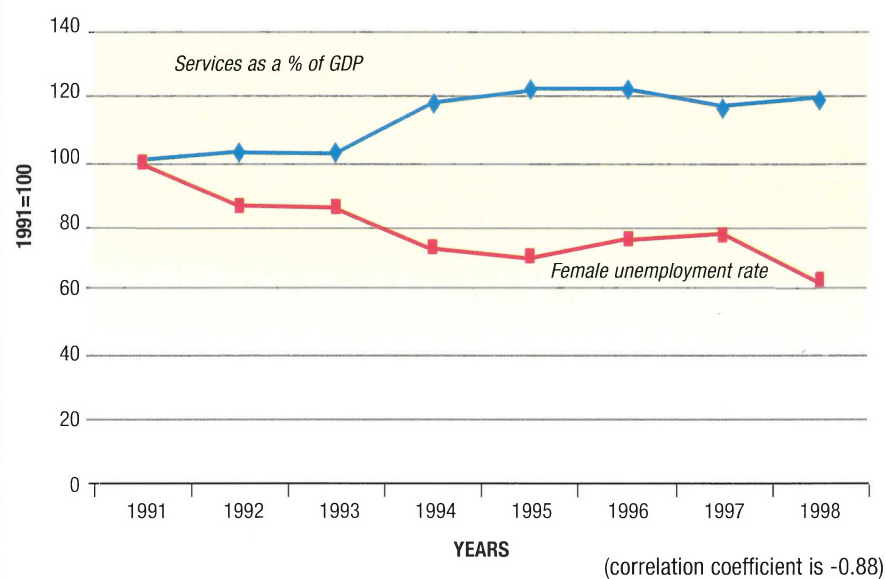
Resource-based economies have not, on the other hand reported such significant declines in the unemployment rate. Comparative data presented by the World Bank (2001) on average unemployment rates by gender for Jamaica, which has shifted its composition of output towards services, and Trinidad and Tobago, which has remained a resource-based economy, shows that for the period 1980-1989, the rate of female unemployment was 35 per cent for Jamaica and 18 per cent for Trinidad and Tobago. For the period 1995-1999, the rate of female unemployment in Jamaica dropped by more than 10 percentage points to reach 23 per cent.

**Table 3**  
MALE AND FEMALE UNEMPLOYMENT IN  
CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC (2000)

	Male unemployment rate	Female unemployment rate	Ratio female to male unemployment rate
Costa Rica	4.6	6.3	1.37
El Salvador	9.0	3.7	0.41
Guatemala	3.5	1.5	0.43
Honduras	6.2	4.0	0.65
Nicaragua	13.9	13.7	0.99
Dominican Republic	8.8	20.7	2.35

Source: ECLAC (2002)

**Figure 1: Jamaica**  
CONTRIBUTION OF SERVICES TO GDP AND FEMALE UNEMPLOYMENT RATE  
1991-1998



Source: Statistical Institute of Jamaica (2002)

**Table 4**  
UNEMPLOYMENT BY DECADE AVERAGE BY GENDER IN THE CARIBBEAN

Unemployment Rate	1980-1989	1990-1999	1995-1999
<b>BELIZE</b>			
Total	....	12.4	13.2
Men	....	9.5	10.0
Women	....	18.3	19.7
<b>JAMAICA</b>			
Total	23.8	15.8	16.0
Men	14.4	10.0	10.3
Women	34.7	22.6	22.7
<b>TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO</b>			
Total	15.4	17.2	15.1
Men	14.0	14.7	12.6
Women	18.3	21.4	19.3

Source: The World Bank (2001)

On the contrary, in the case of Trinidad and Tobago the rate of female unemployment for the same period rose to 19 per cent (*See Table 4*).

The last characteristic feature of stabilisation policy - the contradictory role of fiscal policy - places government policy on an ambiguous footing with respect to gender issues. To the extent that the government uses fiscal policy as a microeconomic tool to develop the services sector, it plays a positive role in expanding female employment.

At the same time, however, the use of fiscal policy as an adjustment tool increases unemployment and in fact divorces macroeconomic policies from the needs of the real economy (Rodrik, 1999). To the extent that women form a significant part of the most vulnerable groups in Central America and the Caribbean, government macroeconomic policy is in fact a gender discriminatory policy. Data available in the case of Jamaica for 1999 reported a higher incidence of unmet financial needs for female-headed households than for male-headed households (66.6 per cent versus 57.7 per cent).

## CONCLUSION

Stabilisation policies have real effects. These have not only provoked a change in the composition of output of some of the economies of Central America and the Caribbean but have also shaped institutional change. In particular, they have ultimately redefined the role of the government.

The gender impact of stabilisation policies is for the most part ambiguous. It is marked by a series of trade-offs. They have certainly not narrowed the gender gap. The evidence presented in this paper indicates that structural change has benefited female employment, but at the expense of developing a skilled labour force. Governments, perhaps unknowingly, have promoted the insertion of women into the labour force but at the same time have suppressed key benefits that accrued to women as heads of household.

Policies can be devised to achieve gender equity. Our position, however, is that prior to the elaboration of any list of recommendations, policy makers must become aware that the role of

women in relation to the productive structure and the role of government with respect to women are tainted by ambiguity and contradiction. There is no guarantee that in the absence of the redefinition of both roles, any policy to achieve gender equity will live up to its promise. ■

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**Table 5**  
FEMALE LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATE – LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN  
1991 - 2002

	1991	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002 b/
Argentina	28.1	34.2	33.2	34.4	35.4	36.7	35.6	34.8	35.6
Brazil	44.3	43.9	44.9	44.3	44.5	43.9	45.2	43.9	45
Chile	30.8	34.0	33.9	34.6	35.0	35.3	34.9	34.0	33.8
Colombia	46.3	49.5	48.0	51.0	52.9	54.9	54.8	55.6	n.d.
Costa Rica	30.6	32.4	31.1	33.5	35.6	35.5	35.0	38.6	38.2
Ecuador	43.2	42.4	42.8	43.1	46.1	47.8	46.0	44.7	42.1
El Salvador	35.0	36.5	n.d.	35.3	39.4	39.1	38.7	39.5	38.6
Honduras	26.6	42.4	n.d.	35.0	32.8	37.6	n.d.	34.7	32.5
Jamaica	47.6	49.7	48.8	49.8	50.3	49.0	50.1	50.2	
Mexico	34.5	38.0	38.2	39.3	39.3	38.5	39.5	38.8	38.2
Panama	38.1	42.5	41.5	43.1	44.2	43.1	41.6	41.7	44.8
Dominican Republic	37.5	35.7	36.5	36.2	n.d.	36.6	40.6	40.0	42.1
Uruguay	43.8	46.6	46.7	45.8	49.2	48.6	49.3	51.0	49.4
Venezuela	38.1	41.4	43.3	45.1	47.2	48.8	47.3	50.9	54.3

Source: ECLAC (2002)



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## ABSTRACTS OF SELECTED ECLAC/CDCC PUBLICATIONS

APRIL TO JUNE 2003

### **Report of the National Training Workshop on the ECLAC Methodology to assess the Macroeconomic and Social Impacts of Natural Disasters**

*ECLAC. Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, 2003*  
LC/CAR/G.736

The National Training Workshop on the ECLAC Methodology to assess the Macroeconomic and Social Impacts of Natural Disasters was held in Castries, Saint Lucia from 17 to 19 December 2002. Among the primary objectives of this Workshop were to strengthen the capability of Saint Lucia to conduct its own assessment of a (relatively minor) disaster and to develop its capacity to create an effective counterpart team in the event of a serious disaster. This report summarises the findings of an evaluation questionnaire completed by participants, including their recommendations for the planning of subsequent Workshops. The Programme and List of Participants for this Workshop as well as the table of contents for the *Disaster Assessment Training Manual for Small Island Developing States (LC/CAR/G.709)* are appended to the report.

### **Report of the Subregional Meeting on the Contribution of Yachting to Development in the Eastern Caribbean**

*ECLAC. Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, 2003*  
LC/CAR/G.737

Participants in this meeting (convened in Port of Spain in December 2002) included sailing enthusiasts, as well as

service providers and professionals associated with the yachting sector in the Eastern Caribbean. The meeting highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of the subregional yachting sector, based on the findings of country studies conducted in Antigua and Barbuda, the British Virgin Islands, Grenada, Netherlands Antilles (St. Maarten), Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago. Presentations on the country studies identified the need for appropriate skills training and human resource development, investment promotion and marketing, and the establishment of occupational safety guidelines and standards, among other issues. The studies also revealed the strengths of the sector, which include its significant economic impact on national income. Following the presentations, participants formed working groups to identify those mechanisms that could further develop the Caribbean yachting sector.

### **Domestic Violence and the Law in the Turks and Caicos Islands: Directions for Law Reform**

*ECLAC. Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, 2003*  
LC/CAR/G.741

In October 2002, the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean conducted a mission to the Turks and Caicos Islands designed to assess domestic violence legislation in that territory. During the mission, representatives of the judiciary, the Ministry of Education, Health and Social Services, the police service and non-governmental organizations were interviewed about the status and

potential reform of laws relating to domestic violence. This document outlines the findings of that mission and makes recommendations for law reform. It also makes recommendations for policy and programmatic initiatives that would be necessary to complement and buttress the legal response to domestic violence.

### **Report of the ECLAC-CDCC/CIDA Gender Equality Programme Regional Conference on Gender-Based Violence and the Administration of Justice**

*ECLAC. Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, 2003*  
LC/CAR/G.744

This conference was convened to review the investments made by the Canadian International Development Agency Gender Equality Programme (CGEP) over the past five years to eliminate gender-based violence in the Caribbean. During the conference, presenters reviewed justice system responses to gender-based violence, focusing specifically on issues of police training and supporting social services. Working groups were then formed to consider and make recommendations on victim and batterer intervention programmes; strengthening police training; and developing police response protocols. Summaries of country presentations on *Police Training on Domestic Violence (Annex I)* and *Policing Sexual Assaults (Annex II)* are also included in the conference report. ■





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