

Subregional Meeting on the Gender Equality Observatory
for Latin America and the Caribbean
14 June 2010
Rodney Bay, Saint Lucia

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**REPORT OF THE SUBREGIONAL MEETING ON
THE GENDER EQUALITY OBSERVATORY
FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

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A. DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Member States were to submit written reports on the availability of data for the Gender Equality Observatory.
2. There was a need to reinforce dialogue between users and producers of gender statistics.
3. More active participation was required in gender statistics forums.
4. There was a need to explore the possibility of revising and rethinking more specific Caribbean indicators.
5. Advantage can be taken of the Millennium Development Goals process and linkages made with those in charge of the follow-up.
6. The cut off date for receipt of indicators was agreed for 30 May 2010 .
7. Templates for data collection were to be re-sent to all participants.

B. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Place and date of the session

8. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) convened the Subregional Meeting on the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean in Rodney Bay, Saint Lucia, on 14 June 2010.

Attendance

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

Organization of work

13. The meeting adopted the draft programme setting out the organization of work.

C. AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Gender Equality Observatory of Latin America and the Caribbean
4. Challenges to the production of gender statistics in the Caribbean subregion
5. Country presentations on statistics available at national level
6. Discussion: Identification of problems and potential solutions
7. Working Group on the collection of indicators for the Gender Equality Observatory
8. Presentation of the Position Document *What Kind of State? What Kind of Equality?*
9. Presentation of the preliminary version of the Brasilia Consensus
14. Follow-up activities toward the Eleventh Session of the Regional Conference
15. Closing remarks

D. SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

14. At the opening session of the Subregional Meeting on the Gender Equality Observatory for Latin America and the Caribbean, remarks were made by the following speakers: Mr. Hirohito Toda, Deputy Chief, Officer-In-Charge, ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean and Mr. Edwin St. Catherine, Director, Statistics Department, Saint Lucia. A written message from the Caribbean Community Secretariat (CARICOM) was read by Ms. Diane Almeras of ECLAC.

Presentation of the Observatory

15. This presentation was made by the Head of the Division of Gender Affairs, ECLAC, who remarked that the Observatory was already considered as a best practice in the United Nations system. The Observatory was not only a technical tool but also a political one which would assist in naming and quantifying gender equality. The information entered in the database must be official data which would come from collaboration with the government. The official data could be used to generate methodological work when needed. The assumption behind the observatory was that information was a public good

therefore there was a need to be accountable for it and to be able to quote it to support policy. A strong linkage was made among the three central areas of concern, namely economic autonomy, decision-making autonomy and physical autonomy, with each one sharing some dependence on the other. The significance of the Observatory lay in the fact that in addition to showing the data, it also highlighted what needed to be collected. Countries were encouraged to build their own observatories which would help to identify the linkages between areas such as public and private life and reproductive and non-reproductive work (women without income of their own would impact poverty, security and sexual and reproductive policies). Having national observatories would also assist countries to share and exchange experiences. Country profiles were explained along with all features of the Observatory and a strong case for the revision of regional indicators was made.

16. The representative of Brazil spoke of her country's Observatory, describing its structure and indicating that they were still in the process of building their own indicators.

Challenges to the production of gender statistics in the Caribbean subregion

17. In this presentation, facilitated by the Coordinator of the Social and Statistical Development Unit, ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean, participants were asked to describe the challenges that they faced with respect to the collection of gender statistics. The three main challenges cited were: (a) coordination of statistical activities, (b) training of statistical personnel, and (c) political will or the commitment of government.

18. Coordination: The variety of producers using varying methodologies made comparability very difficult. There was no consistency with data collection, compilation or data analysis and training was required in each of those areas to achieve the needed level of coordination. The training, however, was expensive and the resources were sometimes not available. Proper coordination would serve to ensure that the information produced would be suitable for and used in policy formulation and follow-up. Harmonization of data was challenging at national and regional levels.

19. Training: The tendency of personnel to leave the field after training was cited as one of the difficulties to be addressed. There was a need to look for training outside of the Caribbean, which could benefit from the experience of Latin American countries. Trainers and practitioners should be equipped with practical experience and not be limited to methodological knowledge.

20. Government's commitment: Governments needed to commit to ensuring that there were enough human resources and adequate equipment in the National Statistical Offices. Reliance on government statistics would increase the demand for and support of those statistics. Only eight countries of the Caribbean conducted an annual full survey on a regular basis. All countries should at least conduct an annual labour force survey.

21. Possible solutions were recommended as follows:

- Coordination: Reduce 'turf' protection and enhance cooperation
- Training: Promote capacity development in statistics at tertiary training institutions
- Mandate regional universities to address the serious problem of human resource capacity in the area of statistics

- Seek 'South-South' assistance/collaboration
- Governments should seek to increase collaboration among statisticians/planners/analysts to use statistics in plans and policy formulation and promulgation
- Promote and encourage the use of incentives or incentive mechanisms to attract and retain the best human resources to the statistics workplace
- Promote and encourage thorough reviews of current statistical systems with the objective of enhancing resources to deliver quality outputs of a broader scope, including gender statistics.

Country presentations on statistics available at national level

22. During the session each country gave information on statistics available on a national level along with a brief summary of their resources, problems and potential solutions as they related to the collection of data for the Observatory. Persistent themes in these presentations included:

- There were new or very young gender machineries without statistical information
- There was a lack of coordination between gender machineries and producers of data
- Statistical units were only recently beginning to consider gender
- There was a mismatch between the template of Observatory indicators and indicators used in some countries
- Data on violence was not disaggregated
- Data was not readily accessible, in some instances it must be requested
- There was inconsistency in data collection
- A central registry was absent
- Information on economic autonomy was taken from labour force surveys, where they existed
- The quality of data was inadequate
- There was a lack of common understanding on gender
- There was the issue of double counting.

Working group discussions on collection of indicators for the Gender Equality Observatory

23. Discussions were centred around:

- The possible revision of questions on income in the labour force surveys
- Time use surveys
- Organization of national meetings
- Networking for gender info
- Data collection forms
- The upcoming CARICOM Statistical meeting.

Presentation of the position document, *What Kind of State? What Kind of Equality?*

24. The position document on “What Kind of State, What Kind of Equality” was presented for discussion by the Member States.

Presentation of the Brasilia Consensus

25. The Brasilia Consensus was also presented for discussion.

Follow-up to the Eleventh Conference on Women

26. The meeting discussed funding and logistical arrangements relating to the attendance of the Member States at the Eleventh Conference on Women to be held in Brasilia in July 2010.

Closing remarks

27. The meeting was brought to a close with a reminder of the need for ownership of the process at a national level and the importance of using the data in a meaningful manner.

Annex

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

A. Member countries

Antigua and Barbuda

- Sheila Roseau, Executive Director, Directorate of Gender Affairs, Ministry of Education, Gender, Sports and Youth Affairs

Bahamas

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

Belize

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

Brazil

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

Dominica

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

Ecuador

- Alba Perez, Planificación, Dirección Técnica, Comisión de Transición hacia el Consejo de las Mujeres y la Igualdad de Género

Grenada

- Meryle Walker, Coordinator, Domestic Violence Unit, Ministry of Social Development
- Halim Brizan, Director of Statistics (Ag.), Central Statistical Office, Ministry of Finance

Guyana

- Jacqueline Tull, Bureau of Statistics

Haiti

- Marie Beauchamps, Assistant Directeur, Direction des Statistiques Demographiques et Sociales, Institut Haitien de Statistique et d'Informatique (IHSI)

Jamaica

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

Saint Lucia

- Felix St. Hill, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Health, Wellness, Family Affairs, National Mobilization, Human Services and Gender Relations
- Charms Gaspards, Director, Division of Gender Relations, Ministry of Health, Wellness, Family Affairs, National Mobilization, Human Services and Gender Relations
- Lindy Eristhee, Research Officer, Division of Gender Relations
- Edwin St. Catherine, Director, Statistics Department, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs
- Euphemia Edmund, Senior Statistician, Central Statistics Office, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs
- Richard Harris, Statistician, Statistics Department, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs

Saint Kitts and Nevis

- Celia Christopher, Ag. Gender Affairs, Ministry of Social Services, Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs
- Corneil Williams, Statistician, Statistics Department, Ministry of Sustainable Development

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

- Polly Olliver, Coordinator, Gender Affairs Division, Ministry of National Mobilization, Social Development, Youth, Sports and Culture
- Sandra Kennedy-Grant, Statistical Officer, Central Statistical Office, Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning

Suriname

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

Trinidad and Tobago

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

B. Associate member countries**Anguilla**

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

Aruba

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

British Virgin Islands

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

Cayman Islands

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

Montserrat

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

St. Maarten

- Joy Arnell, Department of Social Development Island Government

Turks and Caicos Islands

- Barbara Higgs, Under Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs

C. United Nations Bodies**United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)**

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

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

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

United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

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

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

- Amaia Perez, Social Affairs Officer/Officer in Charge

D. Specialized Agencies**Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO)**

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

E. Secretariat

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) – Headquarters

- Sonia Montaña, Director a.i., Division for Gender Affairs
- Ana Cristina González, Social Affairs Officer, Division for Gender Affairs
- Nathalie Brisson-Lamaute, Social Affairs Officer, Division for Gender Affairs
- Diane Almeras, Social Affairs Officer, Division for Gender Affairs
- Geraldine Velandria, Social Affairs Officer, Division for Gender Affairs
- Vivian Milosavljevic, Social Affairs Officer, Division for Gender Affairs
- Alejandra Valdés, Consultant ECLAC/UN-INSTRAW, Division for Gender Affairs
- Gaietry Pargass, Consultant, Division for Gender Affairs

Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean

- Hirohito Toda, Deputy Chief/Officer-in-Charge
- Sylvan Roberts, Coordinator, Statistics Unit
- Karen Bart-Alexander, Social Affairs Officer, Social Development Unit