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**THE CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN
TO THE ECONOMY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION
ESPECIALLY IN RELATION TO
UNPAID WORK PERFORMED BY WOMEN
IN THE CARIBBEAN**

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Preface

This document was prepared for the Caribbean Subregional Preparatory Meeting for the Tenth Session of the Regional conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean to be convened by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean. It seeks to draw the attention on the condition of women in Caribbean countries and their contribution to the economy and social protection, especially in relation to unpaid work.

The area of focus of this document is that of unpaid work, a sector in which many more women than men are employed. Unpaid domestic work or reproductive care work directly impacts on the productive sector contributing in no small measure to the economic sustainability of society. Women's unremunerated work takes place mostly within the home where women work longer hours than men performing tasks ranging from the preparing and cooking of food, cleaning and laundry to the provision of health care for family members. However, a large part of this work also takes place outside of the home, where women are involved in agricultural production, welfare work at community level, and volunteer work within institutions and organizations.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPFA) to which all Caribbean governments are signatories recognizes the domestic work performed by women as a key contributor to *“the economy and to combating poverty through both the remunerated and unremunerated work at home, in the community and in the workplace”*. The BPFA recognizes the fact that women must participate as “both agents and beneficiaries in the development process”, and called for governments to implement gender impact analyses of economic policy making to ensure equal opportunities for women, to undertake legislative reforms to give women equal access to economic resources and to measure unpaid work performed by women.

Conceptual framework

This paper will examine concepts of unpaid work as performed by women, the care economy and time use. It will also seek to provide linkages between reproductive and productive work, the importance of such work for economic and social development and women's participation in decision-making. The concepts of "public" and "private" will be explored from the gender perspective.

Reference will be made to international agreements relating to unpaid work by women, in particular the BPFA, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and agreements of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) which include articles relating to gender equality and maternity and paternity rights. In addition, reference will be made to the incorporation of these mandates within the constitutions and legal frameworks of countries in the subregion.

Introduction

There is a direct link to women's lack of access to power and decision-making in the invisibility of their contribution to the economy through the unpaid domestic work they perform on a daily basis in the home and community. The 1999 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report addressed the issue of care and the global economy, linking the care economy to the invisible heart, and the often neglected care and caring labour necessary for the economic development of societies. *"The task of providing for dependants, for children, the sick, the elderly, and (do not forget) all the rest of us, exhausted from the demands of daily life. Human development is nourished not only by expanding incomes, schooling, health, empowerment and a clean environment, but also care. And the essence of care is in the human bonds that it creates and supplies. Care, sometimes referred to as social reproduction, is also essential for economic sustainability."*

An important and yet unrecognized aspect of women's contribution to economic development of the subregion is in the area of food security, through their involvement in food production – where women are responsible for kitchen or backyard gardens which for decades have provided food for their families, friends and the community. In addition, women have been involved in cottage industries, garment making/needlework, and the vending of fish, agricultural and other food products. It is Caribbean women who have been responsible for intraregional transportation of food – though this activity is now dwindling.

Today unpaid work needs to be recognized, especially for understanding the contribution of women to the national economy and for assuring women better living conditions. The only Caribbean country to recognize women's unwaged work is the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago in 1996. This achievement was the result of ongoing advocacy by the women's movement in that country, particularly the work of the National Union of Domestic Employees¹ (NUDE), which was in the forefront of advocating for government to count women's unremunerated work. NUDE is also affiliated to the International Wages for Housework Group which stressed that all

¹ Ms. Clotil Walcott of Trinidad and Tobago, was the founder of the first trade union for domestic employees in Trinidad and Tobago – the National Union of Domestic Employees (NUDE).

women do housework – a job for which they receive no money. The Wages for Housework campaign linked the powerlessness of women to their lack of money.

The Counting Women's Unremunerated Work Bill was introduced into Parliament by Senator Diana Mahabir-Wyatt in February 1995, as a private members Bill as an act to "*require the Central Statistical Office and other public bodies to produce and maintain statistics relative to the counting of unremunerated work and to provide a mechanism for quantifying and recording the monetary value of such work.*" The Bill was expected to take into account and give value to a wide range of domestic tasks including agricultural work, care-giving of the sick, the disabled, the elderly and very young; work carried out in and around households; unpaid "Social Safety Net" work, and work carried out by both men and women in Non-governmental Organizations, *not as part of the overall GDP but, hopefully, parallel to it, to recognize the value of the work that is being given to society.*"²

In addition to the limited legislative and constitutional provisions which recognize and value the care work performed by women, feminist and gender and development literature have also helped to contribute to our understanding of the relationship between the household and the role of women in the economy or, more specifically, women's role in the labour force. This literature has provided a critique of the private and public spheres of women's lives, in which the household is presented as the private domain to which women are relegated as opposed to the public spheres of the economy and polity which is seen as the almost exclusive domain of men. Feminist economists have redefined the sphere of economic enquiry by emphasizing the concept of the provisioning of human life which encompasses all the tasks that women undertake to maintain human life.

Historical overview

Twelve years after Beijing and three years following the last review, not much change has occurred with respect to the recognition of women's contribution to the economy. There continues to be lack of equality because of the unequal sharing of reproductive work between women and men, and the invisibility of women's work continues – despite commitments to CEDAW, BPFA, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and numerous recommendations emanating from subregional forums on the promotion of gender equality. Research on methods to strengthen the definition and the implementation of counting women's unpaid work is greatly lacking in the subregion.

Historically, gender mainstreaming gained currency from the Third World Conference on Women, held in Nairobi in 1985, which called for the recognition of women's unpaid work. Areas identified for action were:

- (a) The recognition of the extent and value of women's unpaid work, inside and outside the home;
- (b) Inclusion of women's paid and unpaid work in national accounts and economic statistics;

² Parliamentary Debates of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Tuesday, 7 February 1995 – 1453.

- (c) The sharing of domestic responsibilities;
- (d) The development of services, to reduce women's child-care and domestic workload, including introduction of incentives to encourage employers to provide child-care facilities for working parents; and
- (e) The establishment of flexible working hours to encourage the sharing of child-care and domestic work between parents.

Paragraph 206 of the Beijing Platform for Action calls for "Actions to be taken by national, regional and international statistical services and relevant governmental and United Nations agencies, in cooperation with research and documentation organizations, in their respective areas of responsibility, specifically to: *Develop a more comprehensive knowledge of all forms of work and employment by:*

- (i) *Improving data collection on the unremunerated work which is already included in the United Nations System of National Accounts, such as in agriculture, particularly subsistence agriculture, and other types of non-market production activities;*
- (ii) *Improving measurement that at present underestimates women's unemployment and underemployment in the labour market;*
- (iii) *Developing methods, in the appropriate forum, for assessing the value, in quantitative terms, of unremunerated work that is outside national accounts, such as caring for dependents and preparing food, for possible reflection in satellite or other official accounts that may be produced separately from but are consistent with core national accounts, with a view to recognizing the economic contribution of women and making visible the unequal distribution of remunerated and unremunerated work between women and men;*

Calls were also made for the introduction of policies to promote harmonization of work and family responsibilities for women and men.³ In 2004 Caribbean governments, in preparation for the Ninth Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, adopted a number of recommendations aimed at strengthening the process towards the attainment of gender equality, social justice and development in the subregion with particular reference to:

- (a) Continuing to collect and examine data on women's and men's unwaged work as a contribution to the domestic economy;
- (b) Strengthening the gender framework (including time use surveys) within the methodology for poverty assessment in the subregion in order to capture the differential impact of poverty on women and men; and

³ Beijing Platform for Action.

(c) Reviewing and examining the policies and laws in order to enhance provisions for child support and maintenance in so far as the vulnerability of women and the households that they head is integrally linked to women's disproportionate responsibility for child care.⁴

Twelve years after the Beijing Conference a vital achievement has been the decision of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC to include gender statistics in the working programme, but many of the agreed actions remains to be taken, especially in relation to time-use surveys. These surveys focus on the frequency and duration of human activities and attempt to measure the different ways in which people use their time during a 24-hour period. A primary motivator for the conduct of time-use surveys is a growing recognition that traditional statistical methods, such as national censuses, undervalue women's contributions to the economy.⁵

In the Caribbean there is definitely an urgent need for counting women's unwaged work. The overwhelming responsibility of Caribbean Community (CARICOM) women for unwaged caring work both explains and masks their poverty. It is masked or invisible because it forces poor women to search for avenues for making money whether via the formal or informal sector or via remittances or male financial assistance.

There is also need to quantify the value of housework to the economy. The findings of a recent survey in the United Kingdom indicated that if housework was paid, it would be worth an estimated 700 billion British pounds. The Caribbean subregion is still to undertake a comprehensive time use survey of households to calculate the monetary value of unpaid housework to the economy.

Women and care work

One of the most enduring facts of life is that assumptions and beliefs about the roles that men and women perform in society (as breadwinners and mothers/caregivers) remain universal and entrenched. Despite advances in the status of women and their entry into the paid labour force, women's central life interest continues to be viewed as being more focused on the traditional family life, what Barriteau⁶ refers to as the ideological relations of gender, where the cultural specific construction of what it means to be a 'man' and a 'woman' in a given society remains stubbornly unchanged.

Mark Figueroa⁷ identifies what he coins as gender privileging to the socio-economic outcomes and status of males and females in Caribbean society. Gender privileging is defined as a system of rights, exemptions, advantages and impunities enjoyed by one gender over the other

⁴ Accelerating Gender Equality. Report of the Technical Meeting of National Machineries for Women; and Fourth Caribbean Ministerial Conference on Women: Review and Appraisal of the Beijing Platform for Action. 11-13 February 2004.

⁵ See Joyce Mary, Stewart Jay, "What can we learn from time-use data?", in *Monthly Labour Review*, Bureau of Labour Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labour, Washington D.C., August 1999, pp. 3-6

⁶ Violet Eudine Barriteau, 2002. Understanding Relations of Gender in Contemporary Barbados. UWI Centre for Gender and Development Studies. Paper presented to the National Advisory Council on Gender, Barbados.

⁷ Mark Figueroa. 1998, Gender Privileging and Socio-Economic Outcomes: The case of Health and Education in Jamaica, in *Gender and the Family in the Caribbean*, Proceedings of the Workshop "Family and the Quality of Gender Relations" 5-6 March 1997, Edited by Wilma Bailey. ISER, UWI, Mona, Jamaica.

and which gives one gender control over or access to expanded social space, resources, prestige and/or power.

In the context of the subject matter of this paper, it could be argued that the male gender has generally been privileged in the public sphere, where they dominate the public social space (males in work outside the home; males socializing in public spaces; males in soldiering), whereas there has been a privileging of the female gender in certain facets of the domestic private sphere (females in domestic work; females in childrearing). This translates into *the fact that boys, young men and indeed older men have the right to be in the streets day and night while they female relatives tend to be confined to the home.*

However the *privileging of the female gender with respect the domestic sphere does not in general bring with it a gender privilege for women* in the public sphere. Without getting too much into a theoretical discussion, the underlying thesis is that there is privileging of the female gender when it comes to domestic tasks such as washing, cleaning and cooking in the home, which is taken for granted as appropriate to the female gender. *It is not gender inappropriate for a female to put a man out of the kitchen or indeed the house if she is cleaning or in certain circumstances to direct him on the clothes he may wear.*

This privileging of the female in the domestic sphere is closely linked to the historic under-privileging of the female gender, which precludes them from exercising power in the public sphere. Control of the public space translates into control of the market economy by the males, who have the ownership and control of wealth, higher incomes and the ability to spend a larger portion of their incomes on themselves. In stark contrast, females have less access to income and control of wealth, and any money they earn is spent first on food and clothing for their children and other family members, leaving very little for them to spend on themselves. In fact women's access to the labour market is severely affected by their reproductive work, thus limiting their access to economic resources.

The nature of women's and men's participation in the labour force is also very different. Women still have to reconcile family responsibilities and market work and they are employed in different jobs and occupation than men, often with lower wages. Women have engaged in the less formal types of work, working as unpaid workers in family businesses, in the informal sector or in various types of household economic activities. They continue to receive less pay than men. Official statistics on home-based work are scarce and its importance is grossly underestimated. Today the major factor still influencing gender-based differentials in the labour market is the division of work within the household and the time spent in the unpaid work. Women continue to spend more time on unpaid work than men.

According to the ILO, women throughout the world are primarily responsible for the care of family members and household tasks and therefore face greater constraints than men in terms of the amount of time and effort they can put into paid employment and productive work. In developing countries, there is still considerable reliance on the extended family – usually women and girls – for care of children, the sick and the elderly, and few public or private services have emerged in response to the increasing demand for care.

Defining unpaid work

I am referring to domestic work which is necessary for the sustenance of life and health, to the care of the elderly, to the care of the handicapped, to childbearing, child-rearing, the socialization of children, the teaching, the feeding, the transporting, all that essential, emotional and psychological work which goes into developing people so that they become productive members of society, rather than unproductive and antisocial. All this work has traditionally been women's work.⁸

Caribbean feminist research has explored the interactions between gendered divisions within the household and the labour market in an effort to dispel the artificial closures which ignore the interplay between domestic, family and community life. There has been much speculation that the need of the Caribbean woman for employment is caused by her major responsibility for family welfare, whether as heads of households or as secondary income earners, brought about by the increase in single parenting; the increased cost of living which demands the employment of two persons to support the household and the fact that it is now common for women to work outside the home.⁹

Available literature refer to domestic work¹⁰ or housework as *unpaid or unwaged or unremunerated work*¹¹, and all agree that this work is performed predominantly by women in their own homes, and while it primarily involves the care of children, is not limited to childcare but involves a wide range of activities. The literature identifies many different types of unpaid work, such as: (i) unpaid domestic work; (ii) unpaid subsistence activities; (iii) unpaid family work; (iv) unpaid work in paid workplaces; and (vi) volunteering.

The unpaid domestic work tasks performed by women for their households and families include preparation of meals, cleaning, clothing care, gardening, home maintenance and management, care for children and adults, and in some instances the provision of unpaid help to other households. It also includes shopping or obtaining services, and unpaid work in family businesses. It is important to underline that each category of work performed includes a subset of tasks, for example, unpaid subsistence activity is another kind of unpaid work, performed predominantly by women, and includes activities such as cultivation of vegetables, fetching wood and water and the care of livestock animals.

Volunteering which represents another category of unpaid work is often performed for persons that are not family members. It means both work done for formal non-profit organizations and care provided in an informal way by individuals for other individuals. Volunteer work is varied and extensive. It includes caring for neighbours, forming community

⁸ Senator Diana Mahabir-Wyatt as recorded in the *Hansard* of Trinidad and Tobago during the debate of the Counting Women's unremunerated work bill in 1995-1996.

⁹ Stuart, Sheila. *Demystifying Gender and Economics: The Role of Women in the Economies of the Caribbean*. 1996. Paper presented to the WCC/CCC Consultation on Economic Justice for Women. Antigua and Barbuda.

¹⁰ The concept of domestic work has been variously referred to as housework and/or domestic labour and these terms are used interchangeably in this paper to refer to work in the domestic economy, also referred to as the care economy or reproductive work.

¹¹ It is argued that the time devoted to housework limits women's opportunities to earn wages or salaries in the formal labour market.

groups and institutions, advocacy, helping out in political campaigns, working with people in or leaving prison, agriculture work community gardens, international producing theatre and arts, counseling and education. In the Caribbean, women also perform unpaid labour in the agricultural sector, and yet continue to have more responsibilities than men in the household, which reinforces women's marginalization and contributes to the gendered dimension of poverty.¹²

As mentioned in the introduction to this paper, the NUDE in Trinidad and Tobago, and the International Wages for Housework advocacy group, called repeatedly for an analysis of women's workload and lack of income emphasizing that women's workload was continually expanding yet they received the lowest wages. The call for the inclusion of women's unpaid work either in the Gross Domestic Product, or in a "Satellite Account" of each country in the subregion is seen as one of the most concrete ways of supporting women's fight against poverty.

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago stands alone as the only Caribbean State to pass legislation to Count Women's Unremunerated Work in 1996. The Counting Women's Unremunerated Work Bill was first introduced in February 1995, as an Act to *"require the Central Statistical Office and other public bodies to produce and maintain statistics relative to the counting of unremunerated work and to provide a mechanism for quantifying and recording the monetary value of such work."* The Bill was expected to take into account and give value to a wide range of domestic tasks including agricultural work, care-giving of the sick, the disabled, the elderly and very young; work carried out in and around households; unpaid "Social Safety Net" work, and work carried out by both men and women in Non-governmental Organizations, *not as part of the overall GDP but, hopefully, parallel to it, to recognize the value of the work that is being given to society.*¹³

Social services

Another aspect of the unpaid work performed by women is best described as an extension of the social services that should in essence be provided by the State. This was magnified during the period of structural adjustment, when a greater burden was placed on women to provide social services once provided by the State which mirrored the unpaid care work carried out at the domestic level, for example, health care and other unpaid community services. This trend has continued over the last decade and has been exacerbated by the growing Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) epidemic.

The additional burden of care caused by the impact of HIV-AIDS in most countries of the Caribbean has added not only to the unpaid workload of predominantly older women, but it has also added to their poverty. These grandmothers and other relatives are increasingly being called upon to take care of their sick children and/or spouses and are often left to look after the orphaned grandchildren when parents afflicted with the disease die.

In many instances women are the ones looking after family members with AIDS-related illnesses because of the lack of hospital beds or because of the stigma and discrimination

¹² www.unpac.ca (February 2007).

¹³ Parliamentary Debates of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Tuesday, February 7, 1995 – 1453.

associated with the disease, which again makes this unpaid work very invisible. Further, women are likely to fall victim to poverty when the male head of household falls ill, leaving them to bear the burden of caring for orphaned children. Further, the loss of income is often the catalyst for women to seek other sources of income, whether legitimate or illegitimate.

This and other responsibilities underscore the myriad of social services provided by women at all stages in their lifecycle and for which they receive no payment or economic reward. In this regard, women contribute to what are very weak and inadequate social service delivery programmes and in no small measure to social protection.

Survival strategies

The gradual erosion of women's livelihoods in the agricultural sector as a result of trade liberalization policies have resulted in severe economic hardships for women as countries in the subregion battle with declining economic growth. Many women have been forced to adopt their own survival strategies, many of which are yet to be documented. The available studies point to an escalation in the informalisation of economies, the steady contraction of already inadequate social services, lack of a comprehensive welfare system, and negative fall-outs from the loss of preferential markets for their agricultural exports brought about by the global trade.

Women who once played a key role as marketers of agricultural produce in the domestic food marketing system and the inter-island or intraregional trade are now faced with a growing number of challenges which militate against their economic activity in this sector. The two greatest challenges are: (a) the increasing importation of agricultural produce, leading to a reduction in the domestic market for local produce, but which also impacts significantly on the lowering of income for family-sized producers who are forced to sell at lower prices in order to compete; and (b) the diminished markets for primary goods as a result of the removal of preferential markets, particularly for bananas.

In the aftermath of the sleuth of economic reforms, strict monetary policies and the elimination of barriers to the movement of goods have had a corrosive effect on the lives of Caribbean people, especially on women who have been forced to find new strategies for survival in order to feed their families. The unequal gender relations within this changing process also means that women are more disadvantaged than men.

These challenging economic circumstances have led to an increased involvement in risky '*employment activities*' by women as an alternative means of survival. These activities include an increase in migration and drug trafficking, commercial sex work and involvement in the cultivation and marketing of illegal drugs. Women as heads of households who no longer have access to legitimate work avenues face lives of acute poverty leading many to take desperate actions as they struggle to ensure an everyday survival for their children.

The available information point to the fact that even in this sphere of illegal activity, there is blatant exploitation of women, their labour, their sexuality and their time which urgently needs to be further investigated. A growing number of women are prepared to swallow pellets of cocaine filled packets, (risking their very lives) and board a plane to travel intra and

extraregionally in exchange for money to feed, clothe and educate their children or to make improvements to their social situation. Some women engage in this risky activity in order to meet the costs of taking care of family members, while others are coerced into this activity by gangs.

While information on this clandestine activity is still to be researched, anecdotal information reveals that the majority of women who engage in illegal activities are typically poverty-stricken and are often in a desperate state. For example, most of the 'drug mules' who end up in prisons in foreign countries leave children in their home countries, who are often forced to fend for themselves as the majority of drug couriers are single mothers. "Their main worry is their children, who have been left with mothers or sisters or friends, and how they can keep in contact with them."¹⁴

At the other end of the spectrum is the growing numbers of women, displaced from the legitimate agricultural sector and economy who are now engaged in the cultivation and marketing of illegal drugs as a means of supporting their families.

Another important factor in this complex maze of economic dependency that helps to push poor women into situations which make them vulnerable to HIV infection is the lack of employment opportunities and their sole responsibility for family, childcare and other dimensions of the domestic workload, which have forced many women and girls to resort to direct and indirect sex work as a survival strategy. The gender-power relations are such that it is usually men, not women who are the decision makers in sexual relationships. The power disparities includes access to material and financial resources which makes it extremely difficult, if not impossible for a woman to negotiate for safer sex practices with her partner, especially if she is financially dependent on him.¹⁵ In this respect transactional sex (usually unsafe) is exchanged for money and/or other necessities.

Unfortunately it is complex and untenable situations such as these described here which subject many poor women with family responsibility to exclusion, vulnerability and in some instances societal ostracism. In situations where there is pressure to feed her children, risk-taking by the sex worker may assume secondary importance:

*"When you are hustling in order to feed yourself and your children, the extra money that a man offers for unsafe sex lets you take the chance and forget about any disease"*¹⁶.

The informal sector

The informal sector represents a significant component of the economic structure of many developing countries and in many instances represents an important provider of employment and economic opportunity¹⁷ which, though central to the economy, often remains

¹⁴ The United Kingdom-based Hibiscus Project, which works with Jamaican Prisoners and their families.

¹⁵ See Stuart, 2000

¹⁶ See Antonius-Smits, Christel C.F., Juanita Altenberg, Teersa Burleson et al. 1999.

¹⁷ UN-ESCAP. 2006. Project Document on Inter-regional Cooperation on the Measurement of Informal Sector and Informal employment.

invisible. The informal sector has always been an avenue of employment for Caribbean women and has traditionally been regarded as the domain of women without a regular paid job or those who cannot survive on income from a male breadwinner.

These women have used a variety of subsistence activities to provide for their families including agricultural work in backyard gardening and the rearing of animals for family and sometimes community consumption, as well as other marginal economic projects and unpaid work in the home on the periphery of the cash economy.

This sector has expanded rapidly in the last two decades in response to the changing economic environment including the structural adjustment policies and other economic upheavals such as natural disasters and the loss of much of the export manufacturing sector, which employed large numbers of women in the export processing offshore operations, and the loss of the banana industry in the Windward Islands.

More and more women and men, who have no other avenues for employment, crowd into the services sector of the informal sector, particularly in the tourism sector operating in such areas as street vending, operating taxi services, selling food or other commercial goods and domestic work.

In many respects the avenues for economic sustainability for women are being shaped by the demands of the shifts in the global economy. For example, the subregion has witnessed a decline in the female hucksters and the inter-island trade in agricultural trade which once dominated an estimated 80 per cent to 90 per cent of the inter-island trade in agricultural goods and fuelled a vibrant informal economy.¹⁸

Further informal work is unprotected work and falls outside the mainstream of social protection, much needed by poor families to advance their social and economic development. Increasingly, informal work has expanded to work in the cash economy, characterized by the move from street vending and such operations to more sophisticated trading and marketing in unregistered small businesses which are not taxed.

Informal work nonetheless contributes substantially to the economy and national accounts, but there is no accurate measurement of this contribution in official statistics. Without the official statistics, alike the uncounted unpaid domestic activities, “*estimates of female participation rates could be implausibly low, GDP significantly underestimated and the share of population living below the poverty line overestimated.*” The lack of data also impacts on the formulation and implementation of evidence based policies and programmes which seek to promote gender equality and eliminate child labour and poverty.

It is this dearth of information on the measurement and dimension of activities in the informal sector and its impact on social and economic development that has led the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean to embark on a research project aimed at raising public awareness and improving the availability and analyses of data on the informal sector – including employment, and the contribution to GDP. It is anticipated that the availability of data

¹⁸ See Nurse and Sandiford. 1995.

on the informal sector and informal employment will improve data on women's economic participation and facilitate the development of more adequate measures of gender equality and women's economic empowerment. In addition, more reliable information will be generated on the *relationship between informal economic activities and poverty, gender inequalities in economic opportunities and participation, and the need for promoting decent work for all workers.*

Migration and the Caribbean transnational family

Another survival strategy adopted by Caribbean women in search of better economic opportunities is that of migration. In fact, Caribbean peoples out of sheer economic necessity have migrated both internally and externally for decades, which is another critical factor in the formation of female headed households. However migration has also been responsible for the formation and structure of triangular family links creating what has been termed the Caribbean transnational family, which has been described as one of the most effective functioning family units brought about as a result of migration.¹⁹

Recent literature on Caribbean kinship has reversed the negative image once held of the Caribbean family unit as one of fragmentation, breakdown and dysfunction by highlighting functioning and supportive extended family networks despite residential and geographical separation²⁰, "viewed from the perspective of interdependent linkages the Caribbean family emerges as a transnational institution, powerful and resilient."

Within this context the transnational family extends across national boundaries, where migrant parents live overseas leaving children and grandmothers in the home country. Economic and emotional support continues to be provided through remittances which are sent home on a regular basis. Migrant parents in the host countries perform the breadwinner role, while the nurturing of children is carried out by extended family members such as grandmothers or other relatives with whom children reside, until they are reunited with their parent(s).

It is interesting to note that the majority of women who migrate, particularly to North America, often end up working in household domestic service as maids or babysitters, replicating their unpaid reproductive role, for which they receive an income in the productive sector. Added to this is the fact that a growing number of women who migrate are now the sole economic providers of their family household.

Patterns of migration have been shifting over the years, including changes in the patterns of migration and economic flows to the Caribbean which point to the fact that gender is a critical dimension in migratory processes and which demonstrate that economic resources whether these be monetary or in kind make a significant contribution to national development, which also needs to be counted.

¹⁹ Rosina Wiltshire-Brodber. 1986. The Caribbean Transnational Family.

²⁰ See UNICEF 2003.

Assessment of responses to the ECLAC questionnaire on unpaid work

Responses to the ECLAC questionnaire on unpaid work were received from a total of 13 Caribbean countries. The assessment presented in this section is based on those responses. The majority of Caribbean countries lack constitutional provisions that recognize the unpaid housework performed by women. Trinidad and Tobago is the only country, which explicitly recognizes unpaid housework performed by women.

Assessment of the responses to the ECLAC questionnaire, indicate that efforts have been made by a number of Caribbean countries to measure the unpaid work of women. These are Jamaica, the Cayman Islands, and Belize. For example, Jamaica in 2004 introduced new statutory rules to provide for the equitable division of assets upon marriage or relationship breakdown. The Property (Rights of Spouses) Act, 2004, though gender-neutral in its provision, should be beneficial to women in proving entitlement to property. The new Act recognizes the contribution made by a spouse in the performance of unpaid domestic work. It recognizes women's contribution made in the areas of child-care and home duties. It stipulated that there should be no presumption that a monetary contribution is of greater value than a non-monetary contribution.

Belize introduced a National Gender Policy which seeks to accelerate progress in this area by addressing issues such as the unpaid economic value of domestic labour, equity in employment opportunities, child-care, access to credit and pension entitlements. The placing of an economic value on childcare and domestic duties in cases of separation or divorce is a step towards the empowerment of women and poverty alleviation particularly for those women who do not work outside the home. The recognition of common law unions is also vital since not only married persons are entitled to this benefit. Amendments by the government in 2001 to the *Supreme Court of Judicature Act* (91 148A) provide for the value of unpaid domestic labour, including child-rearing, to be included in the distribution of property upon the termination of a marriage or common-law union.

Dominica accounted for unpaid domestic work in national statistics in the last census in 2001. In their response to the ECLAC questionnaire, it was noted that there are no known available research studies specific to time use in unpaid domestic work/care-giving in Dominica. Nonetheless at various consultations, the contribution of the housewife to the household economy and the valuing of such work have come up for discussion especially as regards property rights or benefits to women in unions both married and common-law. Such consultations informed:

- (a) The 2003 Draft Report on Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW);
- (b) Report on the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Domestic Violence and Family Law Reform Initiative;
- (c) Preparation of Census 2001; and
- (d) Preparation of the gender policy.

The Cayman Islands reported that there were no official research projects conducted specifically in relation to unpaid domestic work and/or caring activities. However, the Cayman Islands are in the process of conducting a National Assessment of Living Conditions in which some data regarding unpaid domestic work and/or care giving activities should be revealed. In addition, the 1999 Cayman Islands Population and Housing Census collected data regarding the number of hours persons self-reported that they spent on unpaid housework, unpaid childcare and unpaid elderly care. This data is broken down by district and sex. However, the Economics and Statistics Office was unable to confirm whether or not this data was sufficient enough to actually capture these unpaid activities.

Suriname made reference to a study “Verkenndend beoordeling van mensenhandel in het Caribisch gebied” (Investigation of Trafficking in persons in the Caribbean) by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), June 2005, which states that paid domestic work is mostly carried out by women and is also informal, hardly noticeable, undervalued and unprotected. Investigators have not focused on this subject, because it is one of the most concealed jobs and takes place in private buildings. There is no specific law or regulation regarding women’s paid domestic workers in Suriname and most of the women have no employment contract, which makes them more vulnerable for exploitation.

The Bahamas, Barbados and St. Vincent and the Grenadines reported that there were no mechanisms for measuring the unpaid domestic work of women. While Trinidad and Tobago did not complete the questionnaire, this is the only Caribbean country with legislation which provides for the counting of women’s unremunerated work. Act No. 29 of 1996 of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago require “*the Central Statistical Office and other public bodies to produce and maintain statistics relative to the counting of unremunerated work and to provide a mechanism for quantifying and recording the monetary value of such work*”.

In addition to the responses from the ECLAC questionnaire, selected data taken from census data is presented below which records the “non-economic” home duties performed by men and women in the Caribbean. The information in tables 1 and 2, show that in Belize and Guyana women have the greater burden of responsibilities for household work. The data also show that in Guyana men’s participation in home duties is high, where it is almost equal to that of women. The lowest percentages are in St. Kitts and Nevis and in The Bahamas. The highest percentages of domestic duties performed by men are in Guyana and Jamaica; and the lowest in Trinidad and Tobago and The Bahamas. CARICOM women’s responsibilities for unwaged work are numerous. They have overwhelming responsibility for child/family care; the poorer the household, community and/or country, the greater the burden of work. Because of this responsibility, women “hustle”²¹ more than men to find a means of survival, often by finding multiple sources of waged work and/or other income.

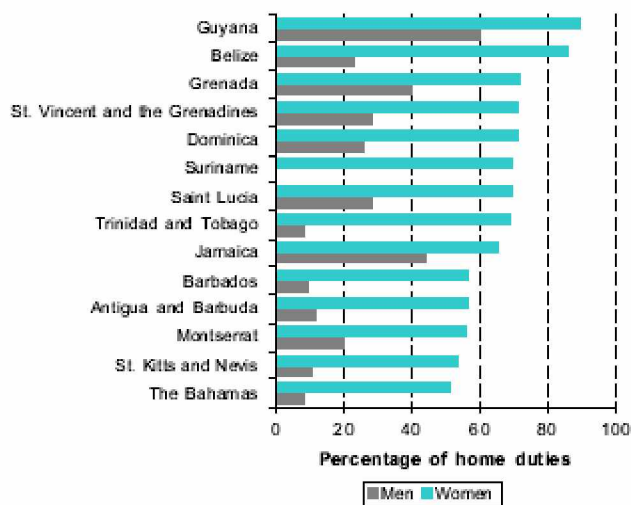
²¹ That is to underline the arduous efforts of women in finding the necessary resources for a decent life.

Table 1: Percentage of non-economically active with home duties as main activity, 1980-1981 and 1990/1991.²²

Country	1980/1981		1990/1991	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Antigua and Barbuda	...	...	56	12
The Bahamas	50	1	51	8
Barbados	57	2	56	9
Belize	94	8	85	23
Dominica	75	11	71	25
Grenada	75	24	72	40
Guyana	86	10	89	60
Jamaica	...	...	65	44
Montserrat	59	10	56	20
St. Kitts and Nevis	...	...	53	11
Saint Lucia	80	15	69	28
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	75	7	71	28
Suriname	...	...	69	<1
Trinidad and Tobago	73	5	69	8

According to Andaiye²³, women's wages are kept down by the persistent treatment of women as primarily unwaged care-workers. In addition, economic restructuring has increased the burden of both unwaged and low-waged work and the expansion of women's presence in the informal sector which is undirected, unregulated, insecure, and oriented towards survival.

Table 2: Home duties the main activity of most non-economically active women.²⁴



²² See Caribbean Community Secretariat, *Women and Men in the Caribbean Community. Facts and figures, 1980-2001*, Caribbean Community Secretariat, Georgetown, Guyana, 2003, p.88.

²³ See Gender Equality in the Caribbean – Reality or Illusion 2003

²⁴ See Caribbean Community Secretariat, *Women and Men in the Caribbean Community. Facts and figures, 1980-2001*, Caribbean Community Secretariat, Georgetown, Guyana, 2003, p.88.

Valuing unpaid work

The assumption of a sexual division of labour ignores the importance of women's work and introduces a gender bias, through the undervaluing of the economic contributions of women in the domestic economy. As Andaiye argues, the foundation on which waged work continues to be segmented between women and men is the sexual division of labour at the level of unwaged caring labour in the household. According to her this recognition has provided the conceptual breakthrough, which led CARICOM governments to support the mandate to count women's unwaged work at the Beijing Conference. *"This mandate has been called one of the two most important decisions taken at Beijing because it addresses the basis of women's particular economic exploitation."*²⁵

Despite these hard won battles, there stubbornly remains a reluctance to view housework as real work because it does not earn money. *Even among feminists who have emphasized that housework is real work, there is strong tendency to take the model of market employment as basic.* (R.M. Blackburn, 1999). It is interesting to note that economist Kenneth Galbraith as early as 1975 developed a proposal to value unpaid work. In *"Money: Whence it Came, Where it Went,"* Galbraith argues that if the value of our money is work, then all work can provide the value foundation for money.²⁶

Some have argued that that there is a fundamental theoretical flaw²⁷ in the application of market conceptions of pay to the domestic economy, pointing out that it is erroneous to describe the domestic work performed by women as unpaid work because housework is carried out in the domestic economy and not in the 'capitalist' market economy. Indeed in the parliamentary debate of the *"Counting Unremunerated Work Bill"* in Trinidad and Tobago one of the male Senators admitted his own skepticism regarding merely documenting the unremunerated work of women and adding it to the country's GDP as making the GDP look bigger – and feared that this would lead to the country being graduated to a higher level of development and not being eligible for funds.²⁸ As a result, it called for the creation of a separate account to assess and quantify women's contributions to economic development.

²⁵ Andaiye, Op Cit, Page 88

²⁶ See Galbraith John Kenneth, *Money whence it came, where it went*, Houghton Mifflin, 1975.

²⁷ R. M. Blackburn argues that housework is non-market work and therefore cannot be viewed in the same way as work in the market sector. See "is Housework Unpaid Work" in International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy, Volume 19 Number 7/8 1999.

²⁸ Senator Prof. John Spence, Tuesday 28 May 1996.

Strategic Objective 8 of the BPFA, calls for the development of an international classification of activities for time-use statistics that is sensitive to the differences between women and men in remunerated and unremunerated work, and collect data disaggregated by sex. At the national level, subject to national constraints:

- (i) Conduct regular time-use studies to measure, in quantitative terms, unremunerated work, including recording those activities that are performed simultaneously with remunerated or other unremunerated activities;
 - (ii) Measure, in quantitative terms, unremunerated work that is outside national accounts, work to improve methods to assess its value, and accurately reflect its value in satellite or other official accounts which are separate from, but consistent with core national accounts.
- (Paragraph 206, item G).

Responses to the ECLAC questionnaire reveal that very few studies have been conducted in the Caribbean on women's paid and unpaid domestic work, however, the Government of Belize in 2001 amended its Supreme Court of Judicature Act to provide for the value of unpaid domestic labour, including child-rearing, to be included in the distribution of property upon the termination of a marriage or common-law union. In addition, in May 2006 the government appointed a Minimum Wage Council to examine paid domestic work, as well as other wages. In January 2007, Cabinet received the recommendations of the Council and approved that wages for domestics would be increased from \$2.25 to \$3.00 per hour.

Belize also reported that a non-governmental organization - Women Issues Network – Belize conducted a study in 2006 on paid domestic wages, which was submitted to the Minimum Wages Council. Dominica reported that while there were no known available research studies specific to time-use in unpaid domestic work/care giving in that country, the contribution of the housewife to the household economy and the valuing of such work have been discussed at various consultations. Areas of concern relate to property rights and benefits to women in unions, both married and common-law.

These consultations informed a number of initiatives and activities, including the preparation of the 2003 draft CEDAW Report, the Report on OECS Domestic Violence and Family Law Reform Initiative; preparation of the 2001 Census; and preparation of the Gender Policy which was presented to Cabinet in March 2006. Recommendations have also been made with respect to the issue of *Property Rights of Spouses in Marriage*, namely to have the indirect contributions by parties considered for provisions on the breakdown of the union, and with respect to *Matrimonial Property & Financial Provision Breakdown*, the criteria for division of property should not be the status of marriage, but the contribution of the parties. Further, the draft CEDAW Report makes recommendation under *Article 16 – Equality in Marriage and Family Law*, for the recognition of the contribution of women to work at home and joint enterprise in division of property upon divorce or breakdown of relationship.

It should be noted that a number of Caribbean countries do have legislation relative to domestic employees, for example, Barbados has a *Domestic Employees (hours of Duty) Act, 1982*, which makes provision for minimum pay or maximum hours per week. Rest periods and hours of work are controlled by statute.

The importance of time-use surveys in measuring unpaid work

Activities excluded from the System of National Accounts (SNA), are household upkeep, such as preparing food, cleaning, taking care of children, the sick, the elderly and the disabled, paying bills, personal development, volunteer work, that is performed both in formal and informal sector.

In the Caribbean there is the need to implement time-use surveys for understanding how unpaid work contributes to the national economies. These studies help to build a solid basis of information necessary for the implementation of gender sensitive policies, and the promotion of the value of women's work, their role in the society and their contribution to national production. Interestingly, the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago is yet to conduct a time-use survey, despite the passage of legislation in 1996 on *counting women's unremunerated work*. In fact as early as 1997, one Senator lamented the fact that "there was no disaggregation of the contribution of women to the Gross Domestic Product – unpaid work done mainly by women. The Senator was critical of the fact that the legislation was a *public relations effort*²⁹, but had immense value in helping to determine the extent of poverty because attached to the legislation was the proviso for government to periodically hold a household survey a minimum of once every three years.

A Draft International Classification of Activities for Time-Use Statistics (ICATUS) was adopted in October 2000 at a United Nations Statistics Division Expert Group Meeting on *Methods for Conducting Time-Use Surveys: Gender issues in the measurement of paid and unpaid work*. The adoption of the ICATUS was viewed as a step toward promoting the collection and compilation of data on paid and unpaid work. It addressed two main issues:

(a) Better measurement of production of goods by household members for own final use. These involve activities considered as work within the production boundary of the System of National Accounts (SNA) but are generally underestimated in labour force statistics, and

(b) Better identification of SNA work in informal sector enterprises. Many of these activities are not covered well in data collection on economic activity for several reasons – women and men who engage in such activities may not consider these as work because they are perceived as too small-scale, of subsistence-level, of short duration or seasonal, or because many of these activities may actually be done as part of production of services for own final use (e.g. cooking food for both the household and for sale); designers of surveys may not identify these accurately in operational definitions and in survey instruments; enumerators may have inadequate knowledge of what these activities are and may impose their own biases and judgments in recording them.³⁰

²⁹ Senator. Prof. John Spence, Senate Debates, December 30, 1997.

³⁰ United Nations Secretariat Statistics Division, *Draft International Classification of Activities for the Time Use Statistics*, Expert Group Meeting on Methods for conducting Time-Use Survey, New York, 23-27 October 2000.

The Draft ICATUS differentiates between activities with respect to the relationship they bear to the production boundary of the SNA. It consists of 15 main categories, which are indicated by alphabetical labels from A to O. Each category consists of eight or more divisions. For example, categories A to E correspond to System of National Accounts work, namely those activities done in relation to production, categories F to H correspond to non-SNA work, namely those done in relation to production, but which fall outside of the SNA boundary; and categories I to O correspond to non-production activities.

The non-productive activities are classified in two groups: personal care, such as eating, sleeping, personal health, dressing and taking care of one's body, and personal recreation, as social visit, reading the newspaper, watching TV, going to the cinema, listening to the music, sports and resting. They are labeled as non productive because their product cannot be received for another, they are not exchangeable.³¹

Actually there are three main problems linked to this revision:

- 1. Underestimation of the value of the good produced for household consumption;*
- 2. Omission of the value of the household maintenance and care work from gross domestic product (GDP);*
- 3. Self-education performed within the home is classified as entirely "non-productive".³²*

Time-use surveys are the starting point for creating satellite accounts to measure unpaid work. They are an alternative mechanism for measuring the value of unpaid work and household production. One weakness of the satellite accounts is that they may not be the most effective way to measure many types of unpaid work such as community participation, self-education, travel time to and from paid work, which are not included in the SNA or extended-SNA production boundaries. Obstacles to the implementation of time-use surveys are a lack of updated and recent statistics, an insufficient appropriation of the concept of gender equality at the national level, antiquated judicial systems that have difficulties to implement gender sensitive public policy, an external impetus to conduct them and insufficient capacity-building and follow-up.

Assessment of the responses to the ECLAC questionnaire, as well as the results of the on-line dialogue carried out in early 2007 indicate that there has been no comprehensive conduct of a time-use survey in the Caribbean. The lack of research on unpaid work and time-use was linked to the lack of financial and human resources to bring effect to this research. Jamaica was the only country that reported the conduct of research by the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) on *Social Reproduction in Jamaica* in 1999. The results are included in Jamaica's first Human Development Report 2000, which has a companion document on gender indicators.

In addition to the summary provided, the following information can be observed from the table below, identifies a total of 17 activities carried out by women in any one week in Jamaica, and which do not appear in national statistics. The case studies of the six women indicate that five are in full-time productive employment with hours varying between 44 to 30 hours. When

³¹ See UNDP (United Nations Development Program), *Global Conference on Unpaid work and the Economy: Gender, Poverty, and the Millennium Development Goals*, Conference Proceedings, Levy Institute, New York, 1-3 October 2005.

³² See UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), *Costing the Care Economy*, Columbia University, New York, December 2004, pp. 32-35.

the reproductive tasks are added, the total hours increase significantly and shows that the three women identified as household helpers had a weekly time use of 117.0; 102.5; and 80.5 hours, respectively, while the three women identified as middle-income earning housewives (presumably with paid household help) recorded hours of 52.0; 42.5; and 35.0. It is interesting to note that these women did not undertake tasks such as caring for children even though two spent a total of five hours per week “picking up children”. While the sample size is extremely small, the data does provide interesting information on the productive and reproductive tasks carried out by women.

Summary of Research findings from **Data in Social Reproduction on Jamaica**, Judith Wedderburn, 1999

1. There are many roles played by women in social reproduction which are not market-oriented and consequently do not appear in national statistics. This includes the bulk of household and voluntary/community work;
2. The outputs and outcomes associated with these activities redound to the benefit of family, the community and the country as a whole and make an important contribution to national development;
3. Unpaid unrecognized activities are more numerous in low-income households where any addition to output impacts greatly on the welfare of the family in terms of meeting the basic needs of the family;
4. The inability to measure and assign a value to those economic activities not only prevents an accurate assessment of output, but also contribute to the low value placed by societies on these activities;
5. The non-monetary contribution of women are undervalued in economic terms and as well as in terms of their inherent human value;
6. The non-monetary activities performed by some women have an intrinsic use or human value which is not captured by its value for exchange.

Women's paid and unpaid domestic work -Jamaica

“ In order to arrive at a more accurate assessment of output in the Jamaican case, an in-depth study needs to be carried out to assess the value of women's unpaid work”.

(Source: Human Development Report 2000)

No in-depth research has been conducted since this preliminary study was done. However attempts are to be made in this year (2007) to develop appropriate gender indicators which would also capture this type of information on time use and unpaid work. The Bureau and the Statistical Institute of Jamaica will be working collaboratively toward this end particularly after the participation of both entities at the recent technical meeting on the status of gender indicators in the Caribbean held November 2006 in Trinidad and Tobago.³³

In addition to this Jamaica research, the non-governmental organization, Red Thread of Guyana, conducted the first systematic time-use survey in that country amongst grassroots women in 2004 with the assistance of the International Women Count Network. Red Thread was critical of the fact that the fundamental work that women perform to ensure the continuation of Caribbean societies remained uncounted and invisible, in spite of *the thirty years of Conferences, Papers* and international Commitments about women's unwaged work.

TABLE V.1

Women's Use of Time in Social Reproductive Activities, Selected Responses

Hours Occupied Weekly

Task	Annemarie*	Pam*	Esperanze*	Annette+	Nevine+	Nina+
Cleaning	3.0	3.0	5.0	0.0	15.0	0.0
Cooking	7.0	3.0	10.0	0.0	5.0	0.0
Caring for Children	30.0	3.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Washing	2.0	2.0	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Working	44.0	40.0	40.0	40.0	0.0	30.0
Pick up Children	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.0	5.0	0.0
Ironing	2.0	2.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Supermarket/Market	3.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	12.5	0.0
Exercise	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Home Improvement	3.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.0
Shopping	5.0	0.0	2.0	2.0	0.0	0.0
Doing Errands	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Watch TV	1.0	4.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Bible Study	2.0	7.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Caring for Plants	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Transporting	0.0	14.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Sewing	0.0	0.0	10.0	5.0	0.0	0.0
Total	102.5	80.5	117.0	52.0	42.5	35.0

* = Household helpers

+ = Middle income-earning housewives

Source: Background paper in Social Reproduction in Jamaica, by Judith Wedderburn, 1999

³³ Jamaica response to the ECLAC Questionnaire on unpaid work and political participation, 2007.

The survey included women from all racial groups as well as illiterate women. The highlights from the findings showed that women from all racial/ethnic groups had a typical working day which “*ranged from 14 to 18 hours, with little help from anyone, often with minimal or unreliable technology, limited access to amenities and with very little leisure or free time for themselves*”. The limited access to amenities included the lack of pipe borne water and electricity, which impacted on the length of their day and the types of activities in which they engaged.

Although women were impacted by pregnancy and ill-health of themselves and other family members, this did not stop them from undertaking a full day’s work, which often included performing tasks such as chopping wood. As a result, some women had work days that extended to 21 hours and in some instances to 24 hours.

Red Thread, in its analysis, was critical of the lack of attention paid to the goal of measuring and valuing women’s unpaid work won from governments at the Beijing Conference and lamented the fact that women’s work continued to be hidden. Several reasons were given for this, namely the fact that: (i) *sexism continues to trivialise and refuses to acknowledge the importance of what women are doing; and (ii) the design and outcome of surveys are increasingly determined by political agendas that would push women into waged jobs on the pretext that this would deal with poverty. Such agendas justify this policy by trying to show that waged work can be easily fitted in with housework ... flying in the face of universal experience, including of women’s desperate overwork, even before this second job for wages*”.³⁴

³⁴ Red Thread report on Time Use Survey by the International Count Network, 30 November 2004.

BOX V.2 Women's Use of Time in Social Reproductive Activities, Jamaica, 1993	
Domestic Activities	Average Hours/Week
Prepared Food	24.69
Carried Water	5.34
Washed Clothes	6.60
Ironed Clothes	2.46
Cleaned House	5.02
Cared Child	28.80
Shopped	8.18
Repaired house and furniture	4.22
Sewed/Mended Clothes	1.37
Paid Bills	1.59
Cleaned Yard	5.70
Tended Garden	11.63
Transported Children/Other	13.33

Source: From Data in Social Reproduction in Jamaica,
by Judith Wedderburn, 1999

This seminal research has nonetheless provided a glimpse of reproductive and productive work that women perform on a daily basis in one Caribbean country.

Reconciling work and family responsibilities

An important aspect of participation in productive work is the ability to reconcile work outside the home with family responsibilities, because many women are confronted with their greatest problems when trying to reconcile their numerous domestic tasks with their work responsibilities within a 24-hour day. The fact that women are burdened by their family responsibilities therefore restricts them from participating in paid employment outside of the home, which is often compounded by the lack of facilities for child care and, in a growing number of cases, elderly care facilities. The BPFA highlighted *“the lack of a family friendly work environment, including a lack of appropriate and affordable child care, and inflexible working hours further prevent women from achieving their full potential,”* and also hampers women in their contribution to the economy.

Governments agreed to take actions to “provide affordable support services, such as high-quality, flexible and affordable child-care services, that take into account the needs of working women and men,” and also to eliminate discriminatory practices in the workplace to enable

women to carry out their reproductive functions by providing facilities for breastfeeding and other child-care responsibilities.

In the Caribbean, there are no public policies explicitly designed to reconcile paid and unpaid work. Such policies have not yet become established in the language or in government discourse. It should be noted that policies for maternity protection and social security in general are still conditional on the labour market and as such the exclusion of women from such services (especially women engaged in informal employment remains high).

Caribbean countries have subscribed to a variety of conventions and international standards, especially the ILO conventions, such as those on maternity protection and its revision, equal pay for equal work, discrimination in employment and occupation and reconciliation of work with family responsibilities.³⁵ In addition, they have introduced national legislation and reforms and implemented State programmes and projects to complement these conventions.

The ILO Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156) is intended to promote equality of opportunity and treatment in employment for workers with family responsibilities, and among workers with such responsibilities. Belize is, however, the only Caribbean country to ratify this convention. The ILO focus on maternity protection, reconciling work and family, and working hours has highlighted the specific requirements of women and men in the workforce and the need to adopt appropriate measures with respect to work arrangements.

Despite the recognition and support for child care programmes in the Caribbean subregion, available information support the view that the vast majority of children under the age of three remain at home in the care of parents or other family members, creating its own dynamics not only in terms of the restrictions placed on mothers who are desirous of becoming part of the productive sector but also in terms of the quality of child development amongst home-based caregivers.

For many Caribbean women, providing and managing resources for proper child care and the sacrifices that have to be made to carry out these duties are everyday realities of the mothering role. However the female kinship networks once used by women as a 'safety net' are fast disappearing, making it increasingly difficult for poorer women to enter into paid employment, since few women have the benefit of a non-working mother, friend or other family member to provide much needed child care services. The need for day-care services is therefore a very real one and increasingly these facilities are also required for older family members as the subregion is faced with a steadily increasing ageing population.

The breakdown of the extended family structure has deprived communities of accessible informal care traditionally provided by grandmothers, neighbors, and others. Parents' reliance has shifted to the formal care sector, with residential and day-care services provided primarily by

³⁵ See Annex 1.

government through the Child Care Board, complemented by private operators and non-governmental organizations.³⁶

The institutionalization of child care arrangements has been identified as one of the critical issues relating to improvements in women's participation in the labour market.³⁷ In countries where child care is provided, it is mainly for pre-schoolers and provided by a mix of government and private agencies. In many instances, the use of these facilities is no longer restricted to children from lower income households but increasing from middle and upper income households.

The number of day-care facilities and the costs of services vary across the Caribbean, for example in Belize there is one day-care centre that is managed by the Ministry of Human Development, which accommodates a maximum of 15 children. Fees are US\$7.50 for children who come half day every day of the week and \$12.50 for children who come all day every day of the week. Most countries seek to provide early childhood education, for example, Barbados provides 80 per cent coverage of three year olds in government and private day-care centres. However, many gaps remain due to lack of access and lack of resources/income to pay for these services.

In response to the concerns with respect to the quality of child development of those children who do not have access to organized early childhood development programmes, a project is currently being piloted in the Caribbean with support from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and local non-governmental organizations, known as the "Roving Caregivers" which provides support and training for parents or other caregivers to enable them to better care for their children, especially those who do not have access to day-care or pre-school facilities. The programme is currently being piloted in communities in Dominica and Jamaica. The programme provides child development support and parenting education through home visits to families who cannot afford day care or who do not understand the importance of providing correct stimulation for early childhood cognitive development

In addition to the need for childcare as hinted to earlier, there is a growing need for elderly care services in the subregion, which adds to the conflict many women face between their employment and family responsibilities.

More alarming, the phenomenon of poor children who are placed in other families to undertake unpaid domestic work, called *restavek* in Haiti underlines the relationship between the invisibility of unpaid work and the needs of poor women who are heads of household to receive child care support to be able to go to work. These children called *restavek*, a (derogatory) term which literally translates as domestic child workers, are placed in households other than their own to perform labour in the domestic sphere in what has been likened to slave-like conditions.

³⁶ BARBADOS Statement by Hon. Hamilton Lashley Minister of Social Transformation at the Twenty-Seventh Special Session of the General Assembly on Children, 8 May 2002, New York.

³⁷ Joycelin Massiah. 1982. Women who Head Households in Women and the Family. WICP. UWI Cave Hill Campus.

The gender implications of this practice are immense because it is estimated that three quarters of *restavek* children are girls, many of whom are as young as four years old, who perform arduous household tasks with no pay, no schooling and who are isolated from parental love and care. This practice has tremendous impact on family structure and gender and power relations and is a major contributory factor in the perpetuation of the cycle of poverty and violence and therefore needs to be addressed with greater urgency.

Overview of legal reforms

This assessment provides an overview of legal reforms taken by Caribbean countries to remove provisions which discriminate against women and to ensure equal treatment with men. In the context of this paper, the review focuses on legislation that seeks to reconcile work and family life and therefore includes legislation in the field of employment, equal opportunity and maternity protection, as well as gender policies or gender-oriented national projects.

A number of countries have also undertaken legal reform measures relating to maintenance of women and children, in which there is some recognition that in some cases domestic work could be taken into account in cases of separation and divorce. In Jamaica for example, the *Maintenance Act, 2005* repealed and replaced the old Maintenance Act and the Affiliation Act and makes comprehensive provisions for maintenance within the family. It confers equal rights and obligations on spouses with respect to the support of each other and their children. This Act is a companion measure to the Property (Rights of Spouses) Act, accordingly “spouse” is similarly defined to include a de facto spouse.³⁸

The Property (Rights of Spouses) Act, 2004 introduced new statutory rules to provide for the equitable division of assets between spouses upon marriage or relationship breakdown. It legislates a presumption of equal shares in the family home, permitting a variation where equal division would be unfair having regard to the circumstances of the particular case. A single man and a single woman who have cohabited in an informal union for five years or more qualify as spouses for the purposes of this act. This act, though gender neutral in its provisions, should be beneficial to women in its practical application, as the deficiencies under the old law which placed women at a disadvantage in proving entitlement to property have been removed. Of interest in this regard is the recognition by the new act of the contribution made by a spouse in the performance of the role of homemaker and parent and the stipulation that there shall be no presumption that a monetary contribution is of greater value than a non-monetary contribution.³⁹

In Belize, the National Gender Policy was passed by the Cabinet in 2003. Priority areas of this policy are health, wealth and employment generation, gender-based violence, education and training, power and decision-making and coordination and implementation. The policy also focuses on minimum wage levels, equal pay for work of equal value, the economic value of unpaid domestic labour, gender equity in employment opportunities, child-care opportunities, employee pension entitlements, pension entitlements for the employee’s spouse and dependants, maternity leave provisions and access to credit.

³⁸ Jamaica response to the 2006 ECLAC Questionnaire, pages 20-21.

³⁹ Ibid. page 20

Two of the provisions relate to the area of the economic value of unpaid domestic labour:

(a) The practice of the Supreme Court in valuing unpaid work labour will be reviewed, with a view to establishing appropriate criteria and guidelines.

(b) The Government of Belize will urgently review the current adequacy of provisions for assistance to those who cannot afford access to legal representation, and whose access to justice is thus limited, in order to introduce or expand appropriate legal assistance provisions (this extends beyond the issue of divorce or settlement).⁴⁰

The “Women’s Agenda 2003 – 2008” commits the government to implement the recommendations of the National Gender Policy. As reported by the International Women’s Rights Action Watch in Belize, women consistently receive less pay than men for the same work and occupy lower level positions. The majority of women are concentrated in traditionally female, low status and poorly paid occupations, such as manufacturing, tourism and domestic work.

A gender policy was also approved in Dominica in 2006; it was an outcome document of a consultative process to sensitize people on the importance of gender mainstreaming as a strategy to achieve gender equality in the country. In addition, the Women’s Bureau collaborated with an inter-sectoral committee to compile and submit to Cabinet a Draft National Action Plan on Gender Mainstreaming. This plan aims to ensure that gender is incorporated in all policies, plans and programmes both at national and sectoral levels.

The Country Poverty Assessment Report of June 2003 showed a high level of poverty in the households (29 per cent), however no major difference was found between men and women’s income, but it was argued that this analysis was not sufficiently focused on gender disparities.

In Dominica, legislative and policy changes have specifically addressed the needs of poor women and have attempted to improve women’s equal access to economic resources and employment, and to promote an equal balance between paid work and family responsibilities for women and men. The Amendment to Maintenance Act increased the allowance to children; additionally, the maternity grant increased by 100% in 2003.

Social protection

In the Caribbean subregion, social security schemes are relatively new and provide a wide range of benefits. As in other countries the systems are pay-as-you-go (PAYG). In some countries, contributions are shared equally between employer and employee, while in others the employers contribute a higher percentage. Barbados is the only country that provides an unemployment insurance scheme, while Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize and St. Kitts and Nevis provide a non-contributory pension as part of the services offered by social security.

⁴⁰ Belize National Gender Policy, Articles 70, 71.

Social protection has traditionally been defined in terms of a range of public institutions, norms and programmes aimed at protecting individuals and their households from poverty and deprivation. It addresses poverty and social exclusion. Social protection includes labour and employment standards, programmes aimed at ensuring maternity leave and pension for old people, norms and programmes directed at work related contingencies, such as unemployment or work related injuries, and basic safety nets⁴¹. It is generally taken to be broader than social security, normally associated with compensatory, comprehensive, welfare State programmes, and social insurance, generally restricted to contributory programmes.

Broad components of social development

Provision of an enabling environment; (includes resources such as physical environment; human and financial resources);
 Eradication of poverty;
 Expansion of productive employment and reduction of unemployment;
 Social integration, inclusion and cohesion;
 Full respect for human dignity – equalization of opportunities for all;
 Equality and equity between women and men;
 Equitable access to quality education; healthcare and other social protection measures; (Decentralization is critical as services are brought closer to the people who need them).

Gender and social protection issues

Gender is critical to social protection policies because of the direct impact on women's living conditions. Although available data is scattered, the information points to the fact that women and children, including the elderly, face considerable social and economic risks and are among some of the most vulnerable groups in the Caribbean subregion. Among the specific risks that women face are those related to health, life cycle including childbearing, household economic risks, ageing and other social risks, such as social exclusion, and vulnerability to domestic violence.

Discrimination and marginalization of women is also prevalent. This is found particularly amongst women who predominate the informal labour market – thus increasing their vulnerability – while at the same time having responsibility for the care of children. Later in their life cycle find that they do not qualify for pensions, either public or private, because the structure of social security systems excludes large numbers of women who find themselves outside of the largely contributory systems.

This is because social protection systems were structured when family and labour functions of men and women were significantly different, which means that in many instances women are not direct beneficiaries of social protection mechanisms, hence the need for comprehensive reform of these systems to be more gender sensitive. For example, despite the

⁴¹ *Social Safety Nets* ensure that all the different groups of the population have reasonable access to minimal income and basic social services in situations as involuntary unemployment, old age or sudden economic crisis. They traditionally are introduced during economic crisis and phased out during periods of recovery. If there are no safety nets, a fall in income can lead to permanent poverty.

higher vulnerability to risks faced by women and the poor in the informal sector, traditional social protection schemes continue to target those in the formal labour market.

There are a number of the key assumptions underlying economic policies which impact on gender and social protection:

- (a) The structuring of the economy is undeniably male centered;
- (b) Economic and other inputs are targeted to men; and
- (c) Women's needs as producers are ignored.

The reality is that large numbers of Caribbean women are heads of households because of divorce, death of spouses and, in some instances, because of choice or other circumstances resulting in the fact that many women are living in poverty. Often their health is diminished – double burden + costs of health care; (some States provide for the elderly in terms of assistance with medication, but this is not always comprehensive).

It is clear from the available information that women need a reliable source of income, but for many this is problematic because many are precluded from engaging in paid employment because of their responsibilities in the “care economy”, while others are forced to take precarious employment in low-paid jobs or in the informal sector which offers no income security and no protection, forcing them further into poverty. The association between unpaid work and participation in insecure work on the periphery of the economy is vital in explaining how women are disadvantaged and excluded from social protection systems.

When we add to this the changing demographic profile of the subregion with an increasing ageing population, which is predominantly female, the situation becomes even more untenable and fragile. While the expectation is that women will receive support from their male partners, the reality is woefully different. In some respects married women are more disadvantaged because they cannot claim benefits such as old age pensions if their husband is already a beneficiary.

Summary of social security/protection schemes

Caribbean countries nonetheless provide an impressive range of programmes to support vulnerable groups, however these are plagued by significant gaps and deficiencies in existing social protection mechanisms to assist households and communities. This section provides a brief country overview of maternity provisions which are designed to benefit women and their families. Although many of the schemes are similar there are slight differences in terms of the required number of contributions to receive benefits, which for most countries require an average of 50 contributions; the length of payment of benefits and the quantum of monies payable to beneficiaries. Most countries provide for the granting of 12 weeks of maternity leave, and most provide for employment protection to ensure that when a woman returns to work she maintains her seniority, resumes her former work or its equivalent and does not receive lower wages than before she went on maternity leave.

Defining Social Protection

Social protection should be viewed as an integral part of a country's attempt to restructure its economy and pursue social and economic development, address poverty and social exclusion, and achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

Social protection programmes can potentially ensure that the fruits of development reach vulnerable households and communities, which are unable to participate fully in economic activities by guaranteeing a minimum level of welfare.

Social protection is intended to provide households and communities with protection against risks and vulnerabilities and promote their access to new opportunities. It helps sustain households' living standards in the face of adverse conditions, but also supports the investment in human and physical capital, which is central to economic growth and long-term well-being.

Source: Promoting an Integrated Social Protection for the Caribbean. Paper prepared by the Caribbean Development Bank in conjunction with the Department for International Development; the European Commission for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean; the United Nations Development Programme; and World Bank, for the twelfth Meeting of the Council for Human and Social Development (Gender) April 2, 2005.

The Bahamas has social insurance which covers employed persons, self-employed persons and the voluntarily insured. The social insurance system is based on cash benefits. In order to receive maternity benefits, under the National Insurance Act of 1972, amended in 1999, a woman must have paid 50 weeks of contributions. Maternity benefit is equal to 60 per cent of average weekly insurable earnings. The minimum benefit is B\$43.85 a week. No coverage is provided for workers in the informal sector. To receive the maternity grant, which is paid as a lump sum of B\$400.00 she must have at least 50 paid contributions.

In Barbados, the Social Insurance and Social Security Act of 1966, amended in 2002, covers all employed persons, public-sector employees and the self-employed aged 16 to 64, but it excludes unpaid family labour. The Social Insurance System is based on cash benefits. Maternity benefits are equal to 100 per cent of average insurable weekly earnings. The maternity grant is also payable to women who are not insured or who fail to meet the requirements for cash maternity benefits, but whose spouse does meet the requirements. Payment is a lump sum of Bds. \$800.

In Belize the Social Security Act of 1979 provides social coverage for employed persons aged 14 to 64, including public servants and self-employed persons. It excludes casual labour, persons employed for less than eight hours a week and military personnel. It does not provide coverage for workers in the informal sector. Women must have 50 weeks of contributions to receive maternity benefits and the maternity grant of B\$300 which is paid for each child. Maternity benefit is equal to 80 per cent of average weekly insurable earnings.

The Dominica Social Security Act (1975) provides coverage for employed persons and apprentices aged 16 to 60, it excludes the self-employed and people employed in the informal sector. Women must have 13 weeks of contributions to receive maternity benefits, which are equal to 60 per cent of average weekly earnings in the last 30 weeks. Maternity grants are

payable to an insured woman or a non-insured spouse of an insured man with at least 26 weeks of paid contributions in the 52-week period before the expected date of childbirth. It is a lump sum of EC\$500.

The Grenada National Insurance Act (1983) and the Maternity Leave Law (1980) provide coverage for all employees in private and public sectors and for self-employed persons aged 16 to 59. A woman must have at least 30 weeks of contributions to receive maternity benefits, which is equal to 65 per cent of average weekly insurable earnings in the 30 weeks before the start of the claim. The minimum maternity benefit is EC\$450. The grant is payable to the uninsured wife of an insured man. The minimum grant is EC\$450.

In Guyana, the Social Security Act of 1969 covers persons employed in the private and public sectors and the self-employed between ages 16 and 59. Family labour and casual labour are excluded. Women benefits must have 15 weeks of contributions to receive maternity benefits, which are equal to 70 per cent of average weekly covered earnings. Maternity grant is payable to an insured woman who does not meet the qualifying conditions for a maternity benefit but whose insured husband does; it is a lump sum of G\$2,000.00.

The Jamaica National Insurance Act (1966) and the National Health insurance Act (2003) provides a social coverage for resident female employees aged 18 or older, with the exclusion of self-employed women. In order to receive maternity benefits, women must have 26 weeks of paid contributions in the 52 weeks before the expected date of childbirth; the benefit is equal to the national minimum weekly wage (J\$2,400.00).

In St Kitts and Nevis, the Social Security Act (1977) provides coverage for employed and self-employed persons aged 16 to 62. Women must have 39 weeks of contributions for maternity benefits. The benefit is equal to 65 per cent of the average weekly wage. The maternity grant of EC\$450 is paid for every child birth and is payable to an insured woman or the wife of an insured man.

The Saint Lucia National Insurance Act (2003) covers employees and apprentices aged 16 to 65. To receive maternity benefits, women must have at least seven months of contributions in the 10 months immediately before the claim. The benefit is equal to 65 per cent of the insured's average salary in the last 10 months. A maternity grant of EC\$600 is payable to women receiving cash maternity benefits and to women whose husband have at least seven months of contributions.

In St Vincent and the Grenadines, the Social Insurance Act of 1986 provides a social coverage for employed persons aged 16 to 59 and a voluntary coverage for self-employed persons aged 16 to 59. Women must have at least 30 weeks contributions to receive maternity benefits, the benefit is equal to 65 per cent of the insured's average earnings in the last 30 weeks of employment. In order to receive the maternity grant of EC\$550, the woman or her spouse must have at least 20 weeks of contributions in the 30 weeks immediately before the birth of the child.

The Trinidad and Tobago Social insurance Act of 1971 covers employed persons aged 16 to 64, including agricultural and domestic workers, apprentices and public-sector employees. Maternity benefits are equal to 60 per cent of average weekly earnings. A maternity grant of TT\$2,000.00⁴² is paid if the pregnancy is of at least 26 weeks duration.

How unpaid work can be integrated into public policies

The principal mechanism for integrating women's unpaid work in employment, economic and social policies is to implement reforms in these areas. These reforms must be designed to ensure equitable access to economic resources, access to credit, access to health services and the provision of more benefits for women employed in the informal sector.

The information above highlights the limited public policy actions and/or legislation that recognize the unpaid work performed by women in the "care economy". Further, policies to harmonize work and family duties are also lacking, even in areas where the impact of HIV and AIDS as well as the ageing population has dramatically increased the burden of care on working women. There is still little recognition of the contribution of household work to national economic outcomes and therefore little change in the corresponding economic and social policies for care work being promoted.

Caribbean countries, however, often face considerable constraints in implementing necessary gender sensitive reforms because of the lack of funds and the ongoing weakening of women's/gender bureaux is also a challenge both at the national and regional level. Further and perhaps more instructive is the fact that the models of development in the subregion privilege growth over social development, thereby perpetuating the cycle of poverty and inequality which continues to marginalize women. There is need to understand that investments in social development such as child care, social security and other social services are vital if economic progress is to be maintained.

In respect of employment policies, governments have a responsibility to ensure more equitable access to employment for women. They need to establish the necessary legal and an institutional framework, and enact and enforce more equitable labour laws. These laws must prohibit discriminatory practices by employers in both formal and informal sectors. Additionally reforms in this area have to ensure an equitable access for women to economic resources, including the right to inheritance and ownership of land and other property.

Governments and national machineries with responsibility for women's advancement and gender equality must encourage financial institutions to adopt new policies, aimed to reduce transaction costs and make the access to credit easier for women. There is also need for a more gender approach on taxation, for example, governments could include reforms in terms of tax exemption from goods mainly used by women, such as items used for child care, items related to household functions, items related to reproductive health and hygiene.⁴³

⁴² www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/progdesc/ssptw/2002-2003/americas

⁴³ See Brunnich Gabriel B., Vacarr Danielle, *The challenges in integrating unpaid work into economic policy in lower and middle-income countries*, Paper for the 2005 Global Conference on Unpaid work and the Economy: Gender, Poverty, and the Millennium Development Goals, September 2005, p. 16 – 20.

Twelve years after the Beijing Platform for Action and seven years after the Millennium Development Goals, there is still no public policies which recognize unpaid work against a background where this work is increasing and continues to be the sole responsibility of women, despite decades of advocacy and public education programmes to transform not only gender relations but also the gender roles assigned to men and women. Although there have been some minor breakthroughs in acknowledging women's economic role in the development process as evidenced from the responses to the ECLAC questionnaire, women's unpaid work remains largely invisible and uncoded in national accounts.

Conclusion

This assessment indicates that Caribbean countries, like most of the world's developing countries, still have a long way to go in recognizing, understanding and valuing the important role played by women in the national economies. In spite of commitments to a wide range of international agreements, the domestic unpaid work performed by women in households, in the agriculture sector and the community remains in many cases invisible and unvalued.

This assessment has also revealed what many of us already know, that social protection programmes have tended to be discriminatory rather than inclusive, leaving out large numbers of women who work outside of the formal labour market. Many of the benefits payable to women are often still dependent on the contributions made by their spouses. In addition, there is need for the implementation of comprehensive social protection programmes ensuring coverage for women employed in the informal sector to reduce the precarious nature of much of this work.

There is clearly a need for governments to implement strategies to assist women in managing their unpaid work and reducing the burden of care work through the provision of more equitable social protection programmes, which would reduce women's vulnerabilities and social exclusion. There is also need for more governments in the subregion to implement policies to count women's unremunerated work and make their contribution to economic development more visible. There is also need to invest more in data collection and in the conduct of time-use surveys because it is only through the implementation of research on how people use their time and on how much time is spent by women in domestic work and in producing goods for their households and for the social community, that there will be an accurate understanding of the relevance and the importance of women's contribution to the national economy and to social development.

Endnotes

The gender division of labour: Andaiye (2003) notes that a direct result of the gendering process “is the gender division of labour whereby women and men cluster in the different kinds of work for which they have been socialized. This socialization takes place first within the household and family and then in education, the wider society and the economy. Building on biological difference (the fact that women bear children and breastfeed) women are socialized into having the main responsibility for social reproduction, that is, child and family care, including housework, although there is no biological basis for this. The work is ascribed little value: it is unwaged when performed within the household and low-waged when performed for strangers (e.g. domestic work, nursing, and teaching).”

Valuing unpaid work: The work done by care-givers and volunteers can be the foundation for creating the “volunteer” sector’s own money supply. According to Galbraith this could be done by reversing the operational perspective of that system, and creating a separate parallel system of the money needed to pay for the unpaid work of care-givers and volunteers. Although it would still be considered as “outside of the economy”, Galbraith suggested that it be determined “economic” by viewing it as a debt owed by the community. So if it is a debt, it is also money. This debt is the basis for creating the money to pay for unpaid work. With this method the money necessary for paying the work of care-givers and volunteers will have been created by their own work.

Annex 1
SELECTED ILO CONVENTIONS ON GENDER EQUALITY IN EMPLOYMENT
RATIFICATION BY CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES

Country	INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONVENTIONS																											
	29*	81+	87*	89	94	95	98*	100*	103	105	111*	122+	138*	141	142	144+	149	150	151	154	155	156	158	175	177	182*	183	
Antigua & Barbuda	X	X	X	-	X	-	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	-	X	-	-	X	-	
Bahamas	X	X	-	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	
Barbados	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	
Belize	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	-	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	-	-	X	X	
Dominica	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	-	X	-	-	X	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	
Grenada	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	-	X	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	
Guyana	X	X,	X	-	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	-	-	-	X	-	X	-	
Jamaica	X	X	X	-	X	-	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	-	-	X	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	
St. Kitts & Nevis	X	-	X	-	-	-	X	X	-	X	X	-	X	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	
Saint Lucia	X	-	X	-	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	X	-	-	X	-	
St. Vincent & The Grenadines	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	
Suriname	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	-	-	X	-	X	-	-	-	X	-	X	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	
Trinidad & Tobago	X	-	X	-	-	-	X	X	-	X	X	-	X	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	
TOTAL	13	10	12	1	11	9	13	12	2	13	12	4	11	2	2	11	2	6	4	4	2	1	2	1	0	13	1	

Titles of Conventions

No. 29	Forced Labour, 1930
No. 81	Labour Inspection, 1947
No. 87	Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize, 1948
No. 89	Night Work (Women) (Revised) [and Protocol], 1990
No. 94	Labour Clauses (Public Contracts), 1949
No. 95	Protection of Wages, 1949
No. 98	Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining, 1949
No. 100	Equal Remuneration, 1951
No. 103	Maternity Protection (Revised), 1952
No. 105	Abolition of Forced Labour, 1957
No. 111	Discrimination (Employment and Occupation), 1958
No. 122	Employment Policy, 1964
No. 138	Minimum Age, 1973
No. 141	Rural Workers' Organizations, 1975
No. 142	Human Resources Development, 1975
No. 144	Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards), 1976
No. 149	Nursing Personnel, 1977
No. 150	Labour Administration, 1978
No. 151	Labour Relations (Public Service), 1978
No. 154	Collective Bargaining, 1981
No. 155	Occupational Safety and Health, 1981
No. 156	Workers with Family Responsibilities, 1981
No. 158	Termination of Employment, 1982
No. 175	Part-time Work, 1994
No. 177	Home Work, 1996
No. 182	Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999
No. 183	Maternity Protection, 2000

* Fundamental Conventions

+ Priority Conventions

Annex 2**National Legislations on Employment, Equal opportunity and Maternity Protection in the English-speaking Caribbean countries.⁴⁴**

Antigua and Barbuda	Social Security Act (1973)
Bahamas	Fair Labour Standard Act (1970), Employment Act (2000), National Insurance Act (1972), Early Childhood Care Act (2004), National Health Insurance Act (2006)
Barbados	Employment Act (1977), Employment of Women Act (1978), National Insurance and Social Security Act (1966)
Belize	Labour Act (1988), Labour (Maternity Protection) Regulations no. 34/1960, Social Security Act (1979)
Dominica	Labour Standards Act (1977), Social Security Act (1975)
Grenada	Employment Act (1999), Maternity Leave Law (1980), National Insurance Act (1983)
Guyana	Labour Act (1984), Equal Rights Act (1990), Anti-discrimination Act (1997), Social Security Act (1969)
Jamaica	The Women (Employment) Act, The Employment (equal pay for men and women) Act, National Insurance Act (1966), The Maternity Leave Act (1979), National Health Insurance Act (2003)
St Kitts and Nevis	Fair Labour Standards Ordinance (1988), Social Security Act (1977)
Saint Lucia	Equality of opportunity and treatment in employment and occupation Act (2000), National Insurance Act (2003)
St Vincent and The Grenadines	Equal pay Act (1994), Employment of women, young person and children Act, Social Insurance Act (1986)
Trinidad and Tobago	Equal opportunity Act (2000), Legal profession Act (1986), Social Insurance Act (1971), Maternity Protection Act (1998)

⁴⁴ Source: www.ilo.org (February 2007).

Annex 3

Responses of Governments to the Questionnaire on Unpaid Work sent out in 2006

Country	Constitutional Provisions which recognize women's unpaid domestic work	Legislation that promote harmonization of work with family life	Statistical research on unpaid domestic work
Anguilla			
Antigua and Barbuda	-	-	-
Bahamas	No constitutional provisions	None	None
Barbados	No constitutional provisions	None	None
Belize	Amendments by the Government in 2001 to the <i>Supreme Court of Judicature Act</i> (91:148A) provide for the value of unpaid domestic labour, including child-rearing, to be included in the distribution of property upon the termination of a marriage or common-law union. The Belize National Gender Policy through its commitments seeks to accelerate progress in this area by addressing issues such as the unpaid economic value of domestic labour, equity in employment opportunities, child-care, access to credit and pension entitlements.	None	While no research was carried out on unpaid work - The Government of Belize appointed in May 2006 a Minimum Wage Council to examine paid domestic work as well other wages. In January 2007 Cabinet received the recommendations of the Council and approved that wages for domestics would be increased from \$2.25 to \$3.00 per hour. Women Issues Network- Belize, a non-governmental organization, conducted a study in 2006 on paid domestic wage. This study was submitted to the Minimum Wages Council.
British Virgin Islands	-	-	-
Cayman Islands	No constitutional provisions	Part II, Section 19 of The Labour Law (2001 Revision) allows for 12 calendar weeks of Maternity Leave in any 12 month period. Within the 12 calendar week period, 20 working days are full pay and 20 working days ½ pay. This law also acknowledges 9 calendar weeks (15 working days full pay) for female employees who are adopting a child under 3 years. Adoption leave may be granted to any female employee once in any 36 calendar months.. The Public Service Management Law 2005, Personnel Regulations 2006 provides female government employees the same Maternity Leave benefits as the Labour Law. Additionally, this law allows for two weeks Paternity Leave for male civil servants (one week paid, one week unpaid). Note: The current Labour Law (2001) operating does not allow for Paternity Leave. However, Section 21 of the Employment Law 2004 which is assented to but is not in force/not operational does allow for 2 weeks Paternity Leave (½ paid, ½ unpaid) as well as paternity leave for adoption.	None – However, the 1999 Cayman Islands Population and Housing Census does have data regarding the number of hours persons self-reported that they spent on unpaid housework, unpaid childcare and unpaid elderly care. This data is broken down by district and sex.

Dominica	-	Although there are no legal provisions with reference to harmonization of work with the family life, there has been public discussion or dialogue resulting in representation of such issues: In a recently developed national gender policy, and current OECS family laws and domestic violence law reform initiative. Policy recommendation includes among others Provisions for child care Flexi time and Paternity leave	No Study - In the last census unpaid domestic work was accounted for in national statistics
Grenada	-	The following Sections of the Employment Act (No. 14) 1999; 26 – Provisions prohibiting discrimination in employment 32-35 – Prohibition of Child Labour 37-40 – Hours of Work; 40 - Special Provisions for Young Persons; 59-70 – Provisions governing Maternity Leave 72 - Provisions allowing employees to take leave for family responsibilities-	-
Haiti	-	Fair labor standards act, treating Chapter III of the weekly rest and the public holidays; art: 107, 108 - Fair labor standards act, chapter VII, treating work of the women.	Investigation ENFOFANM into the Remunerated House work, completed by Myriam Merlet, article AYITI FANM, a publication ENFOFANM, Vol.14 No 56, December 2003, January, February, Mars 2004.-
Jamaica	The Property (Rights of Spouses) Act, 2004 introduced new statutory rules to provide for the equitable division of assets upon marriage or relationship breakdown. The Act recognizes the contribution made by a spouse in the performance of unpaid domestic work. It recognizes women's contribution made in the areas of child-care and home duties. It stipulated that there should be no presumption that a monetary contribution is of greater value than a non-monetary contribution	None	Women's use of time in Social Reproductive activities – 1999 by the Planning Institute of Jamaica. Publication – Jamaica Human Development Report 2000.
Saint Lucia	-	-	-
St. Maarten'			
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	No constitutional provisions	None	None
Suriname	No constitutional provisions	Personnel act December 31, 1962, amended SB 1990 No 36. (Article 45.1.a and 46 is about maternity Leave); states that in case of maternity dispensation of duty is given. Women have the right to 12 weeks paid maternity leave; 6 weeks before and 6 weeks after delivery date.	A study "Verkennd beoordeling van mensenhandel in het Caribisch gebied" (Investigation of Trafficking in persons in the Caribbean) by the International Organization for Migration, June 2005 states that paid domestic work is done most by women and is also informal, hardly noticeable, undervalued and unprotected.
Turks and Caicos Islands	-	-	-

Annex 4

Proportion of households and unemployment rates by sex for ECLAC/CDCC member countries

Country	Head of household by sex (1995)		Unemployment rate by sex (2000*)	
	Proportion of males (%)	Proportion of females (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
Anguilla	67.8	32.2	6.3	9.0
Antigua & Barbuda	58.5	41.5	6.4	5.6
Aruba	77.3	22.7	6.7	8.4
Bahamas	64.1	35.8	6.0	9.7
Barbados	56.5	43.5	7.5	11.4
Belize	78.0	22.0	9.0	20.3
British Virgin Islands	71.3	28.7	3.4	3.1
Cuba	72.0	28.0	...	...
Dominica	62.7	37.3	19.6	27.2
Dominican Republic	70.0	30.0	...	...
Grenada	57.3	42.7	10.5	21.2
Guyana	70.5	29.5	6.2	14.3
Haiti	61.3	38.7	...	...
Jamaica	58.0	42.0	10.2	22.3
Montserrat	60.0	40.0	...	...
Netherlands Antilles	66.0	34.0	10.4	18.1
Puerto Rico	72.0	28.0	...	...
St. Kitts and Nevis	56.1	43.9	...	...
Saint Lucia	59.6	40.4	12.6	20.7
St. Vincent & The Grenadines	60.5	39.5	18.4	22.1
Suriname	80.0	20.0	7.2	17.0
Trinidad and Tobago	73.5	26.5	10.2	15.2
U.S. Virgin Islands	67.0	33.0	...	...
Mean	66.0	33.9		
Low	56.1	20.0		
High	80.0	43.9		

*2000 or most nearest available

Source 1: Poverty Eradication & Female-Headed Households (FHH) in the Caribbean (POV/96/2) ECLAC Source 2: ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean

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