

# **1991 ANNUAL REPORT**

**Of**

## **THE CARIBBEAN ASSOCIATION FOR FEMINIST RESEARCH & ACTION (CAFRA)**

**September, 1992**

CARIBBEAN ASSOCIATION FOR FEMINIST  
RESEARCH AND ACTION (CAFRA)  
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## INTRODUCTION

The year 1991 was one of evaluation and transition for CAFRA. The year brought to focus the achievements of CAFRA to date but also the need to redirect our attention to the function of the organisation within the Caribbean region and its relationship to the wider women's movement. Whilst the first five years were those of formation and conceptualization, the need for more concrete policy formation and strategic planning emerged in 1991.

### *Evaluation*

In October 1991, CAFRA, for the first time, underwent an external evaluation exercise at the request of HIVOS, one of CAFRA's major funding partners. The evaluation exercise, which lasted some three weeks, focused on the institutional development of CAFRA and to a lesser extent attempted to assess the impact of CAFRA in the region and more specifically in the countries where CAFRA has implemented the Women in Caribbean Agriculture (WICA) and the Women and the Law Projects.

This exercise was of special value to the staff because it allowed for reflection on the programming. In many ways the process of evaluation was collaborative. The staff were asked at every stage of the exercise to comment on and make input into the findings of the evaluators.

Several important recommendations emerged. These include:

- The need for a clear mission statement for the organisation which would make transparent and realistic programme objectives possible and would form the foundation for strategies, plans and work assignments;
- With reference to the mission clarification, the evaluators considered a definition of CAFRA's stakeholders important: Who has a stake in CAFRA? Who is CAFRA dependent on? Who depends on CAFRA?

The evaluation exercise also addressed the role of membership, making reference to a membership whose role not only supports CAFRA's mission but carries forward the mission:

The challenge for CAFRA now, . . . is to strategically utilize its membership, its various committees and resource persons in such a way as to move from re-active to pro-active initiatives that effectively influence policy at national and regional levels (Evaluation Report, 1991: 54-55).

### ***Creation Fire***

Finally, after much anticipation, copies of *Creation Fire* found their way to the CAFRA Office for regional dissemination in April, after the first shipment was lost in transit. Copies of the anthology were sent to all contributing poets and the dissemination to bookshops in the region, continues.

### ***Violence Against Women***

In 1991, as part of the Women and the Law project, CAFRA co-hosted a regional meeting on Women, Violence and the Law with the Trinidad and Tobago Rape Crisis Society and the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC). Participants who came from all over the region, from both non-governmental and governmental agencies discussed the gender ideology which underpins women's vulnerability to violence and came up with recommendations covering legal reform; police training; advocacy and education for women.

By the end of 1991, new laws on domestic violence had been passed in Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados - testimony to the success of women acting in a collaborative and systemic manner for legal reform on violence against women.

The year 1991 was also one of transition for the CAFRA office. Rawwida Baksh-Soodeen, so far the only Coordinator of CAFRA went on two years study leave and Cathy Shepherd replaced her in an acting capacity.

## **PROJECT CO-ORDINATORS' REPORTS**

### ***Women in Caribbean Agriculture***

#### **Introduction**

The WICA project has been without a Project Co-ordinator since the end of April 1991, when Joan French resigned to take up duties as Co-ordinator of the Caribbean (NGO) Policy Development Centre (CPDC), based in Barbados.

Implementation of actions around the findings emerging from research conducted in Dominica and St. Vincent and the Grenadines and preparation for action research projects in Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago, were the focus of project activities in 1991.

The findings of CAFRA's first action research project informed the discussions at a Workshop on Women in Agriculture organized by the Windward Islands Farmers' Association (WINFA), the Caribbean Network for Integrated Rural Development (CNIRD) and CAFRA. Held in St. Vincent and the Grenadines in September, the workshop was attended by representatives of farmers' organizations from nine Caribbean countries. Recommendations addressed specific problems facing women farmers and outlined measures for increasing women's participation in farmers' organizations.

#### **Commonwealth of Dominica**

In January 1991, CAFRA, in consultation with the Small Projects' Assistance Team (SPAT), appointed a team of ex-WICA researchers to co-ordinate and monitor the follow-up activities of the WICA project in Dominica. The team included Josephine Dublin, Country Co-ordinator and community workers, Martha Joseph and Christalene Merrifield.

A programme of work was agreed upon in collaboration with the Back Up Team (the local body of non-governmental organizations committed to giving assistance and technical support to the action programme), women in the three communities researched and community workers.

Activities which took place during 1991 include the following:

- launching of the community women's group, WICA Roots, in Marigot
- development of an organic vegetable project in Marigot, producing okroes, carrots, cabbages and cucumbers for local consumption;
- development of a pig rearing project in Grand Bay;
- regular meetings of the community groups to discuss farming techniques; and explore problems faced by women farmers and wider feminist issues, through popular theatre;
- inter-community exchanges to share knowledge, skills experiences and labour;
- educational workshops aimed at strengthening the community groups;
- a weekly radio programme titled, 'WICA Update' providing information on project activities and issues pertaining to women and agriculture; and
- participation of members of the co-ordination team and community women in the WINFA/CAFRA/CNIRD Workshop on Women in Agriculture; and the Workshop for Women Farmers, jointly organized by the St. Lucia National Farmers Association, WAND and CAFRA and held in St. Lucia in November.

In October, a member of the Team conducting the External Evaluation of CAFRA visited Dominica and met with individuals and organizations associated with the WICA project.

A one-day national consultation was held in December, to report on and evaluate the follow-up action programme. The meeting was very encouraging and clearly indicated that community mobilization, an important component of the follow-up, is at a high point. While lobbying at the national and regional levels has been weak, plans emerging from the meeting suggest that the project in Dominica seems poised to strengthen this component of the action programme.

### **St. Vincent and the Grenadines**

CAFRA, the Committee for the Development of Women (CDW) and the Women and Development Unit (WAND) met in April in Kingstown, to

evaluate the St. Vincent WICA project. Also attending were representatives of the three project communities of Buccament, Lauders and Orange Hill.

Particular attention was paid to the complex problems that have hampered the follow-up programme in Orange Hill and a decision was taken to suspend further work until avenues of collaboration were explored with other non-governmental organizations working in that community. In this regard, the meeting reiterated the need to keep gender issues at the forefront of follow-up activities implemented by collaborating agencies.

Community mobilization continued with varying success. The Buccament Women's Group for Future Development met regularly, organized fund raising activities and concretized plans for an Adult Education Programme set to begin in January 1992. Members of the YWCA group in Lauders organized courses in sewing and cake decoration to upgrade skills while meetings were held with the research participants to identify needs and skills and explore areas of support for work in agriculture and craft.

The Inter-Agency group, a sub-committee of the National Alliance of Development Organisations (NADO), which co-ordinates the work of non-governmental organizations in Orange Hill, undertook a re-assessment of the situation in that community and completed a housing plan for the area. Unfortunately, a proposed meeting among CAFRA, CDW, WAND and the Inter-Agency group to discuss collaboration around the gender issues and findings emerging from the WICA project, did not take place.

Women from all three communities participated in the WINFA/CAFRA/CNIRD Workshop on Women in Agriculture in September, at which representatives of CDW and former project researchers served as resource persons.

In October, a member of the Team conducting the External Evaluation of CAFRA, visited St. Vincent and the Grenadines and held discussions with individuals and organizations connected to the WICA project. Her itinerary was co-ordinated by CDW.

## **Suriname**

The ASA Foundation for Women submitted a profile for a pilot research project on the role and position of female farmers in the village of Calcutta in the Saramacca district, Suriname, for which technical and financial

assistance from CAFRA was requested. Project preparation was delayed as a result of the transition to a new government after the May election. In September, CAFRA provided partial support for a woman farmer from Suriname to attend the WINFA/CAFRA/CNIRD regional workshop on Women in Agriculture.

### Trinidad & Tobago

Preliminary research on the situation of women in agriculture in Trinidad and Tobago was completed by the Consultant, Sharon Carew. The consultant prepared a report which surveyed existing research on this subject and policies and programmes of non-governmental, governmental and inter-governmental organizations and outlined macro- and micro-level issues for research and action. Still to be completed in this preparatory phase are a consultation with key organizations to obtain feedback on the consultant's report and the formulation of a project proposal.

## ***Women and the Law***

### **Women, Violence and the Law**

As a regional organisation, CAFRA is committed to working wherever possible with national-level organisations. Such collaboration is seen as necessary to avoid duplication of effort; to maximize programme outreach and to strengthen the capabilities of national-level organisations through the experience of organising. CAFRA therefore approached the Trinidad and Tobago Rape Crisis Society to co-host the regional meeting on Women, Violence and the Law which was held between January 28-30, 1991. The United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) which already had plans to host a meeting of a similar nature with the governmental machineries for women suggested collaboration. This meeting therefore had the input of national, regional and international organisations in the planning process.

The participants were drawn from rape crisis centre personnel (both the legal advisers and the outreach workers); organisations whose work focuses on the women and violence issue; police departments; judicial administration personnel and social workers.

Many important recommendations emerged from the meeting. In relation to CAFRA's role in furthering the work around violence, the participants felt that CAFRA should utilize its networking capabilities to share legislation from around the region as well as assist in sharing the various country experiences with advocacy and legal reform in the region.

Following from the workshop:

- CAFRA facilitated, through its technical assistance programme, a forum organized by the Belize Women Against Violence Movement, on Women, Violence and Legislation. CAFRA funded the attendance of Gaietry Pargass to the meeting;
- CAFRA also funded a training workshop on rape crisis counselling in Guyana, an initiative of the Guyanese CAFRA membership;
- CAFRA continued to network around the issue of violence against women, and in particular has circulated the CARICOM Women's Desk model legislation to countries where the need for legal reform was identified;

- CAFRA facilitated the attendance of Aileen Burton of the Dominica National Council of Women, at a conference on community-based response to domestic violence, child abuse and sexual abuse, in St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands.

A report of the meeting was prepared and disseminated to participants and governmental and non-governmental agencies in the region.

### **National Consultations in the Project Territories**

The Women and the Law project is being implemented in Antigua, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago.

Legal Status of Women Reports were prepared in the five project countries as well as in other countries where interest was articulated in having such a report prepared. These countries are The Bahamas, Dominican Republic, Guyana, Jamaica and Puerto Rico.

By October, national consultations based on the findings of these reports were held in the five project countries. Sessions at the consultation focussed on the identification of follow-up action in three broad areas: popular education, para-legal training and legal reform campaigns.

Participants also discussed the administration of the project, focussing on the possible collaboration of both the governmental and non-governmental sectors. Advisory teams for the execution of the project were selected and broad time guidelines were discussed.

The commonalities of the legal situation in the countries, as well as the similar nature of the societies were reflected in the fact that very similar issues arose in the discussions for follow-up action, namely, child maintenance, violence against women and labour law.

A report on these national consultations has been prepared.

Much of the year's activities involved preparatory work for the implementation of the main components of the project - production of education materials and para-legal training programmes

For CAFRA, the central challenge in the management of the project is to decentralize its execution so that the participants at the local level will be fully involved in all aspects of the administration of the project.

Meetings of the advisory teams in all five project territories were held to schedule the various activities as well as to focus more closely on specific activities of the project. In this latter regard, the teams considered carefully all the inputs which will be needed at the workshops on popular education and the para-legal training component (technical, human and financial).

All five countries identified the need to strengthen the capacity to produce popular legal educational materials. To meet this need, CAFRA planned a regional workshop on Participatory Methodologies for Legal Education, carded to be held March 16-21, 1992. The facilitator for the workshop will be Elizabeth Dasso, of Peru Mujer. Participants will be drawn from the five project territories as well as from the other countries where legal status of women reports were prepared.

## ***Women's History and Creative Expression***

The direction of this project for 1991-1993 was discussed at a Forward Planning and Evaluation Meeting held in June 1991, at Mt. St. Benedict, Trinidad and Tobago. At this meeting it was decided that unfinished projects should be completed and funds raised for new projects.

Specific projects targeted for completion by 1992 are:

### **Short stories based on the lives of women in agriculture**

(Anselma Morgan and Beverly Warren - St. Vincent & the Grenadines)

These short stories have now been reviewed and edited by the Saint Lucia Folk Research Centre which made concrete suggestions on how they could be tailored for radio. The authors are currently considering local production in St. Vincent as well as possible assistance which CAFRA can make towards dissemination.

### **Publishing Handbook for Women Writers**

Coming out of CAFRA's 1st Creative Writing Seminar(1989) was the idea for a Publishing Handbook for Caribbean Women Writers. The final draft of the manuscript was completed and publication and dissemination is targeted for the first quarter of 1992.

### **Tape/slide show on Guyanese women sugar workers:**

Consultation continued with Red Thread Women's Development Project on production of the tape/slide show.

### **Bravé Dangé**

(Shahiba Ali, Rowena Kalloo, Judith Laird, Rhoda Reddock - Trinidad and Tobago)

Boards for this pictorial exhibition of women's work and struggle in Trinidad and Tobago from 1800-1960, had been completed for the period up to 1937. Art students were contracted to paste-up the remaining boards which are expected to be completed by 1992.

### **Life stories of professional women in Trinidad and Tobago**

(Maureen Warner-Lewis)

Taped interviews of an earlier generation of professional women, conducted by Maureen Warner-Lewis were transcribed.

## Creation Fire

Since the publication and initial launching of *Creation Fire* in Trinidad and Tobago in 1990, contributing poets have received copies and launchings have taken place in the following countries: Barbados (March); St. Vincent and the Grenadines (June); Commonwealth of Dominica (June); Jamaica (July) and Guyana (July). An article about the Barbados launching was published in *Caribbean Contact* (March/April 1991) and a video tape of the event was presented to the CAFRA Office, by the Women's Forum.

With the exception of the Barbados launching, a representative of the CAFRA secretariat attended each event.

In the Caribbean, the Anthology is distributed by the CAFRA office, the national representatives and bookshops around the region.

## **CAFRA News/Novedades CAFRA**

### **CAFRA News**

Four issues of *CAFRA News* were produced in 1991 including a double issue. On average, production and distribution of each issue took four months and the issue length for this year was 4-6 pages longer than in previous years.

Content: Articles featured in the issues of the newsletter included: reflections on the Biennial General Meeting of 1990; interviews with feminists in the region on several issues; project updates and information on conferences. Also featured were the Columbus Quincentennial, the World Women's Congress for a Healthy Planet in Miami, the newly formed Caribbean NGO Policy Development Centre, poetry from *Creation Fire*, among others.

### Editor's Comments

The newsletter achieved a relatively good balance of coverage of CAFRA activities, regional news, and articles for reflection. More reflection, analysis, and critique would be welcome. It is also felt that the newsletter should lend more support to the work of feminists and feminist organisations by featuring their work.

Writing style of many contributors tends to be jargonistic, and it may be necessary to have on the editorial team persons who can creatively convert information into a more easily readable style.

The survey being carried out in 1992 aims to solicit readers' opinions on the newsletter, and should help to give us some direction in upgrading *CAFRA News*. It is time to give *CAFRA News* a new look.

### **Novedades CAFRA**

Two double issues of *Novedades CAFRA* were produced in 1991. The content of *Novedades CAFRA* is really a translation of the articles contained in *CAFRA News*. At the last CAFRA General Meeting, Spanish-speaking members said that they were interested more in news from the English-speaking Caribbean than news from their own sub-region. However there continues to be an urgent need to identify translators to facilitate the production of *Novedades CAFRA*.

## NON-PROJECT ACTIVITIES

### *Networking*

#### **Caribbean Network for Integrated Rural Development (CNIRD)**

CAFRA staff represented the Association at Management and Executive Committee Meetings of the CNIRD in March, June, July, September and December. The Administrative Assistant/ Documentalist edited the cartoon booklet, *Reaping Without Weeping*, which was published by CNIRD in September. A copy of the book was sent to WICA project personnel in Dominica and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

#### **Caribbean (NGO) Policy Development Centre (CPDC)**

Nineteen (19) Caribbean non-governmental organizations (NGOs) met in February 1991 to establish the Caribbean Policy Unit, later re-named the Caribbean (NGO) Policy Development Centre. The CPDC aims to help NGOs in the region build their capacity for policy analysis and develop skills and strategies for influencing regional and national policy. CAFRA, CARIPEDA, CCC and CNIRD are members of the Steering Committee which guides the work of the Centre.

The Co-ordinator and Acting Co-ordinator attended Steering Committee meetings in May, July and October. Membership dues on behalf of the association were paid in July. In August, the Acting Co-ordinator represented the CPDC as an observer, at the Fifth General Assembly of the Caribbean Conference of Churches (CCC), held in Trinidad and Tobago. She also participated in a regional planning and strategy meeting on Debt and Structural Adjustment hosted by the CPDC in Barbados in October.

## **Caribbean Peoples' Development Agency (CARIPEDA)**

While CAFRA is not a member of CARIPEDA, CAFRA was invited to participate in CARIPEDA's Women in Industry Networking Group earlier this year. In October, the Acting Co-ordinator attended a Women's Committee meeting of CARIPEDA, which considered Terms of Reference for the establishment and functioning of a Women's Department within CARIPEDA. National Representatives, Cecilia Babb and Josephine Dublin were selected by the CAFRA Secretariat to attend CARIPEDA's annual Development Workers' Course which was held in Jamaica from 3-17 November. The course received mixed reviews from the CAFRA participants who submitted a joint report to the Secretariat.

## **Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN)**

DAWN is an international network which provides a forum for South women to formulate issues from a gender perspective. DAWN is organized through a Steering Committee comprising the General Co-ordinator, Peggy Antrobus, and Regional Representatives (Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America, the Pacific and South East Asia). Sonia Cuales represents CAFRA and the Caribbean on the Steering Committee and attended a Steering Committee meeting in May, in Barbados, followed by a brainstorming meeting on Women and the Environment.

## **Caribbean Regional Economic Conference**

The Caribbean Regional Economic Conference was held in Trinidad and Tobago from 27 February to 1 March, 1991. The main objective of the Conference was to "begin a dialogue toward consensus on the policies, strategies and measures which the region should adopt to move to a higher and sustainable growth path and to improve the quality of life of all the peoples of the region" (*Port-of Spain Consensus of the Caribbean Regional Economics Conference*). The conference was a unique and historic occasion, in that NGOs were accepted as social partners in the CARICOM process and were able to make a significant input into the discussions on the various issues.

CAFRA and CNIRD co-ordinated the work of a Trinidad and Tobago NGO Planning Committee, which was formed to expedite arrangements for regional NGOs participating at the Conference. Activities of the committee included: printing and distributing copies of the NGO position paper for the

Conference; organizing a publicity campaign; and keeping NGO delegates abreast of Conference preparations and arrangements.

Rawwida Baksh-Soodeen, headed the delegation of women's organizations and made a presentation entitled "Human resource development issues: women and development." In addition, CAFRA funded the participation of Carol Narcisse of the Association of Women's Organizations of Jamaica, and gave financial support to the popular theatre presentation by Caribbean youths at the opening of the Conference.

The CPDC will be publishing the interventions by NGOs attending the Conference, in 1992.

### **West Indian Commission**

The Co-ordinator attended a meeting of regional women's activists and researchers in April, convened by the Women and Development Unit (WAND) to prepare an outline for a study on women requested by the West Indian Commission. Later, a draft was circulated and amendments and corrections submitted by CAFRA staff members were incorporated in the final document submitted to the Commission in November.

### **Belize Textile Workers Strike**

Following the decision by the II Regional Committee Meeting to support the strike by women workers of the Civic Textile factory in Belize, CAFRA circulated a press release to all National Representatives requesting them to alert relevant organisations in their country. Copies were also sent to relevant international organizations and publications and to Priscilla Brown, National Representative of Belize.

Financial contributions were sent by CAFRA members in the U.S. Virgin Islands, the CAFRA Secretariat, WAND and the Women's Forum (a Barbadian women's organization). In addition, CAFRA's press release was published in the *Asian Women Workers Newsletter*, (vol. 10 (2), June 1991). The Union for Civil Liberty, Thailand, sent a letter of solidarity which was forwarded to the Belize Rural Women's Association; and CAFRA members in Guyana sent a letter of solidarity.

## **First Sub-regional Conference of Caribbean AIDS Service Organisations**

In April, CAFRA was invited to join the Steering Committee which was formed to plan this conference. We undertook to field participants through our network of National Representatives. CAFRA also facilitated the participation of two delegates from the Dominican Republic and provided the services of an interpreter.

## **Collaboration with Trinidad and Tobago Women's Organizations**

CAFRA was at the forefront of a lobby against proposed amendments which would weaken the Domestic Violence Bill being debated in Parliament from late January to early July. Staff members prepared and circulated a petition on International Women's Day, on behalf of CAFRA members in Trinidad and Tobago, which was signed by 21 NGOs and presented to the then Minister with responsibility for women's affairs and Members of the Senate. One week later, Women Working for Social Progress ('WorkingWomen') in collaboration with CAFRA, held a public forum on the Bill which was reported widely by the media.

In April, CAFRA organized a panel discussion on the Employment of Women (Night Work) Act, together with WorkingWomen and the Women and Development Studies Group of the University of the West Indies.

During 1991, CAFRA continued its collaboration with Women Working for Social Progress on the planning of a **Women's Economic Conference**. This collaboration took the form of facilitating funding assistance for the conference and input into the planning of the agenda of the conference. The conference is now scheduled to take place in January 1993.

## **Technical Assistance**

**Among those receiving grants from CAFRA's technical assistance fund were the following agencies and individuals:**

Association of Women's Organisations of Jamaica, Carol Narcisse: attendance at the CARICOM Regional Economic Conference held in Trinidad & Tobago.

Belize Women Against Violence Movement, Belize: Women, Violence and Legislation Workshop: Participation of resource person, Gaietry Pargass - Trinidad & Tobago

Developing Alternatives for Women Now (DAWN), Bahamas:

- (i) a visit by Sistren Theatre Collective to the Bahamas
- (ii) the "Call for papers" on Women in the Bahamas

Movimiento por la Identidad de la Mujer Negra, Dominican Republic: organising of a documentation centre

Agency for Rural Transformation (ART), Grenada: for Women and Work Workshop.

Colectivo Mujer y Salud, Dominican Republic: for the publication of three booklets on Traditional Medicine

Committee for the Development of Women (CDW), St. Vincent & the Grenadines: rally for the observance of International Day Against Violence to Women.

Belize Rural Women's Association: for support of striking women textile workers.

Dolores Robinson McGregor, Trinidad and Tobago: attendance at Public Relations Course.

Joan Prevost, Dominica: attendance at the CARICOM Women's Desk Meeting on Model Legislation in Trinidad and Tobago.

Angela de Coteau, Trinidad and Tobago: attendance at 20th Annual Thornfield Workshop on Sexuality in New York.

Josephine Dublin, Dominica: attendance at the CARIPEDA Annual Development Workers' Course, Jamaica.

Cecilia Babb, Barbados: attendance at the CARIPEDA Annual Development Workers' Course, Jamaica.

Andrell Andrews, Dominica: attendance at ART's Women and Work Workshop, Grenada.

Colectivo Mujer y Salud, Dominican Republic: attendance at Sub-Regional Conference of Caribbean AIDS Service Organisations, Trinidad and Tobago.

Aileen Burton, Dominica National Council of Women: attendance at Conference "Out of the Abyss of Abuse: Opening Doors and Minds, St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands.

CAFRA Chapter, Guyana: Workshop on Human Sexuality, Establishing of a Crisis Centre & Counselling Techniques.

Gisela Quiterio and Milagros Ricourt, Dominican Republic: research for consciousness-raising among women free trade zone workers.

## **INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

### ***External Evaluation***

CAFRA underwent an external evaluation carried out at the request of Dutch co-financing organisation HIVOS. This evaluation took place between September 23 and October 13, 1991.

The objectives of the evaluation were twofold:

- to assess the development, accomplishments and problems of CAFRA since its formation in 1985; and
- to provide insights and recommendations that a) permit CAFRA to better plan and implement its future activities; and b) permit HIVOS to determine its future support for CAFRA.

The evaluators, Ria Brouwers and Audrey Ingram-Roberts met with the CAFRA staff and also had the opportunity of visiting Dominica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Barbados to meet with organisations which have been involved in the execution of the WICA and Women and the Law Projects.

A number of important recommendations emerged from this exercise, the main one being the need for strategic planning and the development of a mission statement.

### ***Meetings of Decision-Making Bodies***

The 2nd **Regional Committee Meeting** of CAFRA took place on April 12-13, 1991 in Trinidad and Tobago. The objectives of the meeting were as follows:

1. To engage in a process of consultation and decision making about major issues of concern, including the role of the National Representatives, which emerged at CAFRA's 2nd Biennial General Meeting;
2. To review and evaluate CAFRA's 1990 programme and finances with regard to both impact and role;
3. To make plans for CAFRA's 1991 Programme (to include consultation with members) and finances; and
4. To take decisions on a number of business matters.

This 2nd Regional Committee Meeting was of critical importance for the evaluation and forward planning of the association. It also aimed at addressing concerns raised at the 2nd Biennial General Meeting (BGM) held in October 1990, which had mandated that a process of consultation with the general membership on the re-structuring of the association should begin over the next six months.

A report of the meeting was prepared and circulated to the members of the Regional Committee. The decisions and comments on possible re-structuring were also circulated to the General Membership for feedback.

As a result of recommendations made at the Regional Committee Meeting on re-structuring, an **Interim Continuation Committee** was constituted and met for the first time in December 16-17, 1991, in Trinidad and Tobago.

The Interim Continuation Committee was given the following mandate:

1. To ensure that the final report (including recommendations) of the 2nd Regional Committee meeting is a true reflection of the discussions;
2. To take the recommendations on restructuring from the Regional Committee meeting to the general membership;
3. To meet within six months to:
  - (a) review feedback from the membership and make final decisions and;
  - (b) complete the unfinished business of the Regional Committee meeting.

A major portion of this meeting was dedicated to a review of the External Evaluation Report.

### **Staffing**

CAFRA Co-ordinator, Rawwida Baksh-Soodeen, went on study leave at the end of June and was later offered a part-time consultancy for one year, with primary responsibility for orienting the Acting Co-ordinator, regional and international fund raising, and financial management in collaboration with the Acting Co-ordinator and Financial Officer.

Cathy Shepherd, the former Administrative Assistant/ Documentalist, was appointed Acting Co-ordinator in July.

The post of Administrative Assistant was advertised regionally in June and a temporary, part-time person, Thora Laughlin, was hired to assist the Acting Co-ordinator while the post was being filled. Unfortunately, the processing of the applications was delayed for several months, by which time the Acting Co-ordinator indicated that she wanted to resign and return to her former post as soon as a replacement could be found.

The post of Project Co-ordinator, 'Women in Caribbean Agriculture' Project was also advertised regionally but the appointment of an officer was deferred until 1992, as a result of recommendations of the External Evaluation of CAFRA.

### *Staff Development*

Rowena Kalloo attended the course, 'From Desktop to Action: Women's Computer Skills Training' which and held by the International Women's Tribune Center in New York from 22 April to 3 May.

Roberta Clarke was one of 23 international participants selected to attend the first Women's Leadership Institute of the Center for Global Issues and Women's Leadership, held in New Jersey, USA from June 3-15.

Julieta Alfonso and Pat Lee Kong attended a five-week computer literacy course for Macintosh users, in August.

## **Appendix 1: Composition of CAFRA's Decision-making Bodies**

### **Regional Committee**

#### ***National Representatives***

Marion Bethel - Bahamas  
Cecilia Babb - Barbados  
Priscilla Brown - Belize  
Cathy Ribas - Cuba  
Josephine Dublin - Dominica  
Gisela Quiterio - Dominican Republic  
Janice Jackson - Guyana ( Danuta Radzik acting)  
Anne Marie Bonner - Jamaica  
Gladys do Rego-Kuster - Netherlands Antilles  
Muriel Byam - St. Vincent and the Grenadines  
Nadia Raveles - Suriname  
Sonia Cuales - Trinidad and Tobago  
Gloria Joseph - U.S. Virgin Islands  
- The Coordinator; Financial Officer (non -voting members); Rhoda Reddock  
and Gemma Tang Nain

#### **Interim Continuation Committee**

Cecilia Babb - Barbados  
Gisela Quiterio - Dominican Republic  
Anne Marie Bonner - Jamaica  
Nadia Raveles - Suriname  
Gloria Joseph - U.S. Virgin Islands  
Rhoda Reddock & Gemma Tang Nain - Trinidad & Tobago

#### **CAFRA Staff**

Julieta Alfonso, Bilingual Clerical Assistant  
Rawwida Baksh-Soodeen (CAFRA Coordinator on leave)  
Roberta Clarke, Women and the Law Project Coordinator  
Rowena Kalloo, Newsletter Editor  
Thora Laughlin, Temporary Administrative Assistant  
Pat Lee Kong, Clerical Assistant  
Sybil Seaforth, Women's History and Creative Expression Project  
Cathy Shepherd, CAFRA Coordinator (Acting)  
Anne Marie Sinkia, Financial Officer  
Maggie Williams, Office Assistant

## **Appendix 2: Regional and International Meetings Attended**

### **Staff**

February 1-2: **Caribbean Policy Unit** (re-named Caribbean (NGO) Policy Development Centre). **Assembly**, Barbados. Rawwida Baksh-Soodeen.

February 27 - March 1: **Caribbean Regional Economic Conference** (CARICOM), Trinidad and Tobago. Rawwida Baksh-Soodeen.

April 9-10: **Workshop to Examine Draft Model Legislation Relating to Women in CARICOM States** (CARICOM), Trinidad and Tobago. Roberta Clarke.

April 25: **Planning Meeting: West Indian Commission's Study on Women** (WAND), Barbados. Rawwida Baksh-Soodeen.

May 10-12: **Improving Prison Conditions in the Caribbean: A Working Conference for Penal Reform** (Caribbean Rights and Penal Reform International), Trinidad and Tobago. Roberta Clarke.

May 24-27: **4th General Assembly of the Coordinadora Regional de Investigaciones Economicas y Sociales** (CRIES), Cuba. Julieta Alfonso.

June 26-27: **Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting on Changing Production Patterns and Women in the Caribbean** (ECLAC), Trinidad and Tobago. Cathy Shepherd.

August 23-30: **5th General Assembly of the Caribbean Conference of Churches**, Trinidad and Tobago. Cathy Shepherd (on behalf of the CPDC)

September 16-19: **5th Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean** (ECLAC), Curaçao. Cathy Shepherd.

October 7-9: **1st Sub-regional Conference of Caribbean AIDS Service Organisations** (PAHO/WHO/CAREC/ICASO/AIDSLine), Trinidad and Tobago. Cathy Shepherd and Julieta Alfonso.

October 29-30: **Debt and Structural Adjustment Planning and Strategy Meeting** (CPDC), Barbados. Cathy Shepherd.

November 8-11: **World Women's Congress for a Healthy Planet**, Miami, USA. Rowena Kalloo (partial support from WAND).

### **Members and Others**

January 9-11: **Alternatives for the 1990s Caribbean: An International Conference** (Institutes of Commonwealth Studies and Latin American Studies. Joint Caribbean Studies Programme), London. Gemma Tang Nain.

June 20: **Forum on Women, Violence and Legislation** (Belize Women Against Violence Movement), Belize. Gaietry Pargass.

August 29: **Final Seminar on Project ANT/90/001 Research and Information on Women** (ILO), Antigua. Imani Tafari-Ama.

September 23-24: **Seminar on Violence Against Caribbean Women** (PNP Women's Movement/WIDF), Jamaica. Pamela Redwood.

October 3-5: **Out of the Abyss of Abuse: Opening Doors and Minds** (Women's Resource Centre Inc.), St. Thomas, U.S.V.I. Aileen Burton, Dominica National Council of Women.

October 23-26: **2nd Central American and Caribbean Meeting of the Forum on Debt and Development** (FONDAD), Panama. Taimoon Stewart.

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