



# In the Spotlight

## Caribbean

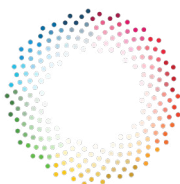
Knowledge Fair: Turning Knowledge into Action:  
Knowledge Fair to End GBV in the Caribbean

GBV Workplace Policy Launched

Jamaica National Study: Economic Costs of VAWG

Women's Football Committee gets capacity-building training

## PARLIAMENTARIANS, CSOs TALK VAWG



**Spotlight  
Initiative**

An initiative of the United Nations funded by the European Union



# Editor's Note

As the year draws to a close, so does the Spotlight Initiative. With less than two months to go before the end of 2023, Spotlight Initiative in the Caribbean is a hive of activity with final activities concluding and closure events.

A lot has been achieved since the Programme started in the region and Recipient United Nations Organisations (RUNOs), implementing partners, civil society and other stakeholders are excited about the work that has been completed or nearing completion. The UNDP Knowledge Fair has been billed as a space for those who work to end gender-based violence to showcase their work. Over three-and-a-half days, the event brought together UN agencies, implementing partners, government officials and civil society organisations to dialogue, network and showcase their work while learning from each other. You can learn more about the Knowledge Fair on Page 3.

Another key activity that has been a major accomplishment is the integration of the Education Sector into the Essential Services Package Community of Practice. The Validation Workshop with Chief Education Officers and other education stakeholders was held in September in Trinidad and Tobago. Read more about the workshop on Pages 4 and 5.

In Guyana, more than 80 participants from NGOs, schools, community groups, faith-based organisations, and government entities such as the Guyana Police Force completed the Training of Trainers workshops held May 15-18, 2023, in Region 6 and July 4-7, 2023 in Region 7. Learn more about the Foundation Programme's work on Pages 6 and 7.



 Participants at the Knowledge Fair held 5-8 November 2023 in Barbados.

Spotlight Initiative Grenada has also been delivering tremendous work. In June the programme launched GrendadInfoSAFE, a data collection platform that collects and analyses GBV data in the country. Read about the launch on Page 8. Spotlight Grenada also conducted an outreach activity during the country's carnival season with Walkabouts in two parishes. That article is on Page 11.

On Page 10, read about the two-day training workshop that took place in Belize with more than 20 CSOs who were trained on how to improve their service delivery in GBV prevention and response to continue supporting more survivors, educating communities and challenging harmful societal norms that perpetuate GBV.

Finally, Spotlight Guyana was a hive of activity over the last several months with training workshops for CSOs, a pledge of the WEPs. Those articles are on Page 16, 24 and 25.

The private sector in the Caribbean is also making its contribution to eliminating GBV. Read about the Caribbean Employers Confederation launched its GBV Workplace Policy in August on Page 12 and 13. On Page 22 and 23, UN Women MCO – Caribbean Representative, Tonni Brodber made the link between economic empowerment and ending VAWG during a fireside chat at the recently concluded, Advancing Caribbean Development through Women's Empowerment Conference.



# KNOWLEDGE FAIR

## Turning Knowledge into Action: Knowledge Fair to End GBV in the Caribbean

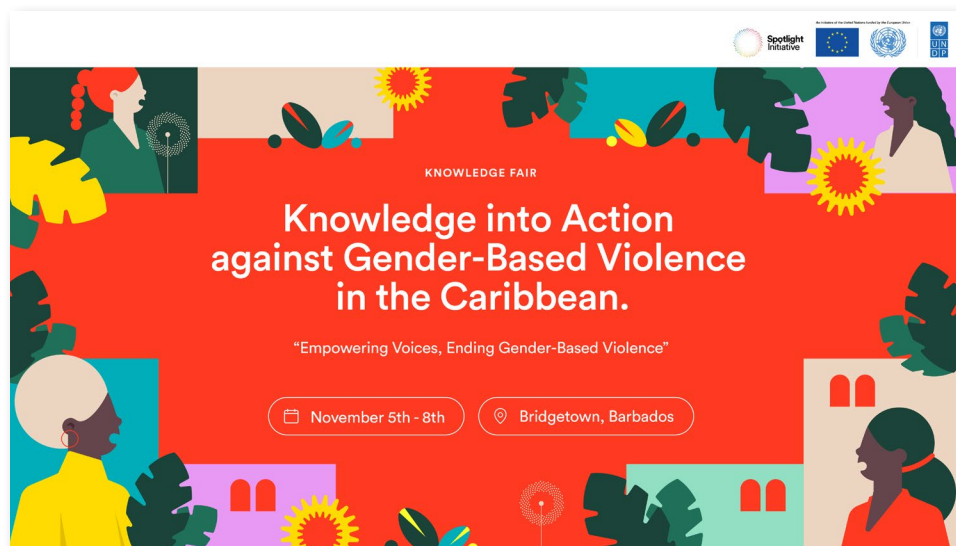
The world's largest effort to end violence against women and girls, the Spotlight Initiative (SI), hosted the Knowledge Fair: Empowering Voices, Ending Gender-Based Violence (GBV) from 6-8 November 2023 in Bridgetown, Barbados. The Fair created a space for those who work to end GBV to showcase local experiences, learn from each other, and amplify the impact of effective strategies to end GBV and empower voices in the Caribbean region.

GBV including family violence (FV), persists today at an alarming rate, deeply-rooted in unequal gender norms and relations. Homicide rates in several Caribbean countries, notably Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, have surged in recent years, putting them among the world's most violent nations (Crime and violence in Barbados: IDB series on crime and violence in the Caribbean, Bailey, 2016, p.13). This has significant implications for women, as illustrated by a Barbadian study showing that one-fifth of murders between 2000 and 2007 in Barbados were related to domestic violence (Crime and violence in Barbados: IDB series on crime and violence in the Caribbean, Bailey, 2016, p.23). Furthermore, three of the top ten recorded incidence rates of rape in the world occur in the Caribbean (Crime, Violence, and Development: Trends, Costs, and Policy Options in the Caribbean, UNODC, 2007, p. 12).

The event provided a dynamic platform for sharing insights, best practices, and collaborative strategies to end GBV in the Caribbean region. The fair sought to offer attendees an inspiring mix of workshops, interactive sessions, creative installations, and collaborative activities that transcend traditional learning contexts.

The Fair served to “name” actors and showcase their experiences, inspiring others to get involved and contribute to lasting change; “connect” participants, fostering new partnerships and alliances to enhance the collective impact of efforts against GBV and FV; “nourish” by disseminating culturally relevant practices and products to engage diverse communities and enrich the collective knowledge base, encouraging new initiatives; and lastly it “amplified” knowledge exchange and partnerships to adapt, replicate, or scale up impactful work in this important area.

In line with the inclusive approach of the Fair, participants were selected through an open Call for Proposals to seek out local initiatives and context-specific approaches that have shown promise in preventing GBV and FV in the Caribbean. The final selection of participants were made by an advisory group that has engaged four recipient UN organisations (UNDP, UN Women, UNICEF, and UNFPA) and the European Union, and other key partners (UN Associated Agencies, the Spotlight Initiative Civil Society Reference Group, Implementing Partners, Academia, etc.)



# REGIONAL EDUCATION STANDARDS VALIDATION WORKSHOP HELD

## **Caribbean Guidelines For The Education Sector To Prevent And Respond To Violence Against Women And Girls (VAWG) And Violence Against Children (VAC)**

The Education Standards were developed under Pillar 3 (Prevention) of the European Union-United Nations Spotlight Initiative Caribbean Regional Programme led by

UNICEF in collaboration with the CARICOM Secretariat. The Education Sector was identified as one of the priority areas for strategic intervention since educational institutions are important sites for normative change and have the potential to address gender inequalities and prevent and respond to gender-based violence (GBV).

As part of a “whole-of-education” approach where several interventions can be coordinated to achieve more sustainable results, there is a need to better understand the role of the education sector in the protection against both victimisation and perpetration of violence as part of integrated services.

The Whole of Education Approach proposes to work with family and peers in school within a community, which, as part of the wider society, will help to transform harmful gender norms and attitudes that perpetuate GBV with the view of improving the ethos of the school and promote healthy, equitable and non-violent relationships for children, young people, and all members of the school and community.

Denise Stuckenbruck, Regional Gender Advisor, UNICEF Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office in her welcome remarks, stated “we address a pressing issue that affects 1 in 3 individuals in the Caribbean: Violence against Women and Girls and Violence against Children. This validation workshop serves as an opportunity to emphasize the urgency of this issue and the need for innovative approaches that promote the rights of women and children. Our key partners in this endeavor include ministries of education, principals, educators, school counselors, community groups, parents, caregivers, and youth-led initiatives.

Our mission is clear: together, as a community and society at large, we must transform harmful gender norms and attitudes, improve our schools ethos, and foster healthy, equitable, and non-violent relationships. The solidarity we







 Participants at the UNICEF CARICOM Spotlight Initiative Caribbean Regional Programme Validation Workshop with Education Stakeholders gather for a group photo. The Workshop was held 20-21 September 2023 at The Brix, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad.

build here today and tomorrow will pave the way for a safer, more equal, and violence-free Caribbean for all women and girls.”

Three products were validated during the workshop: Education Standards to respond to VAWG and VAC; a set of information tools on the Essential Services for the education community at school level; and the Whole of Education Approach to VAWG and VAC. The Education Sector has been included in the Essential Services Package Community of Practice (ESP CoP), which was developed by the United Nations Population Fund in response to VAWG in the Caribbean, and launched in May 2022. The Caribbean will be the first Region to integrate the education sector as part of an ESP CoP.

The Standards’ purpose is to create an enabling environment for an effective response within and through education, as it aims to provide all women and girls who have experienced GBV with greater access to a set of essential quality and coordinated multi-sectoral services. They provide guidance for the design, implementation, and review of response services for women and girls subject to all forms of GBV for the education sector.

In delivering welcome remarks during the Opening Session of the workshop, Helen Royer, Director, Human and Social Development, CARICOM Secretariat shared that “the Education Standards for Essential Services and the Whole of Education Approach to prevent and respond to VAWG

and VAC will contribute to the four policy imperatives of the CARICOM Human Resource Development (HRD) 2030 strategy, Access, Equity, Relevance and Quality. It will contribute to the achievement of the whole strategy particularly to the HRD 2030 immediate Outcome #2: Strengthened equity in access and provision to HRD.

“Addressing the root causes and mitigating the risk factors of VAWG and VAC is at the heart of prevention work and must take a multi-sectoral approach to reach individuals, communities, and institutions in coordinated ways so that they are mutually reinforcing. The education sector is key to complement the health, justice, police, and social services to prevent and respond to VAWG and VAC in the Caribbean.”

Participants included Chief Education Officers from CARICOM’s 15 Member States and five Associate Members, representatives from teacher education institutions, Civil Society Organisations, the CARICOM Secretariat and CARICOM Youth Ambassadors and officers from the United Nations Population Fund, United Nation Children’s Fund and the European Union.

At the conclusion of the workshop, recommendations concerning the application of the three products were outlined and will be presented for endorsement at the next CARICOM Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD).

# SPOTLIGHT SUPPORT FOR FOUNDATIONS PROGRAMME



 Above - Adel Lilly, Manager of the Gender Affairs Bureau, facilitated the programme.

Below - Detective Constable Keisha Deane Smith, Guyana Police Force attended the workshop.



## Region 6 and 7 gets support

The UN Women gender-based violence (GBV) prevention initiative for young people aged 13 to 24, Foundations Programme, took another step forward in implementation under the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative Guyana.

More than 80 participants from non-governmental organisations (NGOs), schools, community groups, faith-based organisations, and government entities such as the Guyana Police Force completed the Training of Trainers workshops held May 15-18, 2023, in Region 6 and July 4-7, 2023 in Region 7.

Led by the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security (MoHSS) and UN Women Multi-Country Office – Caribbean, the programme forms part of the activities organised by Spotlight Initiative Guyana, which is funded by the European Union (EU), and implemented by the United Nations, in partnership with the Government, and civil society organisations in Guyana to implement solutions to accelerate action towards eliminating GBV, specifically violence against women and girls (VAWG) within the context of family violence.

Planning and Coordination Specialist, UN Women MCO – Caribbean, Je'nille Maraj said: "In partnership with the ministry, we were able to equip 85 facilitators in the hinterland communities to continue to implement programming to address the root causes of GBV, through critical thinking about gender, gender socialization, hierarchies and constructs and intersectional inequalities which lead to violence, and embedding actions which change attitudes and behaviour. Local partnerships and capacity building within communities is especially critical for sustainable action





Senior Gender Affairs Officer, Jairo Rodrigues, from the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security addressing participants during one of the sessions.

Participants from Region 6 who attended the Training of Trainers workshop including Adel Lilly, Manager of the Gender Affairs Bureau, who facilitated the workshop.

toward safer, more peaceful and cohesive communities in which women and girls live lives free from violence.”

Facilitated by Manager of the Gender Affairs Bureau, Adel Lilly and Senior Gender Affairs Officer, Jairo Rodrigues, both from the MoHSS, the participants were able to deepen their understanding of gender constructs and pervasive cultural norms that perpetuate inequalities; and focused on strengthening the prevention approaches employed to address GBV and HIV discrimination.

In an interview at the workshop in Berbice, Lilly said: “The Foundations Programme is an important element in preventing gender-based violence because it addresses some fundamental things that must be addressed. For example, what role culture plays in preventing or promoting gender-based violence? Not only does the Programme look at what should be done after violence occurs, but it seeks to address the issues that can prevent GBV and that is most important.”

Though some of the participants may have possessed conceptual knowledge of GBV with backgrounds in sexual and reproductive health, human rights advocacy, work with marginalised communities, or victims/survivors of GBV, the workshops provided specialised training to implement the 12-week psycho-educational programme at a community level.

Guyana is the second Caribbean country currently implementing the Foundations Programme under Pillar 3, the Prevention Pillar of the Spotlight Initiative that focuses

on gender inequitable social norms, attitudes and behaviour change at community and individual levels to prevent VAWG and harmful practices.

Ending violence against women is everyone’s business. The UN Women Foundations Programme is one approach being used by the Spotlight Initiative Guyana to accelerate collective action to help the most vulnerable and address the drivers of VAWG.

For more information on the Foundations Programme




Hon. Dr Vindhya Persaud – Minister in the Ministry of Human Services and Social Security Hon. Dr Vindhya Persaud presents a certificate of completion to a participant.



# USING DATA IN THE FIGHT AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

## How the Spotlight Initiative is building national capacities in Grenada

### How many women are victims of gender-based violence?

 Globally, according to an article published by UN Women “an estimated 736 million women—almost one in three—have been subjected to physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual violence, or both at least once in their life (30 per cent of women aged 15 and older).” But if we were to pose this question to the region would we be able to provide detailed figures? To date, it has been a challenge to collect and compare gender-based violence data in the region, but in Grenada, the Spotlight Initiative, a global initiative of the United Nations which has received generous support from the European Union is working to remedy this, as part of their overall aim to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls..

Gathering and understanding the nature and prevalence of gender-based violence in a country is a crucial step in informing policymakers and assisting the design and implementation of effective policies to combat gender-based violence. The capacity to collect comprehensive,

reliable, comparable, and up-to-date data on violence against women and girls is therefore essential to the development of effective solutions towards ending gender-based violence.

To this end, the Spotlight Initiative in Grenada has been working towards strengthening national capacity to regularly collect data related to violence against women and girls VAWG, including intimate partner violence. This data needed to be publicly available and comparable on an international scale to provide the type of reliable analysis required to inform policy decision. In 2022, the online data system – GrenadaInfoSAFE – was born!


This innovative, new and harmonised data system was prepared in collaboration with the Central Statistical Office and the National Data Centre of Grenada and following extensive consultation with civil society and key stakeholders in the public sector, including the Royal Grenada Police Force (RGPF).

### So how will GrenadaInfoSAFE work?

GrenadaInfoSAFE allows data officials to analyse trends/patterns and improve reporting to support the development of more targeted and strategic intervention strategies that prevent and respond more effectively to gender-based violence.

The Spotlight Initiative also provided the equipment necessary for the operation of the data system, including hardware and software, which were procured and distributed to the Royal Grenada Police Force and the Ministry of Social



 Members of the audience during the launch of the GrenadaInfoSAFE digital platform, which is using data to help eliminate VAWG reporting tool. Developed by UNDP under the Spotlight Initiative Grenada and a diverse group of partners including several government agencies, the tool will help collect real-time local data on VAWG.

 Elaine Henry-McQueen, Spotlight Initiative Grenada Coordinator (left) and William Lavell (right) during the launch of the GrenadaInfoSAFE digital tool provides a central digital incident reporting system that enables timely collection of data on VAWG.



Development, the data producing agencies, and to the Central Statistical Office, which houses the central hub of the system.

But a data system is only as effective as the information being inputted and the Spotlight team dedicated additional support to provide extensive training in collaboration with the Central Statistical Office in Grenada to improve stakeholders' capacities to gather, and enter data on violence against women and girls, and to use the data system. The training sessions were designed to enhance participants' knowledge and skills for data management and processing, data safety and security, and understanding the layout and functionalities of the web-based data system.

The key institutions that benefited from the training were the National Data Centre in the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, the Central Statistical Office, the Criminal Records Office of the RGPF, the Ministry of Gender Affairs, Ministry of Health and other stakeholders of the Spotlight Initiative Programme.

While there is still much more to be done in the goal of eradicating violence against women and girls and gender-based violence, UNDP stands committed to ensuring no one is left behind. UNDP Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean,



in partnership with governments and stakeholders, remains dedicated to the advancement of inclusive and sustainable development throughout the region. This intervention is part of the work of UNDP Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean in its commitment to promoting economic diversification, job creation and resilience with the "Blue Economy for Green Islands" vision.


# BELIZE CSOs IMPROVE ADMIN SKILLS TO TACKLE VAWG

**On September 18-20, 2023, more than 20 civil society organisations (CSOs) in Belize participated in a two-day workshop to improve their service delivery in gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and response to continue supporting more survivors, educating communities and challenging harmful societal norms that perpetuate GBV.**

The workshop was part of a series of training workshops hosted under the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative Caribbean Regional Programme and implemented by the UN Women Multi-Country Office (MCO) – Caribbean and the National Women's Commission to equip CSOs with the skills to secure funding opportunities for sustained programmes, manage projects effectively, improve financial planning and ensure accurate reporting for accountability.

Minister of Human Development, Families, and Indigenous Peoples' Affairs, the Honourable Dolores Balderamos Garcia, underscored the importance of partnerships and capacity building for local CSOs in ending violence against women and girls.

Hon. Balderamos Garcia said: "The government can never fight this fight alone and that is why it is important that all of you civil society organisations are here today. With the support of UN Women and the EU, with the Pastor and civil society present, this is so important to have this partnership."

According to the  UN Women Global Data Portal, Women Count, 7.8% of women in Belize aged 15-49 years reported that they had been subject to physical and/or sexual violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months. CSOs, particularly women-led CSOs, are on the frontline of the fight to end GBV given their direct contact with the victims and survivors. However, they experience challenges that limit their effectiveness in providing psychosocial services.

Delivering opening remarks, Representative, UN Women MCO – Caribbean Tonni Brodber said: "Too often, civil society organisations rise and fall based on the personality of a leader and we don't necessarily see systemic strengthening. Regardless of who is at the fore of an organisation, the organisation must be able to thrive, prosper and continue its good work. This is what this type of training will assist with."

Team Leader of the European Union Office in Belize, Xavier Canton-Lamousse reminded civil society of their crucial role as the bedrock for advocating for a safer, more equal Belize.

"It [civil society] has an essential role as advocate and promoter of the rights of people, including marginalized groups. Civil society also plays an important monitoring role as watchdog, holding Government to account on its commitments and responsibilities towards the people. For these reasons, it is important that civil society build capabilities to engage in governance mechanisms and contribute to policy-making processes," said Canton-Lamousse.

The Spotlight Initiative Caribbean Regional programme is partnering with women's rights groups, women-led CSOs, and other relevant community-based CSOs to improve their capacity to influence national and local women's rights and gender equality agendas and better serve the needs of most marginalised communities.



# GBV UNIT WALKABOUTS PLATFORM FOR CHANGE

By Sophia Phillip

Amidst the vibrant colours and contagious rhythms of Grenada's carnival, a powerful movement quietly unfolded—a movement that aimed to ensure every reveler's safety and dignity. Organised by the Gender-Based Violence Unit within the Ministry of Social and Community Development, Housing and Gender Affairs, a series of walkabouts were held in the capital St. George and in the outer St. Andrew parish. However, this was not just a series of walkabouts; it was a resounding statement against gender-based violence that echoed through statistics and stories alike.

Behind the scenes, the Spotlight Initiative Grenada had meticulously monitored key data, and the numbers unveiled critical insights. The 2021 Labour Force Survey showcased a persistent gender gap in economic participation, with women facing lower employment rates compared to men. The unemployment rates among young women were strikingly higher at 42%, compared to 36% for young men. This gap extended even to household heads, where women's unemployment rate stood at 19% while men's was 10%. The data painted a stark picture of inequality that urgently needed addressing.

## The sobering reality did not stop at economics.

A World Bank report, "Breaking Barriers to Women's Economic Inclusion in Grenada," underlined that despite progress, women still faced restricted opportunities, lower earnings, and limited economic autonomy. This disparity rippled beyond income, impacting women's agency and safety profoundly.

And so, against this backdrop of data-driven insights, the Carnival Outreach Activity took flight. Walkabouts in the towns of St. Andrew and St. George became more than just community interactions - they became platforms for change. These walks symbolized the commitment of the Gender-Based Violence Unit, the Spotlight Initiative, and partners to creating a safe and respectful carnival experience for all.



Some of the brochures distributed during the Carnival Walkabouts.

Amidst the vibrant costumes and contagious energy, a profound message was shared by engaging with people during these walkabouts, focusing on respect, consent, and the prevention of intimate partner and sexual violence. During the walks, items such as condoms, flashlights, and pamphlets with information on Sexual Transmitted Diseases were shared with participants. Chae St. Louis, Public Relations Officer for the Ministry, said the events were successful and described an energetic interaction with people who eagerly accepted the items and were receptive to the information shared. The statistics did not just stay on paper; they reverberated through every step taken.

As the sun set on the walkabouts, their impact was undeniable. The numbers and stories merged, revealing a society yearning for change. The data illuminated the urgency, while the stories of resilience and hope illuminated the path forward.

The Carnival Outreach Activity wasn't just an event; it was a testament to a nation's commitment to transformation. In the dance of statistics and stories, it became evident that Grenada was stepping into a new era—one where carnival celebrations were not just joyful but safe, where the rhythms of unity drowned out the echoes of violence.

# GBV WORKPLACE POLICY LAUNCH

## CEC Launches Workplace Policy to Promote Eliminating Gender-based Violence

**The workplace must become another line of defense against Gender-based Violence (GBV) and Caribbean businesses must establish policies to ensure that this is the case.**

This call came recently from President of the Caribbean Employers Confederation (CEC), Wayne Chen, as he delivered the opening remarks at the launch of a Gender-based Violence (GBV) Workplace Policy, which is part of the Spotlight Initiative Caribbean Regional programme, designed to empower employers to play their part in the work to end violence against women and girls (VAWG).

Under the theme **“From Awareness to Action: Transforming the Caribbean Workplace to End Violence Against Women”**, the launch of United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)-led initiative, featured a range of speakers representing the interests of labour, as well as the regional diplomatic corps. A total of eight businesses from Barbados, Antigua and Barbuda, and Trinidad and Tobago, formally demonstrated their commitment to implementing policies to end gender-based violence in the workplace, during a signing ceremony of the official policy.

In addressing the gathering, President Chen noted that the milestones from Phase I of the project included the

creation of a gender-based violence workplace toolkit, communications materials and training programmes. Phase II, he added, would see support being provided to Caribbean employers to apply these tools to their respective industries and business places. This aspect will be completed in four phases with emphasis on areas as broad as gender equality, victim-centered support, recruitment, reporting and self-defense training.

The CEC President also noted that the COVID-19 Pandemic had exacerbated the issue of VAWG, making the need for initiatives that can create lasting change even more urgent.

David Mogollon, Head of Cooperation of the EU to Barbados, Eastern Caribbean States, the OECS, and CARICOM/ CARIFORUM, Delegation of the European Union, also addressed the forum describing GBV in the workplace as “simply unacceptable.” He emphasized that interventions in the workplace must be culturally appropriate and embedded within the organisation, to ensure that there is a “zero tolerance approach” at various levels of its structure, to bring about meaningful change.

Jenny Karlsen, Deputy Director, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Sub-Regional Office, Caribbean noted: “It is our collective duty which necessitates the support of everyone, from leadership to individuals to foster a safe working environment for everyone because every person, regardless of gender, deserves to work in an environment free from fear, intimidation, or violence. Together, we can make a difference that touches the lives of every individual, particularly women and girls in the Caribbean.”

UN Resident Coordinator, Didier Trebucq, described the proceedings as “an important moment in our journey



# WORKPLACE LAUNCH

towards a safer, more equitable workplace for all.” He noted that with the 2023 global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Summit less than a week away in New York, “this is welcome progress on our work to end Gender-based Violence in the region and achieving the SDGs for people everywhere.”

Commending the eight companies from three CARICOM Member States who participated in developing the GBV Workplace Policy, the UN official assured that the UN System will continue to support work undertaken in Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean “to eliminate GBV in all its forms in the workplace and wherever it shows up.”

Also commending employers for their part in this critical policy, Barbados’ Minister of Labour, Social Security and the Third Sector, the Hon. Colin Jordan in delivering the Feature Address underlined that “violence and harassment at work, and in the world of work, causes harm to individuals, families, businesses and societies. It affects people’s lives, dignity, health and wellbeing. It also worsens inequality in societies and undermines business productivity. There should be no place for and no tolerance of violence and harassment,” he concluded.

Persons attending the launch were also treated to poignant cultural performances by Barbadian Spoken Word artist Cindy Celeste and singer Rhesa Garnes who both reminded of the importance of women to society.

The resources developed will be available to organizers and HR practitioners across the region, in the hope that in the future more organisations will come on board to implement workplace policies that protect the rights and well-being of their employees.



Minister of Labour, Social Security and the Third Sector, Colin Jordan (left back) join UN officials, president of CEC, Wayne Chen (centre back), join UN and EU officials, along with representatives of the eight businesses who signed the policy for a group photo after the launch of the GBV Workplace Policy.

**SAVE THE DATE**





The United Nations Populations Fund  
Sub-regional Office for the Caribbean

*in partnership with the*

The Caribbean Observatory on Sexual and  
Reproductive Health and Rights

*hosted by*

International Planned Parenthood Federation:  
Americas and Caribbean Regional Office

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# Joint End-of-Year Launch & High-Level Meeting

*to share findings and recommendations and engage in dialogue on  
key SRH/GBV issues based on evidence-based knowledge products*

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DEC. | **5-6\*** 2023

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO  
(FACE-TO-FACE & VIRTUAL)

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*An additional day, **December 7**, will be used to conduct a  
workshop with civil society and youth actors only*



An initiative of the United Nations funded by the European Union



**Caribbean Observatory on  
Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights**  
Monitoring • Mobilising • Advocating

# CSOs IN GUYANA GET SKILLS TRAINING



Niveta Shivjatan, Finance Officer and Danuta Radzik, M&E Officer, both from Help & Shelter during a site visit with the UN Women team.

## Spotlight Initiative builds Guyana-based CSO skills for programming solutions to end VAWG

Civil society, and specifically women-led organisations in the Caribbean, play a pivotal role in the collective effort towards ending Violence against Women and Girls, advancing gender equality, and realising the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The EU-funded United Nations Spotlight Initiative in the Caribbean is partnering with women's rights groups, women-led civil society organisations (CSOs), and other relevant community-based CSOs to improve their capacity to influence national and local women's rights and gender equality agendas and better serve the needs of most marginalised communities.

On August 21-25, 2023, UN Women Multi-Country Office (MCO)–Caribbean hosted a five-day capacity development, monitoring, and evaluation mission to Guyana, where local CSOs, including recipients of the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative Caribbean Regional Small Grants for CSOs, participated in skills training and site visits.

The attendees from eight local CSOs were trained in effectively creating applications to secure technical assistance and grants, which included skills building in procurement procedures, finance planning, monitoring and evaluation, and overall project design to better position the CSOs to access donor funding to support the work to end VAWG.

The training was facilitated by members of the UN Women MCO – Caribbean: Planning and Coordination Specialist, Je'nille Maraj, Project Coordination Analyst, Shadé Maycock, and Finance Associate, Kerwin Holder.

[▶ Watch vid recap of the partner training workshop here.](#)

During the visit, the UN Women team also visited four of the civil society partners who were recipients of the EU-funded-Spotlight Initiative Small Grants for CSOs, to identify their needs and priorities, explore existing good practices, and assess the outcome of their projects to end violence against women and girls.

With existing global and local crises that challenge the impact of their work such as limited donor funding and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Spotlight Initiative in Guyana is helping CSOs become more resilient and sustainable agents of change.



# ZERO TOLERANCE FOR FAMILY VIOLENCE BEGINS IN EVERY HOME



# **PLAY  
YOUR  
PART**



**Spotlight  
Initiative**  
To eliminate violence  
against women and girls



An initiative of the United Nations funded by the European Union

**unicef**   
for every child



# MAKING THE BEAUTIFUL GAME BEAUTIFUL FOR ALL

On October 1, representatives of women's football committees across the Caribbean Football Union (CFU) completed a two-day, capacity-building workshop in Miami, Florida, with commitments to implementing advocacy activities in the respective member associations and to working on a joint strategy.

The workshop was the third of five planned activities of the CFU's project under the Spotlight Initiative Caribbean Regional programme. The Spotlight Initiative to end Violence Against Women And Girls is a United Nations initiative funded by the European Union.

The CFU project titled **Ensuring that the Pitch is a Safe Place** examines the barriers to women and girls' participation in football. The overarching objective of the project is to strengthen organisational capacity that will empower the participants to become change agents for equity for women and girls in football, to ensure that the beautiful game is beautiful for all.

Over the course of two webinars and the two-day workshop, the participants sharpened their skills in advocacy and creating advocacy and communications strategies. They

also presented their draft strategies and received guidance to finetune them.

The participants also committed to a joint communication, sensitisation and visibility strategy surrounding women in football, with the objective of deconstructing harmful gender norms and perceptions.

Representative of the UN Women Multi-Country Office (MCO) – Caribbean, Tonni Ann Brodber, Programme Specialist UN Women Latin America and the Caribbean, Jennifer Cooper, and Planning and Coordination Specialist UN Women MCO – Caribbean, Akilah Dorris addressed the participants, each underscoring the importance of the member associations aligning their actions with their good intentions.

**“Sport has an enormous capacity to propel gender equality and women and girls’ empowerment. It is the source of confidence for so many women and girls where they find, not only their understanding of themselves, but the understanding of their potential,” Brodber said in her remarks during the opening.**



“Football has the power to change lives. It changes the lives of many women and girls across the world, and in the process, it also can address various cultural and social challenges,” Brodber added.

Cooper, meanwhile, during a session entitled **Why Representation Matters**, underscored the benefits of a regional focus in addition to the individual projects, and she challenged the participants to go beyond implementing activities to identify and trigger the levers for change.

CFU President, Randolph Harris, during his opening remarks, reiterated his and the CFU executive committee's support for the initiative, saying, “The opportunity to examine both the individual and regional landscape for women in football, with a view to ensuring, not just participation and inclusion, but safety, is priceless.” He thanked UN Women for what he called a timely partnership.

Eighteen member associations were represented at the workshop – Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Dominican Republic, Dominica, Grenada, Haiti, Martinique, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Martin, St. Maarten, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands, and the United States Virgin Islands.



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 Dr. Florian Luetticken (left), Team Leader / Counsellor – EU Caribbean Partnership for Governance, Security and Human Development, Delegation of The European Union to Barbados, the Eastern Caribbean States, OECS and CARICOM/CARIFORUM, and Tonni Brodber (second from left), Representative, UN Women MCO – Caribbean, Acting Commissioner of Police Erwin Boyce (third from left), and Inspector (Ag.) Christine Husbands (right) who heads TBPS Family Conflict Unit with some of the office equipment presented to the Family Conflict Unit during the official handover.

# SPOTLIGHT INITIATIVE GIFTS OFFICE EQUIPMENT TO TBPS

## Equipment Handover from the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative Caribbean Regional Programme to The Barbados Police Service (TBPS)

The European Union-funded United Nations (UN) Spotlight Initiative Caribbean Regional Programme is supporting The Barbados Police Service TBPS Family Conflict Unit with its data capture and management of gender-based violence cases. Officials from the European Union (EU) and UN Women presented computer equipment to the specialised unit of the BPS to process, store, and analyse data on gender-based violence.

Acting Commissioner of Police Erwin Boyce highlighted the work the Family Conflict Unit has done to respond to domestic violence. He said the TBPS was very proud of the achievements, particularly in response to family conflict, as a result of their specific policing approach. The Commissioner was joined by members of the Barbados Police Service senior command team including Inspector (Ag.) Christine Husbands who leads the BPS Family Conflict Unit.

Representative-UN Women MCO-Caribbean Tonni Brodber remarked: “To have so many Assistant Commissioners of Police, the Deputy Commissioner Police, present with the Acting Commissioner of Police demonstrates a real political will and prioritisation of this issue, which sometimes people think is siloed from the issues of crime. But more and more, the research is showing children who grow up in homes where they witness their mothers being battered by their fathers; men who batter their partners are generally, boys who grew up in homes where they saw this happen and they are also more likely to get into violent interactions with other men.”

Recognising the much needed EU-UN partnership through the Spotlight Initiative, the UN Women Representative said police officers from forces across the region had participated with statisticians and other key GBV responders in sessions on the minimum standards for ethically collecting administrative data on GBV, and data that is also sex disaggregated.

The EU Team Leader for Human Development, Governance and Security, Dr. Florian Luetticken, said having also seen differences in policing processes in another Caribbean



Senior Officers from TBPS, representatives from UN Women MCO – Caribbean and representatives from the Delegation of the European Union to Barbados, the Eastern Caribbean States, OECS and CARICOM/CARIFORUM during the formal handover of office equipment to the Family Conflict Unit of TBPS.



Inset - Dr. Florian Luetticken (from left), Team Leader / Counsellor – EU Caribbean Partnership for Governance, Security and Human Development, Delegation of the European Union to Barbados, the Eastern Caribbean States, OECS and CARICOM/CARIFORUM, and Tonni Brodber (right), Representative, UN Women MCO – Caribbean during the official handover of office equipment to the Family Conflict Unit of The Barbados Police Service.



state, he was very happy that the EU-UN partnership through the Spotlight Initiative was able to contribute to these positive changes.

“Sometimes there are questions of what has security to do with human development and even development with a government. But I think this is a very good example... all the different UN agencies and the European Union try to tackle gender-based violence at every level; so, families, schools, the work environment.

Noting that while the Spotlight Initiative was coming to an end, he said the EU will not leave, but remains committed to working with the different actors who are addressing security.

Inspector (ag.) Christine Husbands, Coordinator of the BPS Family Conflict Unit said the Unit, established in 2013 remains committed to ensuring that girls and women are in a position to say they have had a better response from the Barbados Police Force.

“We have had the problem that victims are still not willing to prosecute. But today we assure that if they are not willing to prosecute there is still another means of getting them the support that they need.

The presentation [of the equipment] will surely help us (sic) with being able to analyse those numbers. Now we have that opportunity to analyse so we know which road to go, because we face intimate partner violence, child abuse, and all the other forms of abuse. Today I can only say we really do appreciate this, and we will continue to work with UN Women and the EU in order to end domestic violence. You know that we really want to bring these numbers down, and we will surely not be minimising our effort in terms of the response of the Barbados Police Service.”

With the aim of ending all forms of violence against women and girls by 2030, the European Union and the United Nations have been collaborating since 2017 to empower, promote, and protect the rights of women and girls worldwide. The **Spotlight Initiative is a EUR500 million programme that deployed targeted, large-scale investments in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America, and the Pacific.**





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# BUSINESSES KEY IN WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT IN JAMAICA

The estimated USD1 billion or 6.49% of the 2018 Gross Domestic Product (GDP) that Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) costs Jamaica, necessitates that the private sector sees itself too, as a critical player in women's economic and overall empowerment.

Representative, UN Women Multi-Country Office – Caribbean, Tonni Brodber made the link between economic empowerment and ending VAWG during a fireside chat at the recently concluded, Advancing Caribbean Development through Women's Empowerment Conference.

Brodber said, "It is an economic issue. It is a human issue. It is a sustainable development issue. If women do not have the tools to make certain decisions, they will feel they cannot leave certain situations and so it is an economic issue. Not only is it costing the government of Jamaica but it is also costing individuals, their potential to fully serve their country."

VAWG survivors are sometimes unable to attend work (miss work); it means that their duties at work are not attended to, resulting in lost productivity and by extension losses to the GDP. Examining the economy-wide costs related to VAWG by sector, showed that the services sector was most impacted with an estimated USD 180.6 million in output losses (1.27% of GDP). The industry sector follows with an estimated USD 140.4 million in output losses (0.99 per cent of the 2018 GDP).

Under the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative, UN Women implementing partner Atlantic Council brought together UN agencies, government officials from several departments, civil society representatives, academics and students to discuss the challenges and opportunities around ending GBV and enhancing women's economic empowerment. Data from UN Women Caribbean shows that 39% of women in Jamaica have experienced some form of



The Honourable Olivia Grange, Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, Jamaica (left) and Aniceto Rodriguez Ruiz, Head of Cooperation, Delegation of the EU to Jamaica chatting during the "Advancing Caribbean Development through Women's Empowerment Conference".

violence and on average across the region, at least 46% of women have experienced at least one form of violence in her lifetime. Brodber told the audience that the cost of GBV is "expensive" and availability and access to data are important to understand the prevalence of GBV and its impacts on economies. 🌐 **She shared that data, which is a readily available resource at UN Women,** empowers government representatives to make a case for national policies and laws, and changes the debate on GBV.

Head of Cooperation, Delegation of the European Union to Jamaica, Aniceto Rodriguez Ruiz in delivering welcome remarks said: "Gender equality is a core value of the EU and a universally recognised human right but it's not just that. It is also imperative to economic growth, to prosperity, good governance, to peace and security."





Tonni Brodber, Representative, UN Women Multi-Country Office – Caribbean, speaks with Christina Williams, Chairwoman, Human Rights Council, Norman Manley Law School during a fireside chat at the “Advancing Caribbean Development through Women’s Empowerment Conference”.

of legislation as well as plans and programmes.

In addition, the study also highlights the need to allocate budgetary support to fund initiatives to provide essential services to affected women and children. I have no doubt that all of us will be able to achieve even more once we receive the appropriate funding to do so.”

In December 2022, the House of Representatives approved a motion to establish a Caucus of Women Parliamentarians to bolster women in political representation. UN Women Caribbean provided technical support to the women members of Parliament through women’s leadership initiatives under the EU-UN Spotlight Jamaica programme, whereby the Caucus was proposed.

The Minister said the bi-cameral caucus will, “create a sustainable medium where women Parliamentarians can unite to strengthen solidarity and women’s representation and leadership in politics [...]. We ensured that it (the caucus) was institutionalised in Parliament where we were able to get it to be a sessional committee. Additionally, the caucus can be used to provide essential information and training for women Parliamentarians, and also to mainstream gender in Parliamentary Institutions and Procedures.

The business sector, civil society and government officials were also well-represented at the conference participating in panel discussions examining the root causes of GBV and the potential for women’s economic inclusion to the growth trajectory of the Caribbean.

Under the Spotlight Initiative, UN Women implementing partner Atlantic Council will host a similar private sector engagement in Guyana in November, 2023.

Ruiz added: “The EU is therefore committed to eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls. In fact, empowering women and girls is not only the right thing to do, it is the smart thing to do. It’s a human thing to do.”

Honourable Olivia Grange, Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport said the Government of Jamaica is committed to “doubling down” on strategies to empower women and achieve gender equality. She stressed that attaining Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5: Gender Equality, is key to achieving all 17 SDGs and is a priority of the Government of Jamaica.

Stressing the need for gender-responsive budgeting in the region, Minister Grange said, “In order to more appropriately respond to the differing needs of not only our women and girls, but all citizens as a whole, public budgets should integrate commitments towards achieving gender equality. This is necessary to not only adequately address the differing needs of citizens, but also to assist in avoiding the further exacerbation of existing gender inequalities.”

Minister Grange also stressed the importance of the UN Women-commissioned, “National Study on the Economic Cost of Violence Against Women and Girls in Jamaica” in partnership with the Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport under the frame of the EU-UN Spotlight Initiative, as an action geared towards realising a gender-sensitive public budget.

The Minister said that the Study, “highlights the importance of ending violence against women and girls with the support



# GUYANA BUSINESSES

“Societies and communities with higher levels of gender equality exhibit lower levels of violence and greater social cohesion. Recent research conducted by UN Women on the Economic Cost of Violence Against Women and Girls in Jamaica in the region demonstrated that gender-based violence (GBV) contributes to significant annual output loss to the private sector. This violence affects staff members’ health and their performance.”

Representative, UN Women Multi-Country Office – Caribbean, Tonni Brodber highlighted this nexus of eliminating GBV as part of a comprehensive approach of centering gender equality in the development agenda, if Guyana and other Caribbean countries are to realise their development goals, including the health of the people and economic and social growth. The UN Women official was at the time delivering remarks to the launch of the Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEPs) held under the EU-funded, Spotlight Initiative Guyana to increase awareness of the role of the private sector said: “The elimination of violence against women in Guyana should also be a priority of the private sector.”

Launched in 2010 by UN Women and the UN Global Compact, the WEPs are a set of Principles offering guidance to businesses on how to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment in the workplace, marketplace and community.

The private sectors companies at the launch, including seventeen WEPs signatories announced their commitments to the Principles which they are implementing through workplace policies for Domestic Violence victims/survivors as well as paternity leave. They advocated for more members of the private sector in Guyana to endorse and action the WEPs. This took place as attendees openly expressed concern for the recent fire in Mahdia where 19 children, mostly Indigenous girls aged 12 to 18, died.

Deputy Head of Delegation of the European Union to Guyana, Suriname and with responsibility for Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, St Barthelemy, St. Eustatius, and St. Maarten, Evelina Melbarzde commended the UN and government on the collaboration with a wide group of stakeholders towards preventing and eliminating violence against women.

“I am very happy here today to see that we are no longer just focusing on one cause, but we are also looking at the



Photos Credit: UN Women/Trevor Smith



Evelina Melbarzde, Deputy Head of Delegation of the European Union to Guyana, Suriname and with responsibility for Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, St Barthelemy, St. Eustatius, and St. Maarten delivering remarks during the launch of WEPs.

preventative measures. It is with great gratitude that I am here today to thank particularly the UN partners but also the government who have so far been very successful and to congratulate all of you for your involvement. It is very important to create a safe environment to empower women and to fight gender-based violence”, said Melbarzde.

# COMPANIES COMMIT TO WEPEs

Eight (8) private sector companies in Guyana have created Gender Action Plans and are implementing policies that align with the WEPEs. Two videos featuring these companies' actions were also shared at the launch.

By signing the WEPEs, these companies have committed to advancing gender equality through implementing the following principles:

1. Establish high-level corporate leadership for gender equality.
2. Treat all women and men fairly at work - respect and support human rights and nondiscrimination.
3. Ensure the health, safety and well-being of all women and men workers.
4. Promote education, training and professional development for women.
5. Implement enterprise development, supply chain and marketing practices that empower women.
6. Promote equality through community initiatives and advocacy.
7. Measure and publicly report on progress to achieve gender equality.

The activity was conducted within the framework of Pillar 3 of the ongoing Spotlight Initiative Guyana, which focuses on gender inequitable social norms, attitudes and behaviour change at community and individual levels to prevent violence against women and girls and design an inclusive future for men, women, boys and girls in Guyana.



Representative, UN Women Multi-Country Office – Caribbean, Tonni Brodber delivering remarks during the launch of the WEPEs held under the EU-funded United Nations Spotlight Initiative Guyana.



Some of the representatives from companies that have made commitments to the WEPEs.





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