



**Department of Economic and Social Affairs
(UN DESA)**



**United Nations Sub Regional Workshop
For The Caribbean on Youth employment policies**

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**Methodist Church Hall
Kingstown, St. Vincent and the Grenadines**

**DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS
UN DESA**

REPORT ON

**United Nations Sub Regional Workshop For The Caribbean
On Youth Employment Policies**

Hosted By The Government Of St. Vincent and the Grenadines with the
collaboration of Projects Promotion Limited (PPL)

Methodist Conference Centre, Kingstown, St. Vincent & the Grenadines 15th-17th December,
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Mission Statement of UN DESA

The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat is a vital interface between global policies in the economic, social and environmental spheres and national action. The Department works in three main interlinked areas: (i) it compiles, generates and analyses a wide range of economic, social and environmental data and information on which States Members of the United Nations draw to review common problems and to take stock of policy options; (ii) it facilitates the negotiations of Member States in many intergovernmental bodies on joint courses of action to address ongoing or emerging global challenges; and (iii) it advises interested Governments on the ways and means of translating policy frameworks developed in United Nations conferences and summits into programmes at the country level and, through technical assistance, helps build national capacities.

Le Département des affaires économiques et sociales du Secrétariat de l'Organisation des Nations Unies sert de relais entre les orientations arrêtées au niveau international dans les domaines économiques, sociaux et environnementaux et les politiques exécutées à l'échelon national. Il intervient dans trois grands domaines liés les uns aux autres : i) il compile, produit et analyse une vaste gamme de données et d'éléments d'information sur des questions économiques, sociales et environnementales dont les États Membres de l'Organisation se servent pour examiner des problèmes communs et évaluer les options qui s'offrent à eux; ii) il facilite les négociations entre les États Membres dans de nombreux organes intergouvernementaux sur les orientations à suivre de façon collective afin de faire face aux problèmes mondiaux existants ou en voie d'apparition; iii) il conseille les gouvernements intéressés sur la façon de transposer les orientations politiques arrêtées à l'occasion des conférences et sommets des Nations Unies en programmes exécutables au niveau national et aide à renforcer les capacités nationales au moyen de programmes d'assistance technique.

These contributions do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs or any body of the United Nations system but strictly those of the respective authors.

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PREFACE

The workshop was a result of the work programme of the Socioeconomic Governance Management Branch within the Division for Public Administration and Development Management, SGMB/DPADM, of UN DESA, and the interest of the Caribbean Governments that participated. The support of the Division is consistent with its mission: “To assist Member States in ensuring that their governance systems, administrative and financial institutions, human resources and policy development processes function in an effective and participatory manner by fostering dialogue, promoting and sharing information and knowledge and providing technical and advisory services.”

The event, that provided a space for the sharing of best-practices of good governance in a key social sector, was supported with resources from the Development Account of the United Nations. It was also supported with in-kind contribution from the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The office of ECLAC in the Caribbean also supported the forum with a resource person. UN DESA contributed with two resource persons who supported substantive and organisational aspects of the forum. In addition, the local NGO Projects Promotion Limited, contracted by UN DESA, provided administrative support in-situ, as a complement to the administrative support provided by UN DESA from New York.

Following the proposed programme of reform of the United Nations ¹, the UN approved to creating a dividend for development, denominated Development Account, based on administrative costs reductions.

The projects and activities supported with the Development Account must be defined within the scope and priorities of the approved medium-term plan, and must address major development goals of the UN. The Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs acts as Programme Manager of the Account.

The key characteristic of activities financed with these resources is that Project implementation can be carried over beyond the one-biennium budget limit.

Under the framework of the Account, the Branch has supported activities related to the follow-up of the implementation of commitments emanated from the Social Summit, Copenhagen 1995. These tasks have been implemented through a broader Project, denominated Project H, “Activities for the implementation of Agenda 21, the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development, and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action “.

Project H's overall objective ², is to strengthen the capacity of national and local mechanisms, to collect, analyse and apply knowledge, information and expertise to policy development. On the

¹ Contained in the policy document "Renewing the United Nations: A Programme for Reform" A/51/950 and A51/950/Add. 1-7 - 1997

² Approved by the General Assembly resolution A/RES/53/220B and A53/374/Add.1

specific area of support to the follow-up to the WSSD, one key objective is to organize training workshops on the policies and principles agreed by member countries during the Summit.

The issues covered by the participants in the meeting are related to Youth employment, one of the sub-themes of the World Social Summit and its related Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Copenhagen Program of Action. The issue has also been carried forward by the different UN conferences after Copenhagen, the Millennium Development Declaration and Goals in particular. From the institutional point of view, the issue of Youth is complex and is mostly left to the interpretation of the different stakeholders in terms of responsibilities and mandates. This in part reflects the different definitions adopted to identify the target population. For example, in terms of age, the United Nations focuses on the population of 15-24 years old. The majority of youth policies in the Caribbean, however, see youth as beginning at 15 and ending at 30 years of age. Another aspect we must factor in is that important segments of the Youth population are the focus of several and different institutions working on cross-cutting issues, such as gender, drug-use, HIV/AIDS, infant pregnancy, and others. The result of this is that the difficulties to identifying and measuring the effect of specific policies and programmes are increased. This last aspect was clearly picked-up in the discussions and integrated into the recommendation in the form of a more integrated and comprehensive institutional approach to Youth employment.

1. INTRODUCTION

This document contains the proceedings of the Sub-regional workshop on the Follow-up and Implementation of the Social Summit in the Caribbean, organised by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (with the Socio-economic Governance and Management Branch of the Division for Public Administration and Development Management of the Department as the focal point) with the support of the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and the collaboration of the Projects Promotion Limited on 15th through 17th of December 2004. The forum draws its central objective from both the United Nations Social Summit of 1995 and the conclusions and recommendations made during a workshop on Social Policies organised by UN DESA in Kingstown with the participation of the same countries in November 2001.

The United Nations Social Summit of 1995 (WSSD) was attended by 117 heads of state or governments, 187 countries and more than 14,000 participants. It was the first major UN conference dedicated to social development. One of its immediate results was the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Copenhagen Program of Action.

The discussions during the WSSD evolved around three core issues that are linked to and of relevance for all countries: eradicating poverty, achieving full employment and social integration. These, together with a number of others, are reflected in the Programme of Action and Copenhagen Declaration with ten commitments³ that were adopted at the Summit. Most of the issues raised at the Summit have been incorporated in subsequent UN major conferences, including the Millennium Development Declaration and the related Goals, MDGs, of 2000 in particular.

In the year 2000, the 24th Special Session of the General Assembly convened in Geneva, UNGASS, for an overall follow-up, review and appraisal of the implementation of the Social Summit's commitments and decided on further initiatives to accelerate social development for all. The follow-up to the WSSD gave as results (1) raised commitment and concerns about achieving the objectives set in 1995, and (2) the identification of further initiatives needed to solidify the way to achieving in full the adopted commitments.

The issue of implementation and follow-up of the Social Summit commitments have received increased attention both in developing as well as in developed countries. The consensus achieved at UNGASS 2000, Geneva, is a reaffirmation of the policies set in Copenhagen in 1995. Equal consideration is given to these objectives in the Millennium Development Declaration and its MDGs. The UN system, UN DESA included, must assist developing countries that request assistance on the implementation of agreed policies at country level, as part of its mandate and the overall commitments arising from these fora.

³ List of the Commitments is attached at the end of this report

Workshop's objective

The objective of the Saint Vincent's workshop was to build national capacity in selected English-speaking countries of the Caribbean sub-region for the implementation and follow-up of the Copenhagen Declaration and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development 1995 through the exchange of information on national policies for youth employment. *See Annex 1 for the Workshop Programme.*

The aim was to propitiate a proper space for discussion on views, issues, policies and best practices that could be shared amongst the participating countries with a view to more harmonised policies on a critical matter that is of concern to all the governments in the subregion and to the UN.

The meeting in Saint Vincent was structured so as to give an opportunity to government and non-government representatives to listen from and present queries to peer professionals on national experiences in the implementation of policies, programmes and projects at national level on concrete themes within the context of youth employment protection and creation, as part of the commitments signed by their respective governments in Copenhagen. It is expected that the exchange of experiences and the sharing of best practices will enhance the impact of national policies/programmes in each of the participating countries.

As youth unemployment is a key concern of the Caribbean countries, especially those that belong to the English speaking zone, the issue of youth employment formed the central theme of the workshop discussions.

The levels of unemployment observed in the region are consistently and drastically higher than the averages observed in Latin America. This serious problem is believed to be at the root for much of the economic and social disequilibrium affecting many of the countries in the sub-region, including poverty, social exclusion, crime and violence.

Background document

UN DESA commissioned an expert on Youth employment to prepare a background paper on "Youth Unemployment in the Caribbean: Social and Economic Backgrounds". The document covered issues on school-to-work transition, impediments to labour force entry, the context and specific problems affecting youth, definitions, data on youth unemployment rates, specific social problems, youth development policies and programs, regional programs, the support of the International Development Organizations, the Global Policy Framework and the effectiveness of youth policies. The document is part of this report and it corresponds to its adjusted version after comments from the participants.

Countries invited

Given the nature of the meeting, a follow-up activity to a previous workshop, participation was based on country representation of the previous workshop of 2001. Accordingly, UN DESA invited two representatives (one government and one NGO) from each of the following

countries: Aruba, Barbados, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

A total of 21 participants attended full-time the three-day discussions. In addition, four Saint Vincent and the Grenadines government officials and one representative from a local NGO of St. Vincent participated as observers. Further, two representatives from UN DESA and one from ECLAC Caribbean participated at the workshop. There were also other attendants from Saint Vincent who participated as observers during the presentations and discussions. *See Annex 2 for the list of participants.*

Though was not mandatory, four participants presented national papers on the forum's theme, which were discussed during the workshop. These are attached in the Annexes of this document and they cover the following specific topics: Youth employment and enterprise in Guyana; Policy and strategy recommendations to enhance youth employment in Jamaica: an NGO perspective; Youth employment; strategies, policy, instruments and modalities in Suriname and Implementing WSSD, National Youth policies and programmes in Trinidad and Tobago.

The Summary in the first part of this report contains the main issues discussed during the general debate. The presentations and recommendations of the three working groups addressed the following questions:

Group 1: Role of stakeholders: Education, Skills development and Health

Group 2: Role of stakeholders in employment creation for youth

Group 3: Micro Enterprise Development

The unedited presentations of the three working groups are also included in the attachments.

Main conclusions/recommendations

All the participants consistently agreed in that (1) the unemployment rates observed in the Youth sector double to quadruple the observed adult rates in the Caribbean (2) the high unemployment rates prevailing in the sector is contributing factor to many of the social problems identified in the region, including poverty, exclusion, delinquency and others (3) countries where Governments have specific policies designed to collect more information on Youth situation and act accordingly are faring better than others (4) in terms of institutional governance, a co-ordinated approach to interventions of all actors is required, including government, private sector, civil society and international organisations.

The participants, organised through three working groups identified the issues of education, skills development and health as critical areas where more effort should be placed by all stakeholders and the type of interventions that seem to work better. They also addressed, with the same approach, the issues of employment creation for Youth and micro-enterprise development in particular. The specific recommendations are included in the section of Group presentations.

Acknowledgement

Finally, we express our recognition to the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines for the support to this exercise. The workshop could not have been implemented without the

commitment and willingness shown by Government ex-ante and during the forum. We also like to mention the outstanding assistance from Projects Promotion Limited, the local supporting NGO, which went beyond its contractual commitment with UN DESA.

The substantive contribution of Mr Tamjidul H. Kazi, UN DESA Consultant, was well received by all the participants and his presentation was a guidance for the discussions. We also like to mention the administrative support support provided by Mr. Luis Prugue from SGMB/DPADM. The collaboration of the ECLAC's representative, Ms Asha Kanbom, enlightened the discussions with her profound knowledge of the Caribbean region and the workshop's theme.

We last but not least recognise the support from and efforts of the participants listed in the Annex, their participation and contribution in hard work and commitment to the objectives of the Workshop and for their understanding of the administrative difficulties normally experienced during this type of events.

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2. WORKSHOP PRESENTATIONS

2.1 YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT IN THE CARIBBEAN: SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BACKGROUNDS⁴

The purpose of this paper is to provide the following:

- a) a general perspective of youth unemployment in the Caribbean,
- b) social backgrounds contributing to youth unemployment, including specific social, economic, demographic, gender-related, cultural and population-related problems,
- c) a summary of existing policies, including
- d) an enumeration of existing national, regional and international programs and policies geared towards youth development and employment generation.

Because of the lack of sufficient material and information on the issues addressed, this paper owes a great deal to, and certain passages are directly borrowed from, research by World Bank, ILO and CARICOM. However, the analysis is mine, and I take all responsibility for any errors.

Introduction

In his Nichomachean Ethics, Aristotle says that “happiness, a state we all pursue, is the full realization of our rationality. In order to be happy, to reach a self-sufficient, attainable, and final end, we should aim at the good.” However, “the full realization” of our potential presupposes the successful attainment of more basic requirements, i.e. necessities such as food, clothing, shelter, and peace of mind, all of which contribute to a person’s eligibility to be a functioning member of society.

It would not be far-fetched to say that gainful employment, i.e. Decent Work 5, is the medium through which one attains both these basic requirements and, further on, self-actualization. However, according to the International Labour Organization, 70 million young people 6 are actively—but unsuccessfully—looking for employment. They represent nearly 40% of the world’s total unemployed. Unemployment levels for this age group are generally two to three times higher than for the more senior population. In some countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, it is as high as five times the rate for adults over age 45. Many of the young

⁴ Reference document prepared by Mr. Tamjidul Huda Kazi, UN DESA consultant and expert on youth employment

⁵ Decent Work involves obtaining and maintaining productive and satisfying employment; decent working conditions; and, income security.

⁶ The conventional international definition of youth delineate those aged between 15 and 24 years old, i.e. from the earliest acceptable school leaving age to the age at which most people will have completed third level education. In some countries, entry into the labour market may occur before 15 years. In other countries, however, the transition between education and the labour market may not be completed until the late twenties or early thirties. Certain portions of this paper necessitates that “youth” therefore encompasses the age group beyond 24 and under 35.

people who are employed find themselves in low-paying temporary situations with little or no job security.

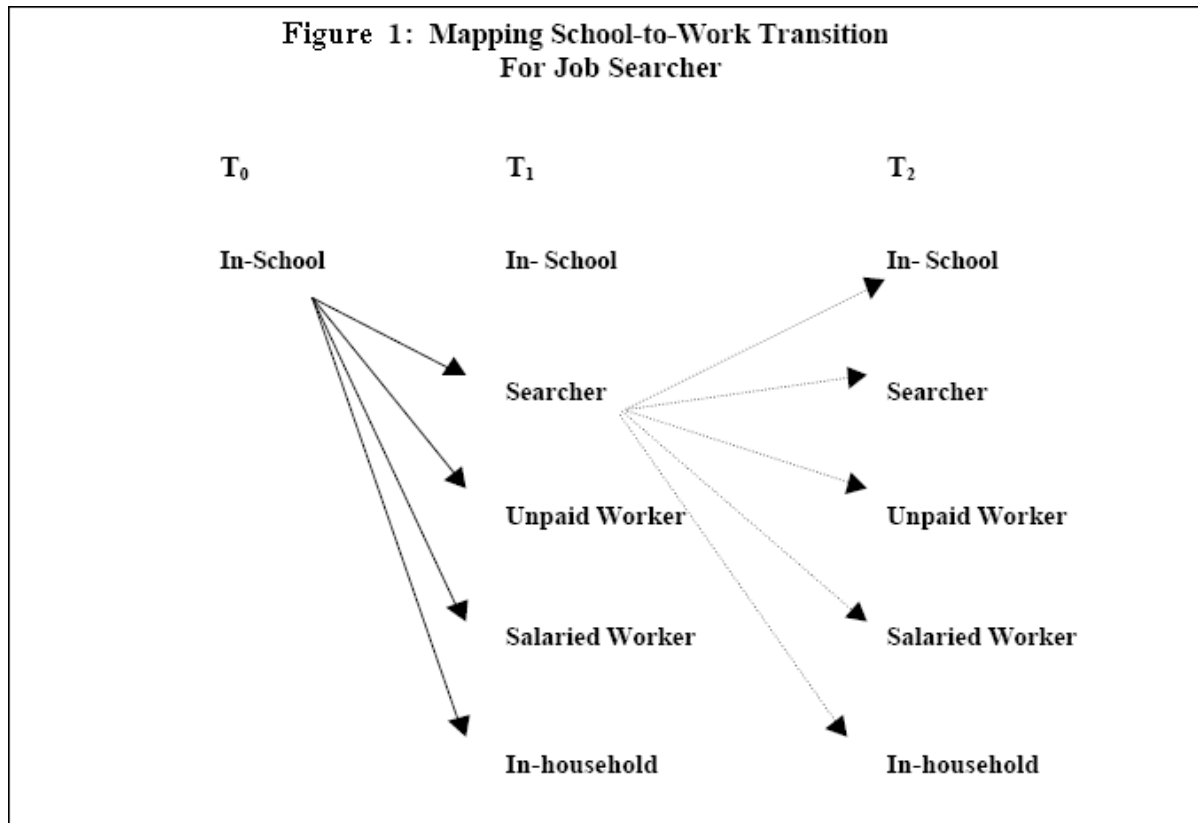
Short spells of unemployment are a natural consequence of the process of job search (especially when a youth is entering the job market). Young people are, to an extent, disproportionately represented amongst new labour market entrants. For this reason alone, one would expect young people to face higher unemployment rates than adults. However, more extended periods of unemployment, which are becoming increasingly prevalent around the world, are the cause of more serious consequences, especially for young people. Since young people are more adaptable but also more impressionable than adults, the long-term scarring effects of long unemployment spells are likely to be of even more consequence than for older workers. Furthermore, health problems, drug addiction, and other forms of social anomie and social unrest are strongly linked to extended periods of unemployment (more on that later).

School-to-Work Transition

Potential young workers making the school-to-work transition face certain challenges. The traditional academic depiction of the school-to-work transition process presents students with a choice between the benefits of further education as opposed to employment (i.e. current income and projected future income), and it is assumed that students directly move from the academic ethos to gainful employment. However, this is not a realistic assumption. In the US, for example, three out of every four students face multiple difficulties in effecting this transition. In her excellent paper on youth unemployment in Latin America and the Caribbean, Caroline Fawcett says that

Such a characterization does not adequately reflect the school-to-work process in Latin America, a process where youth may leave school, go to unpaid work or informal salaried employment, become unemployed and in turn, within a short period, face a whole new transition into unemployment. School-to-work transition in Latin America is an elusive and highly changing process, as youth may leave school, be unemployed, move onto salaried informal work, and then return to school. It is a state of limbo, where many Latin American youth are neither in school, nor in work for any significant amount of time. (Fawcett)

Figure 1 illustrates Fawcett’s findings:



Some Impediments to Labour Force Entry

Beyond the trials of the school-to-work transition, certain groups face harder difficulties than the average youth looking for employment. These groups include:

- *Women:* In general, young women have a much harder time finding employment than young men. In the Bahamas, for example, young women are twice as likely to be unemployed than young men.
- *Education and Skills:* Mostly in developing countries, a substantial number of young people are poor. Since there is little or no social safety net, many of them simply cannot afford to continue education (or even start the education process, in some extreme cases). These young people therefore enter the job market, frequently in the informal sector, where there is an abundance of labour already. Since they cannot afford the luxury of unemployment while conducting a proper job search, they usually end up with low-paying temporary employment that offers little or no security, little remuneration, and can be physically exacting and time-consuming to the point that continuing a job search on the side becomes impossible.

Furthermore, there is a “digital divide” where computer literacy has polarized employment opportunities. There is a relatively greater proportion of jobs in industries which presuppose

computer literacy, and so the privileged few who can afford the education have access to better jobs, furthering the discrepancy.

- *Ethnic Minorities*: While there hasn't been much systematic collection of figures pertaining to ethnic minorities, the situation is obvious. Cultural differences and, more importantly, prejudices; religious differences; linguistic differences add to incompatibilities (or perceived incompatibilities) which result in, among other things, unemployment.
- *Youths with Disabilities*: Once again, statistical evidence is hard to come by, but it is self evident that disabled youths are placed in relatively tougher circumstances when looking for jobs.

The Caribbean Context

Definitions of the territorial scope of the Caribbean vary. According to World Bank (2000a), the 'wider' Caribbean region includes:

- The sovereign-state members of CARICOM
- Spanish-speaking Cuba and the Dominican Republic
- The semiautonomous states of the Kingdom of the Netherlands (Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles island of Bonaire, Curacao, Saint Marten, Statia and Saba)
- The British Overseas Territories, that is Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, and the Turks and Caicos Islands.
- The US Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and territory of the US Virgin Islands
- The territories of the Republic of France consisting of French Guyana, St. Marten, Guadeloupe and Martinique

The Caribbean is a multiethnic region with many cultural differences. There are English-speaking countries (e.g. Trinidad and Tobago), French-speaking countries (e.g. Haiti) and Dutch-speaking countries (e.g. Suriname). The majority of the population is of African descent although there are also people of European, Hispanic, and East and South Asian ancestry (e.g. Indians in Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana).

Historically, the Caribbean region has been strongly influenced by Europe and the United States. The countries of the English-speaking Caribbean have a combined population of around 6.7 million scattered over the Caribbean Sea. Caribbean youth make up about 30% of the population.

Defining Youth

The United Nations' definition of youth is 15-24 years old. The majority of youth policies in the Caribbean, however, see youth as beginning at 15 and ending at 30 years (Alexis 2000). The reason for this extended period of youth in the Caribbean is extremely high rate of youth unemployment.

Youth represents the transition from childhood to adulthood. For the purpose of our study, youth is defined as spanning between 14 and 30 years.

Much has been discussed about the problems plaguing Caribbean youth and subsequent youth unemployment. Not enough has been discovered about the underlying causes and contributions to the problems, and remedies that may be suggested to overcome those.

The youth played a critical role in the birth of the politically independent Caribbean, and most of them continue to manifest tremendous potentialities to overcome hurdles in order to attain high levels of personal and professional goals. However, factors capable of disrupting the process of positive attainments exist amongst youth, which in turn, coupled with a number of external factors, impede easy transition to employment.

Over the last two decades, most Caribbean countries experienced severe economic decline and stagnation. This was a result of a loss of their preferential treatment in agriculture products, depressed market for minerals, losses due to lack of market diversification, stagnation of the manufacturing sector in the face of increased competition, and the increasing vulnerability of the tourism sector. Many countries have been forced to implement structural adjustment and stabilization programs, with resulting cutbacks in health, education, housing, and social welfare programs. More recently, global economic recession, debt service obligations and declines in development assistance have severely impeded economic recovery and growth for most of the Caribbean countries.

Youth Unemployment Rates

Like in most parts of the world, unemployment in the Caribbean is primarily a youth phenomenon (Figure 3). Across countries in the Caribbean, youth unemployment rates double to quadruple the adult rates. According to the World Development Indicators, from 1996-98, St. Lucia had the highest unemployment rate in the Americas and the Caribbean, closely followed by Jamaica (among the countries for which data were available).

Caribbean-wide data indicate that St. Lucia, Dominica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Jamaica, have the highest youth unemployment rates.

Youth unemployment is likely to be quite underestimated in high unemployment economics where non-availability of employment over a prolonged period influences "discouraged workers" to stop looking for work.

Youth unemployment in the Caribbean represents 40-60% (except Barbados) of the unemployed, even though youth comprise 20-30% of the labour force.

Youth unemployment rates are higher for female than males, although their proportion of the total labour force tends to be less. (Figure 2)

Figure 2 : Youth and Adult Unemployment in the Caribbean

Country	Year	Youth (15-24 years) Unemployment			Adult Unemployment			Youth as Share of Unemployed		
		All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female
Antigua & Barbuda	1991	13.0%	13.1%	12.8%	4.2%	4.0%	4.4%	47.0%	47.5%	46.0%
Anguilla	1992	13.7%	14.1%	13.0%	4.0%	4.0%	3.9%	55.1%	56.3%	52.9%
Barbados	1999	17.9%	15.2%	20.9%	7.4%	5.2%	9.6%	36.6%	41.8%	33.3%
Belize	1999	18.4%	13.4%	25.8%	8.2%	6.1%	12.1%	50.8%	47.7%	53.5%
Dominica	1997	28.1%	28.9%	26.7%	14.4%	15.3%	12.6%	40.9%	39.5%	43.8%
Grenada	1998	23.9%	21.1%	28.2%	9.2%	5.3%	13.5%	49.0%	59.8%	43.8%
Guyana	1992	21.1%	17.2%	27.7%	5.2%	3.2%	8.8%	66.9%	72.0%	62.3%
Jamaica	1999	25.4%	19.1%	31.8%	8.9%	5.4%	12.8%	52.6%	57.2%	50.1%
Saint Lucia	1998	30.6%	27.7%	34.0%	12.5%	9.9%	15.4%	50.0%	54.2%	46.4%
Saint Vincent & the Grenadines	1991	26.7%	24.7%	30.0%	11.2%	10.8%	11.9%	55.3%	54.2%	57.1%
Trinidad & Tobago	1999	20.2%	17.9%	23.6%	8.8%	7.2%	11.2%	42.8%	44.1%	41.6%

Source: ILO (1999)

In the English-speaking Caribbean, the gender differential is greatest in Belize, followed by Bahamas, Jamaica, and Guyana.

The following chart shows the unemployment percentages throughout a comprehensive part of the Caribbean:

	1990 MF	1990 M	1990 F	1995 MF	1995 M	1995 F	Latest Year MF	Latest Year M	Latest Year F	Latest Year
Aruba	-	-	-	-	-	-	7.4	6.7	8.4	1997
Bahamas	-	-	-	10.9	10.1	11.8	7.8	5.9	9.6	1999
Barbados	15	10.3	20.2	19.7	16.5	22.9	10.4	8.4	16.4	1999
Belize	-	-	-	12.5	9.9	17.9	12.8	9	20.3	1999
Cayman Islands	-	-	-	4.9	-	-	4.1	3.2	5.1	1997
Dominica	-	-	-	-	-	-	23.1	19.6	27.2	1997
Dominican Republic	-	-	-	15.8	10.2	26.2	15.9	9.5	28.6	1997
Grenada	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	10.3	24.8	1996
Jamaica	15.7	9.3	23.1	16.2	10.8	22.5	16	9.9	23	1996
Netherlands Antilles	17	-	-	13.1	9.9	17	16.7	14.1	19.4	1998
Puerto Rico	14.1	16.2	10.7	13.7	15.6	10.8	11.8	13.2	9.6	1999
Saint Lucia	-	-	-	15.9	11.7	20.9	18.1	16	20.3	1999
Suriname	15.8	12.5	20.6	8.4	7	10.9	10.6	7.2	17	1998
Trinidad and Tobago	20	17.8	24.2	17.2	15.1	20.6	14.2	11.3	18.9	1998
United States Virgin Islands	2.8	-	-	5.7	-	-	5.9	-	-	1997

The Caribbean Office of the ILO gives us this analysis of the above population data:

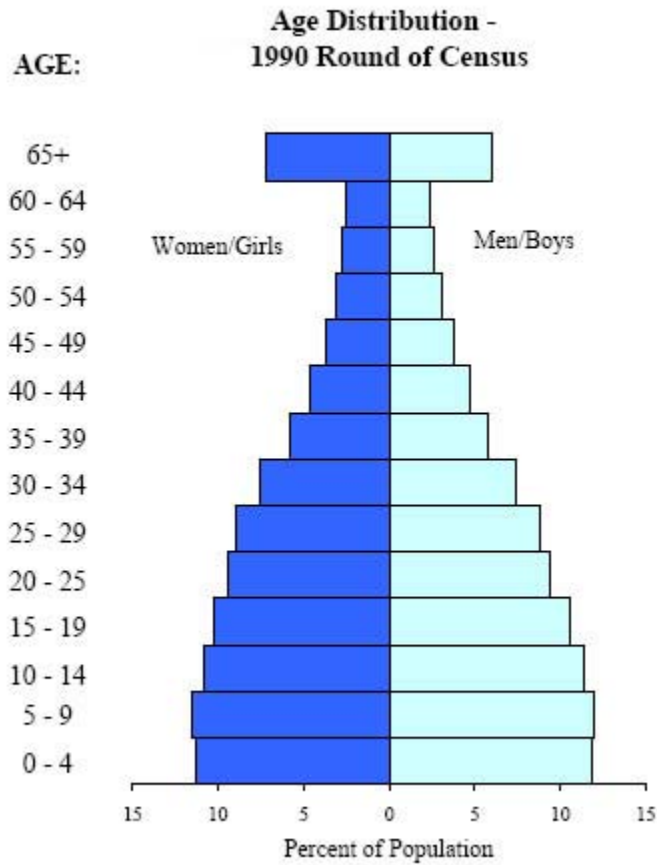
The total labour force of the predominantly English-speaking Caribbean currently stands at approximately 2.7 million people. 26 % of this labour force is between the ages of 16-24. Males make up a greater share of the labour force on average, between the ages of 16-24, across the region. However, there are country specific variations and the pattern becomes less pronounced in the 25-29 age group where female participants roughly equal that of males in Jamaica, Barbados, the Bahamas, Saint Lucia and the Netherlands Antilles.

The youth cohort looms larger in terms of unemployment. An estimated 404,000 persons or 15% of the region's labour force are unemployed. Of this, 51% or 204,000 are between the ages of 15 -24. As a result, youth unemployment rates are substantially above the national averages across the region and average around 40% in the 15-19 age group and 30% in the 20-24 age group. Research reveals that the share of females in the total unemployment figure for youth is most consistently higher in the case of Jamaica across all three age groups between 16-29. The pattern is much more varied in other countries.

The overall figures show that these regional averages for youth participation and employment do not fully capture individual country experiences. In the case of Jamaica, for example, some 27% of the labour force is between 15-24 with another 30% between 25-29. Only a few other Caribbean countries have a comparable or higher proportion of their labour force between 15 -24 years (Guyana, Barbados, Belize, St. Vincent and the Grenadines) to that of Jamaica.

As noted earlier, most countries are experiencing unemployment rates among the 15 -19 age group of around 40% or higher. (ILO Carib. 1997)

Figure 3 demonstrates the population structure of CARICOM nations ⁷. (CARICOM 2002)



It is evident that a very substantial number of the population is aged under 15. This necessitates greater employment generation for future years, as this group will soon join the ranks of potential employment seekers.

Specific Social Problems in the Caribbean

Beside the declining economic trends as mentioned already which limit employment opportunities for the youth, there are a number of social and cultural factors that not only add to the degrading economic situation but at the same time create insurmountable deterrent to the development of a healthy and positive labour force, therefore rendering a multiplier effect on the precarious employment scenario.

⁷ The last available date was 1990

In the Caribbean, aside from the ever-growing problem of unemployment, there are specific negative societal conditions, behaviour among the youth, and outcomes of unemployment. All these add to the inculcating cycle of poverty and unemployment, which in turn breeds more poverty and unemployment for present and future generations.

Enumerated below are the major negative societal conditions, behaviour among the youth, and outcomes of unemployment.

- *Early sexual initiation*— The Caribbean Region is characterized by very early onset of sexual activity. According to the nine-country CARICOM study, one-third of school-going young people are sexually active.

The history of early sexual initiation dates back to the days of slavery, when there were no other recreational facilities except sex after a hard day's Herculean physical labor at the plantation.

- *Non or little use of contraceptives*— Despite high level of sexual activity among adolescents starting at a very early age, use of contraceptives remain fearfully low. Only a quarter of the CARICOM school-going sexually active sample are reported to use contraceptive and only negligibly more worry about getting pregnant or causing a pregnancy.
- *Adolescent and undesired pregnancy*— As a natural sequence, there is an alarmingly high rate of adolescent pregnancy. About 85 percent of children in Jamaica and St. Lucia are born out of wedlock.

The institution of marriage was neither encouraged nor allowed by the slave masters, whereas procreation was encouraged so as to add to the “slave-wealth.” The structure of households in the English-speaking Caribbean is also traced back to conditions of slavery. Families were discouraged, as they would be broken up in the sale of slaves, but women were encouraged to bear many children (capital production for the slave-owners). Thus, men were excluded from the family and were not encouraged to be participating fathers. The high number of out-of-wedlock births, the propensity for men to float among several partners, and the absence of expectations for men to be responsible partners and fathers persist today and leads to the unstable family situations of the present.

Unions between men and women in the Caribbean are common and are not disrespected in the society. Much as these do not represent marriages per se, children born from the unions are socially and culturally accepted in the Caribbean; furthermore, they are not necessarily considered to be children out of wedlock.

- *Risky sexual behavior, HIV, AIDS*: Following sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean has the highest HIV/AIDS prevalence rates in the world— and data suggests that for one-third of all new cases, the disease was contracted when the individual was 15-24 years. Out of the 12 countries with the highest HIV prevalence in the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) Region, nine are from the Caribbean (World Bank 2000). The high incidence of HIV among youth has been linked to early sexual initiation and low condom use amongst young people.

Rough estimates show that losses to society from risky youth behaviors—such as promiscuity, drug-taking and the like—both in terms of direct expenditures and foregone benefits of alternative uses of resources, reach into billions of dollars. “While Caribbean Youth involved in crime and drugs or infected with AIDS remain a minority, it is the resources which must be diverted for their treatment and the loss of their creative potential and energies which make this minority of national and, indeed, regional concern.” (West Indian Commission, 1992).

- *Physical Abuse*: Many young people in the Caribbean countries have a history of severe physical abuse in their lives, mostly in early childhood. Cultural norms sanction the practice of corporal punishment to discipline children.
- *Sexual abuse*: Many Caribbean youths have had experience of sexual abuse earlier in their lives by adults outside the home or other teens, and also by adults in the home and siblings.
- *School-leaving*: Across the Caribbean, more boys than girls tend to fall behind and leave school, much as rates of unemployment are higher for females than males.
- *Crime and violence*: Based on homicide rates, the LAC region as a whole is one of the most affected regions in the world by this type of violence. At 22.9 per 100, 000 people in 1990, homicide rates for the Caribbean are almost double the world average of 10.7 per 100, 000 (1990 being the last year for which sub-regional Caribbean data were available). Department of Corrections data reveal that young people (age 17 to 30) commit most offenses, with youth (15-24) contributing significantly to crime and violence. Consequently, young men also tend to be the main victims of homicides.

Over 40% of Caribbean teenagers report emotions such as rage, and many believe youths without any tangible employment opportunities for the present and lacking definite profitable engagements in the foreseeable future to be the natural cause for this syndrome. Another factor that may be attributed as a cause to this apparent rage is that the Caribbean youths are exposed to vacationing youths from developed countries engaging in a variety of recreational activities, and indulging in luxury, while the Caribbean youths themselves are only providing services.

- *Substance abuse and drug dealing*: According to a United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) funded study, drug and substance abuse and youth involvement in drug dealing are significant problems facing at-risk youth in the Caribbean (Barker 1995).

Substance use and consumption of alcohol in the contemporary Caribbean are the legacy of colonialism, and the system of slave labor these fueled the sugarcane-based plantation economy. Historically, alcohol-drinking has been a social norm. Working in the sugarcane plantation with its consequent easy availability of rum made the Caribbean men dependent on it. For example, now and then, alcohol is not seen as a drug (Luther 2002), and many

consider its consumption an integral cultural activity. As one Barbadian suggested, “We grow sugarcane here, everyone drinks rum, they always have” (Barker 1995).

However, during hard times of unemployment and economic privation, driven by hopelessness, youths tend to be totally dependent on alcohol. This leads to a number of adverse externalities.

- *High rate of weapon and gun possession*
- *Social exclusion:* At-risk Caribbean youth are deemed to be feeling powerless and excluded from the mainstream of Caribbean societies as social integration of youth involves the insertion into the workforce, political, social and cultural life as well as a smooth transition from dependence on the family to independence. (Morales 2001)
- *Low self-esteem*
- *Ambivalence and hopelessness:* Ambivalence may be a reaction to the hopelessness felt by many Caribbean youth who feel they have no chance for a happy and productive life. This prohibits them from being proactive in support of the public good.

Not only do the above factors deter the development of youth and their profitable absorption into a productive labour force, they impose astronomical costs to the societies and governments at large as well as individuals and their families.

Private economic costs accrued are the foregone earnings, non-monetary contribution to households and loss of returns to the family from private investment in the individual; social economic costs amount to loss of returns from state investment in the individual in terms of tax revenue, lower future income, migration, underinvestment in future generations, social exclusion, secondary costs from criminality, substance use, etc. The Caribbean economies, already suffering from the effects of global recession, can hardly afford to bear these additional costs.

Youth Development Policies and Programs in the Caribbean

Over the years, concerns have grown over youth issues in the Caribbean and the need to promote youth as active players in national development. Without exception, Caribbean governments have responded by establishing ministries and/or departments to coordinate youth development activities and most have put in place policies and related programs. (Danns et al. 1997)

It is encouraging to note that governments, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), and, to a more limited extent, the private sector, provides services to youth. Typically, governments address youth issues through education, social safety net programs, job training, family services, sports and culture. NGOs are also active across the sector.

The programs play an important role in addressing the needs of specific groups of at-risk youth, including street children, children in inner-city communities, teenage mothers, young fathers, drug addicts, children with disabilities and other special-need groups. However, evaluation data on the effectiveness of these different interventions are generally lacking. These organizations are also plagued by problems common to civil society organizations in other countries—including lack of staff, limited space for programs, scarce and uncertain funding sources, and limited administrative capacity.

Various thematic areas where services are provided are:

- *Education*: Problems associated with out-of-school youth and joblessness have sparked demand for educational reforms in the Caribbean. In the Commonwealth Caribbean, a number of countries have responded by developing comprehensive reform approaches to education.
- *Training and Skill Development*: Given the high level of unemployment among the youth, training and skill development is the focus of many programs in Trinidad and Tobago. Several large youth-training and employment programs reach about 15,000 youth annually at a total cost of some TT\$ 50 million. (World Bank 2003)

Aside from several institutions under the auspices of various governments and NGOs, some training offered in the private sector is profit-oriented, small-scale and non-regulated by the government.

Across the Caribbean Region, several safety-net programs target young people. These include school feeding, school fee assistance, grants to tertiary-education students, welfare programs (including food stamps) and economic and social assistance. However, questions have been raised about the effectiveness of some social-protection programs directed to youth. Many Caribbean governments support family and youth services, although these programs tend to be poorly funded and inadequately implemented.

- *Community Sports and Leisure*: “Youth work has traditionally been carried out as a means of providing young people with avenues for collective leisure, exploration, talent development, and service to community.” (Alexis 2000)

Art, theater and other cultural activities are increasingly used as vehicles to reach youth and deliver messages on youth development, self-esteem, personal development, sexual and reproductive health, and parenting.

- *National Youth Services*: Youth volunteers are selected to provide services in poor communities targeting unemployed and out-of-school youths between ages 17-24. Through this process of “re-socialization” and development of appropriate work attitudes, the program, under the auspices of national youth services, aims to bridge the gap between school to career.

- *National Youth Councils*: National Youth Councils (NYCs) are umbrella organizations or NGOs for youth volunteers. The NYCs provide services in their respective communities with an aim of promoting leadership skills amongst the youth.
- *Micro Enterprise Development*: A not-so-successful attempt was initiated by some youth programs in support of entrepreneurship and business development. The Micro Investment Development Agency in Jamaica was used as a vehicle for delivering micro-enterprise credit among young people aged 18-25. Despite its best efforts, youth turnout for the facility was disappointingly low, amounting to only 10% of the total beneficiaries. The Community Development Fund established by the Social Development Commission had also focused on youth as the target group. Unfortunately it did not succeed in enlisting sufficient numbers of youth clients⁸

Hewlett Packard, a private sector corporation, is reportedly getting a considerable number of youth clients through its Junior Achievement, a program initiated and funded by it in Saint Lucia.

The Barbados Youth Business Trust, an NGO with similar objectives, is also reporting success in enrolling youth entrepreneurship.

Both programs teach entrepreneurship, economic self-determination and business skills development in schools and aim to attain youth self-sufficiency in employment creation.

Finally, the Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative, approved by the heads of governments—is a regional scheme created to respond to youth unemployment in the entire Commonwealth.

A youth-specific policy can be an effective tool for putting the youth issue firmly on the agenda of policy makers and creating ownership over youth development—particularly if the youth policy is approved through the representative wing of the government (I.E., Parliament in the Commonwealth) rather than receiving only Cabinet approval. But clearly, a well-worded policy is not enough. As countries move to involving youth as active participants in development, programs with systems in place, the analytical rigor to identify the needs of youth, and the flexibility to tailor activities accordingly, will be more effective. As always, with a cross-cutting issue, finding the right balance between coordination and implementation is another important element of an effective policy framework.

The adoption of an integrated approach to youth development programs and policies requires concerted action amongst several ministries; for example, among those responsible for economic policy, education and training, employment, enterprise, development, labor, finance, youth and community affairs, to name a few.

⁸ In response to these experiences and with the hope of making self-employment a viable alternative for disadvantaged youth, HEART Trust/NTA recently modified its program curricula to include entrepreneurial skills training as requisite part of all of its training programs. To expand the number of persons able to teach entrepreneurial skills, HEART Trust/NTA has provided training for trainers. The impact of these initiatives is not known at this point.

Existing analysis of youth programs and policies, however, points to the need to carry out evaluations and cost-benefit analysis of programs, confront tough choices in terms of targeting and prioritizing of issues to be addressed, define age-specificity of services, provide longer-term quality services, support programs that provide youth with access to caring, knowledgeable adults over the long-term, and create incentives from private-public sector collaboration.

Indeed, investments in youth have potentially high payoffs at the individual, familial and societal levels. Young people who contribute positively to society create positive externalities and improve the economic, cultural and societal environment for all. Policy-makers and governments thus have a catalytic role in ensuring that youth are exposed to a full spectrum of opportunities to enable them to become productive, healthy adults.

Regional Programs

The Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP) is the youth department of the Commonwealth Secretariat that carries out decisions made by Commonwealth Heads of Government. Operating out of a regional office in Guyana and having covered the Commonwealth Caribbean since 1974, the CYP has 18 member countries. The CYP's main activities include training and empowering youth workers, providing technical assistance to governments on developing and implementing youth programs, supporting the economic enfranchisement of youth, and acting as a regional repository of information on youth in the Caribbean. Commonwealth Governments provide the bulk of funding. But more recently, CYP has collaborated with the UNDP, UNICEF, UNAIDS and other partners. According to CYP staff, funding conditionalities have changed considerably over the years, having been more flexible in the past. At present, funding tends to be earmarked according to donor priorities such as HIV/AIDS.

The Caribbean Federation of Youth, which is based in St. Vincent, was formed to act as a representative body for youth organizations in the Caribbean and to address problems faced by youth at the sub-regional and international levels. The Federation's mandate is to coordinate the work of national youth organizations in the Caribbean and assist them in policy formulation and management practices, and strengthen the integration process of Caribbean youth through networking, information sharing, and youth exchanges. The Federation operates through the direct support of National Youth Councils, which are responsible for implementing the Federation's work at the national levels.

Led by its Commission for Human and Social Development (COSHSOD), CARICOM has recently become active in the area of youth development but have since worked hard to place youth issues on the regional agenda. Specifically, it established a Regional Strategy for Youth Development, which represents a framework for facilitating youth initiatives at the national level.

The strategy includes the following targets over the 2001-2006 time period:

- a) all countries should have a youth statistical database and collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative data by 2003;
- b) all countries should have systems for training/educating youth workers as well as begun to democratize and decentralize the youth function by 2003;
- c) all countries should have NYCs operating and delivering services to youth by 2003;
- d) all countries should have established mechanisms to provide youth with a voice in public policy making by 2002;
- e) all countries should have begun to implement inter-sectoral community-based programs promoting economic participation, poverty reduction, and sustainable livelihoods and health families, communities and nations by 2003; and
- f) in terms of promoting adolescent health, all countries should have begun to implement community-based projects aimed at raising awareness, changing behavior and empowering young people to educate/counsel their peers by 2002. CARICOM's other efforts include a Youth Ambassador's program, staging of model CARICOM conferences and support for cooperative initiatives, such as the Australian Caribbean Community Sport Development Program. (World Bank 2003)

International Development Organizations

International development organizations are active in youth development to varying degrees, with UNICEF playing a leading role due to its mandate on children and adolescents. Working at both at the regional, national and local levels, UNICEF organizes activities around the lifecycle through three types of programs: early childhood development (0-8 years), adolescent development and participation (9-18 years), and social policy and special care protection. Types of programs supported by UNICEF in OECS countries, for example, include health/family education (using the classroom as the primary medium for transmission of messages), HIV/AIDS (peer training in partnership with the Red Cross), and youth empowerment (capacity building of National Youth Councils). In the case of Jamaica, the UNICEF strategy is to promote cross-institutional collaboration in youth development through community level multi-purpose hubs that provide integrated services to adolescents (UNICEF 2002).

Other international organizations that support youth development include: the UNDP, which mainstreams youth throughout its programs (reform of classroom culture, entrepreneurship, social policy development, community development and information technology); the Pan American Health Organization, which supports integrated youth development programs⁹; UNFPA, which funds adolescent reproductive and sexual health

⁹ Current PAHO initiatives in the case of OECS, for example, are in the areas of tobacco use, HIV/AIDS, mental health promotion and health/family education.

programs; the ILO, which funds work on child labor and job preparation; the European Commission, which addresses the youth development through education and health projects ¹⁰; the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), which supports youth development through a small grants program and an education project that addresses teacher quality and violence and discipline in schools; USAID, which supports HIV/AIDS programs, community-based life skills and other training for at-risk youth, and parenting programs; and the Department for International Development (DFID), which, while not supporting youth-specific projects, promotes youth development through education reform (access and quality of post-primary education), drug eradication and urban poverty and violence (Jamaica) ¹¹. (World Bank 2003)

Global Policy Framework

Approved in 1995, the UN World Program of Action for Youth provides a global framework for youth development. It identifies the following ten priority areas for action (to be carried out in two stages, up to the year 2000, and from 2001-2010): education, work, hunger and poverty, health, environment, drug use, juvenile delinquency, recreation, gender (girls and female adolescents), and participation ¹². By 2000, according to a progress report on Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), of the 34 LAC countries, 27 had formulated a national youth policy, 30 had established a national coordination mechanism for youth issues, and 16 had implemented a national action plan for youth.

Effectiveness of Youth Policies

Worldwide, there is a dearth of information on the nature and effectiveness of youth policies, due most probably to the fact that the concept of youth development is new and has only been emerging recently.

However, it is not easy to measure the impact of these programs. As pointed out by Alexis (2000), even though the Caribbean has a solid track record of organized youth activity and numerous programs, it does not have adequate systems nor the data and rigorous analysis to monitor the effectiveness of these programs. The cross-cutting nature of youth and the multitude of programs in place to address youth also make monitoring and evaluation a challenge. But problems related to measuring the impact of youth programs are not limited to the Caribbean. Worldwide, very little exists in the way of impact evaluations of youth initiatives, due likely to the relatively young and underdeveloped nature of the youth development field. (World Bank 2003)

¹⁰ Including technical and vocational training, education sector reform (programmatic as well as project, with a push towards the former), institutional strengthening of community colleges, social investment funds, drug programs, and education and health infrastructure projects.

¹¹ Also noteworthy is UNESCO's youth programs with in Latin America and the Caribbean support youth fora, formal education and the Infoyouth Network.

¹² The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), assists in the implementation of the action plan by holding regional meetings and preparing studies and reports on youth.

Conclusion

Poverty amidst plenty in the world is the biggest challenge facing mankind today. Of the world population of 6 billion, 2.8 billion people live on less than US \$1 a day. Future geographic change will add to the challenge of poverty. In the next 25 years, roughly 2 billion people will be added to the world's population, most of them in the developing countries.

About 3 billion people—nearly half the world population, currently have no access to sanitation, and 1.3 billion people have no access to clean drinking water ¹³.

Young people between the ages of 15 and 25 total almost 1.1 billion and constitute roughly 18% of the global population. 133 million youth remain illiterate—comprising of 41% of the world's unemployed. Some 238 million youth live on less than \$1 per day. An average of 7, 000 young people become infected with HIV every day.

During the last decade, i.e. 1990s, international warfare killed more than 5 million people. More than 300,000 child soldiers worldwide are still directly involved in armed conflicts, and a substantially larger number are dealing with human tragedies resulting therefrom.

We are living in a world of striking paradoxes, where, according to Stephen Miles, “assets of the 200 richest people in the world are greater than the combined income of more than 2 billion of the poorest—and the gulf between these two groups continue to grow.”

Aside from the above prevailing inequalities, a new threat to the world youth assuming considerable proportion is “globalization.” Globalization, apparently bringing people closer, is actually expanding the divisions between them and is thereby breeding inequality. Being local in a globalized world is a sign of social deprivation and degradation.

Globalization inevitably leads to exclusion. It is characterized by spatial segregation, actively increasing disparities that already exist between global elites and localized majority. “...The only certainty is that globalization is characterized by increasing market power, and there is always the danger that such power will be abused. Overly hasty privatization, unaccountable corporations and companies, a weakened public sector, and an imbalance between individual private interests and collective public interests are all symptoms of globalization that may have a direct or indirect impact on young peoples' lives.” (Townsend 211)

Amidst these frightening scenarios, it becomes imperative for all stake-holders in the society, public and private both—including the civil society, to initiate positive actions towards creating a better world order. In March (6-12) 1995, for the first time in history, heads of State and Government gathered at Copenhagen, Denmark, “...to recognize the significance of social development and human well-being for all and to give these goals the highest priority into the twenty-first century,”—The Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development.

The World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1995—the tenth anniversary of the International Youth

¹³ <http://www.globalissues.org/geopolitics/children.asp>

Year (1985), signified the “United Nations’ commitment to young people, and international response to the call for more effective strategies aimed at meeting the needs of youth and addressing the challenges they would encounter in the next millennium.”

The United Nations, at the global pivotal position, adopted the Millennium Declaration at the dawn of the new millennium. Several heads of state and government gathered at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 6 to 8 September, 2000, and reaffirmed their commitment to create “...a more peaceful, prosperous and just world.”

The Millennium Declaration, along with a number and variety of global issues, firmly resolved: “To develop and implement strategies that give young people everywhere a real chance to find decent and productive work.”

Subsequently, the Secretary-General’s Youth Employment Network clearly documents the need of young people for securing decent work, which would ensure conducive working conditions, reconciling work and family life, gender equality, equal recognition, and enabling young women to make choices and take control of their lives. It emphasizes the youth’s ability to compete in the marketplace, keep up with technological advancement (or new technology). It lays down the importance of their fair share of wealth and not being discriminated against; it means having a voice in the workplace and in their community. It prescribes a path from subsistence to existence.

For millions of young women and men, decent work is the primary route out of poverty— in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. Employment provides the single most effective means of reducing poverty; not only through the income it creates for workers, but also because of the dignity and empowerment with which it is associated.

Ultimately, true happiness and actualization for millions of young people, not only in the Caribbean but all across the world, depend on the generation of employment for them. With the world population projected to grow by 110 million during this decade and with technological advances leading to further “rationalizations” of labour demand, some 500 million new jobs have to be created within the next 10 years merely to maintain the status quo.

This is, admittedly, a daunting task. Within the Caribbean itself, the quest for employment generation faces multiple social, economic, socio-economic, and geographical problems that need to be overcome.

These call for resolute and concerted efforts by various Caribbean governments backed by strong policy decisions.

The Caribbean region is united by a strong sense of cohesion and racial unity. However, individual countries are also separated by their various colonial histories. Because of their colonial past, they are differentiated by their language and culture. Because of the broader cultural history of this colonization, they face various social problems (for example, rampant sexism in the form of the male macho culture). Post-colonial Caribbean youth have found themselves locked in societies in which “the rhetoric of self-reliance of new vision for youth, of

education as a vehicle for democracy, of youth entrepreneurship; all these promises did not materialize in viable amounts.” The islands are also limited by their lack of landmass, and the fact that travel between the islands needs to take place by air or by sea.

These disadvantages can be and are frequently turned into advantages. Their colonial past gives the Caribbean islands a uniquely international outlook. The fact that most of the world’s major languages are spoken there is a definite advantage— in spite of the Caribbean’s small size, it is extremely well-represented on a global scale. The tourism industry offers opportunities for many other industries and generates cash flow. The fact that these islands are islands and not one continuous landmass means that cultural diversity is nourished.

Above all, the Caribbean people are of remarkable average intelligence. The positive outlook of the Caribbean islanders is globally acknowledged and appreciated fact, and this in turn generates a vast amount of international goodwill. Because of their unique positioning on the world map, and because of the peace-loving nature of the peoples and governments, the Caribbean nations have no enemies and many friends.

The purpose of this paper is to enumerate the difficulties faced in the face of the problem of unemployment, and to review the progress already made. The purpose of this workshop is to determine what steps need to be taken in order to defeat unemployment and proactively implement said steps so that the problems, once gone, do not return.

The hurdles facing us are great. But there are even greater factors working to our advantage, the most important among them being the nature, potentialities, and capabilities of the Caribbean youths themselves. In the end, we can overcome that which we know and believe we can overcome. And the problem of youth unemployment, while great today, is surmountable.

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2.2 COUNTRY PAPERS

2.2.1 GUYANA'S REPORT: YOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND ENTERPRISE

General

This report, focusing on issues of importance to youth employment, with an emphasis on youth in entrepreneurship in Guyana, is prepared for the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs workshop to be held in Kingstown, St. Vincent and the Grenadines from December 15 - 17, 2003. The theme for the workshop is: Creating Conditions for Harmonized Policies for Youth Employment in the Caribbean Region.”

For the purpose of this presentation, young people are defined as those in the age group 15 to 29 years. However, it should be noted that many of the organizations that support youth employment enterprise, have varying age ranges within this presentation's definition, in order to qualify for their services.

Socio-Economic Conditions

- Population (2002 estimate): 698,209
- Number of young people in the Population: Recent estimates have suggested that there are 202,115 young people in the age group 15-29 years (CARICOM 2002). This is approximately 27% of the population.
- Average education level, (ie tertiary, high school) inclusive of male and female: 73.5% of the population
- Number of employed (1992 estimate): 245,492
- Number of unemployed (1992 estimate): 12%
- Gross Domestic Product (2000 estimate): US \$3.4 billion
- Income per-capita (in US currency): US \$4,800

Source: Time Almanac 2003

Characteristics and Participation Profile of Young People in Guyana:

Generally, entrepreneurs in Guyana can be viewed from two perspectives:

- Those that have been traditionally involved in such ventures through generations of family involvement;
- Those that became involved through the implementation of structural adjustments in the Guyanese society over the last two decades to promote economic growth and provide employment for many citizens. Many persons in this category have been operating in what is known as the parallel or underground economy.
-

However, both groups of people have contributed to the development of enterprise in Guyana, to the extent where the government sees this sector as a vital part in the engine of growth for the economy.

In terms of how many young people are economically active, the last available data are estimates based on findings from the Survey of Household Income & Expenditure 1992-1993 [See attached, Table 1]. In the youngest age group, 15-19 years less than half (41%) were economically active. Just over one third (37%) were still at school or college: this means that about one fifth (22%) were not in education and were not economically active. Women accounted for almost two thirds (61%) of those who were economically inactive.

As the age groups grew older, the proportion that was economically active increased – from 64% for 20-24 year olds to 67% for 25-29 year olds. However there is a big difference between males and females. For the oldest group 25-29 year olds nine out of ten (93%) young men were economically active where as only four out of ten (44%) young women were economically active. It is not known whether young women have considered the labour market and made a choice not to participate or whether they have become disillusioned job seekers who have opted out because of the lack of suitable employment. Women were more likely to be unemployed than men, with an overall unemployment rate of 31% compared to 16% for men in the age group 15-29 years. The situation for women was more serious in the youngest age group of 15-19 years where 50% were out of work although available and seeking employment.

International Labour Organisation published figures in 1999 which suggested that young people in the age group 15-24 years in the Caribbean were more likely to be unemployed than adults.

In terms of what proportion of those economically active young people own businesses or run social enterprises, as a percentage of all those young people who were economically active, self-employment accounted for 27% [See attached, Tables 2 and 3]. Young women were less likely than young men to be self employed, 23% for women compared to 29% for men. And the percentage of those in self-employment rose with age, from 25% in the 15-19 year age group to 30% in the 25-29 age group.

The lack of jobs in some of the traditional governmental sectors of employment, such as the public service, teaching/nursing professions and the discipline forces has forced many young people to become involved in enterprise. In addition, young people living in rural areas have traditionally been exposed to social enterprises as forms of self-employment. Thus they are more likely to continue this trend.

Active social enterprise in Guyana exists in many forms:

- Micro credit projects
- Youth entrepreneurial skills training programmes
- Youth business trust
- The President's youth award programme
- Volunteer consultancy and financial vouchers
- Enterprise business advisory services

An example of one of the best and leading practice in Guyana is The Commonwealth Youth Programme: Caribbean Centre in collaboration with its financial partner Globe Trust and

Investment Co. Ltd. This organisation launched a micro credit project *The Commonwealth Youth Credit Initiative* in 1996. The main elements of the initiative are:

- training,
- savings,
- access to credit
- monitoring and support to young people who have received loans.

CYP: CC has compiled a Trainer’s Manual in Small Business management entitled *Helping Youths to Become Entrepreneurs*. The manual is intended for use by trainers who are seeking to provide young persons with the knowledge and skills necessary for establishing and managing a micro-enterprise. CYP: CC has also organised training sessions for trainers.

There have been training sessions in four areas, Georgetown (3 programmes), Linden, West Demerara and Berbice (2 programmes). Some young people did not proceed with their business plan after completion of their training and others withdrew after the investment company asked them to re-write their business plan.

Characteristics of loan recipients

One hundred and twenty six young people completed the training successfully and received loans through CYCI . Women accounted for 60% of those receiving loans, and half the recipients were in the older age group 27-30 years old.

Table Number of recipients of loans through CYCI by age and gender 2001

Age group	Female		Male		Both sexes	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
18-22 years	11	15%	8	15%	19	15%
23-26 years	26	36%	18	34%	44	35%
27-30 years	36	49%	27	51%	63	50%
Total	73	100%	53	100%	126	100%

Half the recipients set up small businesses in the retail sector: a fifth opened up in manufacturing and another fifth in agriculture with just under 10% in the service sector.

Table : Types of Enterprises and Size of Loans under CYCI 1996-2001

Sector	Number of loans		Value of loans (million dollars)	Average size of loan (thousand dollars)
	N	%		
Retail	63	50%	9.5	151

Manufacturing	27	21%	3.6	133
Agriculture	25	20%	3.6	144
Service	11	9%	1.4	127
Total	126	100%	18.1	

Just over half (52%) of the loans have been dispersed in Georgetown. A further 29 loans have been dispensed to second and third time borrowers. Sixty nine of the loans have been repaid in full but 61 loans are in arrears.

Location	Number of first loans	
	N	%
Georgetown	62	52
Berbice	27	22
West Demerara	18	15
Linden	13	11
Total	120	100

Support available for young entrepreneurs

Support mechanisms, inclusive of educational/training programme for young entrepreneurs in Guyana are available in the form of:

- promoting the development of business , with emphasis on small and medium enterprise;
- training in entrepreneurial skills and domestic business development services, to improve entrepreneurial talents and business competency;
- enterprise support centres providing business advisory services;
- advice with follow-up technical assistance, networking opportunities and extension services;
- enhancement of the export capacity of local enterprise;
- identifying overseas market opportunities;
- promotion of trade, investment and the transfer of technology;
- financial support;
- business mentoring;
- volunteer services
- work-study programmes;
- group life insurance.

These levels of support are administered through organizations such as: Commonwealth Youth Programme: Caribbean Centre; Institute of Private Enterprise and Development Guyana

Youth Business Trust; Scotia Bank Enterprise; Guyana Volunteer Consultancy; Peace Corps Guyana; Volunteer Service Organisation; and the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport Youth Entrepreneurial Skills Training Programme.

In addressing what support mechanisms are missing, or could be improved, the geography of Guyana immediately comes into play. One major area is the large size of the country, which makes logistic support in the execution of organizations' mandates extremely challenging. First Nations Populations involved in micro enterprise in the hinterland regions have realized that their distance proximity to Guyana's coastal plain that is the economic hub, has been to their disadvantage. Thus, greater expansion of programmes and other forms of support are needed across the country.

The creation of new businesses in Guyana is in itself a major incentive for young people, for it provides employment, in a country where there is a struggling economy with a growing unemployment rate. The government of Guyana in the restructuring of the country's economy has recognized the importance of the private sector being the engine of growth. Thus, the relaxation of taxes/duties on certain items to encourage social enterprise, especially in micro manufacturing/cottage industry, small scale crop farming, poultry industry, handicraft, etc. has served to encourage greater involvement of persons into the entrepreneurial field.

Financial resources are available through commercial banks, Guyana Volunteer Consultancy, the Commonwealth Youth Programme: Caribbean Centre, Guyana Youth Business Trust, and the local lottery. Funding is also obtained from International Organisations such as the United Nations Development Programme, the regional Caribbean Development Bank, and bilateral co-operations between the government of Guyana and countries such as Japan, China and India. However, the major difficulty for many young people in accessing financial and other forms of support in their venture into enterprise is being unable to present the form of collateral that is needed. Collateral such as property transport is normally called for by commercial banks. Other agencies call for young applicants to have at least 25% of the amount of money that is being sought. Many young persons are called upon to have guarantors to sign on their behalf or lodge collateral, before they are further considered for financial assistance. Greater emphasis should be placed on having young people accessing finances in groups, with each member having a responsibility towards repayment of loans as a group.

The vision for youth employment enterprise in Guyana is one where young people are seen as having a direct role in their own development that will lend itself towards their making a meaningful contribution to the economic development of the country.

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Table 1										
Guyana: Estimated number of Young Persons by usual principal economic activity and age, 1992/3										
Both sexes										
Age group	Population	Economically active			% econ active	Economically inactive			% econ inactive	% at school
		Employed	Unemployed	Total		at school	Other	Total inactive		
15-19 years	85054	21975	12964	34939	41%	31240	19145	50385	59%	37%
20-24 years	72824	37473	9101	46574	64%	3445	22805	26250	36%	5%
25-29 years	62766	37912	4422	42334	67%	1145	19287	20432	33%	2%
Total	220644	97360	26487	123847	56%	35830	61237	97067	44%	16%
Females										
Age group	Population	Economically active			% econ active	Economically inactive			% econ inactive	% at school
		Employed	Unemployed	Total		at school	Other	Total inactive		
15-19 years	42404	5813	5743	11556	27%	15933	14915	30848	73%	38%
20-24 years	38835	11413	4966	16379	42%	2057	20399	22456	58%	5%
25-29 years	32920	11866	2598	14464	44%	855	17601	18456	56%	3%
Totals	114159	29092	13307	42399	37%	18845	52915	71760	63%	17%
Males										
Age group	Population	Economically active			% econ active	Economically inactive			% econ inactive	% at school
		Employed	Unemployed	Total		at school	Other	Total inactive		
15-19 years	42650	16162	6951	23113	54%	15307	4230	19537	46%	36%
20-24 years	33989	26060	4135	30195	89%	1388	2406	3794	11%	4%
25-29 years	29846	26046	1824	27870	93%	290	1686	1976	7%	1%
Totals	106485	68268	12910	81178	76%	16985	8322	25307	24%	16%
Source: Report on Survey of Household Income & Expenditure Guyana 1992-93										

Table 2				
Guyana: Estimated number of persons aged 15 to 29 years, classified by Usual Principal Activity Status, Age and Sex 1992/3				
Female				
Age Group	Economically active			Total
	In work		Unemployed	econ. active
	Self-employed	Employed	Not working but seeking/available for work	
15-19 years	2522	3291	5743	11556
20-24 years	3301	8112	4966	16379
25-29 years	3924	7942	2598	14464
Totals	9747	19345	13307	42399
Male				
Age Group	Economically active			Total
	In work		Unemployed	econ. active
	Self-employed	Employed	Not working but seeking/available for work	
15-19 years	6208	9954	6951	23113
20-24 years	8751	17309	4135	30195
25-29 years	8939	17107	1824	27870
Totals	23898	44370	12910	81178
Both sexes				
Age Group	Economically active			Total
	In work		Unemployed	econ. active
	Self-employed	Employed	Not working but seeking/available for work	
15-19 years	8730	13245	12694	34669
20-24 years	12052	25421	9101	46574
25-29 years	12863	25049	4422	42334
Totals	33645	63715	26217	12357

Table 3					
Guyana: Estimated percentage of persons aged 15 to 29 years, classified by Usual Principal Activity Status, Age and Sex 1992/3					
Female					
Age Group	Economically active			Total	
	In work		Unemployed	economically active	
	Self-employed	Employed	Not working but seeking/available for work		
15-19 years	22%	28%	50%	100%	11556
20-24 years	20%	50%	30%	100%	16379
25-29 years	27%	55%	18%	100%	14464
Totals	23%	46%	31%	100%	42399
Male					
Age Group	Economically active			Total	
	In work		Unemployed	economically active	
	Self-employed	Employed	Not working but seeking/available for work		
15-19 years	27%	43%	30%	100%	23113
20-24 years	29%	57%	14%	100%	30195
25-29 years	32%	61%	7%	100%	27870
Totals	29%	55%	16%	100%	81178
Both sexes					
Age Group	Economically active			Total	
	In work		Unemployed	economically active	
	Self-employed	Employed	Not working but seeking/available for work		
15-19 years	25%	38%	37%	100%	34669
20-24 years	26%	55%	20%	100%	46574
25-29 years	30%	59%	10%	100%	42334
Totals	27%	52%	21%	100%	123577
Source:	Guyana Bureau of Statistics Report on Survey of Household Income and Expenditure Guyana 1992-1993				

2.2.2 POLICY AND STRATEGY RECOMMENDATIONS TO ENHANCE YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN JAMAICA: AN NGO PERSPECTIVE

This paper does not seek to address the general problem of unemployment in the Jamaican economy, which contributes to the phenomenon of so many 14 -19 year olds being on the job market instead of being in school. Rather, it addresses the problem of preparing young people for the workplace, and making the workplace youth-friendly, given current and emerging labour market trends.

These recommendations come from agencies in the Youth Sector of the Council for Voluntary Social Services (CVSS), a Jamaican umbrella Non-Government Organisation (NGO) with over 80 members. They fall into three broad areas of concern: **Preparation through education and training; Facilitating youth employment; Support mechanisms.**

Education and Training

1. Mathematics and English should be compulsory subjects. Basic literacy and numeracy are essential pre-requisites for education and training of any kind. The National Centre for Youth Development reports:
“Although decreasing, an alarmingly high rate of Jamaicans – 20 percent – is illiterate; student and teacher absenteeism are problems; and students have relatively low pass rates for both the regional Caribbean and local examinations. Continuing to expand educational opportunities while improving the quality of schooling are the challenges facing Jamaica. An expansion of upper secondary places, along with action to address the poor performance of boys relative to girls are key steps. At the same time, the school system must do more to encourage regular school attendance and reduce dropout due to economic factors.”
(*Youth in Jamaica: Meeting Their Development Needs*. p.8)
Also see *The Daily Observer*, Thursday, November 20, 2003: “*A Country of Illiterates*” and the Editorial. pp.1,4-5 & 8.
2. Life skills and career guidance counselling should be enhanced. Teachers should relate academic subjects to the real world: for example, students should learn why mathematics and English are important; accounting students should not reach graduation stage without ever having been shown a real, local bank statement. This calls for better trained teachers, who are creative and motivating, as well as being properly academically accredited. A review of teacher training institutions, taking current day realities into account, is immediately needed.
3. Entrepreneurial training and encouragement should be part of the school curriculum. This will guide students into thinking about creating their own employment opportunities as another option besides looking for a job in someone else’s company.

Facilitating Employment

1. Government should offer tax incentives to firms which institute youth hiring and training programmes, providing more openings for work experience. An extension of the current HEART/NTA placement programme could be considered to accommodate this.
2. In today's world, young people must be prepared and trained to compete in the global marketplace. Skills learnt must be transferable. It is very timely, therefore, that this conference deals with harmonising youth employment policies across the Caribbean region.
3. Government, with enabling legislation and tax policies, should facilitate organisations that seek to strengthen links between Jamaicans abroad and young people at home. This would serve to strengthen the economy, as well as provide job and partnering opportunities for youth.

Support Mechanisms

1. A national mentoring programme, sanctioned by Government as part of the education system, is needed. Support normally provided by a stable, educated family is lacking in many of the homes in today's world. Linking children with a mentor from their early days would fill this need, but it must be structured and monitored as an integral part of the system.
(Also mentioned in "*The Daily Observer*" article cited in #1. under "Education and Training" above)
2. Entrepreneurial education must be accompanied by a support mechanism to encourage students to start their own businesses. Access to the small business assistance facilities which already exist, with special windows for youth entrepreneurs, should be provided.

These measures are designed to complement the programmes that already exist through HEART/NTA and some NGOs.

Prepared by Joan Browne
Secretary
CVSS

2.2.3 SURINAME PAPER

REPUBLIC OF SURINAME

163.820 sq. km

SUB-REGIONAL WORKSHOP AS FOLLOW-UP TO CARIBBEAN REGIONAL MEETING ON IMPLEMENTING WSSD

UNITED NATIONS DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS
&
PROJECTS PROMOTION LIMITED

EXPLORING THE CONDITIONS FOR HARMONIZED EMPLOYMENT
POLICIES FOR YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN THE
CARIBBEAN REGION:

STRATEGIES, POLICY, INSTRUMENTS AND MODALITIES

15 - 17 DECEMBER 2003
KINGSTOWN, ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

FOCUS

- **PRODUCTION POLICY APPROACH**
MINISTRY OF LABOUR,
TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT
AND ENVIRONMENT
- **THE SOCIAL POLICY APPROACH**
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND
HOUSING

SOCIAL POLICY APPROACH

ASSISTING THE NEEDY
HOUSEHOLDS

GOALS & TARGET GROUPS

- PROVIDE THE NEEDY HOUSEHOLDS WITH AID IN THE FORM OF CASH, GOODS AND SERVICES
- MAIN TARGET-GROUPS ARE FEMALE HEADED HOUSEHOLDS, CHILDREN AND YOUTH, UNEMPLOYED, ELDERLY AND PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

PROVISIONS RELATED TO UNEMPLOYMENT

- FINANCIAL SUPPORT
- NO CHARGE MEDICAL PROVISION
- CHILDREN'S ALLOWANCE
- SCHOOL SUPPLIES
- ALIVIO

POOR & NEAR-POOR

- LOW LEVEL OF EDUCATION (PRIMARY SCHOOL)
- TEENAGE MOTHERS
- UNEMPLOYED LOW SKILLED MEN AND WOMEN
- MEN AND WOMEN WHITHOUT A STEADY JOB

SOCIO ECONOMIC SITUATION

POPULATION

	2002	2003
• MALES:	239.083	241.837
• FEMALES:	237.336	239.292
TOTAL	476.374	481.146

SOURCE: GBS, MID-YEAR 2002/CENSUS 2003

DEFINITION YOUNG PEOPLE

ALL PERSONS IN THE
AGE-CATEGORY
15 – 34 YEARS

YOUNG MALE

15 - 34

2002

AGE GROUP	NUMBER	PERC.
• 15-19:	24.643	10.31
• 20-24:	19.742	8.26
• 25-29:	18.045	7.55
• 30-34:	18.779	7.86
TOTAL	81.209	33.98

SOURCE: GBS

YOUNG FEMALE

15 - 34

2002

AGE GROUP	NUMBER	%
• 15-19:	25.911	10.92
• 20-24:	20.215	8.52
• 25-29:	18.479	7.79
• 30-34:	18.832	7.93
TOTAL	83.437	35.16

SOURCE: GBS

YOUNG MALE & FEMALE

15 - 34

2002: 476.374

AGE GROUP	NUMBER	%
• 15-19:	50.554	10.61
• 20-24:	39.957	8.39
• 25-29:	36.524	7.67
• 30-34:	37.611	7.90
TOTAL	164.646	34.57

SOURCE: GBS

AVERAGE EDUCATION LEVEL

- ADULT LITERACY RATE IN 2001(15 ->):
94%
- EDUCATION SYSTEM CONSISTING OF ABOUT 28 TYPES OF EDUCATION SPREAD OVER PRIMARY, SECONDARY AND TERTIARY LEVEL

SOURCE: UNDP/HDR

EDUCATION

Enrolment 2001/2002

• PRE-PRIMARY	16.504
• PRIMARY	69.995
• LOWER SECONDARY	31.799
• UPPER SECONDARY	9.855
• TERTIARY	3.375

SOURCE: GBS

EDUCATION

SECONDARY: 2001/2002

	MALE	FEMALE	TOT.
• VWO	924	1.392	2.316
• HAVO	739	950	1.689
• MBO	1.531	1.280	2.811
• TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGES	265	2.774	3.039

TOTAL			9.855

(PROPORTION OF SECONDARY STUDENTS IN THE AGE GROUP 15-34 IS 16.7%)

SOURCE: GBS

EDUCATION

3RD LEVEL: 2001/2002

	MALE	FEMALE	TOT.
• ADEK UNIV	1.123	1.826	2.949
• LOBO	126	20	146
• AHKCO	46	149	195
• COVAB	5	100	105

TOTAL			3.395

(PROPORTION OF 3RD LEVELSTUDENST IN THE AGE GROUP 15-34 IS 4.8%)

SOURCE: GBS

ABBREVIATIONS

- VWO: SENIOR SECONDARY GENERAL ACADEMIC
- HAVO: SENIOR SECONDARY GENERAL ORDINARY
- MBO: SECONDARY PROFESSION
- LOBO: TRAINING COLLEGE FOR TEACHERS OF VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS
- AHKCO: ACADEMY OF ARTS
- COVAB: INSTITUTION FOR CENTRALIZED TRAINING OF NURSES AND PRACTITIONERS OF RELATED PROFESSIONS
- ADEK UNIV: ANTON DE KOM UNIVERSITY

NUMBER OF (UN)EMPLOYED
(1998): DISTRICTS
PARAMARIBO & WANICA

LABOUR MARKET INFO.

- POPULATION 15-65 YEARS 182.705
 - MALE 91.004 (49.8%)
 - FEMALE 91.701 (50.2%)

- LABOUR FORCE 98.719
 - MALE 64.400 (65.2%)
 - FEMALE 34.319 (34.8%)

- SOURCE: GBS

CONTINUED

- UNEMPLOYED 10.475
 - MALE 4.627 (44.2%)
 - FEMALE 5.848 (55.8%)

- EMPLOYED 88.244
 - MALE 59.773 (67.7%)
 - FEMALE 28.471 (32.3%)

SOURCE: GBS

AGE GROUP 15-34

- UNEMPLOYED 9.402
 - MALE 4.105 (46.7%)
 - FEMALE 5.297 (53.3%)

- EMPLOYED 44.400
 - MALE 31.331 (70.6%)
 - FEMALE 13.069 (29.4%)

SOURCE: GBS

THE PORTION OF THE AGE GROUP
15 – 34 IN THE TOTAL NUMBER OF
EMPLOYED WAS (1998) 50.3%.

THE PORTION OF THE AGE GROUP
15 – 34 IN THE TOTAL NUMBER OF
UNEMPLOYED WAS (1998) 89.8%

SOURCE: GBS

GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT 2002 (provisional)

- SRG. 2.206.283,00 MILLION
- =
- **US\$ 868.62 MILLION**

(exchange rate US\$1 = SRG. 2.540,00)

SOURCE: GBS

INCOME PER CAPITA 2002

- SRG. 4.418.953,00 = **US\$ 1.739,74**

(exchange rate US\$1 = SRG. 2.540,00)

SOURCE: GBS

PRODUCTION POLICY APPROACH

INCREASE PRODUCTIVE
EMPLOYMENT POSSIBILITIES

PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT

- EMPLOYMENT-POSSIBILITIES ARE INCREASED IN ORDER TO COMBAT POVERTY SO THAT PEOPLE CAN GENERATE INCOME AND TAKE CARE OF THEMSELVES
- PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT STIMULATED THROUGH TRAINING AND TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

INITIATIVES

FOUNDATION FOR LABOUR MOBILIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT

THE FOUNDATION HAS UP TILL NOW CONCENTRATED ON

- VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN ORDER TO CREATE EMPLOYMENT
- THE RETRAINING AND FURTHER TRAINING OF THE UNEMPLOYED
- AT THE MOMENT, THE FOUNDATION IS TRAINING 14 WOMEN BY ORDER OF THE NATIONAL WOMAN'S MOVEMENT IN NON-TRADITIONAL WOMAN'S JOBS: 9 IN HOUSE-BUILDING AND 5 IN ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING.
- THIS MONTH, TRAINING HAS STARTED IN PLUMBING, GAS/WATER/SANITARY, BASIC COLD STORAGE TECHNIQUE AND BASIC CABINET-MAKER.

- TRAINING ACTIVITIES TAKE PLACE IN THREE CENTRA
- CENTRA 1 AND 3 ARE FREE OF COSTS AND ARE DAYLY ATTENDED BY THE MEMBERS OF THE COURSE. THEIR AGE HAS TO BE BETWEEN 16 AND 25 YEARS AND THEY MUST HAVE PASSED THROUGH AT LEAST THE 5TH GRADE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL. SMALL SELF-EMPLOYED AND EMPLOYEES OF ENTERPRISES ARE ALSO PERMITTED

- CENTRE 2 IS INTENDED FOR DROP-OUTS WHO ARE AT LEAST 14 YEARS OLD AND HAVE AT LEAST PASSED THROUGH THE 5TH GRADE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL
- THE GOAL IS TO GIVE SOME SPECIFIC TRAINING ON SOME PROFESSIONS
- IN 1999: 990 TRAINEES ENTERED OF WHICH 72% MALE. 43% DIDN'T FINISH PRIMARY SCHOOL
- 21% OF THE MALE-TRAINEES GRADUATED AGAINST 28% OF THE FEMALE. 30% OF THE TRAINEES DROPPED OUT OF THE TRAINING

FOUNDATION FOR PRODUCTIVE WORKING UNITS

- STIMULATES WOMEN, PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, EMPLOYED AND UNEMPLOYED-YOUTH TO CONTRIBUTE FUNCTIONALLY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SMALL SCALE SECTOR, THROUGH INFORMATION-INSTRUMENTS
- THE TARGET GROUP IS TRAINED IN PRACTICAL MANAGEMENT AND SMALL ENTREPRENEURS ARE GUIDED, AS WELL AS ENTREPRENEURS WITH A LOW EDUCATION. THEY ARE TRAINED IN NECESSARY FINANCIAL AND ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT SKILLS, SO THEIR BUSINESSES CAN SURVIVE. IN THE LIGHT OF GLOBALISATION, STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP IS STIMULATED SO COST-PRICES CAN BE REDUCED AND PROFITS INCREASED

OTHER INITIATIVES

BUREAU FOR MICRO PROJECTS

- IMPROVE THE OVERALL SOCIO-ECONOMIC SITUATION OF THOSE LIVING IN THE DEPRIVED AREAS, SUCH AS THE HINTERLAND, INTERIOR, RURAL AND URBAN AREAS AND TO HELP THE LOCAL COMMUNITIES TO REALIZE THEIR OWN DEVELOPMENT GOALS
- SMALL PROJECTS ARE IMPLEMENTED, WITH AN OWN CONTRIBUTION OF THE BENEFICIARIES IN THE FORM OF LABOUR FORCE OR FINANCES. THE EUROPEAN UNION FINANCES THE PROJECTS

FUND FOR NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

- FINANCING SMALL ACTIVITIES FROM COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS, IN ORDER TO COMBAT POVERTY.

TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

- TRAINING IN ELECTRONICS, CAR REPAIR, CONSTRUCTION, WELDING, TAILORING ETC.

**FUND FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF
THE INTERIOR**

- FINANCES SMALL ACTIVITIES IN THE INTERIOR/HINTHERLAND. THIS APPROACH MUST RESULT ON LONG TERM IN A STABLE RURAL ECONOMY. THE FUND RESIDES UNDER THE MINISTRY OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**DIVISION OF LABOUR MEDIATION
(MINISTRY OF LABOUR)**

- IN CHARGE OF LABOUR MEDIATION
- HELPS THE ONES SEEKING FOR EMPLOYMENT TO FIND A JOB AND ALSO HELP THE EMPLOYERS TO FIND SUITABLE EMPLOYEES

YOUNG PEOPLE IN BUSINESS

**DATA ON YOUNG
ENTREPRENEURS ARE
STILL BEING COLLECTED.**

**DATA WILL BE SHARED AS
SOON AS AVAILABLE.**

TRADE ASSOCIATIONS

- **ASFA:** SURINAME MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION
- **VSB:** SURINAME TRADE & INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
- **AKMOS:** ASSOCIATION OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SCALE ENTREPRENEURS IN SURINAME
- **FA TJAUW SONG FOEI:** CHINESE TRADE ASSOCIATION

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

- The Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Suriname is an organization based on Public Law, serving as the National Organization in Suriname.
- The registered members are classed in eight categories (branches). The division of these branches is as follows:
 1. **Retail trade**
 2. **Other trades and services)**
 3. **Domestic industry & manufacturing**
 4. **Insurance and banking**
 5. **Transportation**
 6. **Hotel, restaurant & entertainment**
 7. **Mining & industrial processing industry**
 8. **Forestry & forest processing industry**

- MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY
- MINISTRY OF LABOUR
- SAVINGS AND CREDIT COOPERATIONS
- OTHER FINANCE INSTITUTIONS

IN CLOSING.....

- THE PROBLEMS OF UNEMPLOYMENT UNDER YOUTH SHOULD BE DELT WITH IN AN INTEGRATED MANNER. EDUCATION IS AND WILL PLAY A CRUCIAL ROLL: THAT'S WHY THE CURRICULA SHOULD BE ADJUSTED ON THE NATIONAL AND ALSO INTERNATIONAL DEMAND FOR LABOUR-FORCE
- IN THE CASE OF SURINAME WITH THE UPCOMING TOURISM-SECTOR, LARGE-SCALE GOLDMINING AND EXPANSION OF THE BAUXITE-MINING ACTIVITIES, THE EDUCATION SYSTEM SHOULD BE AND WILL BE ADJUSTED
- THE YOUTH WHO, DUE TO THE DOMESTIC WAR IN THE INTERIOR OF THE LATE EIGHTIES, DIDN'T GET A CHANGE TO GET EDUCATED WILL BE GIVEN A CHANGE TO LEARN A PROFESSION, LEARN SKILLS SO THEY CAN TAKE PART IN THE ECONOMY EARNING THEIR OWN MONEY AND IN THIS CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY IN GENERAL BUT SPECIFICLY TO THAT OF THEMSELVES AND THEIR DIRECT ENVIRONMENT.

- EDUCATION AND EXTRA TRAINING OF - IN PARTICULAR DROP OUTS - NEED ATTENTION
- WE STIMULATE PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR
- TECHNICAL SCHOOLS, THE FOUNDATION FOR PRODUCTIVE WORKING UNITS AND THE FOUNDATION FOR LABOUR MOBILISATION AND DEVELOPMENT PLAY AND WILL KEEP PLAYING A VERY IMPORTANT ROLL IN THESE EFFORTS.

2.2.4 TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO PAPER

Summary Data on General Economic Situation of Trinidad and Tobago

Trinidad and Tobago has a population of 1.3m persons. The percentage of the young persons ages 12 to 24 constitutes 30% of the population or approximately 400,000. A breakdown is as follows:

Figure 1 A Breakdown of the Youth Population, by Age Group

<i>Age Group</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Total</i>
10-14 years	68,000	54,000	122,000
15-19 years	72,000	67,000	139,000
20-24 years	61,000	70,000	131,000

Source: Continuous Sample Surveys of Population, Central Statistical Office, Trinidad and Tobago.

There have been increasing social problems relating to youth in Trinidad and Tobago. The main reasons which have led to these problems are:

- Restricted access to the secondary education system which left out about one third of the school aged population (There is now Universal Secondary Education)
- The level of unemployment, which reaches 30 % for the 15-19 aged cohort, compared to 14% for the rest of the population
- Poverty which is related to high levels of unemployment, crime and violence and other social problems
- Reduced family care

Youth involved in criminal activity are often secondary school dropouts.¹⁴ When a crime is committed by this group society pays not only for its costs but for the investment made in education. The importance in education points to the fact that each additional year of schooling increases earnings by approximately 15% for both men and women. It can be seen that youths who reside in poor neighbourhoods, coming from an abusive family and unemployment all relate to one another.

School dropouts usually imply early entry into the labour market with undesirable results. Youths who have not completed secondary education face inferior job prospects, lower lifetime earnings, and greater likelihood of underemployment and unemployment. Other factors affecting youth employment is growth which is capital intensive, slow growth in agriculture and manufacturing and downsizing in the public sector.

During the late 1990s, youth unemployment (15-19) stood at over 30%. In 1999, youths 15-24 years old in the labour force numbered 128,300, accounting for 23% of the total. Of the total labour force, some 79,300 were unemployed and youths between 15 and 24 years of age compose 40% of this group. They are 1.8 more times likely to experience unemployment than

¹⁴ Trinidad and Tobago Youth and Social Development, June 2000

the labour force as a whole. Youth unemployment rates have remained consistently elevated ranging from 34.2% to 25% in 1995.

Within the youth population, unemployment varies by age and sex, with the younger age groups and females experiencing the worst. Unemployment among young males is consistently lower than among young females. In 1973 youth unemployment stood at 28% for men and 36% for women. Thus females are at a relative disadvantage in terms of employment and wages, which stands at 17% lower than men on average.

The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago (GORTT) has made progress in addressing these issues such as laying the foundation for education reform, rationalization of training programmes, and improvement in youth and family services. In 2004 GORTT intends to pursue improving the welfare of its citizens so as to ensure sustainable human development. Government intends to provide a well-targeted, integrated programme of social protection services for the youth population.

PROGRAMMES

National Youth Policy:

In May 1995 Trinidad and Tobago hosted the Commonwealth Youth Minister's Meeting of which 53 countries of the Commonwealth made a commitment towards addressing the needs of the youth. In keeping with this commitment, GORTT has established a task force to formulate a National Youth Policy, which has been drafted. The Draft policy focuses on the following goals:

- The spiritual and moral development of young men and women
- Strong family units providing quality family life
- The satisfaction of the primary needs of young people
- Access to relevant education at all levels
- Access to education and training for employment at a level appropriate to ability
- Ensuring that all caregivers have the capacity to meet the needs of young women and men in institutions
- The acquisition of a sound social identity by all young people in the context of a tolerant plural society
- The development of social awareness and a sense of responsibility among young people and their willingness to participate fully in decision making processes and take leadership roles
- The cultivation of healthy lifestyles among young men and women free of substance abuse, sexual promiscuity and violence
- The contribution of young people to the sustainable development of Trinidad and Tobago

Helping You Prepare for Employment (HYPE)

This programme targets persons who have been unable to find employment either because they do not possess the necessary level of qualifications or technical skills to make them marketable. The main objective is to improve the employability of the target group. There are currently 2 centres and in 2004, 6 more would be established.

On the Job Training

This programme offers participants an induction into the workplace and focuses on the acquisition of educational and occupational skills. Trainees are remunerated based on their educational level. The main objective is to provide job skills and work-based training that would give the individual an opportunity to become marketable.

Youth Development and Apprenticeship Centres

Participants are exposed to training in personnel development skills, basic literacy and numeracy, occupational skills, computer literacy, sport, culture and agriculture. This programme leads to Level I & II certification by the National Training Agency. The programme is national in scope and targets youth between the ages of 15-18 years in a residential setting, and females 15-25 years in a non-residential setting. In 2004 the programme will be expanded to include a craft and artisan component administered by the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force.

Youth Facilities Development Programme

The programme provides services according to community demands and include personnel development training, remedial education, occupational skills, computer literacy, peer counseling, drug abuse education and prevention, creative arts, music, dance, drama, sport and recreation. The target group consists of high risk youths 15-29 years of age.

Youth Training and Employment Partnership Programme (YTEPP)

The programme provides training in career enhancement services. In particular training in numeracy, literacy and vocational skills; and entrepreneurial development and support services, which is a component that teaches the trainees about micro-entrepreneurship. The main objectives are to enhance the employability and self-employment prospects of the targeted population by providing high quality cost effective programmes; and relevant skills and entrepreneurial and attitudinal training.

Civilian Conservation Corps

This programme provides educational and vocational training to young adults between the ages 18 to 25 years who are not academically inclined and who are unemployed or unemployable. It aims to fostering socially desirable behaviour among young adults and at the same time provide temporary employment and training. The programme is currently offered in 8 regions. In 2004, 3,500 trainees will benefit from the programme; operations would be fully computerized; a training facility focusing on soft trades and other vocations would be established.

Dollar for Dollar Education Plan

This plan commenced in September 2001 and was established to facilitate increased access to tertiary education. Under the plan Government pays half the cost of tuition fees of all new students and continuing students at specific tertiary educational institutions.

Sport School Programme

The duration of the programme is two week every year for talented youths between 15-19 years aspiring towards sporting excellence. It also promotes the psychosocial development of participants.

Geriatric Adolescent Partnership Programme (GAPP)

The programme is designed to train young persons between the ages of 17 and 25 years to respond to the demand for the provision of geriatric care services in communities. It intends to foster a sense of self-worth and discipline in the youth of our nation, foster national consciousness among the youth, fully integrate them into the larger community so that they can interface effectively with older adults.

Retirees Adolescent Partnership Programme

The programme is an initiative geared towards helping young adults appreciate their classroom experiences by providing enabling environments for positive social interaction with older persons and, at the same time, marrying both with new experiences gained. The RAPP utilizes the skills of retired experts as facilitators in the programme. It allows for developing and enhancing social skills, building self-esteem and finding mutual ground for purposeful and productive living. It targets at risk persons in order to minimize the extent of delinquency and dropout in our school population.

Adolescent Mothers Programme

This programme is community based and targets pregnant adolescents and teenage mothers and their children, providing them with counseling, remedial/continuing education, day care services for their children and training in pre- and post- natal child care at established centers. The programme is intended to decrease the number of repeat pregnancies among young women and break the cycle of inter generational poverty which may emerge among the target group due to early pregnancy.

2.3. ARRIVING AT HARMONIZED EMPLOYMENT POLICIES FOR YOUTH IN THE CARIBBEAN¹⁵

Arriving at Harmonized Employment
policies for youth in the Caribbean

In a dynamic Caribbean and
Global environment

Arriving at Harmonized Employment policies for
youth in the Caribbean...cont'd

- Basic facts about youth unemployment
- Distill a few basic principles based on our own experiences of what works and what doesn't work in our own environments

¹⁵ Presentation of Ms Asha Kambon from ECLAC, Trinidad and Tobago Office

General principles....

from which policies can be distilled

- Countries that can track their youth (those who have knowledge would seem to be in a better position to develop strategies that are effective- who is dropping out of school,) – eg. Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago. So information about youth is important
- Strategies that seek to prepare youth for participation in the Labour market would seem to be more effective than those that seem to occupy youth;

general principles... cont'd

- The role of the state
 - Countries that work at preparing the Market for youth employment (job creation, incentives to the private sector for youth placement, managed contract work at home or abroad)
 - Countries that seem to exploit the best that the tourist sector has to offer in terms of employment for youth (Jamaica might be able to say something about this)
 - Countries that exploit the services sector in favour of youth employment (in Trinidad and Tobago it is examining the energy sector to see what services it requires and equipping young people to provide those services – some are at the high end , some at the low end ; Barbados the info tech sector; St. Kitts/Nevis the electronics sector)

general principles... cont'd

The role of education...

- It would seem that if you are able to keep young people in school longer, you immediately reduce the problem – (The Honourable Prime Minister said his government was aware that only some 40% of young persons of secondary age were in school – policies had to be shaped to ensure that secondary schooling was available for a larger proportion, until it arrived at universal participation.
- Reforming the school system so that young people could get more out of it – so that they could be more ready... (what does that mean – creating a flexible work force)
- Policies that manage the transition from school to the world of work

general principles... cont'd

- Some gender equity issues:
 - Female headed households
 - Support for the reproductive roles of women
 - Women's participation in the labour market and the delayed engagement of participation of their children (and better performance in the school system)
 - Wage gaps in the Caribbean

general principles... cont'd

- Countries that address human development , reduction of poverty, social protection generally /holistically....seem to be able to keep the youth unemployment problems and their attendant problems at bay

ARRIVING AT HARMONIZED EMPLOYMENT POLICIES FOR YOUTH IN THE CARIBBEAN.¹⁶

In light of the current global economic situation and World Trade Organization's (WTO) emerging prominence and assertion, it is apprehended that more people will lose jobs and join the rank and file of the unemployed.

The deteriorating employment situation, particularly for the youths, has to be addressed through a policy of collective interventions. Family is in the pivotal position to make interventions in peoples' lives, negatively affected by unemployment. Various social institutions beside the family, i.e. society and different social relations, the community and the corresponding governance at large can also contribute to collective intervention against the appalling effects of unemployment.

In order to achieve any tangible success in arriving at harmonized employment policies for youth in the Caribbean, it is essential to obtain basic facts about the youth employment situation in the region. This necessitates tracking the status of youths at various stages, i.e. at school, dropping out of school, joining the labour market, being unemployed and returning to the labour market again etc. It is also important to determine what percentages of youths do pursue education, at least up to secondary level vis-à-vis what percent of them pursue tertiary education, however miniscule their number may be.

The Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines made a very significant statement – “Only 40% of youths who should be in secondary school are in school.” It is important to note that there is a very high rate of drop outs from secondary schools; many do not attend schools while many turn up only to take the O Level exams. There is also an alarming rate of exam failures in the Caribbean. All these, coupled with a number of other social factors and discriminatory social relations compound the unemployment situation in the Caribbean.

It is evident from Mr. Kazi's presentation and Figure 2 thereof that while youths over all have a 3 to 4 times higher unemployment rate compared to adults, female share of unemployment is usually higher for both, youths as well as adult labour force.

In view of the above, we should distil a few basic principles based on our own experiences of what works and what does not work in our own environments.

General principles from which policies can be distilled

Countries which equip themselves with the social mechanism to track their youths would seem to be in a better position to develop efficient and effective strategies to follow those dropping out of schools—e.g. Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad, and Tobago. Barbados has developed a very effective system where the Ministry of Community Development would track every student passing out of school and match their actions and achievements against their goals set forth prior to leaving school.

¹⁶ Text of the presentation by Ms. Asha Kambon, UNECLAC delegate, written up by Mr. Tamjidul Huda Kazi, UNDESA consultant from his notes and Ms. Kambon's power point presentation documented by PPL, SVG.

Information about youth is therefore a key factor for affecting any policy for the advancement of their situation. Strategies that seek to prepare youth for participation in the labour market would appear to be more effective.

Role of the State

The state, being at the helm of affairs, has to assume responsibility for facilitating youth employment. Countries should make concerted efforts for preparing the market for youth employment. This can be done through job creation, providing incentives to the private sector for increasing their recruitment of youths, managed contract work in own country and overseas.

Countries in the Caribbean are also well situated to exploit their tourism potentials. Optimum exploitation of the tourist sector can naturally generate employment for youths. Jamaica is a successful case in point.

There are countries that can use the youth potential to manage and improve their service sector. Opening up the service sector to absorb the youth labour force can be a viable way to generate youth employment. Trinidad and Tobago is examining its energy sector to see what it requires and is training and equipping its youths to provide those services—some at the high end and some at the low end. Likewise Barbados has trained and equipped its youths to manage its information sector. The government of St. Kitts/Nevis has successfully trained and utilized the services of its youths to run and manage the electronic sector.

Another very important aspect that all the Caribbean countries should pay considerable attention to is the necessity of certification. The need for adequate certification can hardly be over emphasized. Many youths, learning and thereby providing excellent output in the service sector cannot often obtain employment—both at home and abroad, for lack of proper certification of their skill and trade. Their less qualified counterparts from other parts of the world with more established system of certification often fare better in the job market. The Caribbean governments should pay attention to the need for regional certification, particularly for the service sector.

Role of Education

Education can play an important role in equipping the youths to fight against social inequity. It is essential to scrutinize the problems of the existing education system. Before recommending changes, it is important to evaluate what exists in the education system and further to pinpoint what needs to be changed.

It may appear that keeping young people in school longer, the problem of their seeking employment is immediately reduced. The Honourable Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines highlighted the poor percentage of young people of secondary age were attending schools while the larger number crowded the labour market. Policies had to be shaped to ensure that secondary schooling was available for a larger proportion, until it arrived at universal participation.

The school system should be reformed in a way that young people could get more out of it. Various life and social skills should also be taught to the young people while they are at school. These should be incorporated in the wider discipline of the school system. Focus should also be given to an easy and conducive passage from school to work transition. Some sort of job training through efficient and effective internship should also be included in the wider perspective of school system which will not only create a more flexible work force but will equip the youths to make the transition from school to the world of work.

Other Equity Issues

There exists an undeniable inequity between men and women in the Caribbean. This naturally puts women at a remarkably disadvantaged position. The governments of the region should make positive initiatives of ensuring higher recruitment of women.

There are also remarkable differences in the wages earned by men and their female counterparts. Men earned 140% higher wages than women in the LAC for the same kind of work. Women do not usually get recruited for the jobs they deserve only on account of their gender difference, even though they may be equally or even more qualified. Women are sometimes overqualified—and their over qualification is often used as a tool to keep them out of a job. Experience shows that women participate more in tertiary education.

Governments in the Caribbean should come forward to ensure higher number and better quality of engaging women in the labour force.

Engaging essentially means empowering. As it is, women in general already suffer certain impediment in the job market because of their reproductive role. The burden of care for the children always falls on women, which automatically limit their entry, continuation and advancement in the labour market. The state should assume responsibility of providing facilities for child care in order to ensure uninterrupted employment by women.

Female workers in St. Kitts, which has the highest rate of female-headed household in the Caribbean, have successfully negotiated with the government to provide child-care facilities.

Countries that address human development, reduction of poverty, social protection generally and historically seem to be able to keep the youth unemployment problems at bay.

3. SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

Mr. Julio D’Arcy of UN DESA opened the discussion by explaining the emerging complicated economic, sociological and cultural situation pervading the present world environment. The current global scenario is no longer as simplistic as it was even a decade or two ago. Economic competition among countries; inter- and intra-national sociological changes, and the resultant cultural polarization have all contributed to complicate the world.

We have to make deliberate efforts to focus our attention to the key subject of the workshop, i.e. youth employment in the Caribbean. Instead of diluting our attention to extraneous matters, we should aim at harmonizing some recommendations toward augmenting successful youth employment policies and practices. We should also focus our attention to carrying those recommendations to our respective countries and also to the United Nations (UN), as the UN has already declared to address the issue of youth employment.

The United Nations, as the highest level of governments, declared in goal VII of the Millennium Declaration to be “a more effective instrument for pursuing all these priorities: the fight for development of all the peoples of the world, the fight against poverty, ignorance and disease; the fight against injustice; the fight against violence, terror and crime; and the fight against the degradation and destruction of our common home.” The United Nations has thus committed itself to be a major player in eradicating the impediments to a sustainable livelihood for all, youths inclusive.

Mr. D’Arcy suggested that participants should raise issues as to how the problems of youth unemployment may be addressed; and this, he opined, should be done with a positive attitude. He further stressed that the participants’ perceptions of the problem and their recommendations for its solutions are the most important determinants and not how the world looks at it.

The Millennium Declaration did not make any particular reference to youth un/employment. The United Nations defined “youth” as those between the age group of 15–24 years and envisaged to create access to “decent work” to all, including youths. Mr. D’Arcy drew the attention of the forum to the new dimensions of the world economy under the forces of globalization. Poverty is on the increase. Much as the North American economies are growing, they are not creating new additional employment. The labour market is increasingly becoming insecure and “youths” are the first to be laid off. Whereas ups and downs in the global economy produces multiplier effects on the quality of labour, high minimum wages in some countries negatively affect youth employment. The new paradigms of global economy present new sets of intertwined problems.

Finally, Mr. D’Arcy opened the floor to discussion and welcomed the participants to come up with specific issues and solutions and substantive suggestions for harmonized policy on youth employment in the Caribbean.

The Jamaican delegates opposed the idea of grouping youths under a broad age group, i.e. 15-24 years, and suggested that the group between 15–18 years have a different set of problems than the group between 19–24 years. They suggested that the two groups should be separated.

They also suggested that the education system should be thoroughly revamped, calling it a “burning issue.” Teachers’ training should be given high importance in the country’s development agenda. Teaching as a profession has lost its intrinsic value and prestige owing to the evolutionary process of the job market, emoluments and even social respect. In order to train the youths better and equip them with the life- skills and job- skills and to enable them to adapt to the labor market, it is imperative to create new Teachers’ Training Institutions and to improve the existing ones. Simultaneously, the teachers’ remuneration should be increased which will eventually improve the status of teachers and thereby will attract qualified and dedicated people to the profession. A well qualified and dedicated rank of teachers can prepare the youths for a world of work and make them viable assets to their employers.

They further recommended that the private sector should co-operate and collaborate with the government in creating jobs.

Another very important point raised by them is that the debt-burden faced by most of the Caribbean countries was a formidable impediment for them to invest in education, training and job-creation. Jamaica pays about 62–65% of its annual budget for debt- servicing. Addressing problems of unemployment is almost synonymous with addressing problems of debt-servicing.

While their points were well taken, Mr. D’Arcy questioned their assertion that quality of teaching was a key issue. He also pointed out that attention should be focused on the demand side of labour as opposed to the supply side.

The delegates from Grenada unequivocally supported the views expressed by their Jamaican counterparts.

Youths between 14–17/18 are in secondary school. Efforts should be made to provide training to the dropouts rather than entering them into the labour market. Vocational training, orientation to various life-skills and emphasis on numeracy and literacy should be given to this age group. They are too young and naïve to enter and compete in the labour market with the immediately higher age group, i.e. 18 – 24 years. The two groups confront two different sets of problems.

Voicing their concern on the issue of teachers, they pointed out that teaching should be viewed out of a wider multiplicity of conditions. Young people are not motivated to take up teaching as a profession, not only because of low salary, but also because of the lack of physical facilities. The present generation of teachers, far from providing a solid academic discipline, can hardly manage students. There are also other compelling factors prohibiting the availability of good teachers. Both USA and UK are actively recruiting teachers from the Caribbean which result in a systematic drainage of qualified teachers from the region, creating a vacuum.

The Guyanan delegates, supporting the views expressed by their earlier speakers also reiterated the opinion that youths at 14/15 years should be in school and not in the labour market, even though the government of Guyana legally allows employment at 14 years. They lauded the SVG Governor’s declaration of introducing universal secondary education in SVG and opined that other countries in the region should follow suit. They informed the participants about the Prime Minister of Guyana, Mr. Gonzales’s opinion that education should be viewed as a medium of

departure from poverty. Mr. Gonzales also views good teaching as an integral part of better products and improved productivity.

Mr. D'Arcy advised the forum to identify critical issues relating to the problem of youth unemployment in the Caribbean. While concern for quality education is certainly commendable, our focus should be on education pertaining to employment and employability only.

The Guyanan delegation highlighted a very important issue: they questioned if the sphere of youth employment included skilled or unskilled labour. Mr. D'Arcy responded that the only parameter for "youth" was age—no statistics were available regarding skilled and/or unskilled youths. It is difficult to generalize in the absence of available data. Future surveys, if any, will determine the "skill" levels of youths.

The delegates informed the forum about the bold initiatives taken in their country in response to the market demand, i.e. remote and distance learning, wood work, industry management and the creation of skill training centres which provide long term skill training to youths.

The Surinamese delegates also unequivocally supported the forum's concern on the waning quality of teachers resulting in poorer standard of education. In Suriname, only the residual students, failing to join any other, more lucrative profession, join the cadre of teachers. The delegates brought into surface another inherent problem regarding youth employment. They referred to gender as a major problem even within the youth employment gamut.

Males facing unemployment at youth ultimately end up getting a job at some point as they grow older. This is not the case for females; unemployed young females have usually less chances to get employed as they grow older. Again, women in the reproductive age often voluntarily do not enter the labour market, which often prohibits their subsequent entry at a later stage.

The delegates mentioned that women trying to undertake business enterprises often suffer from the lack of proper entrepreneurial life skills. Education should also train people to be entrepreneurs and not just employees only. Governments should invest more on human capital and its development. Investment in human capital will ultimately pay off as it will eventually enable people to innovate new and novel business endeavours.

Mr. D'Arcy mentioned that youth employment is higher than the average unemployment level, adding that the dynamics is not clear and the entire employment scenario is constantly evolving. Increased life expectancy is also adding to the unemployment situation. Mr. D'Arcy further suggested that both the governments and the private sector should make substantial investment to create new jobs in order to absorb the large number of youths joining the labour market.

The delegates questioned the dynamics of youth unemployment asking that, if there is no employment for the youths at present, how can there be employment for them after five years, unless new jobs are created?

Admitting that unemployment affects women more adversely than their male counterparts, Mr. D'Arcy opined that governments should adopt pro-employment (and not just pro-profit) micro

economic policies. Simultaneously, training programs to upgrade the workers' skill and increase productivity in line with changing market demand should also be augmented.

The delegate from St. Lucia also voiced her concern over the deteriorating condition of education and further added that youths in her country join teaching after just completing their A levels only as a means of livelihood and not for any inherent willingness to join the profession. This has a negative effect on the already dwindling quality of education in St. Lucia.

Ms. Asha Kambon, the ECLAC delegate mentioned that unemployment in the Caribbean is very difficult to understand and comprehend. Transition from unemployment to gainful employment is extremely challenging, and the labour market is very complex and lopsided. There are often only two sets of jobs— one being very high end while the other belongs to the lowest level. There are usually no employment opportunities in the middle range. That makes entry into the job market by most people rather difficult. She summed it up very humorously: “You either give a clean table in a hotel or manage it.”

There are many people who never had a permanent job all their life—they spend most of their life by providing temporary service all along, which itself manifests the precarious employment situation in the Caribbean. Young people always suffer more.

Ms. Kambon mentioned that governments in the sub-region must be eager and ready to invest in improving the quality of human resources. They should make efforts to create work for high-end, and also low-end of technology scale. The governments should create jobs and bring jobs to the market and make deliberate efforts to attract the discouraged workers. She expressed her concern about young women in the labour market who are usually unable to access training programs to improve their skill, in the absence of any social network to look after their children and / or dependents. She emphasized the need for social system to be put in place and services to be made available to facilitate young women to improve their skill and improve their productivity.

Mr. Kazi suggested that in the absence of regular employment opportunities at present and in the foreseeable future, youths should be encouraged and facilities should be created for advising proper utilization of micro-credit. Entrepreneurial training and managerial capacity-building should be carried on side by side. Mr. Kazi narrated the example of Bangladesh where abject poverty and joblessness, particularly in the rural areas have been successfully arrested and an euphoria sprung up under a very successful micro-credit program under Grameen (Village) Bank. Efforts should be made to diversify economic activities, both in the manufacturing and also in the service sectors. Non-farm rural employment should also be created.

In situations where capital is scarce, mobilization of investable resources—i) at reasonable cost, ii) with their allocation in a manner that yields the best return, and iii) with efficient management of said resources—is a critical issue in growth, poverty alleviation and creation of livelihood. Micro-finance, by providing reasonable access of finance with low transaction cost meets these criteria. As mentioned by Satya Murti, “Of all the development interventions, micro-credit and micro-enterprise have a proven track record of building economic and social capital with low transaction cost.”

There were a few observations by various participants on some of the points mentioned in Mr. Kazi's keynote presentation. Those observations, and Mr. Kazi's corresponding explanations, are the following:

- Dr. Joslin Salmon, a Jamaican delegate, referred to Mr. Kazi's point "about 85% of children in Jamaica and St. Lucia are born out of wedlock," and informed the forum that there is a deep-rooted tradition in the Caribbean that men and women live together under a union for a long time and bear children. This union, even though not a marriage per se, is respected in the society and not at all considered unethical and/or immoral. Children born out of such unions are considered normal, legitimate children.

Mr. Kazi accepted the comment in good grace and responded that he had quoted the figure from a World Bank study report. His terms of reference were not to conduct a field survey of the Caribbean social issues, but to prepare the keynote presentation based on available research publications, particularly those conducted by UN agencies and the World Bank.

- Ms. Asha Kambon of UNECLAC referred to Mr. Kazi's point about the rage reportedly prevalent among the Caribbean youth. She informed the forum that the said "rage factor" was a natural outcome for the Caribbean youths without adequate employment opportunities; furthermore, they are reduced only to serving and providing facilities to youths from developed countries who visit the Caribbean on vacations, indulging in luxuries. It is not unnatural for the youths to react thus when confronted with their (vacationing) peers, who have the same levels of education and qualifications and same expectations in life, enjoying themselves while the Caribbean youths are merely waiters and servicemen.

Mr. Kazi thanked Ms. Kambon for bringing forward such a logical and acceptable explanation.

- Ms. Kambon also objected to the findings of the nine-country CARICOM study about the early sexual initiation in the Caribbean which had been quoted by Mr. Kazi in his presentation: "...one-third of school-going young people are sexually active." She was aware of the study in question, which she said was based on faulty data collection and improper sampling.

Mr. Kazi again informed the forum that his composition was based on the available research findings and material on the Caribbean; none of them were of his making. He mentioned that he did not conduct the field survey, and admitted that research findings by any researcher may become lop-sided and erroneous if based on inadequate and inaccurate field information.

- Concern was also raised by some of the participants about the level of violence and drug-dealing in the Caribbean mentioned in Mr. Kazi's report.

After a threadbare discussion, the forum was convinced that, based on the available data, the observations may be correct. However, these factors are perhaps a result of the colonial historical legacy, high degree of unemployment, and the geographical situation of the Caribbean islands (which served as a convenient transit point for arm-smuggling and drug-dealing). It was also accepted by all and sundry that, in the face of acute unemployment and hopelessness, when such

lucrative business was going on in and around the Caribbean, it would not leave the Caribbean youths untouched and unaffected.

Mr. Kazi also mentioned that any researcher or academician conducting research, in any geographical area, and on any people, should try to use precise and accurate field survey to the best of his/her ability and should refrain from making unkind generalizations, unless those can be backed by solid empirical evidence.

However, the above controversies and arguments only bring to surface the fact that self-generated statistics in the Caribbean on various social and cultural issues are very inadequate if not absent, which may offer opportunities to foreign researchers to draw drastic conclusions, not always very palatable and/or acceptable. The need for dependable surveys leading to compilation of accurate statistics was felt and recommended.

4. GROUP PRESENTATIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The task assigned to the participants for the practical segment of the forum was to openly discuss the role of key stakeholders, namely; government, private sector, non-governmental organisations, youth associations and international organisations, on critical issues identified during the workshop as both contributors and impediments to youth employment. The key issues defined by all the participants are education, skills development, health, employment creation, microenterprise development and job placement. These issues have national policies as counterparts in all and each of the countries that were represented in the forum. The combination of issues and stakeholders give an indication of both policies that must be examined, in terms of their contribution to youth employment, and the appropriate stakeholders closer to the substantive issues as discussed during the deliberations. Accordingly, the participants and observers divided in three groups as follows:

Group 1: education, skills development and health

Group 2: employment creation

Group 3: microenterprise development and job placement

The following are the stakeholders' roles examined in detail during the deliberations of the three working groups for each of the issues above mentioned.

PRESENTATION OF WORKING GROUP 1

Matrix on role of stakeholders

Group one- Education, Skills development and Health

Matrix on role of stakeholders

Areas	Government	Private Sector	Ngo's	Youth	Int'nl org
Education and Training	Appropriate and necessary infrastructure; Play a strong and regulatory role; Responsible curricula, teacher training, student participation ; quality control; Evaluation, regulation and certification; Accreditation of institutions; attractive remuneration to teachers; support the training of social/life skills to young people; negotiate compensation for the drain of human resources abroad from receiving countries.	Financial contributions; involvement in the tertiary sector; provide vocational training; apprenticeship; incentives to hire marginalized youth; offering awards and scholarships; mentorship programmes;	Provide training of a complimentary nature to that which is provided by government; Use alternative education techniques (popular training); make use of infrastructure for the provision of alternative services; Mobilization of youth to participate in existing programmes; mentorship programmes eg. Big brother /sister programmes.	Involvement in the planning, design and decision making around education and training programmes; investigate skills which youth possess and do what is necessary for certification; track youth; Acknowledgement of youth skills; programmes should be located where youth live; help strengthen social skills of youth	Tailor their needs to suit the country; Consultation and Communication greater transparency; Balanced, structured , coordinated approach to supporting governments and B NGO's; recognition of the cultural context; respect for local knowledge and expertise; involvement of local people; greater use of local consultants

Matrix on role of stakeholders

Skill Development	Assessment of skills level of youth and future youth; allocate resources for research; certificate of skills; conduct market research; adopt and adapt technology; provide tax incentives; institute appropriate patenting of technology; intellectual property rights; provide incentives for training; bond trained persons; provide incentives for returning migrants; governments can identify and access opportunities for young persons	More and better structured apprenticeship training; sponsorship	More collaboration can take place between government, private sector, NGO's in providing services; Career guidance; help reduce social barriers and class barriers	More inclusion in decision making;	Provide financial and technical support; share experiences
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Matrix on role of stakeholders

Health	Take responsibility for infrastructure; Provide primary health care; Provide requisite opportunities; for young men promoting health and fitness (recreational opportunities; specific time for services to be provided); other mechanisms to reach young persons; regulatory services including nutritional content of fast food enterprises; improvement of quality of health; mechanisms for a training and retraining of health workers; develop programmes that support the mental health of youth people	Gov't has to collaborate with private sector in order to achieve goals	NGO's can promote use of services explore avenues and provide ARV for PLWHA; Provide incentives for young persons to utilize health care services ; Expand and improve alt community based outreach programmes; ensure that programmes for mental health are given wide awareness and ensure that collaboration occurs between NGO's and govt to support mental health of youth; community based mental health provide training for health care workers	Peer counselors (increase peer education effort); Peer education	Provide technical assistance: training and retraining, drugs; provide support to NGO's; Holistic approach
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PRESENTATION OF WORKING GROUP 2

WORKING GROUP 2

ROLE OF STAKEHOLDERS IN EMPLOYMENT CREATION FOR YOUTH

- JUDY WILLIAMS
 - DEREK FIELDS
 - MARLON POWEL
 - SANDRA SINGH
 - KENRICK QUASHIE
 - MS. HANNIBAL
- GRENADA
 - GUYANA
 - SURINAME
 - TRINIDAD & TOBAGO
 - ST. VINCENT & THE GRENADINES
 - ST. VINCENT & THE GRENADINES

AREAS

- NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICES
- NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCILS
- COMMUNITY SPORTS AND LEISURE

STAKEHOLDERS

- GOVERNMENT
- PRIVATE SECTOR
- NGO'S
- YOUTH
- INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

GOVERNMENT

WHAT CAN THE GOVERNMENT DO FOR NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICES, THE NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY SPORTS AND LEISURE IN REGARD TO CREATING EMPLOYMENT FOR THE YOUTH?

NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICES

- YOUTH ACTIVE IN ALL KINDS OF YOUTH SERVICES - THROUGH INSTITUTIONS OR NGO'S - SHOULD RECEIVE A MONTHLY SALARY
- FINANCE YOUTH PROJECTS THROUGH BUREAU MICRO PROJECTS OR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FUNDS

NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL

- AS A REPRESENTATIVE BODY, MEMBERS OF THE YOUTH COUNCIL SHOULD BE FINANCIALLY COMPENSATED (OR OTHER INCENTIVES)
- YOUTH COUNCIL SHOULD BE SET IN ACTIVELY IN THE POLICY-MAKING/DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNTRY AND BE PAID FOR THEIR WORK
- MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL SHOULD HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE SET IN GOVERNMENT OFFICES SO THEIR GAINED EXPERIENCE CAN BE USED WHEN DEALING WITH ACTIVITIES/TOPICS OF THE AGE GROUP/YOUTH (LIKE WORK-STUDY, STIPENTS)
- GOVERNMENT SHOULD PROVIDE RESOURCES, STATE-FACILITIES, PERSONNEL OF MINISTRIES AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES SO THE COUNCIL CAN DO ITS WORK PROPERLY
- GOVERNMENT FACILITIES LIKE SCHOOLS SHOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR AFTER-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YOUTH SO THEY CAN LEARN SKILLS AND SLOW STUDENTS CAN HAVE EXTRA LESSONS SO THEY CAN ACHIEVE MUCH MORE IN LIVE
- YOUTH COUNCIL MEMBERS SHOULD BE NON-PARTISAN IN POLITICS. IN THIS WAY, THERE IS SOME GUARANTEE THAT, EVEN WHEN THERE IS A CHANGE OF CABINET, THEY CAN STILL DEVELOP/ EXECUTE TARGETS THEY HAVE SET

COMMUNITY SPORTS AND LEISURE

- POLICY HAS TO BE FORMULATED AND FACILITIES PROVIDED SO THAT YOUTH CAN BE SET IN - WITH PAYMENTS - TO ACCOMMODATE YOUNGSTERS IN SPORT AND RECREATION (SCHOLARSHIPS ETC.)
- TRAINING FACILITIES SHOULD BE DEVELOPED SO YOUTH CAN LEARN AND EARN A LIVING OF SKILLS e.g. THE COAST GUARD PROGRAM OF ST. VINCENT
- STRENGTHEN SPORT-ORGANISATIONS SO THEY CAN PERFORM BETTER AND YOUTH CAN BE SET IN EARNING A LIVING

PRIVATE SECTOR

WHAT CAN THE PRIVATE SECTOR DO FOR NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICES, THE NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY SPORTS AND LEISURE IN REGARD TO CREATING EMPLOYMENT FOR THE YOUTH?

NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICES & NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL

- SPONSORING PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES. THEY CAN TARGET A MARKET BY ASSIGNING PRODUCTS THAT SPEAK MORE TO THE AGE-GROUP
- IN SPONSORSHIP, THE PRIVATE SECTOR CAN MAKE PROFITS WHILE THE BODIES CAN REALIZE SOME GOALS FOR THE TARGET-GROUP. SPONSORS SHOULD HOWEVER BE RESPECTFULL OF ORGANISATIONS MANDATES
- BODIES NEED TO SHOW THE PRIVATE SECTOR THAT THERE IS A MARKET OPPORTUNITY WHEN SPONSORING
- PRIVATE SECTOR COULD ALSO COME IN WITH TRAINING TO EQUIP THE TARGET GROUP WITHIN THEIR OWN ORGANISATION WITH ALL KINDS OF SKILLS
- CREATE EMPLOYMENT POSSIBILITIES FOR THE TARGET GROUP NATIONWIDE

COMMUNITY SPORTS AND LEISURE

- LOTTERY SPONSORS SPORTS ACTIVITIES AND SPORT ORGANISATIONS/LEISURE ETC.
- SECTOR CAN SPONSOR SPORT-FACILITIES (E.G. OPERATIONAL COSTS) AND TRAINING CENTRES FOR YOUTH
- YOUTH CAN BE TRAINED AND SUCH SKILLS CAN BE EFFECTIVELY UTILIZED WHEN DEVELOPING SPECIFIC PROJECTS FOR YOUTH RECREATION AND SPORTS
- CHAMBER OF COMMERCE COULD CREATE A FUND ESPECIALLY FOR YOUTH WHERE CHAMBER MEMBERS CAN CONTRIBUTE TO SPORT ACTIVITIES AND SCHOLORSHIPS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WHICH CAN MOTIVATE THEIR PERFORMANCES IN SCHOOL COMPETITION
- ALSO TRADE ASSOCIATIONS COULD CREATE A SPECIAL FUND FOR THESE PURPOSES

NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGO'S)

WHAT CAN THE NGO'S DO FOR NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICES, THE NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY SPORTS AND LEISURE IN REGARD TO CREATING EMPLOYMENT FOR THE YOUTH?

NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICES & NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL

- TRAINING OF THE YOUTH FROM SERVICES AND COUNCIL
- GIVE THE YOUTH THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN A VARIETY OF SKILLS
- CREATE EMPLOYMENT-POSSIBILITIES FOR THE YOUTH
- ASSIST THE YOUTH IN PROVIDING RESOURCES, PERSONNEL ETC.

COMMUNITY SPORTS AND LEISURE

- PLACE TRAINING FACILITIES AT THE DISPOSAL OF THE YOUTH LIKE CULTURAL CENTRES, SPORTCLUBS, ASSOCIATIONS ETC.
- CANALIZE FUNDS TO THE YOUTH ORGANISATIONS WHICH DEAL WITH COMMUNITY SPORT AND LEISURE FOR YOUTH-SPORTS PROJECTS
- PLACE AT THE YOUTH'S DISPOSAL EXPERTISE FOR TRAINING AND TEACHING OF SKILLS
- INITIATE PROJECTS FOR THE YOUTH IN NGO-FUNDS

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

WHAT CAN THE INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS DO FOR NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICES, THE NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY SPORTS AND LEISURE IN REGARD TO CREATING EMPLOYMENT FOR THE YOUTH?

NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICES & NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL

- EXCHANGE OF YOUTH REPRESENTATIVES LOCALLY, REGIONALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY SO THAT EXPERIENCES CAN BE GAINED
- SCHOLARSHIPS FOR YOUTH
- JOBS IN DONOR COUNTRIES
- FACILITATE WITH TRAINING (ABROAD) IN THE DONOR COUNTRIES
- FUNDING OF PROJECTS AIMING AT DEVELOPING AND TEACHING SKILLS
- FINANCE YOUTH PROJECTS WHICH GUARANTEE SUCCESSFUL CAREERS FOR THE YOUTH

COMMUNITY SPORTS AND LEISURE

- FUNDING
- INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHENING OF INSTITUTIONS INVOLVED IN ORGANISING SPORTING ACTIVITIES.

YOUTH

WHAT CAN THE YOUTH DO FOR NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICES, THE NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL AND COMMUNITY SPORTS AND LEISURE IN REGARD TO CREATING EMPLOYMENT FOR THE YOUTH?

NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICES & NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL

- MAXIMUM PARTICIPATION IN ALL YOUTH ACTIVITIES AIMED AT GIVING THE TARGET GROUP FUTURE PERSPECTIVES
- USE THE MEDIA TO INFORM THE YOUTH AND THE WIDER POPULATION BY PROPAGATING YOUTH ISSUES THROUGH YOUTH PROGRAMS
- IDENTIFY SOURCES OF FUNDING FOR YOUTH INITIATIVES, BOTH LOCALLY AND ABROAD

COMMUNITY SPORTS AND LEISURE

- ACQUIRE TRAINING IN THE ORGANISING OF SPORT AND LEISURE ACTIVITIES
- USE SUCH ACTIVITIES TO HAVE YOUNG PEOPLE CONSTRUCTIVELY INVOLVED TO AVOID BEING CAUGHT UP IN SOCIAL ILLS
- PROMOTE THE IMPORTANCE OF SPORTS AND EDUCATION WORKING TOGETHER AS A MEAN OF FURTHER DEVELOPMENT
- ALSO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE VALUE OF ARTS AND CULTURE AS A MEANS OF DEVELOPMENT

COMMENTS FROM FLOOR

- ST. VINCENT: NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCILS MAKE PLANS BUT DON'T EXECUTE THEM. THE YOUTH HAS TO PLAN THEIR OWN PROGRAMMES AND EXECUTE THESE THEMSELVES
- GRENADA: ALSO FOCUS ON LOCAL SCHOLARSHIPS SO WHEN ONES SPORTS CAREER ENDS, HE/SHE STILL HAS AN EDUCATION TO FALL BACK ON
- ST. VINCENT: NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICES ARE ALL SERVICES DELIVERING PROGRAMS FOR YOUTH; ASSEMBLAGE OF ALL SERVICES DEALING WITH YOUTH. AN EXAMPLE IS THE **YOUTH EMPOWERMENT SERVICES** OF ST. VINCENT WHERE PARTICIPANTS ARE COMPENSATED FINANCIALLY FOR THEIR STUDY-WORK IN GOVERNMENT OFFICES
- GRENADA: THERE ISN'T JUST ONE TAILORED PROGRAM OF NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICES THAT COVERS ALL COUNTRIES. E.G. THE **IMANI-PROJECT** WHERE GOVERNMENT PLACES YOUTH (STILL IN SCHOOL) IN OFFICES AND PAYS THEM A STIPEND. THIS APPROACH IS CALLED **LEARNING BY EARNING**
- JULIO D' ARCY: IN THE CASE OF ADVERTISEMENT MENTIONED IN SPONSORING (PRIVATE SECTOR), GOVERNMENTS SHOULD SET REGULATIONS. IT WOULD BE IDEAL IF YOUTH WAS REPRESENTED IN DELEGATIONS WHICH REPRESENT THEIR GOVERNMENT/ORGANISATIONS IN WORKSHOPS/MEETINGS ABOUT YOUTH ISSUES.

PRESENTATION OF WORKING GROUP 3

Group Members

Rosita Snagg -	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Polly Oliver -	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Tanjidal Kazi -	UN Consultant
Joan Browne -	Jamaica
Jeanie Sylvester -	Grenada
Maggie Schmeitz -	Suriname

Micro Enterprise Development

GOVERNMENT:

1. Incorporate in school programme – Ministry of Education
2. Financial assistance programme – loans; starter grants
3. Enabling policies and legislation– tax breaks; facilitating export trade links; recognition of sector as part of GDP; incentives for innovation; showcasing youth entrepreneurs and their products/services.

PRIVATE SECTOR:

1. Loan financing programme
2. Purchasers (provide markets) of products and services
3. Mentoring young entrepreneurs – training, technical assistance and showcasing
4. Suppliers for new enterprise ventures – offering concessionary arrangements.
5. Build on junior achievers, etc. in school (programmes to encourage innovations and entrepreneurship).

NGOs:

1. Loan and/or grant financing.
2. Technical assistance and training.
3. Community-based mobilization and encouragement for entrepreneurial development among youth e.g. in churches, community groups.
4. Build on 4 H, etc. in schools – small business programmes.

YOUTH:

1. Peer group projects with counseling and mutual assistance in marketing, bulk purchasing, financing, etc.
2. Seek to learn from private sector.
3. Advocacy

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION:

1. Facilitate exchange of ideas, e.g. best practices in one country passed on to another; information on niche markets, etc.
2. Funding support for effective programmes.

Job Placement – Linking Youth with Jobs

GOVERNMENT:

1. Creating jobs – economic growth.
2. Enhance programmes like HEART, which link training with placement.
3. Strengthen programmes like farm worker programme – seek other niche markets for young workers – local and overseas.
4. Add job experience to curriculum in all schools and tertiary institutions.

5. Give tax incentives to companies which hire and train youth.
6. Strengthen Ministry of Labour job exchange programme – (now on internet) and publicize it.

PRIVATE SECTOR:

1. Mentoring and job experience – provide opportunities.
2. Provide on the job training.
3. Make hiring youth a policy priority (tax incentives will compensate).

NGOs:

1. Community based mobilization and publicizing of existing programme and entry requirements.
2. Linking candidates with organisations, companies, etc.
3. Doing programmes to prepare youths for world of work.

YOUTH:

1. Peer counseling.
2. Seeking relevant information to be well prepared for work place.
3. Liaising with helping agencies.

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION:

1. Sharing best practices and other relevant information from different countries.
2. Funding support for effective programmes.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Workshop's programme

UNDESA
GOVT - SVG

**CREATING THE CONDITIONS
FOR HARMONISED POLICIES FOR
YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN THE CARIBBEAN REGION
WORKSHOP**

Kingstown Methodist Church Hall
Kingstown, St. Vincent & the
Grenadines

Day 1

8:15 – 8:30	Registration of participants
8:30 – 8:35	Welcome remarks – Government representative
8:35 – 8:45	Address – Minister of Social Development, Designated
8:45 – 8:50	Remarks - UNDESA
8:50 – 9:00	Overview/Background; President of PPL
9:00 – 10:30	Substantive review, by UNDESA
10:30 – 10:45	Break
10:45 – 12:30	Youth unemployment in the Caribbean: Social and economic backgrounds, by Mr. Tanji Kazi, UN DESA consultant
12:30 – 1:30	Break
1:30 – 3:00	Continuation of Youth unemployment in the Caribbean: Social and economic backgrounds
3:00 – 3:15	Break
3:15 – 5:00	Continuation of Youth unemployment in the Caribbean: Social and economic backgrounds – questions and discussion

Day 2

8:30 – 10:30	Arriving at Harmonized Employment policies for youth in the Caribbean, by ECLAC representative Ms A. Kambon
10:30 – 10:45	Break
10:45 – 12:30	Arriving at Harmonized Employment policies for youth in the Caribbean – questions and discussion

12:30 – 1:30	Break
1:30 – 3:00	Presentation of case studies on National Efforts to Providing Employment for Young People – presented by Governments/Civil Society Organizations
3:00 – 3:15	Break
3:15 – 5:00	Continuation on case studies on National Efforts to Providing Employment for Young People

Day 3

Working Groups - recommendations

Workshop Closing

Annex 2: List of Participants

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Annex 3: List of Acronyms

AIDS:	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CARICOM:	Caribbean Community
CDCED:	Caribbean Group for Cooperation and Economic Development
CIDA:	Canadian International Development Agency
COSHSOD:	Commission for Human and Social Development
CYP:	Commonwealth Youth Programme
DFID:	Department for International Development
DPADM:	Division for Public Administration and Development Management of UN DESA
ECLAC:	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
HIV:	Human Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ILO:	International Labour Organization
LAC:	Latin America and the Caribbean
MDG:	Millennium Development Goals
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organization
NYC:	National Youth Council
OECS:	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
PPL:	Projects Promotion Limited of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
SGMB:	Socio-Economic Governance and Management Branch of DPADM/UN DESA
UN DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UN:	United Nations
UNDP:	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA:	United Fund for Population Activities
UNGASS	United Nations General Assembly Special Session
WSSD:	World Summit for Social Development