

CA7RA NEWS

MAGAZINE OF
THE CARIBBEAN ASSOCIATION
FOR FEMINIST RESEARCH AND ACTION

VOL. 18. NO. 2. JULY - DECEMBER 2004

*"Young woman, fragile shoot
I am afraid for you
You are so vulnerable
Young woman, tender vine
I am afraid for you
You are exposed to the
elements of violence
disillusionment and discrimination
fruits of an unjust social and
economic arrangement"*



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CAFRA *News*

CAFRA NEWS is the biannual magazine and primary networking tool of the Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA).

Its main purposes are to:

- Inform members and other interested people about the association's programmes and activities
- Provide a forum for discussion and debate on key issues of concern to women in the region
- Promote the sharing of experiences and foster links among individual feminists, activists and women's organizations
- Assist in breaking down language barriers in the region
- Stimulate women's creative expression
- Contribute to the development of the women's movement regionally and internationally.

We welcome letters, articles, poems, reviews, opinions and artwork for editorial consideration. The Newsletter Committee has a final right to edit content and to reject material that is not appropriate for publication, that is, material that does not further the aims and objectives of CAFRA, that does not promote a spirit of sisterhood, and material that is racist, sexist or 'maternalist'. Individual authors and reviewers are solely responsible for views and opinions expressed in published articles.

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CAFRA IS

A

Regional Network of feminists, individual researchers, activists and women's organizations, which defines feminist politics as a matter of both consciousness and action.

We are committed to understanding the relationship between the oppression of women and other forms of oppression in the society; and we are working actively for change.

CAFRA'S MISSION

T

o celebrate and channel the collective power of women for individual and societal transformation, thus creating a climate in which social justice is realized.

CAFRA'S OBJECTIVES

- Promote and support the continued growth and development of the feminist movement in the entire region.
- Research, analyse and document the situation of women in the region from the perspectives of ethnicity, class, culture and gender relations.
- Network with women's organizations and other organizations which support CAFRA's Mission.
- Influence policy at national, regional and international levels in government non-governmental organizations and institutions, in keeping with our Mission.
- Support, through our programmes and work, efforts aimed at economic self-sufficiency for women.
- Generate a new and critical examination of the nature of 'politics' and 'power' and of women's relationship to it as a basis for a policy on women, politics and power in the region.
- Provide information on actions and struggles taking place in different parts of the region and to encourage and support international solidarity when necessary.
- Develop action and research priorities based on the needs of women in the region.
- Foster dialogue and debate towards the development of non-patriarchal procedures, perceptions and structures.
- Develop an institution that promotes personal growth, the most efficient use of human resources, sustainable development of our environment and economic self-sufficiency.

CAFRA'S RESPONSE TO GLOBALIZATION

Guest Editorial

Keturah Cecilia Babb

CAFRA is a significant part of the Caribbean Women's movement. It has a presence in 16 countries of the region and its membership comprises women who are unemployed (both those with university degrees as well as the less educated), women in the informal sector, women who work as domestics, women who do not own or know how to use a computer, women of Indigenous origins – the first peoples of the region who have almost totally been decimated, women of Rastafari – a group of Caribbean persons who 70 years ago began to construct an alternative way of living, women academics, women activists, regardless of race, class, age, disability or sexual orientation.



Keturah Cecilia Babb

CAFRA's response to globalization has been determined in very clear terms: we have been goods in the trade market. Our very bodies have been commodities for sale – therefore we have no reason to trust the market. All of our responses to market ideology originate from this historical experience. We are very aware that we must resist market forces so that we shall never be market goods again.

CAFRA has therefore taken its own initiatives, as well as joined its efforts with other organisations – both women's

organisations and organisations consisting of both men and women. For example CAFRA is a member of the Caribbean Reference Group on External Trade Relations (CRG), and CAFRA works with such organisations as Women in Development Europe and International Gender and Trade Network to resist globalization.

Apart from CAFRA, a number of national organisations and regional arms of international organisations also work across the English speaking Caribbean on the theme of globalisation. Some of them are the Caribbean Gender and Trade Network which is administered by CAFRA, DAWN Caribbean, and UNIFEM.

CAFRA's primary achievement in respect of globalization has been resistance. It has led the way of resistance in the Caribbean, and been a part of the global resistance as well. This effort, along with that of a range of other actors has helped to slow down the pace of globalization world wide. In the English speaking Caribbean, it has led to our policy makers beginning to listen to what we have to say. Our proposals are just beginning to make sense. In a limited way our language is beginning to penetrate the official documents on trade.

CAFRA has employed five main methods of working:

1. Research and Publications
2. Consultations of membership and communities of interests
3. Public education as well as economic literacy specially for members
4. Advocacy of an integrated rights agenda
5. Tools Design

CAFRA has always returned the findings of its research to the communities where the information was obtained. On return from participation at international meetings, it has been the practice to seek opportunity working through national level organisations to convene consultations on the outcomes of these meetings.

Also, due to its prominence in the region, other women's organisations initiating research have done so in consultation with CAFRA, and consultation on the findings have usually sought to ensure the participation of a representative number of CAFRA members.

Wider audiences of men and women outside CAFRA's membership have also benefited from economic education in instances where, as a member of the CRG, CAFRA has been a prime organizer of consultations on a range of issues on globalization and trade liberalization at national, sub-regional, and regional levels for men and women.

CAFRA's primary advocacy message has been that the people centered conventions agreed to at the level of the United Nations during the decade of the 1990s must remain

centered in trade negotiations and not set aside as something apart from trade. Trade must function in the interest of, not against, human development.

CAFRA has also been monitoring the Caribbean Single Market and Economy and has identified the areas of potential benefit to women. CAFRA intends to intervene in the implementation of this regional agreement on behalf of women.

CAFRA has been recognized as the voice of the Caribbean Women's Movement and now serves as the Civil Society Representative on the Caribbean Court of Justice which is the highest and final Appeals Court within the CSME.

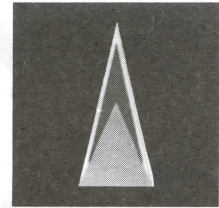
Trafficking in women, violence against women, women's health, sexual and reproductive rights, women's participation in political leadership, and other issues on which CAFRA intervenes are not disconnected from trade. It is this very mass awareness and activism by both men and women which will overturn the boat of globalization so that trade may be made fair. So that our young people can grow up in an environment of people-centered development.

We have been able to resist and to inspire others to resist. Our aim is to transform. Resistance is only the beginning. Our hearts remain strong and our spirit resolute. We are also trying to build an alternative through the development of gender indicators on trade. We do not seek to reform globalization based on market liberalization but to eradicate it. We propose to build a world of social and economic equity, gender justice and sustainable development.

Keturah Cecelia Babb
Deputy Coordinator
Caribbean Policy Development Centre



**CAFRA
BELIZE & ST. LUCIA YOUNG
WOMEN**



CAFRA JUNIOR LEAGUE
(Making a Difference)

The CAFRA Junior League in St. Lucia has provided a very valuable and cherished space for young girls aged 11-19 to learn about feminism, to develop effective communication and advocacy skills as well as to actively participate in a variety of activities.

The group exists in various communities and schools around the island and so far several of the senior members of the junior group have become full members of CAFRA St. Lucia after graduating from college. Some of the activities of the CAFRA Junior League are based on outdoor or fund-raising, but the majority of work done by the group is focused on activities which promote gender equity and which serve to impact directly on people. A series of educational lectures, rap-sessions and workshops have also been organised by the group, in order to ensure that its members are up to date on issues relating to globalisation, reproductive health, gender, and human rights, among others.

During the 17th Biennial Conference of the Caribbean Women's Association (CARIWA), the group played an important role as part of the local organizing committee. They were also directly involved in registration procedures, meeting delegates at the airport, preparing rooms for meetings, attending some of the training sessions and networking. This kind

of exposure provided a very good opportunity for members of the Junior League to meet with and learn from women who have a lot more experience in the feminist

movement.



Members of CAFRA's Junior League

The CAFRA Junior League in St. Lucia is a very important feature of the work of that national group as the junior members are given many opportunities to get involved in the work of CAFRA at various levels. The support network between the senior and the junior members also provides an excellent opportunity for motivating young women to get involved and to continue supporting the work of the national group.

CAFRA YOUNG WOMEN - BELIZE

The CAFRA-Belize Youth Group was formed in October 2003. To date we have a total membership of seven (7), with commitment from three (3) other young women. In addition we have discussed the possibility of sourcing new members from the high schools and tertiary level institutions.

The group is planning on working with the Statistical Department on disaggregating information, creating a database with this information with a focus on women and youth. Additionally, the group will be looking at

ways in which they can assist orphan children affected and or infected with/by HIV/AIDS.

One of the questions or concern is that of membership dues for the youth group. It is being suggested we might look at a special price to be agreed upon. It was suggested that we look at a discounted price for them.

Members of the youth group assisted in the logistical element of the first "Belize Black Summit" in September of 2003. The group will be meeting next month to work on the Database project.



Young Woman

By Nelia Robinson

Young woman, fragile shoot
I am afraid for you
You are so vulnerable

Young woman, tender vine
I am afraid for you
You are denied guidance

Young woman, slender leafy plant
I am afraid for you
You are so innocent
Glorying in discovery

Of your beauty

Young woman, blossoming palm tree
You are on the threshold
Of life in all its fullness
I am afraid for you

You are exposed to the elements of violence
Disillusionment and discrimination
Fruits of an unjust social and
Economic arrangement

Young woman
a sealed fountain
In an enclosed garden

Whose walls are to be scaled
When you are a woman
Conscious and positive
Goal setting, confident woman

Young woman, be wise
Guard your dignity
Acknowledge your potential

Father, mother, older man, older woman
Uncle, aunt, brother, sister
Young woman
Be a hedge around her
Bruise not the flower.



Legal and Regulatory Analysis of the World Trade Organization And Forecast of the Free Trade Area of the Americas

Jamaica has supported international treaties to guarantee rights and commit to sustainable development. Nationally, Jamaica has passed legislation aimed at enshrining basic rights into the Constitution and into national law. In response to the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, Jamaica has enacted legislative changes that enhance women's status including laws relating to child maintenance, heritage, citizenship and matrimony.

As governments pursue a number of steps to improve sustainable development and women's rights, they are simultaneously pursuing international trade and investment agreements. What happens when trade commitments conflict with other

commitments? How can policymakers reconcile the direct tension and potential for conflict between trade agreements and other treaties in the areas of human rights, the environment, and women's equity?

The World Trade Organization and Jamaica



AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY

One of the most famous examples of how trade may contradict other development and food security policies is the World Trade Organization ruling on Caribbean bananas. The WTO sided with the U.S. in ruling against the European Lome Treaty which granted a preference to banana imports from European colonies in the Caribbean. The U.S. argued that European preferences for bananas from the

Caribbean and other former colonies discriminated against U.S. companies in Central America.

Lifting the European Union preferences for Caribbean bananas devastated the banana export sector. Banana exports from Jamaican small farmers have dropped from 8,228 tons in 2000 to 3,936 tons in 2001. Women farmers note that there was no short-term relief because of government budgetary constraints and that it will take time before they can benefit from crop diversification.

The effect of the WTO's ruling may conflict with Jamaican national policies, such as the Rural Agricultural Development Authority Act (RADA), a law established to stimulate the development of Jamaica's agricultural sector; and international commitments to the right to food.

EDUCATION AND THE GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TRADE IN SERVICES (GATS)

The Jamaican government opened its higher education sector to foreign providers and registered no exceptions when it did so. As a result, several U.S. colleges and universities including Florida International University and the University of Phoenix have begun to offer "distance learning" programs in Jamaica – offering instruction via the internet. Because the Jamaican



government registered no exceptions when it opened this area to foreign providers, these colleges could conceivably demand the same subsidies that the Jamaican government provides to the University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona – a regional university with satellite campuses in Trinidad & Tobago and other islands. The Jamaican government subsidizes 80 percent of the costs of tertiary education for its citizens and if the foreign schools are successful in pursuing their demands, the government will soon be subsidizing U.S. – based universities.

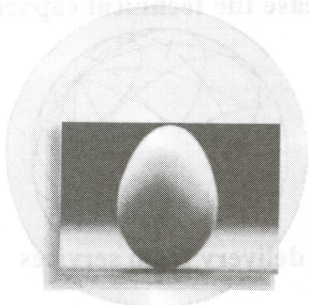
This shift in government resources to foreign institutions may reduce the amount the government can provide each institution, which in turn, may lead to layoffs or tuition increases. Since Jamaican women are the majority of college students, any increase in fees would disproportionately affect them and their ability to receive a higher education. Moreover, if resources are drained from the education budget to subsidize foreign college programs, this may divert important resources away from primary and secondary education. This would conflict with CEDAW, Article 10 which states that governments should ensure equal educational opportunities for women and men.

FREE TRADE AREA ON THE AMERICAS FORECAST

This analysis examines the November 2003 draft text of the Free Trade Area on the Americas (FTAA) negotiations. The FTAA agreement aims to create a free trade area between

34 countries in the Western Hemisphere (excluding Cuba). FTAA negotiators consider a country's WTO commitments to be the floor for negotiations. Therefore, commitments made within the FTAA should strive to go beyond what countries agreed to within the WTO framework. Negotiators hope to complete the FTAA by the end of 2004 and launch the agreement by 2005.

GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT



In 2002, Jamaica passed a "Policy on Public Sector Procurement", which aims to enable the Jamaican government to use its purchasing power to stimulate local producers and to use government contracts as part of a national development strategy. The Jamaican policy is akin to the U.S. "Buy America Act" which restricts federal purchases to U.S. products and was exempt from NAFTA. Yet, the FTAA Agreement on Government Procurement could negate the Jamaican public sector procurement policy depending on how the policy is implemented and what procurement commitments Jamaica makes under the FTAA.

OTHER AREAS OF CONCERN:

- As Jamaica seeks new forms of employment for its young women, particularly those without much education or access to other types of work, the FTAA labor provisions do not provide countries with any recourse to redress violations of labor rights.
- Jamaica's tourism industry employs many Jamaicans and generates foreign exchange. Yet, depending on what limits Jamaica puts on its liberalization of the sector, Jamaica may not be able to control the number of hotels that are built on its coastline, which may damage the natural beauty of the island and the environment.

CONCLUSION

Jamaica's economic and social crisis has many factors, but it is clear that the WTO commitments that Jamaica has undertaken have hindered the ability of the State to act in the public interest. As a small, island economy, Jamaica is already vulnerable to the exigencies of external forces. Jamaica must be able to maintain needed flexibility to act in the interest of the public.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The Women's Edge Coalition and CAFRA believe that the TIR analysis illuminates clear policy recommendations for the governments of the U.S. and Jamaica as they continue negotiations for the FTAA:

GENERAL

- 1. Conduct a Trade Impact Review before completing the FTAA.**
- 2. Continue and increase efforts to collect data disaggregated by gender.**
- 3. Create a "Lawyers Without Borders" organization to increase the technical capacity to analyze, negotiate, and respond to trade agreements.**

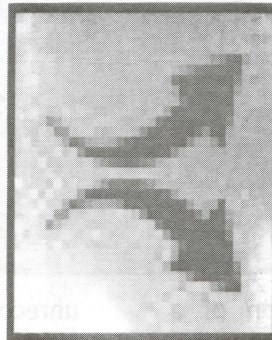
LEGAL & REGULATORY

The U.S. and Jamaica Should:

- 1. Exempt health care, basic education, water, and electricity delivery from services negotiations.**
- 2. Reassert the right to regulate and to promulgate new laws within the FTAA text.**
- 3. Remove elimination of performance requirements from text.**
- 4. Support Article 6 Treatment of the Differences in the Level of Development and Size of Economics of the Government procurement text.**
- 5. Strengthen the respect for labour rights.**
- 6. Assert the legal dominance of human rights over trade.**

GENDER INDICATORS

"Number of new jobs created compared to number of jobs lost by men and women at each wage level in the Agriculture to Services" is a must be used to inform aspects of where agriculture is no longer projected as the new regional economies. The several "fore-sighting" and gender derived in each negotiating area trade off between concessions available for the four project dominant role of trade in



In 1991 it accounted for 80% of GDP in the Caribbean. However, the region's trade balance has worsened in the last decade – the period of intensified trade liberalization. The region's share of world merchandise export dropped from 1.7% in 1950 to 0.2% in 2000. Although the decline in goods has been somewhat counterbalanced by expansion of the services sector, the Caribbean's share of world export of services has gone from 0.75% in 1980 to 0.6% in 1999. The ratio of exports/imports dropped from 86% in 1990 to 51% in 1999. The trade balance with the EU fell from a trade surplus in 1990 of 104% export/import ratio, to 76% in 1999. In that period CARICOM's exports to EU fluctuated around 20% while imports, which were 16.8% in 1990 declined to 11.9% in 1999. CARICOM's current trade balance with the US reveals that its export/import ratio of 84% in 1990 plummeted to 41% by 1999. CARICOM now sources 52% of its imports from the US, while selling 40%

of its exports to that market¹. In sum, the region depends greatly on external trade yet the overall trade balance of CARICOM is negative. The Caribbean has performed poorly in trade in general and it is speculated that preferential market access may have supported the region's exports to the EU. Given that our growing dependence on the US market for regional imports has resulted in a more pronounced trade imbalance, acceptance of more liberalized trading arrangements with the US, EU, and other regions has serious implications for CARICOM. It should take stock that in contrast to performance in extra-regional trade, intra-regional exports have shown a positive trend, growing from 10% in 1980 to 11.8% in 1990 to 19.3% in 1999 of all CARICOM exports, with estimates at 22% for 2004.

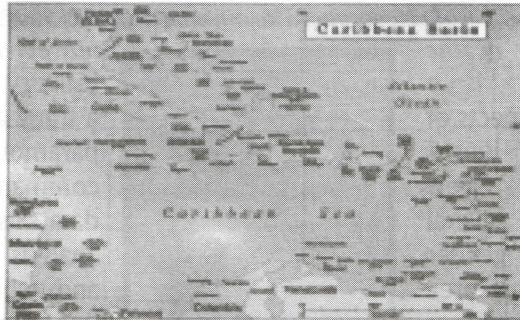
¹ Junior Lodge, CRNM Representative in Brussels: presentation to the CPDC Sustainable Impact Assessment consultation held Nov. 2003, Trinidad and Tobago.

Trade policy ought to be formulated on the basis of information and analysis but it is common knowledge that in the Caribbean there is a weak national demand for statistics and data on which to base public policy. Thus even with negotiations of the Free Trade Area of the Americas due to be concluded in December 2004, the April 2004 launch of negotiations for the Economic Partnership Agreement with the European Union, and the creeping implementation of a CARICOM Single Market and Economy, the potential benefits to the region of these trading arrangements have not yet been forecasted on the basis of evidence. Few impact scenarios have been constructed, potential winners have not been identified, and sector base modeling is at the kindergarten stage. Qualitative analysis to foresight the human development gains is still pending.

Trade analysts frequently use various methods that estimate effective protection rates, social welfare costs, and deadweight losses given the level of tariffs, subsidies and other price or quantity based measures imposed on tradable commodities, to inform national trade priorities. Computer General Equilibrium models are used to get an aggregate measure of the impact on the entire economy, particularly on level and rates of Gross Domestic Product and employment. The basis for judging the desirability of a policy direction is the efficiency impact, mainly on the cost of production or the price of consumption.

The huge oversight in this framework is the importance of tasks and activities that maintain the human resource capital².

The market, the household, and the state are not only sites of production, they are also about social reproduction – the set of activities that guarantee the care and the essence of human life. As opposed to productive activities, social reproduction is largely unpaid and



unrecognized in national accounting although it is the essential base on which the formal productive economy is constructed³. This discounting of social reproduction is best explained by gender analysis of the unequal value given to work done by women when compared to the activities of men, and the positioning of poor men in relation to men who are materially better endowed.

CAFRA's project to identify gender indicators on trade assumes that while civil society activism to stem the tide of galloping trade liberalization will bear fruit in slowing down its pace, new trading relations will develop between the Caribbean and the rest of the world that depart radically from the global pact that once prioritised development of former colonies through special facilitative measures. The Caribbean, however, must be made to remain true to the objective of trade as a means of developing its people. CAFRA and other members of the CRG therefore persist in advocating

² Marina Durano, forthcoming paper prepared for UNIFEM

³ The Government of Trinidad and Tobago passed the ... Act in 2002 and its Central Statistics Office has made some progress in collecting data on unremunerated work.

for the kind of development that puts people before profits and makes trade fair.

If trade liberalization is indeed aimed at sustainable development and the eradication of poverty then social reproduction must receive equal importance as economic production when trade agreements are being framed. Surveys of living conditions are demonstrating that decline in levels of poverty should not be assumed to be a natural corollary of increases in economic growth. Eradication of poverty depends on improvements in all human capabilities, as well as the impact of income distribution on material gains of households. These vital considerations are directly connected to the situation and role of women in our economy and society and must influence the nature of trade agreements.

For example, the growing importance of the regional market has implications for the traditional female agricultural and suitcase traders, and prompts questions as to what special provisions are envisioned for movement of these and other women, who are identifiable forerunners of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy. Monitoring the qualitative dimensions of growth in the intra-regional market might clarify whether it is the goods and services produced by national firms and informal sector activities that are shaping this trend, or whether it is the liberalized entry of extra-regional firms capitalizing on the almost 95% duty free status of intra-regional goods that has given impetus to intra-regional trade.

Another example: the shift in Caribbean economies from export of primary agricultural products to a

concentration on services expansion corresponds to the period of trade liberalization. The incomes and livelihoods of many women have been supported by the traditional agricultural base of national economies. Since trade liberalization is driving the shift of labour from agriculture to services, two issues are paramount for CAFRA's search for gender indicators on trade. The first is whether job creation in services can adequately compensate for the number of jobs lost in agriculture; secondly, do services currently offer better incomes to women at less opportunity cost than did agriculture.



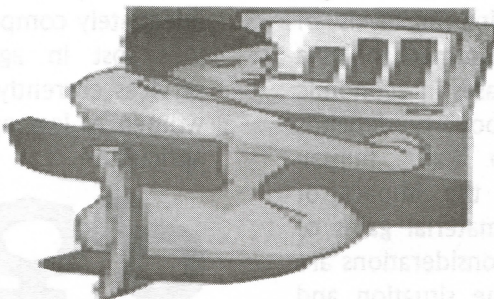
Gender assessments exposed the economic liberalization intent of

Structural Adjustment Policies and their disastrous impacts on the quality of life and time burdens of women, who are the primary caregivers of the Caribbean. Ongoing Gender Assessments continue to demonstrate conclusively that conventional planning methods fail to provide the coverage needed to stem increasing levels of poverty and social decay in the region that have accompanied the period of economic and trade liberalization. Thus new tools and approaches are called to so fashion liberalization that it benefits women, their families and the wider society. CAFRA therefore proposes the use of gender indicators on trade as a logical set of planning tools for shaping people centered trade agreements.

Correct use of gender indicators on trade can prevent much of the negative economic and social outcomes already experienced by farmers and wage earners in the banana industry of the Windward Island, the dairy industry of

Jamaica, and the sugar industry of Trinidad and Tobago, as a direct result of intensified trade liberalization in the Caribbean. Gender indicators must inform the demands made during regional level negotiations of trade agreements. Unless gender indicators actually shape the content of trade agreements there will be little possibility of actualizing human benefits after agreements are signed and sealed.

Women are primary stakeholders who use an empowerment approach in the advancement of the Caribbean. We are concerned to find and analyze the trade data, influence the trade negotiations process, and monitor the implementation of trade agreements. Our intelligence can absorb the technical knowledge required to negotiate trade. We value our human life and prioritize the region's people whom we bear with our bodies as its prime resources. It is our survivability, creativity and resilience that have brought us to this juncture. We focus on the prized natural ecosystems



now sought after as a place of refuge from the development of industrialized regions of the earth. We therefore approach negotiations from the perspective of abundance - not scarcity. We have been materially impoverished and we seek to correct this injustice by our own efforts.

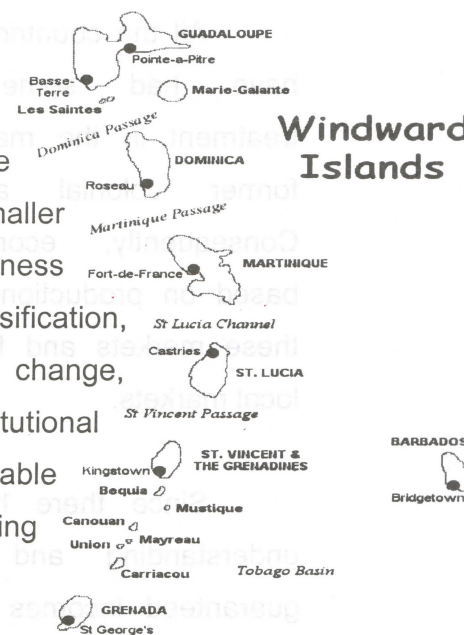
Gender assessment of the Lomé Agreements led to a commitment by the

European Commission to make gender a cross-cutting principle of the Cotonou Agreement. These commitments must find full expression in the negotiation and implementation of the Economic Partnership Agreements. A similar approach must infuse the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas. The potential benefits of the CSME for women must also be assured by implementation that is gender sensitive.

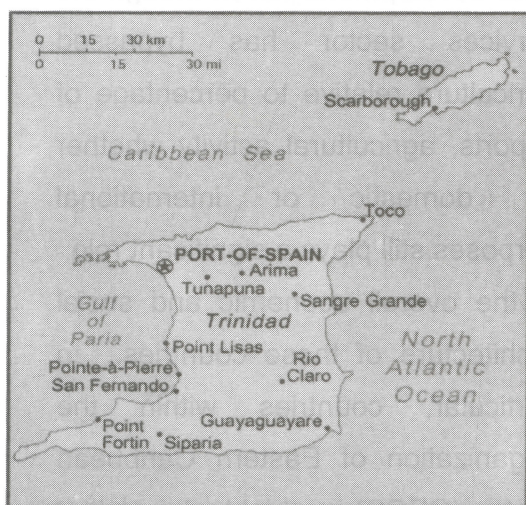
GENDER AND TRADE

IN THE WINDWARD ISLANDS & TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

This paper is based on the definition of The Commonwealth World Bank Task Force study on Smaller Economies that recommends that factors such as remoteness and isolation, income volatility, openness, limited diversification, susceptibility to natural disasters and environmental change, poverty, limited access to external capital and limited institutional capacity, make it near impossible for small and vulnerable economies to compete effectively in the international trading system.



All the countries in the review are Small Island Developing States with small and vulnerable economies. The physical land space ranges from 344 square kilometres in Grenada to 4828 square kilometers in Trinidad. Agriculture, particularly the production of bananas, has over the years accounted for the majority of this land space. In Dominica, Grenada, St Lucia and St Vincent, rural communities account for over fifty percent of the land space.



The populations are also small ranging from just over seventy one thousand in Dominica to 1.3 million in Trinidad and Tobago.

All the countries in the study have had some preferential treatment in the markets of their former colonial administrations. Consequently, economies were based on production for export to these markets and for use in the local markets.

Since there has been the understanding and tradition of guaranteed incomes from exports, the social sector and other areas for public spending were financed from this income making the removal of preferential treatment and the guaranteed income a burden for the State to address with little or no alternatives in place.

Trade liberalization was touted and accepted by Caribbean governments as an option to improve development initiatives and bring

wealth to the countries. The reality however has been that the expected financial rewards have not materialized and development initiatives have been stymied. Rather than enjoy the varied and more affordable goods and services expected, consumers have had to contend with increase costs of goods and services, low wages, uncertainty in the labour market, dumped goods, contracting economies and poverty.

The issue of agriculture is extremely important for countries within CARICOM, particularly as it relates to issues of market access, food security, agrarian reform and rural development. Even though the services sector has bypassed agriculture relative to percentage of exports, agricultural activity whether for domestic or international purposes still plays a significant role in the overall economic and social architecture of these countries. In particular, countries within the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) are highly dependent

on agricultural exports, which range from 31% to 61% of their total exports.

Dominica's economy has been pillared on the production and export of bananas over the years. CAFRA Dominica reports that many small farmers had to abandon their holding or go into other crops to replace bananas. The downsizing of the industry has imposed a significant loss of revenue on Dominica's economy. The population of active banana farmers in Dominica in 1994 was 4,840. The figure for 2000 stood at 2,254.

The Grenadian economy is characterized by its openness, vulnerability and its dependence on the international economy. The dominant activity was agriculture but in recent years the services sector assumed greater significance. In 1999 imports accounted for 50% of Grenada's expenditure, 2000 – 56% and 55.8% in 2001. There are no comparable records on revenues from exports because there are no

direct taxes by Government on exported products.

CAFRA St Lucia states, "Like most developing countries around the world, globalization has had multiple impacts on women at all levels of our society". Women in agriculture and production have faced the most severe impact.

CAFRA St Vincent conducted a case study of the impact of the decline in the banana industry in St Vincent and the Grenadines. The study found that the economic significance of agriculture in St Vincent and the Grenadines had been declining over the years. This decline is evident in the reduction of land allocated to agriculture, the lessening numbers of households that are owners and managers of agricultural holdings and the reduction in crop production. The paper also quotes the Ministry of Agriculture as reporting that 17,800 acres of land or 18.6% of the total land area is used for agricultural purposes.

In 2002, Trinidad and Tobago's economy was expected to grow by 2.7% with an inflation rate of 3.9%. These projections were based on the performance of the energy sector and the expectation that the agriculture sector would grow by 11.1% after a decline of 2.7% in 2001.

Policy Recommendations:

The recommendations consist of those made by the Caribbean Policy Development Centre and other civil society actors in the region.

1. That further liberalization in services should be curtailed to a minimum;
2. That no offers of liberalization on public social services such as education, health care, provision of water services and other social welfare concerns should be made or entertained;
3. That in the case of any further liberalization besides what already exists, appropriate recourse to safeguard measures to be determined by members, should be available to small and vulnerable countries;
4. That the existing provisions of GATS that speak to flexibility arrangements for developing countries in determining the choice of sectors and pace of liberalization should continue to be a salient and binding feature of any future GATS Agreement.
5. That current negotiations on tariffs, subsidies, and domestic support measures notwithstanding, Caribbean countries shall not be required to undertake reductions in tariffs inconsistent with the stable and orderly development of their agricultural sectors. This shall include exemption from further tariff reductions and import liberalizations for a further period of ten years.
6. That small and vulnerable countries shall in respect of current and future undertakings in respect of agricultural liberalization be granted new and enhanced transition periods beyond those agreed to in the Uruguay Round Agreement; and shall be able to modify existing undertakings if it is deemed urgent and necessary in their assessments of the public good with regard to saving jobs, protecting vital industries and alleviating poverty.
7. That the provision of essential services must be considered in the context of national development.
8. That governments must seek to deliver essential services to their citizens by ensuring that they are sustainable, equitable, gender sensitive and promote social inclusion and justice.
9. That governments must retain control over essential service delivery to meet the needs of the populations.
10. That governments must work to improve the process of essential service delivery and the regulatory framework for services.
11. That the education system needs to be reviewed and higher education opportunities increased.
12. That research should be undertaken to determine what and when the emerging opportunities will appear and how they are likely to impact on people's lives and therefore what is needed by the State and citizens to prepare for the new reality.



Human Rights

**DECLARATION OF WOMEN'S
AND FEMINIST NGO'S FROM
LATIN AMERICA AND THE
CARIBBEAN**

**TO THE 30TH SESSION OF ECLAC,
SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO,
28 JUNE-02 JULY, 2004**

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. Everyone is entitled to the rights and freedoms set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

All states and all people shall cooperate in the essential task of eradicating poverty as an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, in order to decrease the disparities in the standards of living and better meet the needs of the majority of the people of the world.

The right to development must be fulfilled so as to equitably meet the population, development, and environmental needs of present and future generations.

Everyone has the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. All couples and individuals have the

basic right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children and to have the information, education, and means to do so.

The family is the basic unit of society and as such should be strengthened. It is entitled to receive comprehensive protection and support. In different cultural, political and social systems, various forms of the family exist.

Countries, with the support of the international community, should protect and promote the rights of adolescents to reproductive health education, information and care...these services must safeguard the rights of adolescents to privacy, confidentiality, respect and informed consent.

In considering the population and development needs of indigenous people, states should recognize and support their identity, culture and interests, and enable them to participate fully in the economic, political and social life of the country.

In circumstances where abortion is not against the law, health systems should train and equip health-service providers and should take other measures to ensure that such abortion is safe and accessible. Additional measures should be taken to safeguard women's health.

Everyone has the right to education, which shall be directed to the full development of human resources, and human dignity and potential, with particular attention to women and the girl child.

Mister President and delegates to this Conference, what we have just read is neither the result of a feminist seminar demanding decriminalization of abortion; a lesbian statement regarding sexual rights, nor even an illusive dream of a woman in the *favela* or the *batey*ⁱ. This is none other than the Cairo Program of Action, agreed by our governments and endorsed in Port of Spain and Santiago.

These are the same commitments that we want enforced in our region, where levels of inequality are the highest of the world and where the economic model continues to generate an external debt, paid for by the exclusion, displacement, and silencing of millions of our people, the majority of whom are women. A region also, that continues to endure blackmail and coercion, in violation of UN principles, and which struggles to defend justice, development and peace. In Latin America and the Caribbean, we want freedom from discrimination, racism, xenophobia and violence.

For the same reasons, we reaffirm the defense of sovereignty and the separation of Church and State, of democracy and its institutions. We reaffirm the Cairo Program of Action and other international instruments and agreements that strengthen human rights, justice, and the well being of peoples.

Ten years after ICPDⁱⁱ, we must call again on the ethical commitments and the political will indispensable to generating the resources and mechanisms that convert commitments into concrete realities. Women, societies, the whole region and its peoples, deserve that this entire Program of Action be implemented.

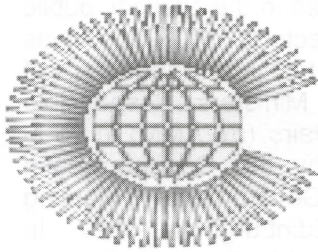
Thank you Mister President. Thank you delegates and colleagues.



**WORLD LEADERS
SUPPORTING THE ICPD**

Achieving Health, Rights & Development

ⁱ Favela and batey are Portuguese and French Creole words used for areas of very poor and often makeshift housing
ⁱⁱ International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo in 1994



COMMONWEALTH PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR GENDER EQUALITY

1. This document consists of four sections.

Section 1 introduces the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015 (PoA), its background and its place in the Commonwealth's overall framework and agenda for development, democracy and human rights. **Section 2** outlines the achievements of the 1995 Plan of Action on Gender and Development and its 2000 Update¹, identifies lessons learned and challenges to be addressed in the next decade, and highlights the Commonwealth's areas of comparative advantage which will underpin its work programme. **Section 3** analyses the four critical areas for Commonwealth action covered by the PoA, and makes recommendations for strategic actions by member governments and the Secretariat in relation to these areas. **Section 4** outlines how governments and the Secretariat will implement the recommendations in collaboration with partners and how accountability will be ensured through monitoring, evaluation and reporting.



2. The PoA reflects the Commonwealth's principles and values and incorporates its responses to the differential impacts of global changes and challenges on women and men, girls and boys. It supports and works towards the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

and the objectives of gender equality expressed in the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPFA) and 2000 Beijing+5 Political Declaration and Outcome Document.

¹ *Advancing the Commonwealth Agenda into the New Millennium (2000-2005): An Update to the 1995 Commonwealth Plan of Action on Gender and Development*. London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 2000.

3. The PoA views poverty reduction, the protection and promotion of human rights, the strengthening of democracy and gender equality as intrinsically inter-related. In fact, the MDGs cannot be fully attained while women/girls and men/boys do not enjoy equal rights, treatment and access to resources in a climate of freedom from discrimination. The PoA therefore takes a rights-based approach to all the critical areas it addresses, and is grounded in the framework of international and regional human rights conventions and other instruments.

4. The four critical aCommonwealth focuses on in this PoA are:

- | | |
|------------|---|
| I | Gender, democracy, peace and conflict. |
| II | Gender, human rights and law. |
| III | Gender and economic empowerment. |
| IV | Gender and HIV/AIDS |

5. Within these critical areas the PoA aims to build on and deepen the Commonwealth gender mainstreaming approach introduced in the 1995 PoA and its 2000 Update, particularly when addressing persistent challenges such as gender-based violence and the achievement of women's full participation in leadership and decision-making.

6. Democracy is a fundamental value of the Commonwealth. Women's participation in democracy, and in peace

processes, is crucial for the achievement of sustainable development. A target of no less than 30 per cent of women in the political, public and private sectors by 2005 was recommended by Fifth Meeting of Commonwealth Ministers Responsible for Women's Affairs (5WAMM) in 1996 and endorsed by the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Edinburgh in 1997. In 2000, the Sixth Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Women's Affairs (6WAMM) recommended that the Commonwealth take action, in collaboration with other international organisations and civil society, to include women at the highest levels of peace-building, peacekeeping, conflict prevention, mediation and resolution, and post-conflict reconciliation and reconstruction activities.

7. While there have been some achievements, the challenge remains to: demonstrate the impact of women's contribution to democracy, peace and conflict in member countries; promote accountability for international legal frameworks that governments have ratified; domesticate international standards in national constitutions and legislations as tools for promoting de-facto equality; encourage political parties to adopt the 30 per cent target for women candidates; and mainstream gender equality at all stages of the peace process. There is a need to develop peace education curricula and promote a culture of peace, geared particularly towards young people.

8. International human rights instruments impose a duty on states parties to guarantee equality of rights between women and men. However, women's and girls' human rights continue to be

**Women's
Equality
Day**

widely violated, and they face different forms of discrimination and disadvantage at different stages in the life cycle. Because customary laws, practices and traditions often affect people more than statutory laws on a day-to-day basis, it is critical to work in partnership with traditional, cultural, and religious institutions and leaders, particularly to address harmful traditional practices and promote harmonisation of statutory and customary laws, where appropriate. Women's rights regarding access to and ownership of land and property must also be promoted and protected.

9. Gender-based violence remains widespread and has clear links with many other factors, such as poverty, HIV/AIDS, property and land rights,

race/ethnicity, age and sexual orientation. An integrated response is essential to address it. The



rapid growth of trafficking in persons is causing increasing global concern. Anti-trafficking legislation must embrace a human rights approach and protect the rights of those most vulnerable to abuse.

10. Special attention needs to be paid to the rights of indigenous peoples, particularly women, who continue to be marginalised and disadvantaged in comparison to other groups in society.

11. Poverty is not only based on lack of income but is also linked to lack of access to political, economic, social, natural and cultural resources. Gender inequality causes and exacerbates the impact of poverty on women. In order to achieve poverty reduction, enhancing women's capabilities is of critical importance. Gender equality needs to be mainstreamed into programmes and processes related to poverty reduction such as the MDGs, PRSPs and SWAPs. Women's health, including women's and

girl's sexual and reproductive rights and maternal mortality, are also priority issues.

12. While globalisation and trade liberalisation offer new opportunities for economic growth and poverty reduction, they also pose critical challenges related to loss of livelihoods and employment, particularly for women. Multilateral trade processes need to be engendered, with women participating meaningfully in the negotiations towards just and fair trading agreements and systems.

13. In order to effectively address the feminisation of both labour and poverty, the Commonwealth will broaden its approach to gender and economic empowerment. This includes the creation of an enabling environment for women by establishing frameworks for core labour standards, social protection, the identification and development of appropriate skills and promoting women's organisations and networking. Improved access to productive resources, markets, skills and extension services is also needed for women, especially in agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

14. The next phase of developing work with gender-responsive budgets will focus on the revenue side of budgets, and on processes to mainstream and monitor gender budget analysis to ensure that these efforts are institutionalised.

15. Poverty and gender inequalities are driving factors in the spread and impact of HIV/AIDS. Women and girls are more susceptible to contracting HIV not only for biological reasons but also because they lack the power to negotiate safe sex or refuse unwanted sex. Their inferior political and legal status perpetuates poverty, discrimination and lack of opportunity in social, economic and cultural spheres of activity. Women's empowerment is a strategy for reducing their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS, and alleviating the impact of the disease.

16. The specific needs of HIV/AIDS infected and affected women, including

care-givers and those at risk of infection through gender-based violence and poverty, need to be addressed. Gender equality should be mainstreamed into multisectoral, national, regional and international policies and programmes on HIV/AIDS. The Commonwealth Youth Ambassadors for Positive Living Initiative should also be supported and promoted as a means of preventing the spread of the disease among young people, particularly girls and young women.

17. Lack of availability of and access to female-controlled prevention methods are a critical factor in the increasing infection rate among women and girls. Greater attention needs to be paid to research and investment in microbicides, improving the female condom and exploring other forms of female-controlled prevention.

18. The PoA recognises that men and boys are essential partners in achieving gender equality. There are emerging gaps affecting men and it is critical that the Commonwealth engage actively with institutions and partners that work with men on gender equality issues. The PoA also promotes the inclusion of young persons in all programmes designed to achieve gender equality.

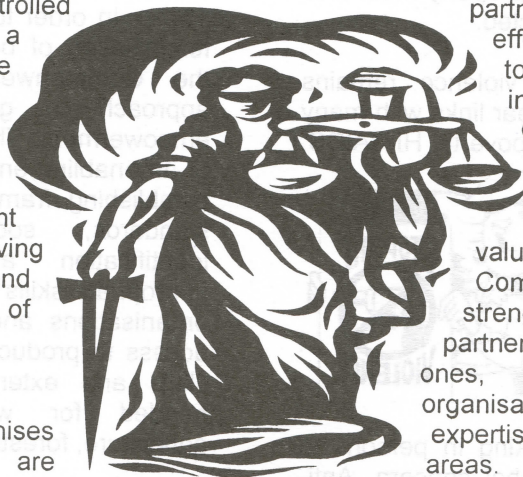
19. The Secretariat will provide increased support to governments in the implementation of the PoA, provide policy advice and technical assistance on the application of gender mainstreaming especially gender analysis and planning, and related issues identified by governments. For each critical area the PoA identifies strategies and mechanisms by which Commonwealth governments and the Secretariat will advance gender equality.

20. As well as strengthening the capacity of national women's machineries (NWMs) to mainstream gender equality, the Secretariat and other Commonwealth associations will work with other key constituencies including ministries, local governments, parliamentarians, the judiciary, universities, public service training institutions and civil society organisations (CSOs), acting as advocate, broker and catalyst in the promotion of gender equality and mainstreaming.

21. The PoA is firmly grounded in partnership as the most effective way of working towards gender equality in the context of the Commonwealth's areas of comparative advantage and the principle of common values in diversity. The Commonwealth will strengthen existing partnerships and forge new ones, especially with organisations that have expertise in the four critical areas.

22. The Commonwealth sees the four critical areas as inter-related and aims to integrate its implementation through various strategies such as generating and sharing knowledge and information, capacity building and monitoring, evaluation and reporting.

23. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting will be carried out in a variety of ways, including the Secretary-General's biennial report to CHOGM, periodic meetings of Ministers Responsible for Women's/Gender Affairs; as well as ongoing monitoring and evaluation activities by the Secretariat, including gender audits.



SOME THOUGHTS ON THE STATUS OF THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN THE CARIBBEAN

By Margaret D. Gill



*I take as my starting point the notion that the women's movement in the Caribbean has been destabilised. But whether that has actually **only** weakened the movement is a matter for debate.*

Also up for debate is the question of destabilisation itself. I believe that to think that there was ever a moment when the women's movement was stable, meaning well and indisputably positioned to achieve the goals it set itself, is to be mistaken. Given what we proposed to do: identify oppressions against women and the mechanisms of their maintenance, and work to eradicate them, in the context that oppressors benefit from keeping others down- we would have always been on shaky ground. Nevertheless, because I too feel that the ground has become even more shaky than usual, I take the notion of destabilisation as true for the moment.

But by what are we being destabilised? To my mind there are four factors:

- 1) *The notion of difference;*
- 2) *Notions of the total or absolute power of*

patriarchy, colonialism/neo-colonialism, capitalism and statism; in other words, the belief in the near impossibility of penetrating these amalgams of power;

- 3) *The male backlash;*
- 4) *Late 20th century instabilities of the concept of the nation state.*

The issue of lost funding is a given.

In this issue of CAFRA NEWS, the notion of difference is explored.

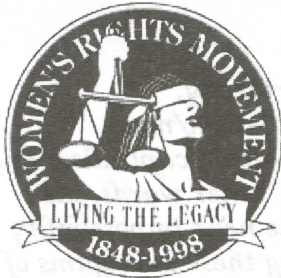
Difference

The idea that "women" is a category riveted by difference has complicated what was thought to be an unproblematic space for solidarity.

In other words, these differences- of class, race, location, ability, to name but a small few- mean that universal sisterhood, which was once assumed, can no longer be an automatic assumption. Persons theorising difference have demonstrated that oppressions, and solutions to these, rightly have something to do with/are mediated by different cultures or sub-cultures. To give an example, the wearing of the veil by women could be a choice for one culture while for another it could be an oppression. The identification of this practice as a problem, and by extension, the solution

to this "problem" as the removal of the veil, is all bound up in where you are located.

The appeal to the category "women" as the ground for action takes



for granted the constituency that has first to be proved. As academics would put it, "Women" is not a

category stabilised by nature, but is historically, culturally and politically produced. Since not nature but culture, or politics, or history determines one's experiences and problems as a woman, no group of women can speak for all women. No experience of one can stand in for that of all. Not that there can be now no shared basic principles or rights. Rather, what these principles should be is now not as settled as once thought.

But arguments against difference theorising have also arisen. One such important argument says that difference itself is a production of the amalgams of power we oppose. In other words, culture/difference is that thing that is already produced by power. So that the woman for whom the veil is a cultural right had little to do with the choosing of the veil as the expression of her particular identity. In fact, her wearing of the veil as an expression of culture pre-dates her. Amalgams of (patriarchal) power over which she had no control chose the veil for her and she then validates it as though it is her original choice. Also important is the fact that these differences mean that the solidarity necessary for social action for change could not be now automatically depended on, it had to be

negotiated.

However, the recognition of difference was a good thing in many respects. Among other things, it asked feminist women of the "North" to examine the degree of their own (unknowing) collusion, their complicity with imperialist projects of domination and control- particularly since these projects express themselves in the consequent oppression of us women of the "South"; it enlightened us to the fact that a project involving mainly black women (but seen by them not as a black women's project but as a women's project) could be exclusionary-

Indian women in the Caribbean have argued this in relation to the women's movement in the region in the 1980s in particular. Difference theorising exposed that one of the mechanisms of oppression was a universalising, homogenising reductionism.

Since difference theorising has highlighted the real need for negotiating within the women's movement, does that finding not also express an enablement of the movement? It validates the vitality and correctness of negotiating difference, and implies consequent improvements in understanding and respect that presumably arise in negotiating. It also gives greater sensibility to our investigations and our actions, especially in a world where historical categories are proving more and more inadequate in describing the realities of people.

ADVOCATES FOR SAFE PARENTHOOD:
IMPROVING REPRODUCTIVE EQUITY
(ASPIRE)
DRAFT WOMEN'S CHOICE ON PREGNANCY
BILL - TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

At present, procuring the miscarriage of any foetus, whether by the female herself or by any other person, may be an offence under the **Offences Against the Person Act, Chap 11:08 56 - 57**. That law established abortions as criminal when they were "unlawfully" procured and thereby inferred that there were conditions in which the termination of pregnancy was lawful. Those conditions were not defined. In the persuasive case **R v Bourne [1938] 3 All E.R. 615**, the lawful justification of abortion to protect the life of a woman was extended to a situation in which a termination was necessary to preserve a woman's health. This Government has ratified International Agreements that recognize unsafe abortion as a major public health concern and resolved to frame policies and implement programmes based on a commitment to improving women's health.

While sensitive to the preservation of the sanctity of life, the proposed Bill is designed to secure the desired goal of safe, voluntary motherhood. It is intended to achieve greater reproductive health for women by putting an end to the widespread practice of unsafe abortion. To this end, the Bill seeks to expand the lawful grounds for the termination of pregnancy in certain cases and subject to certain conditions. The main provisions of the Bill are dealt with below.

In order to reduce the incidence of terminations, the Bill places substantial emphasis on counselling and empowers the Minister to make regulations for this service. Such counselling is voluntary and non-directive and is to occur both before and after any treatment to terminate a pregnancy. The counselling service is intended to ensure that the woman makes an informed free choice in respect of the continuation or termination of her

pregnancy and to enhance her knowledge, and where appropriate her partner's knowledge, in respect of contraceptive methods (**Clause 4 of the Bill**). The provision of counselling is not to be used as a hindrance to a woman's timely access to treatment of her pregnancy.

Where the pregnancy is of no more than 14 weeks gestation, treatment for the termination of pregnancy may be administered by a medical practitioner or an authorized medical practitioner or an authorized midwife. In such a case, it is not necessary for the pregnant woman to have the treatment administered in an approved institution, nor is it necessary to establish any particular fact to justify the treatment. (**Clause 5 of the Bill**).

Where the duration of the pregnancy is more than fourteen weeks and not more than twenty-four weeks duration, such treatment is required by **Clause 6** to be administered by an authorized medical practitioner in an approved institution. The specific conditions under which the termination of such a pregnancy may lawfully be undertaken are set out in **Clause 6**

91), (b), (c), (d) and (e). Such ground include risk to her life, grave injury to her physical or mental health, sever abnormality of the foetus, pregnancy caused by rape or incest, serious illness of the pregnant woman such as HIV, and failure of a contraceptive method. Under **Clause 6 (2)** a pregnant woman's social and economic environment, whether actual or foreseeable, is a relevant factor.

Clause 7 affirms the long established and existing duty of a medical practitioner at common law under the doctrine of necessity. Under **Clause 7** a pregnancy of more than twenty-four weeks duration may only be lawfully terminated if the medical practitioner has evidence that the termination is necessary to save the life of the woman or to prevent grave or permanent injury to her health or that of the foetus.

Under the **Clause 8** the termination of a pregnancy must be voluntary and require the consent of the pregnant woman providing she is not mentally disordered, whatever her age. Where the pregnant woman is mentally disordered, the consent of her guardian, next of kin or the Committee of the Mentally Disordered Person must be obtained. [**Mental Health Act Chap 28.02**]

**Safer Sex,
RESPONSIBILITY,
and
YOU**

**PROTECTING YOURSELF,
REDUCING AND ELIMINATING
THE RISK OF
SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED
INFECTIONS
AND
UNWANTED PREGNANCY**

Special provision has been made by **Clause 10** to meet a situation where the treatment for the termination of a pregnancy must be undertaken immediately to save the life of a pregnant woman or to prevent grave permanent injury to her physical or mental health.

Except in an emergency, a medical practitioner and other staff involved in providing direct treatment who have conscientious objection are not under any legal duty to participate in any direct treatment for the termination of a pregnancy (**Clause 11**).

Clause 12 addresses the need where the patient is mentally disordered. In such circumstances the statement must be made by her guardian, next of kin or the Committee of the Mentally Disordered Person.

Clause 13 deals with the record to be kept and the confidential information relating to the treatment for the termination of a pregnancy and mentions the instances where such information may be disclosed.

The powers of entry conferred on the Chief Medical Officer by **Clause 14** and the existing power that the Police have in that regard are subject to the paramount consideration of the health of the patient and such power is limited to evidence-taking only, and does not include the power to obstruct any procedures observed.

Clause 15 identifies the legislation amended by this Act.

Clause 16 empower the Minister to make such regulations as are necessary and appropriate for making the law operational. The regulations may contain provisions regarding access to services, the appointment of an advisory body, the

provision of counselling, authorization of medical practitioners and midwives, approval of institutions, record keeping and such other matters as the Minister may prescribe.

Clause 17 deals with penalties.

In The Wake Of Hurricane Ivan

Ivan/a

The red one of death comes
striding over the clouds
and s/he is calling my name.
S/he will call in vain
for I shall not answer.

S/he will call in vain
and I shall not answer,
for Jah is holding I,
withholding I.

Jah will take back I name
or
Jah will let Onecall it. Regardless,
morning is without a doubt
coming, coming.

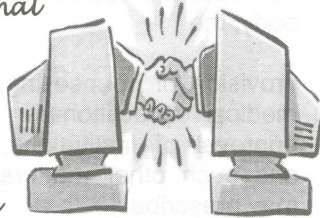
* September 2004

Au Revoir

Greetings to all!

My name is Amélie, and I am from Québec, Canada. I will be working with Dominic at CAFRA's Regional Secretariat from September to November.

We will help to rebuild their Website and make it more accessible and user-friendly for both people working on it and people visiting it. We have already set up their internal network, with which they will be able to exchange files without using diskettes or printing paper copies. I will also be doing translation between English and French since my studies are within that field of languages. So that is some examples of what we will work on with CAFRA.



Prior to coming to Trinidad and Tobago, we spent three months having classes on Web designing, which comprised basic HTML coding, dynamic Website setup and graphic formatting. We also had a Political Sciences class on the evolution of the world order, as well as numerous workshops on specific issues, such as the environment, Eastern Europe, the FTAA, etc. We also had to organize fundraising activities, which not only help pay a little for the trip, but also to sensitize people around us to what we were going to do and the reasons we had decided to embark ourselves on such a

journey. We were 16 boys and girls that started the program last June, with different professional and personal backgrounds, and got together to form a rather efficient team. When everyone left for their respective destination (ranging from Brazil to South Africa, passing by Georgia and Jamaica, to name just a few), we all had the impression that we were leaving behind a second family... Which is great since having spent three months together on a full-time basis, a lot, good or bad, could have had happened. So I can say that for me, this experience has been up to now very challenging, but also very gratifying. It allowed me to meet with people that had different stories making up their "life luggage", and I felt privileged to be a part of this adventure.

Before I started this internship with Alternatives, I had spent six months travelling in Latin America, discovering another world than the one I was used to live in and brushing up my Spanish. The first three months, I visited Ecuador and Peru, with a small hop to Bolivia, doing treks around the rainforests, mountains and archeological sites. I met people from different backgrounds, from different regions, and heard different stories on these people's situation. For the last three months, I flew over to Costa Rica to go volunteer on an organic farm, Finca La Flor de Paraiso, to participate in the daily chores. We had to care the animals (goats, sheeps, horses, hens and geese) and look after the different gardens and fields. This organisation acts also as an environmental school that aims to sensitize people, either foreigners

or Costa Ricans, on such issues as health hazards related to chemical agriculture, mass agriculture in a context of globalization, etc. People working on that farm were very friendly, open-minded and eager to share what they had with others, so I felt again as I had found another family, Costa Rican this time.

To wrap it up, I would simply like to say that I am happy to be visiting Trinidad and Tobago, as it is totally new for me, and also to be working with an organization that has participating for so long in helping making things change for the better.

Au plaisir,
Amélie Baillargeon

Bonjour,

My name is Dominic, and I am still wondering why Alternatives has chosen me to come here, in Trinidad and Tobago. To begin with, I am a francophone, and even though I had a few English classes already, I had never really spoken it. Also, I had never travelled out of my country; therefore, it was impossible to anticipate how I would react to different customs than mine. And the most funny part of it was that I could not even locate Trinidad and Tobago on a map. But one thing is for sure, I am very happy I was picked to come here. After a month, I already know that the knowledge I was lacking will soon be replaced with a great experience. And I hope that my coming to CAFRA's Regional Secretariate will be as beneficial for them as it will be for me.

The way to be the most useful will be, for me, to become the most unuseful for CAFRA. By saying so, I mean that as a computer technician and as a person who has good knowledge in this domain, I will not keep it for me to make my presence critical for the functioning of the office. On the contrary, I will gladly share what I have acquired during my training and give CAFRA's employees simple tools to use for managing and updating their Website all by themselves. To make it possible, Amélie and I have already set up a network that will allow all the computers to share a single Internet connection. My next goal is to create a new image for the Website, and to link it to an updating tool as simple to use as a word processor.

We will also prepare sufficient reference documents for them to be independent.



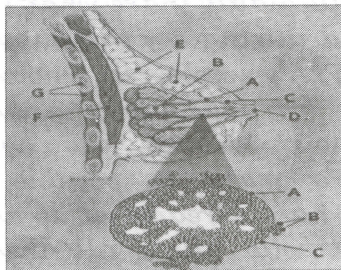
However, three months is a very short period of time to attain this ideal.

Thus, it is certain that not everything will be perfect when we will leave at the end of November. And also, I wish for future interns to be as lucky as we are and come here to continue the work and friendships we will have started.

Au revoir,
Dominic Gaboury

Understanding Breast Cancer

BREAST cancer is a type of cancer in which cells in the breast become abnormal and grow and divide uncontrollably.



Normal Cells

Normal cells divide, grow, and die on a continual, controlled basis. The nucleus of each cell contains genes made up of DNA that 'tells' that cell what to do

and determines its lifespan. When cells grow uncontrollably, they will eventually form a mass, also called a tumor. Benign tumors are not cancer, they do not invade other types of tissue, but they may pose problems depending on their size and location if they grow large enough to interfere with a bodily function (such as blood or urine flow) or put too much pressure on an organ or nerve. Malignant tumors are made up of abnormal cells that are capable of invading nearby tissues.

Cells from the original tumor may also break off and travel via the blood or lymph systems to distant location (metastasis). When these cancer cells grow in another organ, the cancer will still be named for the organ where it began. For example, if breast cancer cells travel to the liver and grow there, that person would have metastasised breast cancer, not liver cancer.

How Cancer Grows

Cancer cells grow and divide at an abnormally rapid rate, so they need extra nutrients. Since cells get their requirements supplied by the blood, malignant tumors build new blood vessels – a process called angiogenesis. Developing treatments to stop this process (called anti-angiogenesis) is one promising area of cancer research.

What causes the cells to grow uncontrollably?

A change or mutation in the genes of a cell changes the way that cells act. The mutation may exist at birth from an inherited genetic trait from a mother or father or it may be spontaneous – a change that occurs sometime after birth. Inheriting the BRCA1 or BRCA2 gene has been identified as a factor in raising the risk of developing breast cancer.

When you hear that a substance is carcinogenic, some substances, such as cigarettes, have been identified as carcinogens, meaning it is capable of causing a spontaneous genetic mutation that can cause a cancer to

begin. Most of the causes of cancer, however, remain unknown. Research is ongoing to understand exactly how each carcinogen causes genetic mutation in hopes of then finding a way to block it.

What is an oncogene?

Researchers have identified two genes that control cell growth and division. One is called an oncogene, which gives the command to grow and divide...think of it as the "on" switch. The other is called a tumor-suppressor gene, which tells the cell to stop growing and dividing (think of this as the "off" switch). If the oncogene doesn't stop giving its "on" command or the tumor-suppression gene doesn't give its "off" command, the cell will grow and divide uncontrollably.

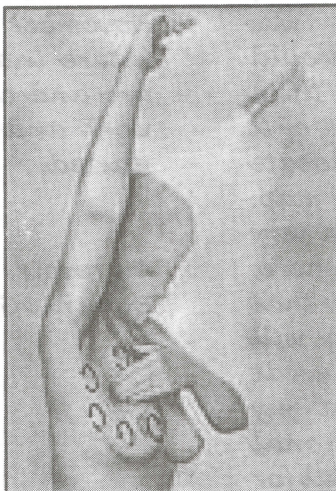
Breast Cancer

The majority (over 75 percent) of breast cancers begin in the (milk) ducts within the breast; the next most common site is the lobules – the glandular tissue that makes milk. Most breast cancers are slow-growing and by the time a lump can be felt, it may have been growing for 5 or 10 years. Early breast cancer usually has no symptoms and the earlier a tumor is found, the better the chance of survival. For these reasons it is extremely important for women to be screened regularly by mammography or ultrasound since they may identify a cancerous tumor before it can be felt. In addition, if a lump or thickening can be felt, it is vital to seek a medical evaluation right away.

Breast cancer in men

It occurs with 1 percent of the frequency seen in women. Although these cancers more often progress to an advanced stage because the diagnosis is

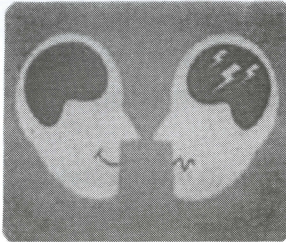
seldom suspected by the patient or physician, the prognosis for men is identical to that for women in the same stage. The treatment is also nearly identical, although breast-conserving surgery is rarely used and no firm data are available on the value of adjuvant therapy. Metastatic tumors respond to all of the endocrine therapies used to treat female cancer. Men with metastatic disease refractory to endocrine therapy may be successfully palliated with combination chemotherapy.



Courtesy The Trinidad Guardian Saturday, September 18, 2004

Emotional Well-Being

Emotional Well-Being is about how we feel, think and behave. Nobody feels blissfully happy, thinks positive thoughts, and behaves sensibly all the time – but if you're in a pretty good state of mind generally, it's much easier to enjoy life.



Looking after your state of mind is as important as taking care of your body, yet most of us manage our physical health far better than our emotional health.

As soon as we feel a physical ache or pain we generally try to do something about it, but when we find ourselves feeling very low or stressed and anxious we tend to think it's just part and parcel of life and don't do anything to improve the situation. Of course, there are times when it's natural to feel sad or anxious – when you've suffered a loss, for example, or if you have to adjust to sudden, unexpected change. But if your mental balance is basically good, you're likely to cope better in a crisis and recover more quickly and more fully.

Scientists also say that people who always seem to be in a good mood may simply have naturally higher levels of certain substances – endorphins (types of hormone) and the neurotransmitters dopamine and serotonin.

These are released by the brain and make you feel good when you are enjoying yourself or when something nice happens. But our state of mind is only partly influenced by the past or by

physical factors. The rest is down to us

The Secrets of Everyday Well-being:-

- *Relaxation*
- *The ability to express your feelings*
- *Achievable goals to aim for*
- *Time for the things you enjoy*
- *A healthy diet*
- *A sport or exercise you enjoy*
- *Work you find rewarding*
- *A comfortable balance between work and leisure*
- *Time to yourself, to do the things that interest y*
- *Time for friends and family*

Some Things to Minimise in your Life:

- *Too much stress*
- *Feelings of rage or frustration*
- *Expecting too much of yourself*
- *Negative thoughts and feelings*

– to the way we think about things and how we manage the different aspects of our lives. Most of us have much more influence over our feelings than we may think.

TRIBUTE TO SISTER SHIRLEY

Joy, Energy, Individualism, Sisterhood

Shirley Ann Hussein, a longstanding member of CAFRA walked quietly from us on October 7, 2004. The following tributes attest to the warmth, love and feminist action of a beloved fighter in the struggle for Caribbean liberation.

1. *Our note of sympathy in this difficult moment for the family of Shirley Ann Hussein, as well as her closer friends, this departure. On moments of sorrow like these, we can only be in a solemn gathering and pray for her. My sympathy and support in solidarity to all the sisters who feel this loss.*
Sarah Malavé Lebron
Puerto Rico

2. *Shirley has gone on, but her spirit will live on forever. She was certainly a very special and unforgettable person.*
Joan Rawlins – Trinidad and Tobago

3. *I am really shocked by Shirley's death. She really brought light into her husband Henri's life, and the disabled boy they adopted.*
Hazel Thompson Ahee – Trinidad and Tobago.

4. *We are all saddened by Shirley's passing. She made a contribution to the women's movement in Trinidad and Tobago. May she rest in peace.*
Grace Talma – Trinidad and Tobago



5. *Her work will live on in our memory.*
Nzinga Barkley Waite – Belize

6. *We are troubled by this loss. This is a very valuable loss, and the only comfort left for us is the great work that she has done.*
Sergia Galvan –
Dominican Republic

7. *It is not easy to accept the passing away of a true CAFRA building member from the early days. I can see Shirley in front of me, strong in her determination, persevering in her views, fearless in her comments and in the expression of her opinions, but also caring and sweet in her friendship. In reading about her passing away and leaving us, I can hear her loud laughter and see the caring sweetness that her personality also was. Thank you Shirley!*
Sonia Cuales – Trinidad and Tobago.

8. *I don't remember when I first met Shirley but my first memory of her was of her disrupting a meeting. I suppose that is everybody's memory; she disrupted a lot of meetings. I was instantly attracted: I do not even understand people who think the*

world can be accepted as it is. There was an element in our friendship of kindred spirits though not quite. We talked on the phone about once a month, most recently about her illness, which I never understood to be as grave as it was even though she tried to tell me, about David and his future, about the thesis she wanted recognised and published and used, and always, about global and regional politics. She was always teaching me a piece of Trinidad history I didn't know. We agreed a lot on politics, at least on the fundamentals. We disagreed a lot on how to do battle for what we believed in: She was braver than I and more individualistic than I, crazier too. She was uncompromising except where love made her find excuses for the person she loved. She was generous with what she had, above all with her time and patience – look at her way of being with David! I remember a day she took me and George Lamming's mother, with whom I was staying for a few days before she died, for a long, meandering drive, stopping wherever we wanted for however long we wanted and dismissing our attempts to thank her. I remember a day she drove me all over Port of Spain from shop to shop as I tried to find some herbal remedy I couldn't find at home, saying cheerfully after each failure that it must be there somewhere so let's try another place: we found it. I will miss her in a very direct way. I hope she knew that what I always thought and felt about her was "respect due".

Andaiye – Guyana

9. *I will be pleased to work with a small group to publish Shirley's thesis, a copy of which she gave me a few years ago. I just returned to the Caribbean, and one of my priorities was to read it and give her feedback. Thus I am very moved by her passing. Give Praise for the legacy she left us!*

Yvonne Bobb-Smith – Trinidad and Tobago

10. *Walk with her now, the sister by your side, Walk with her now, the sister in that corner.*

Nelcia Robinson – CAFRA Regional

11. *She was indeed an activist for women issues and a voice that could not be ignored.*

Glennis Hyacinth – Trinidad and Tobago

12. *I am deeply shocked and saddened. The movement has benefited from her intelligence and determination in the midst of conflict.*

Joan French – Burkina Faso

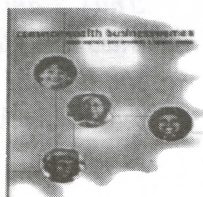
13. *It is hard to believe that someone with all that energy and individualism is not with us anymore. I have some wonderful memories of her in Beijing.*

Diana Mahabir Wyatt – Trinidad and Tobago

ON THE BOOK SHELF



Commonwealth Secretariat:



- Commonwealth Businesswomen: Trade matters, best practices & success stories

- Report of the Expert Group on Strategies for combating the Trafficking of Women and Children
- Mainstreaming Informal Employment and Gender in Poverty Reduction (Eds. Chen, Carr & Vanek)



- Gender and Human Rights in the Commonwealth: Some critical issues for action in the decade 2005-2015

- Integrated Approaches to Eliminate Gender-Based Violence
- Chains of Fortune: Linking Women Producers and Workers with Global Markets (Ed. Marilyn Carr)
- iBase etinho Democracia Viva

CONFERENCES AND SEMINARS

- Men, Women and Development, Bangkok, March 11-18 2005
- Gender and Conflict Transformation, on line www.netuni.nl/demos/genderconflict January 24 to February 18 2005
- Commission on the Status of Women, New York, March 2005
- Meeting to Review the Implementation of the PoA for SIDS, Mauritius, 10-14 January
- Commission on Population and development 38th Session, New York, 4-8 April 2005
- Committee on the Rights of the Child, 39th Session, Geneva, 16 May to 3rd June 2005

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ADDRESS (e-mail): TEL. NO. (home):

TEL. NO. (office): FAX NO.:

ORGANISATIONAL AFFILIATION (if any):

ADDRESS OF ORGANISATION:

TEL. NO: FAX NO.: E-MAIL:

RESEARCH/ACTION EXPERIENCE AND/OR INTERESTS (Kindly enclose a Curriculum Vitae for our Skills Bank):

MEMBERSHIP FEE (40 units in currency of country of residence, paid in US\$ if possible)

ENCLOSED: Yes

No

SIGNATURE

DATE