Distr.
LIMITED

LC/CAR/L.155 rev. 1
21 December 2007

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

Volume I

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EDITORIAL BOARD

FOREWORD

Caribbean Development Review is a new, referred journal by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean. The basic objective of this journal is to publish articles that provide a biennial assessment of the most salient aspects of social-economic development in the Caribbean. It is intended that the highlighted issues would be used as a basis for the countries to respond collectively and collaboratively to specific development challenges.

The framework of the Review can be found in the ECLAC mandate to monitor and report on the implementation of major United Nations global summits on social development and to support Caribbean governments in their efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

Caribbean Development Review, Volume I, 2007, is our inaugural edition with abstracts. This will be a regular feature in all future editions. The issue contains 13 diverse but, nevertheless, interrelated articles that draw on policy ideas and practical insights on contemporary social and economic development issues in the Caribbean. We therefore wish to commend it to policy makers in the region and to members of the general public who are concerned with integration and cooperation, and those that seek to influence the formulation and execution of social and economic policies and programmes in the subregion.

The journal welcomes contributions from the academic community, policy makers and staff members of research institutions and international organizations. Guidelines for contributors are given at the end of this issue.

INFORMAL ECONOMY AND INFORMAL CITIZENSHIP:
Exploring causation and connectivity in socio-politico shifts in Jamaica[1]

By

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ABSTRACT

For the past two decades, there has been an observed shift in how the Jamaican populace responds to institutions of the state. A political culture, generally characterized by large degrees of acquiescence and a greater sense of loyalty to the state has been replaced at one level, by more social and political activism evidenced in a constant agitation 'to know' or to be informed and at another, greater suspicion of governmental actions. The body politic exhibits an enhanced sense of independence bearing credence to the view that the state has lost control. Moreover, socio-political relations do not precipitate towards a collective consciousness of a national vision as the basis of governmental actions or decisions but instead assume a confrontational overtone, resulting in general disconnect between society and politics. This paper argues that the socio-politico transformation in citizens' attitude and behaviour coincides with the expansion of the informal economy which has its genesis in adjustments occurring in economic relations within the state but which has had significant impact on socio-politico relations. It further proposes that the social relations of the informal economy have spawned an *informal citizenship* which 'status', although finds analytic resonance in post-modern socio-political processes, implicates how issues of identity and social placement are contemplated. The paper employs two social problems – informal settlements/'squatting' and alternative community leadership/'Area Dons' to support this proposition.

THE SETTING

Jamaica is among the three largest islands in the Caribbean (Cuba and the Dominican Republic being the first and second, respectively) with an area of 11,420 square kilometers and an estimated population size of 2.6 million even with a declining demographic rate which stood at 0.6% in 2001. A little less than half of the island's population (40%) resides in rural areas but which might change given the rapid rate of urbanization that is occurring. The majority of Jamaicans (90%) is of African descent with the remaining 10% spread unevenly across ethnic groups such as Indian, Chinese, Syrian and Caucasian.

Having once been a colony of Britain, Jamaica's political and constitutional forms show much affinity to Westminster-Whitehall model of government but the practice of the derivative model diverts significantly from its origins (see e.g. Mills 1997: Ryan 1999). The two major political parties, the People's National Party (PNP) and the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) are outgrowths of mass social movements of the 1930s and have thus helped to shape the course of political and economic development of the island as well as influence a particular political culture. The latter point is illustrated by the inability of third parties to gain adequate political traction to challenge the hegemony of the PNP and the JLP. The JLP has the distinction of being the party that formed the government at independence in 1962. However since the granting of adult suffrage in 1944, both parties have alternated in forming the government with the PNP achieving the status of the most successful at winning elections and has since 1989 broken the pattern of party alternance as government and providing Jamaica with its first female Prime Minister,

[1] I acknowledge the support of the Centre for Caribbean Studies, University of Warwick which through its Visiting Research Fellowship Award facilitated work on this theme in the United Kingdom; as well as the assistance of Deneal Walters of the Human Resource Management Division, UWI, Mona.

Portia Simpson Miller. Elections are due in 2007 and from all indications will be a 'battle royale' given that the JLP, presently in Opposition has also had a leadership change with Bruce Golding replacing Edward Seaga in 2006.

The pattern of economic development from 1950 to the present mirrors the ideas prevalent in development discourses of the period. Positive growth rates, averaging 5.7% was experienced between 1961 and 1972, but since then have been disappointing, hovering around 1% for the last decade. The 1970s are crucial for comprehending the present state of the Jamaican economy and benchmark programmes of economic restructuring initiated by the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Standby Agreement of 1977 (Witter and Anderson, 1991) and followed by the World Bank technical assistance programmes which together with other bilateral arrangements evolved into constant monitoring of the economy well into the 1990s. Economic restructuring has been in line with neo-liberal ideas and although yielded positive outcomes on the fiscal side had counterbalancing effects in the high social costs (see for example Henry-Lee 2001) that were imposed on the population. In contention too, was the financial meltdown of 1995 that not only impacted negatively on fiscal targets leading to a high debt-servicing ratio, but has a positive correlation with the expansion of the informal economy due to the contraction of state resources and the associated interruption in stable and formal employment of a significant number of persons.

The preceding issues form the backdrop to the subject of this paper but have appeared as comprehensive analyses of macro-economic performance in for example, Bernal and Leslie (1999) and King (2000), as well as in studies focused on social issues such as poverty (see for example, Danielson 1998; King and Handa 2000; Henry-Lee 2001). Although macro-economic performance of the country is an important point of reference for an examination of the dynamics of the informal economy it is not necessarily the defining variable. The motivational source, value systems and world view of participating agents of the informal economy are important considerations. The central problematic of the paper is the nature of the social relations of the informal economy and how it shapes social membership as well as the structural weaknesses that attend modernization of post-colonial states. Specifically for the past two decades, there has been an observed shift in how the Jamaican populace responds to institutions of the state. A political culture, generally characterized by a high degree of acquiescence and a greater sense of loyalty to the state has been replaced at one level, by higher degrees of social and political activism and at another, greater suspicion of governmental decisions and actions. The body politic exhibits an enhanced sense of independence bearing credence to a view that the state has lost control. Moreover, socio-political relations do not precipitate towards a collective consciousness of a national vision as the basis of governmental decisions or actions but instead assume a confrontational overtone, resulting in a general disconnect between society and politics. This new orientation in citizens' attitude and behaviour coincides with the expansion of the informal economy which has its genesis in the adjustments occurring in economic relations within the state but which has had significant impact on socio-politico relations. The paper further proposes that the social relations of the informal economy have spawned an *informal citizenship* which 'status', although finds analytic resonance in post-modern socio-political processes, implicates how issues of identity and social placement are contemplated.

This proposition is developed in sequential arguments that appear in 4 sections: Section 1 explores the conceptual underpinnings and empirical explanations of the informal economy. Section 2 discusses two manifestations of informalisation in Jamaica and serves as the basis for an analytic examination of the social relations of informality in section 3. Section 4 coheres these arguments around the central claim of a positive relationship between the informal economy and informal citizenship.

THE INFORMAL ECONOMY: Interpretations, Causes and Constitutive Elements

What has transmogrified into the notion of an informal economy had its conceptual beginnings in three socio-economic forces. First was the structure of economies of post-colonial states during the 1950s and 1960s in which rural depopulation and resultant urban growth gave rise to a spate of small-scale activities for those who were unable to find employment in the modern sector. For some time these rural migrants and their urban counterparts were described by neoclassical economists as 'unemployed' or 'service workers' while at others they were a euphemism for poverty. However, this period in many post-colonial states was not one in which there was full or secured employment from which an individual would necessarily become unemployed (see e.g. Jefferson 1972). Moreover the character of the economies was such that the activities in which persons obtained a livelihood ranged between structured regular employment and total inactivity making the notion of 'unemployed' meaningless. Similarly the term 'service sector workers' merely served as a catchall for all those persons who did not fit into the employment statistics of the industrial or agricultural sectors and thus the term did not capture the socio-economic complexities of these states.

Development thinking of the period was influenced by modernization theory, the overarching assumption of which is that with the right mix of economic policies and resources, poor traditional economies could be transformed into modern ones. This perspective rode on the success of the Marshall Plan that was used to reconstruct Europe and Japan after the second world war and which had phenomenal success in North America. However the prospects for economic growth in developing countries became dim in the face of persistent and widespread unemployment. The concomitant growth of heterogeneous petty traders and casual labour confounded the projections of modernization theory and spawned a debate among development scholars around whether the sector was a catchment area for low level productive activity and earnings or whether it was a source of innovation and creative production that provided a fairly decent standard of living for the participants/agents.

Not surprisingly the 1972 Report of the International Labour Organisation on Kenya, which resulted from the first of its employment fact-finding missions to developing countries, employed the concept of the *informal sector*, used previously by Keith Hart (1971) to describe employment structures occurring in developing countries, and evident specifically in Kenya. The report (ILO, 1972) noted the expansion of the traditional sector to "include profitable and efficient enterprises as well as marginal activities" (cited in ILO 2002: 10) echoing the double conceptualization of the phenomenon. The ILO Report (1972) used seven criteria to distinguish the sector: ease of entry, unregulated and competitive markets, reliance on indigenous resources, family ownership of enterprises, small scale of operation, labour intensive and adapted technology, and skills acquired outside of the formal school system (Charmes, 1990:13). At this stage the tendency was for analysts to define the *informal sector* in terms of employment relations.

Second are the structural adjustment policies which had their consequences in contracting economies evident in closure or downsizing of private firms or public enterprises. Outside of migration, retrenched workers had little alternative but to turn to the informal sector for economic survival. The contradiction is that the deficit in public service provision caused by economic restructuring was in some instances filled by the informal sector. Thus structural adjustment policies had an unintended consequence of an expansion of the informal sector in countries where these policies were implemented. Third concerns a broader process of informalisation of economies driven by the decentralist shift in patterns of capitalist development and which began to take shape in developed countries of North America and Europe at the start of the 1980s. It had debilitating effects on production in that standard jobs were made non-standard with few benefits or none at all (ILO 2002:10). Riding on the wave of globalisation decentralization was introduced into developing countries which, either through policy dialogue or imposed conditionality, had to accede to policy directives that emphasised competitiveness of markets and products. The impact of these policy directives can be seen from two angles - on the supply side transnational corporations had

increased leverage in moving from one country to another in search of lower costs; on the demand side consumerism was heightened. How developing countries responded to these types of economic insurgencies varied with their capacities. Clearly the poorer the country the higher the costs evidenced by the fact that producers who have been unable to seize new market opportunities either exited the market or increased the numbers that went into the informal economy (Turner and Hulme, 1997:226-235).

The concept of the informal sector was revisited in the development discourses of the period on the basis that employment relations did not capture in totality the socio-economic significance of this phenomenon. To say that anyone that was not formally employed was by feat included in the informal sector was simplistic and did not reflect the dynamics of the socio-economic relations within these economies. Importantly, employment relations proved to be an unreliable variable in the calculation of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). As a consequence *production units* or *enterprises* emerged as the defining elements and thus in 1993 the International Conference on Labour Statisticians (ICLS) defined the informal sector as:

> …all unregistered or unincorporated enterprises below a certain size, including, micro-enterprises owned by informal employers who hire one or more employees on a continuing basis; and own-account operations owned by individuals who may employ contributing family workers and employees on an occasional basis (ILO 2002:11).

The concept continues to evolve in tandem with its empirical character. More recently the *informal economy* has replaced the *informal sector* in development discourses in order to account for the whole range of informality – both enterprise and employment relations – manifesting in industrialized, transition and developing economies. But scholarship is yet to settle on a definitive meaning. Generally the informal economy refers to production that occurs outside of visible, formal organizations, subjected to the laws and policies of the state (Harrod 1987:122; ILO 2002; Portes and Haller 2005:405-406). Care is taken to distinguish it from the criminal economy which deals in illegal goods and services, and the reproductive or care economy which is considered to be outside of the market economy (see e.g. ILO 2002). Such a distinction camouflages what the international development community suspects and what domestic policy officials might know, that it is virtually impossible to prevent activities in the criminal economy from infiltrating those in the informal economy. Moreover there is in actuality no 'pure' informal economy, a fact further complicated by a high level of segmentation in the productive activities undertaken in this sector as well as the blurring of the boundaries between the formal and informal spheres. The ILO admits that "production or employment arrangements in the informal economy are often semi-legal or illegal" (ILO 2002:12). In truth this phenomenon is a complex of socio-economic forces and behaviour which fall on a continuum where regulated and visible, and unregulated and invisible activities are at opposite ends. The contribution of the informal economy to GDP is not definitive although there is recognition of the value of informal enterprises to non-agricultural GDP. It is therefore expedient for policymakers to make the distinction between the informal economy and the criminal economy if not empirically unjustifiable.

Definitional ambiguities will not deter this analysis and as a consequence the absence of regulation will be the definitive context in which argumentation will proceed, making Castells and Portes' (1989) conceptualization of the informal economy to be *apropos*. According to them it is "not an individual condition but a process of income-generation characterized by one central feature: it is unregulated by the institutions of society, in a legal and social environment in which similar activities are regulated (p.12). The economic goal of informal activities have evolved three functional typologies that in reality are not discrete activities but which help to clarify aspects of the social relations inherent in them: (a) *survival* exemplified by street vending or informal settlements; (b) *dependent exploitation* seen in instances of working off the books; and (c) *networks of micro-producers*, the most referenced example of which is the case of Southern Italy (Portes Castells and Benton 1989; Portes and Haller 2005). All are outside the pale

of state regulation and ergo where there is a shift in the institutional parameters of regulating these activities there is a corresponding shift in the boundaries of the formal-informal relationship.

Investigations into the informal economy in Jamaica have mirrored international trends in that the main concern is with estimating size and identifying factors that aid its development (see, e.g. Tokman and Klein 1996; Anderson 1996; Witter and Kirton, 1990). Uncertainty about its boundaries in Jamaica has resulted in concentration on small and micro-enterprises (SMEs). The 2004 Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) – sponsored study categorized activities in the informal economy in Jamaica into 3 types:

(a) "pure" tax evasion, that is, failure to report "earnings from perfectly legal activities carried out in businesses that are properly registered and recorded in the national statistics";

(b) Irregular economy, which is "production of legal goods and services in unregistered and, hence untaxed and unrecorded small businesses;

(c) Illegal activities, which are activities outside of regulatory controls such as tax and criminal laws (pp.163-164).

Using these categories as frames of reference for calculating the size of the informal economy it was found that it represents a little over 40% of the registered GDP for 2001 and is characterized as:

> …an atomic configuration of economic units that compete individually with each other, in the absence of productive cooperative links and linkages with large firms (Ibid: 165).

The size of the informal economy is a contentious issue on three fronts. Economically, it demonstrates the degree of flexibility in labour market relations but also implicates state and governmental capability to provide the requisite oversight for economic activities. It illustrates also the high level of independence that attends value-added activities in the political economy as well as the wide scope for individual self-determination. Lastly, it provides the greatest indicator yet of the breadth of illegal activities in the political economy. However, economics hardly exists in a vacuum and is therefore counterbalanced by a social context. On this point Titov (2006) proffers that the informal economy ought to be seen as "a specifically constituted self-reproducing social system of coordination and interactions" (p. 3). Further that this social system "is an integrated whole with its own dynamics and transformation logic" (Ibid). Parsons and Smelser's (1966) general theory of social interaction is one of the earliest assertions of the social underpinnings of economics and through the concept of 'pattern maintenance' draw attention to the way in which economic behaviour is reinforced by a particular value system that overtime evolve into 'institutions'. More recently, Portes and Haller (2005) suggest that the first paradox of the informal economy is that, as it takes on the character of a 'true market,' its effective functioning becomes more dependent on social ties (p. 407). Castell and Portes' (1989) comparative rendition is the best known of the empirical studies that engage the social dynamics of the informal economy. However, there is a burgeoning body of research on the social aspects of informality in Jamaica exemplified by Gray (2003; 2004); Johnson (2005) and Schoburgh (2006). Still the claim that informal citizenship is a social formation of the informal economy departs from the omnibus discussions noted previously to focus on the capacity of the informal economy to undermine social and political order. The informal economy evolves a set of social relations that is functional in nature in that the norms and values that are engendered assist in maintaining as well as proliferating the activities that are undertaken and the attitude and behaviour that accompany them.

MANIFESTATIONS OF INFORMALITY IN JAMAICA'S SOCIO-POLITICAL SPACE

However the informal economy is interpreted, one dimension remains constant, that is, its diversified forms. At a glance the range of activities that constitutes the informal economy may be deceptively seen as the multiplicity of ways that the poor gain economic leverage. Overlooked are the complex social structures that it engenders which become the well-spring for different types of institutional deficits. The cases of 'squatting'/informal settlements and the control of certain types of communities by individuals referred to as 'Area Dons' instance two manifestations of the value orientation and behaviour that underpin informality in Jamaica and which are examined in the ensuing sections. These 'developments' whether viewed singly or dually have contributed to a perception of loss of state control as well as social decay and have implicated the robustness of the socio-economic policy framework in Jamaica but more broadly the legitimacy of governance structures.

Squatting/Informal Settlements – Staking a claim or breaking the law?

Squatting is the term applied to the unlawful occupation of land and/or building and represents one of the methods used historically by the poor, economically marginalized and landless persons in post-colonial societies to get a 'piece of the pie' and to bring policy attention to the unequal distribution of land and other resources in the economy. Squatting is in actuality a 'back-door' entrance into establishing property rights and finds legal standing in Jamaica in the Registration of Titles Act that provides for the right of possession of privately owned land after twelve years of undisturbed occupancy and of crown land, after sixty years. The notion of 'idle land' (which is a misnomer since land is owned either by the state [crown land] or absentee owners), provides squatters with an opportunity for establishing the claim of right of possession. Hence the idea of squatters' rights that is bandied about frequently is derived from this legislation and has been used strategically by a significant number of persons in Jamaica to launch an economic path.

The nature of the political culture also provides a supporting context for the incidence of squatting. Precisely because in the case of land, squatters have a tendency to erect buildings that violate existing building codes and security orders. Counterintuitively squatting is done with the tacit approval of the political representative. There is hardly a single incidence of squatting in any geographic area as one incidence triggers another until a fully-fledged settlement evolves. These informal settlements, so-called by policy officials are critical bases of support for political representatives and as a consequence every settlement of this type has had to declare its political allegiance to either of the two major political parties (Tindigarukayo 2002). Other factors such as rural-urban migration, the shortage of housing and the harsh economic realities have contributed to the prevalence of squatting in Jamaica.

Land settlement schemes of the 1950s and 1960s and land reform programmes of the 1970s have been policy's response to arresting the problem of squatting and effecting redistribution of resources, generally. Provision of shelter has been attempted through various housing policies mostly on the platform of poverty reduction and sustainable livelihoods. Through state agencies such as the National Housing Trust (NHT) and the National Housing Development Corporation (NHDC) government provides housing solutions that range from collective provision of housing units, to cooperative arrangements/partially funded by the state, to market-type benefits that are usually priced at the middle-lower end of prevailing market rates. The latest effort at land redistribution and provision of housing was the Programme for Resettlement and Integrated Development Enterprise dubbed "Operation PRIDE" the main focus of which was to provide land for low income earners and to upgrade squatter settlements. Launched in 1994 Operation PRIDE was intended to: (a) reverse the socio-economic fall-out that resulted from economic restructuring; (b) set the framework for an adequate settlement policy, and (c) curb indiscriminate capture of government and privately owned land. From the outset implementation of Operation PRIDE was dogged with charges of nepotism and corruption prompting the appointment of a

Commission of Inquiry into the allegations. In consequence of the Commission's report the Minister of Housing, Dr. Karl Blythe was forced to resign. The broader issue is that redistribution of land and public provision of housing are critical elements in the bargains between politicians and constituents as land and housing are prime sources of patronage within the political economy. Understandably programmes such as "Operation PRIDE" would be a source of disagreement between the PNP and the JLP whether or not there is evidence of corruption.

Squatter/informal settlements are a feature of the socio-political landscape and the fact that this practice has continued unabated suggests that the policy and other regulatory institutions of the state have been unsuccessful in stemming it. Moreover, given the present economic climate squatting is permitted as a form of compensation for the inability of the state to meet the basic need of shelter for the poor. Understandably, the need for economic survival as a basis for the squatter problem cannot be ignored but one has to question the value orientation that underpins a behaviour that has transformed into a norm, especially since the act of squatting is illegal. It stands to reason that squatting is a purposeful strategy through which a group stakes its claim on the limited resources. This logic is reinforced by the fact that each time the authorities regularize informal settlements, or any informal activity for that matter there is a perverse reaction in an exponential growth of others.

'Area Don' – Alternative leadership or challenge to authority?

The nomenclature 'Area Don' appears commonplace to contemporary commentaries on socio-political transformations in the Jamaican society but had its antecedents in the social and political activism of the 1940s and the politics of post-independence Jamaica. The 'Area Don' can best be understood in the context of the "Jamaican lumpenproletariat" used by Gray (2003) to categorize a small segment of the urban poor whose faith in the social system is questionable. For Gray (2003) the lumpenproletariat, like the permanently unemployed as well as groups that are engaged in small-scale self-employment and petty-trading are part of an urban subculture (p. 11), the social relations of which, are characterized as:

> A sense of racial and class deprivation, alienation from traditional values, and susceptibility to norms that see no awful shame in resort to crime, theft from the powerful…Guile, survivalism-at-all costs and cunning self-help in the harsh and often dangerous ghettos are the stock-in-trade of such groups (p. 12).

The 'Area Don' is an outgrowth of the political culture and the criminal underworld and as I have argued elsewhere (Schoburgh 2006: 184) is:

> a community leader of a different kind, whose close association with one of the political parties is an occupational hazard, though not the source of his power. His power lies in his tapping into a reservoir of extremely high levels of psychological dependence in a socio-political context that exhibits extreme social inequalities.

The rise of the 'Area Don' as a mainstay of contemporary socio-political relations in Jamaica derives from a confluence of factors variously relating to the juxtapositioning forces of the retreat of the state and the expansion of the informal economy. Government's adherence to neo-liberal-type policy stipulations had significant institutional impacts which in turn transformed the relationship between political representatives and constituents in particular communities. A decline in state/political resources translated into a decline in political patronage and development of a perception of abandonment of group support and communities by political representatives. Political patronage is essential to sustaining party support and is integral to a brand of welfare politics that is practiced in Jamaica in which state power is used to allocate benefits to party faithful. And although Members of Parliament (MPs) and Parish Councillors are

the main channels through which scarce benefits are accessed, local community leadership influences how and to whom these resources are distributed (Stone 1986). Less obvious is the marginalization of local government in political relations both in representing interests and facilitating access to public goods and services which together, contribute to its ineffectual presence in community relations and politics and which creates a leadership vacuum at the local level. 'Area Dons', whose authority and legitimacy are reinforced by the changing socio-economic circumstances, emerge as an alternative leadership form. A shift from politics as the basis of participation to more diversified forms is a poignant factor in social contexts where 'bread and butter' issues are central to the development of psycho-social connection to that space.

Mostly a feature of inner-city or poor rural communities that are usually aligned to one of the political parties and originating possibly from either squatter settlements or public provision of housing, the 'Area Don's' role in these communities is multifaceted, even though public opinion enthusiastically links them to mere criminality. Depending on his influence, he acts at times as the intermediary in channeling resources to these deprived neighbourhoods or at others he is a political enforcer. The inability of the Jamaican state to protect these communities from violent incursions launches 'Area Dons' into the role of 'protectors' who secure geographic spaces as well as dispense justice. Their actions may be morally repugnant but are celebrated and justified by the communities that they serve. The potential for the interactions between 'Area Dons' and agents of the state (such as the security forces) to degenerate into conflict is great because of the reality of an overlap between the political and criminal underworlds. Further the communities over which they exercise their influence are social systems whose values compete with those of the wider society. Importantly the objective circumstances of the intense pressure 'Area Dons' face to deliver social goods and maintain control in the communities in which they preside, force them to demonstrate their power and influence in ways that place them at odds with the expectations of civil society. The modus operandi of 'Area Dons' illustrates vividly the fallacy of a clear distinction between informality and illegality but for Gray (2003: 14-15) is indicative of the fight for the "right to full moral citizenship."

Outside of economics, the common element in the development of informal settlements and the rise of 'Area Dons' is the nature of political bargains in Jamaica which essentially links the system of distribution with power relations and which determines the kind of exchange that takes place in gaining access to resources. For as much as informal settlements and 'Area Dons' are taken as symptoms of deficiencies in the regulatory capacity of the formal institutions of the state, they simultaneously represent a kind of social activism the fundamental aim of which is a redistribution of political resources. Bayat's (2000) notion of "quiet encroachment" used in reference to the spontaneous activities of people in the Middle Eastern countries of Tehran, Istanbul and Tunisia, among others has analytic relevance in that it encapsulates a similar set of social relations that has at its core "a quest for survival and improvement of lives" (24). More important, informal settlements and 'Area Dons' portend of the dialectics of achieving equilibrium between social order and social change and between the differentiated sources of social change. As well, they evidence the alternative means through which social membership is pursued and rationalized in a political collective.

SOCIAL RELATIONS OF INFORMALITY

Despite portrayal in the literature of mostly economic effects of the informal economy through emphasis on issues such as, taxation potential, productivity and labour costs, there is an acknowledgement of its social impact. Portes, Castells and Benton (1989) reject the notion of a "marginal society" used in reference to the informal economy but admit that "if the informal economy does not generate a distinct society, it does produce specific social effects of far-reaching significance" (p. 31). Thus apart from concerns about its neutralizing impact on the power of organized labour or the blurring of class lines, the

operations of the informal economy must affect the socio-political outlook of the participating agent or individual. To be sure there must arise questions about the values the individual holds dear and the degree to which these are acknowledged in the space he/she pursues his/her life experience. The informal economy is not a euphemism for poverty but there is a correlation, though not absolute, between obtaining a livelihood there and being poor. This is not to say that the link between the informal economy and poverty and the formal economy and material well-being is unproblematic. However, by virtue of one's existence in the sphere of the 'unprotected' or 'unregulated' makes it possible that activities fall outside the influence of legislation, such as labour laws, that social protection arrangements are absent and that earnings are lower. Research has also shown that the link between the informal economy and poverty is stronger for women (see e.g. ILO 2002; Informal Sector Study for Jamaica, Preliminary Report 2004). There are two complicating issues here: the informal economy provides participating agents/individuals with a first-hand experience of the inability of the formal institutions to meet their needs and guarantee those benefits to which they are entitled through their social membership and participation in the wider political community. As the practice of squatting illustrates the material conditions that contribute to a sense of well-being in the wider society and which are important preconditions for social inclusion are met in the informal socio-economic space. Through this function it facilitates a psychological retreat from the wider society by those who operate within it and the creation of a social world in which actions are subjectively justified.

Of course social exclusion is not simply a function of the social relations of the informal economy, but can result from interactions within the formal socio-economic space. For instance, public service provision in democratic societies is predicated on the notion of 'equality of opportunity', meaning each citizen has equal access to these services. In reality access is determined by several factors, among which is the ability to pay, level of formal education, or proximity to the service. More advanced democratic societies counter these social burdens through provision of a minimum income and a basic standard of social services and respite against economic uncertainty (King and Waldron, 1988:420-1 in Twine 1994:94). Developing countries like Jamaica use policy as the context in which to direct resources to the least advantaged. The informal economy implicates the capacity of public policy to engender an ethos of social inclusiveness given that it is the institutional setting in which unequal distribution of costs to some groups is cushioned as the society progresses. And if poverty is the extent of the participating agent's experience then several things follow: subsistence living, poor education and low self worth which are often inter-generational as well as lay the basis on which vertically dependent relationships are built. In these circumstances the informal economy plays counter-balancing roles in the creation of the social person.

A similar argument may be advanced with respect to the value system that sustains the informal economy and to which Tokman (2001) alludes in his discussion of the requirements of transitioning informality to economic citizenship. According to him:

> Microentrepreneurs must radically alter their behavior by going through a process of cultural change. They must move from individualistic ways of doing business, driven by the imperative of succeeding by any means in a wild competitive environment, to a culture that seeks the benefits of pooling productive resources as well as associating with other producers in their efforts to gain access to the market place (p. 58)

The unwavering focus on economic survival instills a strong sense of individualism in the social relations of the informal economy at the expense of norms of cooperation or social action. Yet a degree of group identification is present that may not appear as sustained cooperative efforts but as a resource that is relied on especially in periods of conflict. The incidence of squatting provides the best illustration of this argument for although it is an unauthorized transaction, the central underpinning of common membership engenders a form of solidarity that acts as an insulator against threats to the economic

mainstay and social position of the participating agent. Hence, avoidance of government regulations and taxes or ignoring process norms as in squatting, go deeper than 'beating the system'. Rather, these behaviours point to a particular value orientation that places the preservation self and by extension the current socio-economic experience of the individual or group at the apex of social and political interactions. In such circumstances questions may arise about the utility of loyalty to a political community. The proposition therefore, is that the quality of the material aspects of the practice of citizenship is fundamental to the development of a sense of connection with the socio-political space but the social relations of the informal economy is the context in which this sense of connection can be impaired.

FROM INFORMAL ECONOMY TO INFORMAL CITIZENSHIP

The informal economy can be conceived as a social sub-structure that typifies both spontaneous and purposive behaviour. It is driven by the logic of economic survival but simultaneously satisfies the need for independence and individuality, empowerment and opportunity for voice, effective leadership, and justice. It substantiates important aspects of belonging and by extension social identity and is therefore a route through which social membership is established. Based on the social relations of the informal economy sketched in the preceding section, it is clear that social membership is not a passive state but involves competition among groups about which set of claims should be given priority. The capacity of a political community to respond to these claims depends on its economic stocks. As a consequence some groups will be unduly burdened in the selection of which claims to respond to. The notion of informal citizenship highlights how traditional ideas of citizenship are being dislocated by economic transition in developing states and the kind of competition that is engendered among groups.

Citizenship is variously defined as a status which assures formal membership of a political community and through which the individual enjoys a bundle of equal rights and duties, liberties and constraints, powers and responsibilities (e.g. Marshall 1973a; Held 1989; Janoski 1998). Turner (1993) distinguishes between the juridical and practical aspects of citizenship noting that citizenship defined merely as a collection of rights and obligations (p.2) does not provide a clear picture of the dynamics of the status in practice. Thus he offers citizenship as that "set of practices (juridical, political, economic and cultural) which defines a person as a competent member of society, and which as a consequence shape the flow of resources to persons and social groups" (Ibid). Turner's (1993) emphasis on 'practices' is an important indicator of the sociological underpinning of citizenship status which alerts one to the social constructivist and fluid nature of citizenship (Ibid. p. 3)

The nature of public services provision has been the platform on which scholars build forceful arguments about the failure of the modern state to fulfil the rights of citizens. A distinction is made between negative citizenship rights (political and civil rights) and positive citizenship rights (social and economic rights) in that the latter requires more overt action by state institutions to be realized. The dynamics of the labour market are associated with the extent to which social and economic rights are realized or eroded. Twine (1994) contends that the basis for a social right need not be attached to how secure one is in the formal labour market, but rather to his/her equal status as a citizen (p. 21). Meaning whether or not an individual enjoys structured regular employment does not negate his/her claim to a social or economic right. A reasonable position in theory; but does equal status amount to equal access? The phenomenon of the informal economy is in large measure a consequence of insecurity in labour relations and this insecurity has bearing on the quality of social membership. An individual's socio-economic experience is linked to the quality of his/her participation in the labour market as well as the nature of the productive activities in which he/she engages and together are prerequisites for realization of social citizenship rights.

The 'practices' dimension in citizenship is the point of departure for this discussion and the platform on which the notion of an *informal citizenship* is constructed. There is a presumption however, that the status of citizenship removes all sense of informality with respect to one's position in a socio-political community. But does being accorded citizenship status necessarily transmute into substantive citizenship? Implicitly, informal citizenship does not mean the absence of the politico-legal accoutrements of formal citizenship status, although in some cases this is so. It is a construct used to denote the quality of the experience of the individual designated as a citizen and is thus about the character of an individual's membership in a particular political collective. Informal citizenship is a status acquired through an individual's membership in a social sub-structure/sub-group with which he/she identifies as the legitimate collective/context in which to pursue those claims normally associated with and attached to formal citizenship status. Informal citizenship resides in that realm of formal citizenship status where particularistic needs (be they political and civil, economic, or socio-cultural) are either un-met or under-met and where a subordinated social system assumes responsibility for meeting them.

Of course for the socio-political system on a whole to retain its legitimacy and functional integrity the activities of the social sub-structure have to be non-threatening. For as Walzer (1970) warns if the business of the 'lesser' groups is not trivial, then the universal affairs of the state will lose their distinction (p. 221). However, informal citizenship does not provide these guarantees given its motive and permutations. As shown in the phenomenon of the "Area Don", which if left to flourish can threaten the broader exclusive group membership – the state, suggesting that the social substructures of the informal economy belie pluralist notion of multi-membership that is complementary. Strange (1996) offers a useful interpretation of social developments a la "Area Dons" via a discourse on authority beyond the state which for her, falls on a continuum between non-state authorities that are legitimized and approved by the state, and counter-authorities, that rival and threaten state authority (pp. 91-99). The point is, a sense of connection to a political collective or the psycho-social embodiment of formal citizenship status is derived from the manner in which that collective satisfies critical needs and not necessarily as a result of the conference of the status because certain criteria are met. These needs though easily identifiable in consumption patterns have a psychological base and are essentially about the individual's social "placement" or "positioning" (Shotter p. 116) in a collectivity. The functional nature of citizenship suggests that overt actions have to be taken by the individual to achieve this status and depending on the setting for those actions or whether those actions provide the individual with access to fundamental resources, will be key determinants in whether (or not) he/she develops a sense of belonging or connection to that political space.

Since membership is the first building block to establishing citizenship then the setting (economic, socio-cultural, political) can condition motivations and shape behaviour. The quality of one's membership in the political collective is the salient factor in the development of the "citizen-self" (Janoski 1990). By citizen-self is meant the motivational source of an individual's action within a polity. Janoski (1990) uses seven typologies of citizen-selves, viz, incorporated, active, deferential, cynical, opportunistic, marginal and fatalistic (pp. 95-98) to represent a citizen's affectual relationship to a political regime (p. 98) and to indicate the range of value orientation and behaviour possible. Essentially the degree to which the individual accepts the value position of the political system will determine his/her attitude towards it, which may manifest as allegiance, apathy or alienation. The incorporated and deferential citizens identify with the regime whereas the activist and cynical citizens oppose it. The marginal and opportunistic citizens have little connection to the system and are argued to be more apathetic. Further the fatalistic citizen comes in two forms – fatalistic loyalists and fatalistic opposers, which take no action but have clear value positions (Ibid).

The social relations of the informal economy suggest the informal citizen typology. The informal citizen-self is borne out of a socio-economic status that relegates a person or groups to the fringes of society. The socio-political affect of this individual or group is instrumental and thus behaviour is guided

towards self-interested ends. The value position is transient as it depends on whether goals are being achieved making confrontation with or opposition to the system a possibility. The reality of social exclusion as a product of the informal economy makes the informal citizen-self akin to Janoski's marginal typology, in particular, the sense of detachment and alienation from the system (p. 98). However, Janoski's view of "low resources and little power to act" does not always apply to the informal citizen-self. For as illustrated in the case of squatting and the emergence of the 'Area Don' in Jamaica low resources spawn creative means through which access to greater resources is gained and power is leveraged. In this respect the informal citizen-self has some similarities with the opportunistic citizen, particularly the rational pursuit of material interests and the time horizons that guide behaviour. The value orientation and behaviour of the informal citizen-self presuppose that a difficulty may arise in incurring obligations (paying taxes, voting, giving military service etc.).

Nonetheless, one must be cognizant of a wider process of informalisation and individualization that is taking place and which is accelerated by globalization. Post-modern discourses suggest that contemporary socio-political relations are characterized by 'disorder' and 'chaos' and that ambiguity and uncertainty are defining features or the most natural if not true reality. So, whereas formality could be referenced against interactions that are impersonal and transparent and that subscribe to universal rules and procedures, informality is the hallmark of post-modernism and features "interpersonal, less routine, less rigid and less ceremonial relationships which rely more on tacit knowledge than on prescribed norms" (Misztal 2000 p. 19). The construct of informal citizenship finds analytic resonance in postmodern socio-political processes in which identity is a function of the needs of the individual as expressed through economic consumption (Touraine 1998, 68 in Misztal 2000, 47). Individuality and informality are analytically and empirically contingent as demonstrated by the transformations occurring in Jamaica in that as citizens pursue their options independently, there is greater propensity for behaviour to deviate from institutionalized norms. Importantly citizenship in the modern state is encased in socio-political processes that are trending towards greater levels of informalisation making the informal economy and its social formations definitive prospects for the future. Postmodernism yields a "new politics of identity" which is compounded in the informal economy as the individual grapples with creating the opportunities that will give meaning to his/her life.

Finally citizenship status is an assurance of an acknowledgement by the state or its authorities of an obligation to protect the individual person and private life. The group of citizens which may be so designated by birth, residence or consent is distinctive in that, it and no other group, receives protection from the state (Walzer 1970 p 206). As a corollary the citizen is expected to acknowledge an obligation to the state through expressions of obedience (obey laws) and assumption of responsibilities (perform duties). By virtue of its size and the scope of its activities, the informal economy in Jamaica has created a social space that engenders the formation of sub-structures that are gradually assuming some of these functions. The notion of an informal citizenship is employed in this paper to illustrate the complexities that inhere in contemporary social membership. Thus, whereas formal citizenship status subordinates individualism to universalism and subculturalism to nationalism within the state; informal citizenship is the obverse. It is where there is alienation from the broader collectivity and where social cohesion in the society and loyalty to the political system is replaced by a spontaneous emergence of particularism and individual self-determination.

CONCLUSION

There is general settlement around the view that the modern state is the largest and most inclusive group that legitimizes an individual's membership in a political community. Yet simultaneously, the modern state continues to experience significant changes in its constitutive elements – its boundaries (spatial and social), its legitimacy as well as its capacity which altogether implicate its protective

functions and its centrality to the human experience. Certainly, in a developing state like Jamaica, these issues assume astronomic proportions in light of other structural weaknesses. These structural weaknesses combined with a wider process of informalisation create the context for the development of a kind of interaction where actors have relative freedom to interpret and determine the scope and content of their actions. The informal economy is the construct used in this paper to capture this process of social transformation and which is herein argued to have an effect in the development of an informal citizenship. In exploring the connection between an informal economy and informal citizenship, this paper sought to comprehend the values that the Jamaican body politic holds dear and further the extent to which those values are validated through one's social membership of the political collective. By the size of the informal economy in Jamaica and the social relations that it engenders one may conclude that satisfaction of basic needs is the essential underpinning of the degree of expression of community and thus is essential for engendering a sense of connection to a socio-political space. The informal citizen-self is an indication of a breach in the level of protection provided by a political community.

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NEW PERSPECTIVES ON CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN THE CARIBBEAN

By

Fabio Balboni, Wayne Charles-Soverall and Brigette McDonald Levy

ABSTRACT

This paper aims at shedding light on the practice of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the Caribbean region. Two main reasons make this effort worthwhile: firstly, through the practice of CSR, the private sector can play a decisive role in addressing some of the development challenges that we currently observe in the region, and secondly, there has been relatively little research to date on CSR in the Caribbean, considering that most of the existing literature on Latin America and the Caribbean deals mainly with the former.

In the first part of the paper we provide an overview of the practice of CSR by the private sector in three of the main economies of the region (Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica and Barbados). In the second part, based on these results, we draw some conclusions at the regional level and identify some key elements that would increase the effectiveness of CSR as a development tool for the region. We refer to these elements as *Strategic Drivers of CSR in the Caribbean*.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years there has been increasing consensus on the decisive role that the private sector can play in the development of a country or a region at a broader level, aside from the contribution in economic terms (i.e. profit sharing, taxation, employment). The key channel through which this contribution can be achieved is trough the practice of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Essentially, CSR embodies two emergent concepts - value creation and triple bottom line. Elkington (1997) contends that for a business corporation to prosper over the long term, it must continuously meet society's needs for goods and services without destroying natural or social capital. The triple bottom line reporting approach (Sarre, 2000) acknowledges financial, environmental and social responsibilities of the firms to the wider society (Sarre, Doig and Fiedler, 2001).

Though the fundamental idea behind CSR is that a corporation or company has a responsibility to society's development beyond the maximization of profit and of shareholder's value, it has been shown that when the CSR strategy is aligned with the company's core business it can lead to a wide range of bottom-line benefits, such as increased employee motivation and retention, higher productivity, reduced absenteeism and more efficient environmental-friendly production techniques among many others.[2] From this perspective, CSR is different from philanthropy and handing out of small sums of money to various organizations, which do not generate any business return.[3]

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[2] For an excellent analysis of the business benefits that CSR can be achieved through CSR see Porter MR.and M.E. Kramer (2002). According to these two authors, a strategic planning and implementation of CSR can have a positive impact on the 'competitive context' of a company, which consists of four interrelated elements that affects its profitability. These elements are: (i) factor conditions, (ii) demand conditions, (iii) context for strategy and rivalry and, finally, (iv) related and supporting industries.

[3] A recent paper by Collier J. and R. Esteban (2004) makes a distinction between integrated and decoupled CSR policies. In the first case ethics programmes are integrated into corporate policies and employees will be implicated in the exercise of corporate responsibility while in the second they are mainly 'window-dressing' exercises that can easily be decoupled from

CSR entails both practices that focus on the core business and the workforce (*internal CSR*) and social and environmental programmes within the communities and at the national level (*external CSR*). There is a wide range of CSR practices that, while contributing to the socio-economical development of the country, have a positive impact on the bottom line. To name a few: increase employment standards and health and safety practices, engage in the development and marketing of products and services for the poor,[4] reduce waste, utilize highly efficient environmental-friendly production techniques, sponsor educational programmes at the national level and pool resources to create shared institutions towards increasing the pool of potential high-skilled workers, enhance national competitiveness and the quality of local suppliers through international supply-chains management and finally support and build capacity within Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) towards increasing the sustainability of their projects.

0.1 REVIEW OF THE EXISTING LITERATURE ON CSR IN THE CARIBBEAN REGION

While there might be differences from country to country, the Caribbean region faces a number of common challenges in its drive towards attaining sustainable development. These include: high levels of poverty[5] and social inequity, increasing divide among the poorest and the richest tier of the population, high levels of underemployment and juvenile unemployment, increasing urban violence and crime, high incidence of HIV and AIDS, exposure to natural disasters, brain drain[6] and inadequate access to new information technologies. Several common strategies have been identified by the Governments to address these challenges,[7] however it seems evident that without the support of the private sector to complement the efforts of the public sector, they will hardly achieve the expected results. In acknowledgment of this there is a surge of interest on the topic of CSR, reflected in the rise of national organizations promoting its practice, an extensive media coverage and an increasing number of CSR events region-wide (Peinado-Vara, 2004). However, the data on the actual level and incidence of CSR in the Caribbean are far from being exhaustive.

Jones (2003) interviewed representatives from 58 business corporations in 6 countries across the Caribbean, namely Barbados, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Lucia, and Trinidad. The research also included feedback from 25 NGOs. The study found that the likelihood of a company making a social investment was positively affected by the size of the company in terms of revenue generation, the number of years of operation and, finally, the social environment in the country. It also highlighted that two of the biggest impediments to enhanced CSR programmes by business in the region are inadequate human resources and small CSR budgets. Using a three-wave analytical model (see Table 1), the study concluded that, similarly to developed countries, CSR practice in the Caribbean was still rooted in basic philanthropic giving (75%) rather than strategic philanthropy (25%) and social investment (5%).

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everyday organizational activities. In this case employees usually know little or nothing about the stated CSR policies of their employer. Two of the reasons why decoupling may arise is too rigid compliance with guidelines and external regulations or 'quick-fix' responses to media attention

4 Prahlad, C.K and S.L. Hart (2002) provides several examples of companies that achieved significant business benefits targeting the needs of the consumers at the "bottom of the pyramid". These are often overlooked by traditional business strategies, which tend to focus on higher unitary margins rather than on the scale of production.

5 Countries such as Antigua, the Bahamas, Barbados and St. Kitts, having invested heavily in the social sector, have achieved relatively low levels of poverty (Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, *Social Sector Investment Programme 2007*)

6 Countries such as Jamaica, Dominican Republic, Cuba, Trinidad and Tobago have a high level of emigration of qualified labour. Based on data provided by the United States Census, of all foreign nationals living in the United States, 10% are of Caribbean origin. For further information, go to www.census.gov.

7 The strategies identified by the Governments in the document "Towards a Caribbean Vision 2020" include: reducing poverty and enhancing social protection for particularly vulnerable groups, providing a more equitable access to employment, ensuring the integrity and the preservation of the environment, improving the transparency and accountability of governments.

Table 1. The Three-Wave Model of CSR (Source: Jones, 2003)

	First Wave	Second Wave	Third Wave
Rationale	Philanthropy	Strategic philanthropy	Community/investment
Management	Ad-hoc	Systematic manager	Entrepreneur/consultant
Approach	Passive	Responsive	Building capacity

According to the author, some of the reasons why Caribbean experiences with CSR may lag behind the western experiences include the small size of markets, resulting in relatively small profits for the companies and the limited number of competitors, which implies that the need for obtaining a competitive CSR business edge typically is not a priority for many companies.

In a paper by Haslam (2004), the Caribbean was ranked lowest ("stalled") within the western hemisphere in exhibiting CSR practices, with a huge gap between CSR practice in North America and the rest of the Americas.[8] When analysing the two biggest economies of the region, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, the author found an almost non-existent participation of the private sector, a lack of government advocacy and promotion and general public awareness. The conclusion of the paper is that CSR in Latin America and the Caribbean seem to be heavily influenced by international NGOs, guidelines from multinational headquarters, and multilateral institutions, suggesting a lack of local ownership of CSR initiatives.

Peinado-Vara (2004) pointed out the minimal government involvement in the practice of CSR in the Caribbean region where, differently from countries such as Brazil and Chile, there are limited tax incentives for companies to encourage corporate donations for developmental goals. In the paper by Jones (2003) it was also noted that half of the business leaders interviewed felt there were no special fiscal incentives for CSR investments and only 29% were able to actually claim tax concessions.

A recent study by UNDP and Institute of Business (2005) on the contribution of the private sector to regional development in the Caribbean Region, concluded that the majority of the existing "developed-oriented business practices" did not seem to be "sufficiently driven by business profitability to be considered sustainable".[9]

Finally, Dick-Forde (2006) explored the CSR practices of three leading financial institutions in the Caribbean (Republic Bank Ltd., FirstCaribbean International Bank and Citicorp Inc), with a view to determining their social impact and sustainability.[10] The findings of the study indicated that little attention was paid to the issues of environment and sustainable development. They also revealed an absence of

[8] This study is based on an analysis of the number of hits that the search engine returned when using the tern CSR. Evidently, this type of methodology is biased towards countries with a heavy use of the internet.

[9] The study highlights a number of "development oriented business practices" (DOPB) undertaken by companies in the region that contributed to sustainable development while also increasing the profits. However, the initiatives included in the report were limited to the areas of tertiary education, supply-chains management, health and safety practices and "green products", due to the lack of evidence of similar initiatives in other areas such as poverty reduction, environmental management and development and distribution of products for the poor.

[10] The criteria used to analyse the social impact of these programs included a combination of social theory, the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) guidelines for the financial services sector on social performance, and UNEPFI.

Caribbean signatories to UNEPFI[11] and a lack of participation by countries in many of the international standards related to sustainable development. Finally, there was a significant gap between the CSR practices of MNCs and their subsidiaries in the Caribbean, which can be seen as the difference between the rhetoric and the reality of CSR.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. In the first section we provide new data on the practice of CSR in Trinidad & Tobago, Barbados and Jamaica. In the second, we discuss these findings and draw some general conclusions at the regional level. Finally, in the third section, we provide some recommendations for future research and some policy conclusion on the necessity to implement three key "*Strategic Drivers of CSR in the Caribbean*".

1. CSR Practices in Selected Caribbean Countries

1.1. Trinidad & Tobago

Trinidad and Tobago experienced strong economic growth over the last decade, mainly driven by the buoyancy on natural resources (oil and gas) and the subsequent high level of FDI. The economy of the country is highly depend on the Energy sector as its main income-earner, accounting for over 45% of GDP in 2006, while the other key sectors of the economy are the Manufacturing, Construction and Financial. Despite being classified as a high human development country in the Human Development Report (HDR) 2006 (UNDP, 2006) the country still faces a wide range of socio-economic challenges, including high levels of poverty, social exclusion, income inequality and crime among others.[12] The Government adopted in 2004 a National Development Plan, Vision 2020, which identifies five key pillars for national development.[13] The booming private sector in the country has a great potential to contribute towards the achievement of the national development goals, and while there is widespread evidence of several initiatives in the area, until recently no systematic study had been undertaken on the practice of CSR in the country. "Mapping Corporate Social Responsibility in Trinidad and Tobago" (UNDP and STCIC, 2007)[14] provides for the first time an overview of the level of CSR which can be considered fairly representative of the whole country.[15] Building on the main findings of the report, in this paper we add some considerations based on further analysis of the data collected during the research exercise.

A first element to be highlighted is the general reluctance of the companies to participate to the initiative. In fact, it was necessary to contact almost 200 companies in order to achieve the final sample

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[11] United Nations Environment Programme's Finance Initiative.

[12] The level of poverty in Trinidad and Tobago is still very high (21% of the population lives below the national poverty line). The income distribution shows a high level of disparity between the richest and the lowest tiers of the population, with the richest 20% of the population accounting for almost 50% of the expenditure and the poorest 20% for a mere 5%. While females usually attain a higher level of education than men, the average income is less than half than the one of men, with similar job positions that had different salaries depending on the gender (UNDP, HDR 2006). Access to quality housing is another important issue: a 2006 survey by the Ministry of Housing showed that almost 40% of the applicants did not afford even the lowest cost homes currently under construction (Ministry of Housing of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, *Housing Colloquium 2006*).

[13] The five pillars are: (i) Developing Innovative People, (ii) Nurturing a Caring Society, (iii) Governing Effectively, (iv) Enabling Competitive Businesses and (v) Investing in Sound Infrastructure and Environment (Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, *Vision 2020 Operational plan 2007-2010*, November 2006).

[14] In the ANNEX section a table with the major results of the study is presented.

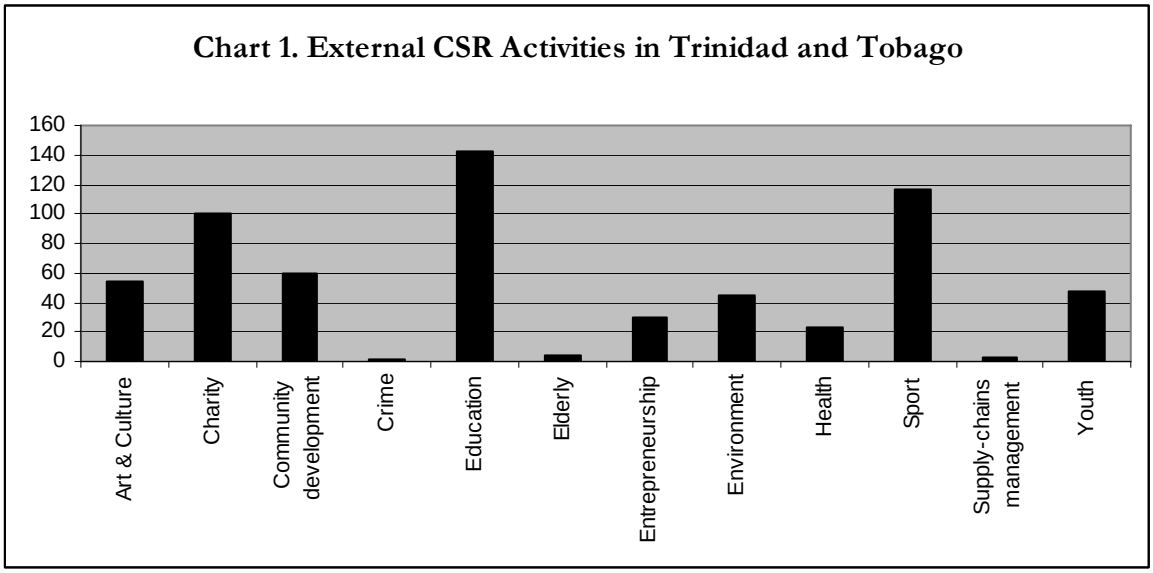
[15] The study refers to the period 2001-2006. The sample is composed of 90 companies from all major sectors of the economy, including large companies and SMEs, foreign owned companies as well as local, both public and private owned. The study was conducted by means of a questionnaire. The companies in the sample were selected on the basis of the GDP and employment contribution of each sector. This joint criterion was identified to avoid over-representing sectors such as the Energy and Related industries, which provide a huge contribution in terms of GDP (over 45% in 2006) but limited in terms of employment (3.5%) (Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago, Annual Economic Review 2006).

target of 90. A possible explanation is a lack of awareness of CSR, particularly amongst local companies and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). Another important limitation to the research was the lack of transparency with respect to CSR practices: only 18 companies published some information on their CSR related activities and 68 disclosed financial information on the funds allocated to social and environmental programmes.[16]

The main finding of the study is that Companies from the Energy and Related industries sector play the leading role as a contributor to the socio-economic development of the country, accounting for over half of the total money spent by the companies in the sample on external social and environmental programmes. Apart a few exceptions, this sector comprises mainly subsidiaries of large Multinational Companies (MNCs). Another relevant sector in terms of their expenditure on external CSR programmes is the Financial, where companies showed an increasing engagement over the recent years, often setting departments specifically devoted to CSR. On the contrary, the Tourism sector showed a very limited engagement, both in terms of human and financial resources.

The geographical distribution of external social and environmental programmes reflects the areas where companies generate their revenues, because companies, and particularly those from the Energy and related industries sector, tend to engage in CSR projects within their fence-line communities. On the other hand, the Financial and Restaurants sector (particularly Fast Food companies) were engaging mainly in programmes at the national or even regional level, depending on their areas of interest. As regards the thematic areas of the programmes, the study highlights that activities with a high Public Relation (PR) value, particularly in the areas of sport and social activities, attracted the majority of the investment. Other areas of interest for the companies were education, followed by health, art and culture and community programmes, while a limited engagement was seen in the area of environment. While some important initiatives have been undertaken by large MNCs in the areas of supply-chains management and local content development, these seemed to be mainly stand-alone initiatives revealing a lack of coordination at the national level.[17]

Chart 1. External CSR Activities in Trinidad and Tobago



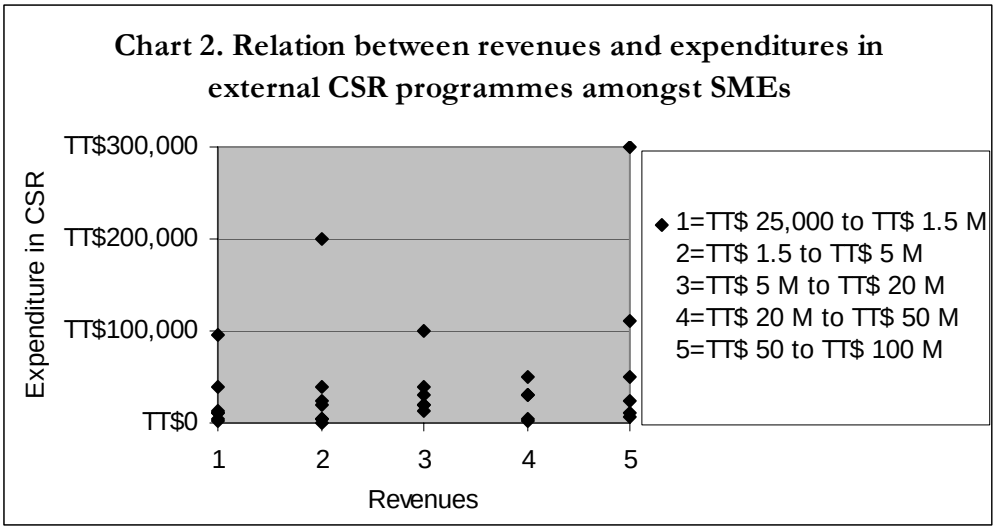
[16] Interestingly, the percentage of companies that disclosed this information is higher among SMEs (90%) than large companies (less than 80%), highlighting that the major problem with respect to transparency seem to regard large companies and not SMEs. The main reason adducted by large companies in particular was that it was an information key to their strategic plans and revealing it would have given an advantage to their competitors.

[17] The Local Content Development Policy, recently introduced by the Ministry of Energy and the Energy Industries, has not yet been able to deliver the expected results.

Finally, with respect to the monies spent through third party organization, which was more relevant among large enterprises, companies showed a general reluctance due to the limited information available on the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in order to assess their reliability and the sustainability of their projects.[18]

Considering the benefits identified by the companies from their social engagement, it was clear that the majority of these activities were more of a philanthropic nature rather than true CSR. Further analysis shows that this was particularly evident for SMEs: only 50% of the SMEs promoted CSR programmes that were aligned with their core business (compared to a 90% amongst large companies) and close to 60% did not identify any business benefits from these programmes. In addition, while according to the literature on the strategic implications of CSR (Mc Williams and Siegel, 2002) we should expect different levels of CSR-related expenditures from different sectors and types of products, the money spent by SMEs was generally low and showed no significant cross-sector variation, revealing that SMEs view CSR more as an expenditure than a strategic investment.

Chart 2. Relation between revenues and expenditures in external CSR programmes amongst SMEs



With respect to the programme planning, the study shows that senior management is always involved in the decision-making process, only in some cases with the inclusion of other stakeholders – employees, communities, shareholders and contractors. For MNCs the parent company's guidelines provided the key framework for programme planning. [19] Around 60% of the companies had a pre-assigned yearly budget for these activities but further analysis shows that this percentage is only 35% amongst SMEs, revealing a high degree of *ad-hoc* allocation of funds. In addition, this allocation of funds was mainly demand-driven without undertaking any need assessment. In only a few cases employee volunteering was used by companies as a device to address the real needs of their communities, but also increase the outreach of these programmes and reduce the costs.

Further analysis of the data shows that publicly-traded companies scored higher than privately owned, both with respect to the reporting of CSR activities (40% of the publicly traded companies produced some form of report on CSR, compared to only 15% of the private) and to the inclusion of other stakeholders in

[18] The existing CSOs registries are not updated on a regular base, providing information from the financial books and on the sustainability of the projects undertaken. While there are several government initiatives currently underway, among which the most relevant is the 2006 NGO scan by the Ministry of Social Development, tangible results are visible only in the long run.

[19] In addition, through these guidelines and codes of conducts some of the foreign contractors introduced standards of quality, health and safety practices to which also local suppliers have to abide, which had a great impact on the development of CSR practices among local companies.

the decision-making process (senior management decided alone without any consultation in 35% of publicly-traded companies compared to almost two thirds of private ones).

With respect to internal aspects of CSR, the study revealed that companies were to be increasingly compliant with national legislation (OSHA)[20] and other industry-specific regulations. However, there was still a significant gap between large companies and SMEs, and the Construction sector in particular registered a limited implementation of Health and Safety polices, despite an high incidence of work-related accidents. All companies provided a wide range of programmes to train their employees, while the assessment of internal CSR practices and provision of employee benefits varied a lot across sectors and also between large companies and SMEs.[21]

Finally, the study showed a low regard towards environmental issues such as reduction of emissions, waste management, promotion of environment-friendly production techniques, with the exception of the Energy and related industries sector. Company's policies and values in the area of environment were not transmitted down to the level of the employees in less than 60% of the cases. The monitoring and compliance with environmental laws seemed to be particularly low within local companies in the Construction sector. Only few MNCs had Environmental Management Systems (EMS). Finally, more than half of the companies in the Tourism sector did not implement any type -formal or informal- of environmental policy and no one to date achieved international certification.[22]

In conclusion, it can be stated that, while the private sector as a whole plays a relevant role in the socio-economical development of Trinidad and Tobago, [23] foreign companies are leading the way in the practice of CSR while there is still a limited participation by local companies and particularly SMEs. In addition, there are at least three key factors that hinder the capacity of CSR to be an effective tool for national development: the lack of evidence-based planning and alignment of the programmes with the national development goals, the limited involvement of the Government[24] and the negligible number of impact assessments undertaken by the companies.

1.2. Jamaica

The economy of Jamaica is largely dependent on tourism as its main income earner. Bauxite, agriculture and light manufacturing play smaller but important roles. In the last decade Jamaica experienced sluggish economic growth, annual single or low double digit inflation since 1997 – down

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[20] The Occupational Health and Safety Act (OSHA) was officially introduced in 2004, however to date only some parts of it have actually been implemented.

[21] The main benefits provided by companies to their employees were health insurance, pension systems, entertainment/gym, maternity and in some cases paternity leave, assistance with tuition and education, transportation housing and travel allowances and finally investment plans and low interest loans, particularly in the Financial and Real estate sector. A striking difference between SMEs and large companies was observed in areas such as in the provision of health insurance and contribution to pension funds beyond what required by the law.

[22] Despite the existence of a development plan for Tobago which is centred on the concept of eco-tourism as a key instrument for the diversification of the economy, so far no concrete strategy has been identified to promote it among the private sector, for example establishing a local environmental certification, which has been done in other countries (e.g. Costa Rica) that pursued a similar development strategy.

[23] "the money spent by these 68 companies on social and environmental programmes represents, on a yearly average, from 2% to 4% of the Government's allocation for the programme development of the Social Ministries.For more information see "Mapping Corporate Social Responsibility in Trinidad and Tobago (UNDP and STCIC, 2007), p. 10.

[24] The Local Content Development Policy, recently introduced by the Ministry of Energy and the Energy Industries, has not yet been able to deliver the expected results. One of the other initiative is the "Wear and Tear" allowance for companies providing day care facilities or homework centres for the children of their employees. This allowance will be extended according to the 2008 Budget proposal and this further incentive was a key factor between the launch by the local Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturer's Association (TTMA) of a joint project between several companies to build common facilities to provide child care and assistance.

from a high of 77% in 1992, declining real revenues and a rapidly growing public, largely internal, with debt servicing accounting now for over 60% of total budgetary expenditures. Classified in the latest HDR 2005 as a middle level developing country,[25] it is affected by a number of social challenges which include: increasing level of poverty, particularly in rural communities,[26] high unemployment rates, particularly among the youth,[27] gender inequality,[28] high levels of crime and violence[29]. The country is currently in the process of developing its National Development Plan, and, given declining resources, there is an opportunity to engage civil society, NGOs, the church and especially the private sector in being part of the solution. While the contribution of individual private companies has been noted, usually through the media and the Annual Repots of publicly traded companies, there is no compilation of these data.

This overview of the practice of CSR in Jamaica presents a preliminary summary of three recent initiatives: (i) a national survey of Private Sector companies on the barriers and drivers in supporting national development activities, (ii) a study of publicly trading companies on the practice of CSR and (iii) a survey of members of an industry association on CSR funded by the ILO. The companies in the sample represent all sectors of the economy, both in urban and rural settings. One major limitation of the research was that, due to the reluctance of many companies to state the allocation of funds to CSR activities, the magnitude of the private sector's contribution cannot be determined.

All companies reported that they engaged on CSR activities and indicated that they made donations to worthwhile causes when asked. However, just below 80% of the companies indicated that would like to give more, but were constrained by lack of awareness of national needs and priorities and lack of knowledge on the reliability of the CSOs that made requests.[30]

While all companies made charitable donations, less than a third did through a structured mechanism such as a Foundation or dedicated member of staff. Sixty percent of companies reported that they had a pre-approved CSR budget, often in the Marketing or PR budget, but only less than 10% indicated that they had a giving plan that is linked to, and supportive of their business strategy.

Publicly traded companies were more likely to have a formal structure, or be considering putting in a structure, for their external CSR activities, usually in the form of a non-profit Foundation guided by a board of directors. On the contrary, in large privately held the giving decision is usually controlled by the CEO and other management. Similarly, SMEs tended to give based on the manager/owner discretion. Around 80% considered the community in which they were located as a priority for support, while also supporting national initiatives and specific issues driven by demand.

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[25] In the HDR 2006 Jamaica is ranked at 104th place, five place lower than the previous HDR (HDR, UNDP 2006).

[26] In 2006 18,7 of the population was living below the national poverty line, more that in 2005 (HDR, UNDP 2006).

[27] The unemployment rate is constant at approximately 16%. Almost half of teenagers (46%) are unemployed, with the highest rates being for those who did not complete their secondary education. It should be highlighted that teenagers who are out of school and out-of-work have few skills are often illiterate and therefore more vulnerable to antisocial behaviours, violence and drug abuse. See Statistical Institute of Jamaica, Labour Force Survey, 2004.

[28] Female unemployment is twice that of male unemployment, despite the higher education attainment of females (HDR, UNDP 2006). In addition, women usually earn less than men, partially because they are concentrated in low paying sectors and partly because the same type of jobs offer different pays for men and women (Planning Institute of Jamaica, Labour Market Information Newsletter, No. 28, 1998).

[29] The three main areas of violence are: domestic violence, including rape and sexual assault, abuse and murder and that associated with drug and gang activity and these are heavily concentrated in low income urban areas (28% of all murders take place in Kingston). Crime and violence is a youthful phenomenon in Jamaica, (in 1999 55% of all crimes were committed by persons 26 and under, and 40% of murder victims were between the ages of 13 and 25 years). Finally, despite the decline in recent years, the murder rate is extremely high (34 per 100000) (Republic of Jamaica, Economic and Social Survey Jamaica, 2005).

[30] As a matter of fact, all companies reported that they had at one time refused to support a project because they were unaware of the NGO and/or uncertain if the project was a good one to fund.

Donations to CSOs are more prevalent in larger companies, while smaller companies tended to support community initiatives and local projects. Larger companies were also more likely to support a series of project on a specific theme, such as a number of early childhood education project, or donations that strengthened environmental awareness and clean up projects. The main areas of support were education, health, youth development and finally crime and violence. Companies also supported sports projects through sponsorship and donations as well as environmental education and clean up activities. A few companies reported that they sponsored advocacy programmes, especially around children and youth issues.

Looking at the internal aspects of CSR, Jamaican companies showed a strong degree of compliance with local and international standards of Occupational Health and Safety (OHS). This is due in part to initiatives in the Ministry of Labour that pushed for the development of a national health and safety policy that called for local firms to develop and then implement corporate strategies. In addition, in response to introduction of National HIV polices, that examine confidentiality, counseling and testing as well as management of all chronic diseases in the workplace, the Private Sector, especially larger companies and branches of multinational corporations, developed firm policies on OHS, HIV and other chronic diseases. This culminated in the formation of the Business Council on HIV/AIDS - a coalition of private sector firms that seeks to strengthen the corporate response to the HIV pandemic. With respect to a sector-specific analysis, the mining manufacturing and food service sectors showed high compliance with the Occupation standards, while food service and financial services sectors had HIV awareness and prevention programmes. Staff training[31] and the provision of benefits to the employees at all levels was consistently well developed in both publicly traded companies and private enterprises.[32] The training provided was in the context of a planned career development in less than 25% of the firms, often the larger firms with formal staff assessment linked to benefits and promotion. Finally, in general the HRD practices of the firms are in keeping with the national policy and regulation framework in this area and the island benefits from a number of unions and sophisticated bargaining and dispute resolution mechanism, including labour, management and government partners.

With respect to the regulation and compliance of environmental aspects of CSR, environmental best practices varies widely depending on sector, and status of company.[33] Bauxite mining companies, as branches of international organizations, have a robust framework and guidelines, monitored by the Jamaica Bauxite Institute, that include conservation of natural and built resources as well as reclamation of lands to original or useful states once mining is complete. On the contrary, the smaller local companies that predominate in provision of aggregate for construction tended to not have a formal environmental policy and monitoring is weak and sporadic. Construction companies reported that they had environmental guidelines in place but, with the exclusion of one company, they did not monitor the practices of their suppliers. Finally, most companies in the Tourism sector reported that they implemented initiatives towards raising the awareness of environmental issues, reducing waste water, recycling water

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[31] All companies reported that they conducted internal training and facilitated both weekly - and monthly - paid staff to participate in external training opportunities that ranged from degree programmes to technical development to business and leadership skills training. There was a tendency for management and supervisory staff to predominate in tertiary training while technical and vocational training were the areas of training for the semiskilled and unskilled workers (weekly paid).

[32] Employee benefits ranged from annual performance based bonuses, discretionary bonuses, life and health insurance, uniform, car, housing, and pension, and these varied widely by sector, size of company and number of employees. Companies with more than 50 staff tended to offer a wider range of benefits, with uniform, health insurance and pension for all staff with management levels also benefiting from car, access to loans, and housing allowances. Financial and other service companies were more likely to have benefits that included access to loans, clothing and car allowances as well as formal pension and Employee Assistance programmes.

[33] The Government, through the Environmental Ministry and the Cabinet Office, has developed protocols for Environmental and Strategic Impact Assessments that are part of approval processes for building and infrastructure development. However, since not all activities require approval for implementation, the environmental practices may vary from sector to sector or type of activity.

and conserve energy.[34] The larger properties indicated that they considered staff involvement in these activities critical for success while in smaller properties the activities tended to be driven and owned by manager/owner.

In conclusion, in Jamaica the private sector is increasingly being called to participate in and support development initiatives but, while the scan shows that many companies are choosing to listen to the call and act, there is a wide variation in the nature of the activities and the ways they are implemented. Most companies seem display rigor in internal staff development programmes but limited activities in environmental best practices. Philanthropy remains the dominant form of social expenditure, and these activities are often linked to Marketing and PR departments rather than through the corporate offices and integrated in business plans. The companies that move towards this more strategic approach have an awareness of the value of CSR as a tool for company growth as well as contributing to community and national development.

1.3. Barbados

The Barbadian economy recorded its fifth consecutive year of growth at 3.9% in 2006. The key sectors driving the economy are the Wholesale and Retail Trade, followed by Business and General Services, Tourism, Finance and Transport, Storage and Communication, while the Manufacturing and Agricultural –both sugar and non-sugar- sectors experienced relative decline over the recent years.[35] The unemployment rate was estimated at 8.7%, one percent lower than in 2005.[36] Barbados is a high human development country according to the HDR 2006, ranking 31st out of 175 countries, the highest ranking for every Caribbean Country. However, it still faces a number of social challenges such as the stigma associated with HIV/AIDS at the workplace and a rapidly ageing population. Since 1991 Barbados practices Social Partnership as a tripartite consultative and negotiating mechanism for policy-making and economic development including government, employers and labour. Its broaden goal is to promote social dialogue towards building national consensus for socially acceptable public policy. According to Charles-Soverall and Khan (2004) however, although there is consensus that the social partnership has served Barbados quite well, recently there has been a call for greater social inclusion in the decision-making process and concerns about the increasingly diverging interest of the parties.

The state of CSR practice and the real impact that CSR activities have in overcoming social challenges in Barbados remains relatively underdeveloped and under-researched. A recent study was undertaken to gauge the CSR achievements of 22 business corporations, including 5 SBEs.[37] The data was collected during July 2007 by 15 graduate students of the International Management programme, IMGT 6040, University of the West Indies/Barbados. The methodology for this study included quantitative and qualitative research methods based on a variety of techniques such as browsing relevant websites, e-mail surveys, telephone surveys, and direct interviews with representatives from selected business corporations

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[34] These initiatives included: highlighting local flora and fauna on property, education materials that culminates in requesting guests to reuse towels to reduce laundry, and to be energy conscious, and using brown water for landscaping irrigation. One group of hotels also included in their mandate educating suppliers in good environmental practice, and exposed their suppliers – known as 'partners' – to a wide range of environmentally friendly activities such as organic farming, terracing, use and disposal of fertilizers and pesticides and water recycling techniques.

[35] For further information see Caricom secretariat, *National Account digest 2000-2003*, Georgetown, Guyana.

[36] Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs of the Republic of Barbados, *Barbados Economic and Social Report*, 2006.

[37]. The business corporations in which direct interviews were conducted included Republic Bank of Canada (Barbados), Cable & Wireless (Barbados) Ltd., Ernst & Young (Barbados), FirstCaribbean Int.Bank (Bank), KPMG (Barbados), Republic Bank of T&T, Barbados Ice Co. Ltd., Barbados Salvation Army, Lashley & Waithe Fish Processors Inc., Soroptimist Int. of Barbados, Barbados Red Cross, the Barbados Cricket Association, and the Barbados Cricket League. Those businesses that were engaged in telephone surveys included Chickmont Ltd. Guardian General, Butterfield Bank, Fujitsu (Barbados) Ltd., Banks Holdings (Barbados) Ltd. and Williams Industries. The email surveys included Arawak Cement Ltd., Caribbean Money Market Brokers, Royal Bank of Canada, and Sagicor.

and Social Business Enterprises (SBEs). In addition, the analysis incorporated the use of the three wave model by Jones (2003) and the five stage corporate citizenship model by Mirvis and Googins (2006)[38]. In assessing CSR practice in Barbados the study makes a clear distinction between actual CSR (adoption and practice of CSR principles with a view to actively creating social value) and the rhetoric of 'corporate responsibility', which simply translates into relativities (minimising risk and acting in conformity with prevailing social norms). The analysis of the data revealed some very interesting findings and insights.

The response rate was relatively high with 18 organizations out of 22 responding positively and only 4 failing to respond. Of the 18 responses, 5 did not practice CSR and 3 were not familiar with the concept, suggesting that the awareness of the concept and practice of CSR is still relatively new.

For the most part, 20 of the 22 business corporations surveyed operated on the basic principle of "giving back to the community and making a positive impact as a corporate citizen" (KPMG). The evidence confirmed the earlier research findings of Jones (2003) and Dick-Forde (2006) when analysed within the context of the three wave model of CSR described early.

The findings also indicated that CSR practice in Barbados was predominantly philanthropic and based on the charity principle. This philanthropic approach was not limited to any one sector but evenly spread across the various sectors - SBEs (5), banking sector (4), commercial (3), construction (3), insurance (2), auditing (2), financial services (1), telecommunications (1), and poultry (1).[39]

Among the companies interviewed there appears to be a keen sense of awareness of the potential benefits to be derived from effective and sustainable CSR practice. This was ably demonstrated by strong leadership commitment towards improving the CSR practice through advocating social change, sponsoring varied and numerous community activities, preparing annual CSR Reports and becoming increasingly aware of their organisation's impact on society.

In conclusion, these findings imply that there is a significant need for further marketing, stakeholder sensitization, vigorous research, wider application and strategic incorporation of CSR practice into the daily management practices of companies. Some organisations speak about a policy of corporate responsibility rather than CSR with the general belief that it is one and the same; projects are viewed as sustainable as a result of the longevity of sponsorship rather than the ability to make a difference in the lives of people and communities. Clearly, there is a need to move beyond these early stages to greater marketing and social change.

2. Conclusions

The findings in the three countries show some interesting similarities and differences. First of all, CSR seems to be mainly foreign driven, while there is little awareness locally of CSR and of its potential to strengthen and support the core business of a company. In Jamaica only 10% of the companies interviewed indicated that their CSR strategy which was supportive of the business model, while in Trinidad and Tobago half of the SMEs interviewed declared not to expect/achieve any business-related benefit from their social programmes.[40]

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[38] Tables summarizing these models are presented in p. 4 (Table 1) and p. 16 (Table 2).

[39] An overview of the social programmes undertaken by the companies is presented in ANNEX II

[40] In Barbados there seems to be a greater awareness of the benefits associated with the practice of CSR, however no assessment on the actual achievement of these benefits was made in the research exercise.

Secondly, while there was a growing interest by the private sector in the practice of CSR and the overwhelming majority of the companies interviewed were undertaking some sort of CSR-related activity, it was clear that most of them were engaging more in philanthropic-types of activities rather than true CSR. While this philanthropic approach was quite widespread across sectors in the case of Barbados, in Trinidad and Tobago it was evident that some sectors were moving away from this approach, mainly those that were exposed to international competition.[41]

Thirdly, there is a general lack of transparency on CSR, both with respect to publicly available information on a company's CSR activities and the disclosure of financial information on the programmes. This confirms the findings of Jones (2003), where over one fourth of the companies did not disclose financial information on their CSR programmes. However, the studies conducted in Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica shows that being publicly trades partially reduces this lack of transparency, facilitating the inclusion of more stakeholders in the decision-making process and increasing the publication CSR-related information.

Fourth, donations are often demand driven with a lack of needs assessment and the decision often relies in the hands on the senior management alone. In addition, both in Jamaica and in Trinidad and Tobago there is a widespread lack of trust and collaboration between the private companies and CSOs, due to lack of available information on the their financial books and projects.

Fifth, companies only rarely undertake formal impact assessments of their CSR programmes. This hinders the possibility to assess the real benefits for the communities and also the Return on Investment (ROI) for the companies, towards increasing the sustainability of these programmes.

Sixth, the role of the Government in promoting the practice of CSR is still limited, confirming the findings of Jones (2003) and Peinado-Vara (2004). There are few fiscal or regulatory incentives for CSR apart from the recently introduced regulations on health and safety[42] and the private-public partnerships (PPPs) for development are still limited in number and scope. In addition, while all three countries developed National Development Plans,[43] the specific role and intervention areas for the private sector in the achievement of these plans has not been explored in detail.

Seventh, with respect to internal CSR, despite an increasing compliance with labour laws and regulations and the provision of a wide range of training programmes for the workforce, companies often do not go beyond the requirements of the law to reap maximum benefits from internal CSR practices[44] or assess these practices towards increasing their effectiveness and business returns.

Finally, there seem to be a limited engagement by the private sector on environmental issues, both with respect to reducing the environmental footprint and engaging in the production of "green" products and services, confirming the findings of UNDP and Institute of Business (2005) and Dick-Forde (2006). Contradictory trends were found in the Tourism sector, with a significantly higher engagement on environmental aspects in Jamaica than in Trinidad and Tobago.[45]

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41 This includes Trans-Caribbean Corporations (TCCs) which are based in a Caribbean country.

42 Both Trinidad and Tobago and Jamaica recently introduced policies for Occupational Health and Safety (OHS).

43 These are: *Vision 2020* in Trinidad and Tobago, the *National Strategic Plan of Barbados 2006-2025* and the *National Development Plan* in Jamaica.

44 Among others: reduced absenteeism, increased work productivity and employee motivation and retention.

45 This might be explained on the basis of the higher presence of foreign companies in the tourism sector in Jamaica than in Trinidad and Tobago. This would confirm the evidence highlighted from the study in Trinidad and Tobago that foreign companies are leading the way in the practice of CSR, being more aware of the potential benefits.

Using the Corporate Citizenship Model (see Table 2), we can conclude that most of the companies interviewed in the three countries operated at stage 1 and 2 of this model. Therefore they have a long way to go before they can achieve the "Transforming" stage.

Table 2. Corporate Citizenship Model (Source: Philip Mirvis and Bradley Googins,2006).

	Stage 1. Elementary	Stage 2. Engaged	Stage 3. Innovative	Stage 4. Integrated	Stage 5. Transforming
Citizenship Concept	Jobs, Profits, and Taxes	Philanthropy, Environmental Protection	Stakeholder Management	Sustainability or Triple Bottom Line	Change the Game
Strategic Intent	Legal Compliance	License to Operate	Business Case	Value Proposition	Market Creation or Social Change
Leadership	Lip Service, Out of Touch	Supporter, in the Loop	Steward, On Top of It	Champion, in Front of It	Visionary, Ahead of the Pack
Structure	Marginal: Staff Driven	Functional Ownership	Cross-Functional Coordination	Organizational Alignment	Mainstream: Business Driven
Issues Management	Defensive	Reactive, Policies	Responsive, Programs	Pro-Active, Systems	Defining
Stakeholder Relationships	Unilateral	Interactitve	Mutual Influence	Partnership	Multi-Organization Alliances
Transparency	Flank Protection	Public Relations	Public Reporting	Assurance	Full Disclosure

On the other hand, this study shows that the conclusions of Haslam (2002), which ranked the Caribbean region as "stalled" in the practice of CSR underestimate the current state of play, at least with respect to the three countries taken into consideration. Nonetheless, we agree with the author that what has been missing so far is not the involvement in social programmes *per se*, but the local ownership of CSR activities. As noted by Jones (2003), that there a number of companies which moved from a philanthropic perspective to strategic giving, but these are mainly foreign companies. Increasing the local ownership would entail promoting CSR among local companies as well as localizing the CSR practices of MNCs, which in most of the cases are directed from abroad, to address regional needs.

2.1. Extending the conclusions to the Caribbean region

Two elements might lead to the conclusion that these findings can be extended to the entire Caribbean region. Firstly, the three countries considered for the analysis represent an important size of the Caribbean economy. [46] contributing in 2002 they contributed to approximately 75% of the GDP of Caricom. Secondly, the findings are quite consistent across these countries, despite different economic profiles,

[46] In 2002 they contributed to approximately 75% of the GDP of Caricom, respectively 39% Trinidad and Tobago, 27% Jamaica and 9% Barbados (Caricom statistics, www.caricomstats.org). Caricom includes 15 countries of the Caribbean region: Antigua and Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago. It should be noted that the two major economies of the Caribbean region, excluding Port Rico, are not members of Caricom (Dominican Republic and Cuba).

suggesting that they night be common to the entire region.[47] However, when transposing the conclusions at the regional level, some caveats have to be bear in mind.

First of all, the fact that subsidiaries of large MNCs play the leading role in the provision of CSR programmes in Trinidad and Tobago might sound bad news for countries that do not experience a similar buoyancy of natural resources. In fact, FDI from outside the Caribbean region are concentrated in a few countries and this might limit the potential for the development of the CSR in countries that do not experience a high level of FDI.[48] In addition to that, further analysis should be devoted to the specific sectors in which the FDI are concentrated.[49]

Secondly, the economic profile plays a role in shaping the potential for the development of CSR in a country, since the strategic implications of CSR are different from sector to sector (McWilliams and Siegler, 2002). Therefore, despite the fact that the three country-studies confirmed this hypothesis only to a limited extent,[50] countries with different economics profiles might still have different landscapes with respect to the actual and potential development of the practice of CSR and an accurate analysis of the key sectors driving the economy has non-trivial implications for an evidence-based policy planning towards increase the effectiveness of CSR as a development tool. In addition, the agricultural sector still plays an important role in several countries of the region[51] and, while none of the three studies was able to assess the practice of CSR in the agricultural sector, due the marginal contribution to the countries GDP, this sector provides a wide range of possible implementation areas for CSR, ranging from labour standards to organic products.

Finally, one recent trend might open the way for a new era of external CSR programmes at the regional level: the surge of Trans-Caribbean Corporations (TCCs). Recently there has been an increasing number of TCCs particularly in the financial sector (banking and insurance), followed by other sectors such as tourism, distribution and manufacturing, food and beverage, cement, airline and finally shipping transport.[52] The study conducted in Trinidad and Tobago showed that the TCCs in the sample, which

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47 For an overview of the major sectors driving the economy see the country-specific sections above.

48 Extra-regional FDI is concentrated in a small number of countries. Over 80% of the FDI in Caricom member states was made in only three countries (the Bahamas, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago in ascending order of importance) Energy-related industries, minerals and tourism are significant sectors for extra-regional FDI For example countries such as Bahamas, Barbados, Dominican Republic and Jamaica attract an important amount of extra-regional FDI in the tourism sector. See Caribbean Trade and Investment Report (Caricom Secreatirat, *Caribbean Trade and Investment Report 2005*, Georgetown, 2005).

49 Since foreign companies, as shown in the study conducted in Trinidad and Tobago, have a greater awareness of the strategic implication of CSR, different patterns of CSR could arise depending on which sector FDI are concentrated. For example the study in Trinidad and Tobago showed that, while sectors such as the Energy and Related industries and the Financial were increasingly using CSR as a strategic investment and differentiation strategy, others such as the Manufacturing, Distribution and Construction and Relate industries were still concentrating their social engagement in the areas of charity.

50 In fact, cross-sector differences in the patterns of CSR expenditure were evident only among large companies. For example a sector-specific analysis of the data from the study conducted in Trinidad and Tobago shows that the 16 companies from the Energy and related industries that disclosed financial information contributed for over 50% of the total money spent in social and environmental programmes, while the 10 from the Tourism sector contributed for less than 2%. On the other hand a key element explaining the limited degree of heterogeneity of CSR practices across different sectors is certainly the lack awareness among local companies, and SMEs in particular, of the strategic implications of CSR. In addition, also the perceived demand for certain CSR activities plays a key role, as revealed by the very different engagement on environmental issues by the Tourism sector in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.

51 In the region there are at least two countries which have a predominantly agriculture-based economy (Guyana and Haiti) while agriculture represents an important contributor to GDP also in Guatemala, Belize and Dominica.

52 Intra-regional investment accounted for around 10% of total FDI inflows to CARICOM Member States Trinidad and Tobago is by far the leading regional investor country, followed by Barbados and Jamaica, while the main destination countries have been Jamaica, Barbados, the OECS and Belize, Guyana and Suriname. The headquarters of the trans-Caribbean corporations are mainly in Trinidad and Tobago and, to a lesser extent, Barbados (shipping) and Jamaica (predominantly hotels and tourism). With respect to non-equity investment, construction companies out of Trinidad and Tobago are engaged in providing services to the region and some firms in the areas of law, architecture, and accounting also provide cross-border

came from the financial, fast food and distribution sector, were among the largest CSR contributors and, while they previously focused in the home country, they recently started a regional CSR programme. Therefore, the practice of CSR among TCCs at the regional level should be investigated further.

In conclusion, there is a need for extending the study conducted in Trinidad and Tobago to include Jamaica, Barbados, Guyana, and the sub-region, i.e. the OECS states. It should focus on MNCs, TCCs and local companies, including SMEs and the Agricultural sector, to assess their actual and potential level of engagement in CSR activities and the resources – human and financial – devoted to CSR programmes. This type of research is crucial for an evidence-based policy planning at the regional level involving governments, business associations and CSOs to mainstream the CSR agenda and make the private sector a key promoter of sustainable development.

2.2. Taking action

To overcome the lack of local ownership and the existing gaps in the practice of CSR in the region which have been highlighted in the paper, three *Strategic Drivers of CSR in the Caribbean* should be considered: (i) *Enabling Elements,* (ii) *Structural Elements* and (iii) *Making the Business Case for CSR.*

The *Enabling Elements* are elements which can increase the level and effectiveness of CSR regardless of the geographical location.

The first *Enabling Element* is the involvement of the Public Sector. Ward (2004) identified several roles of the Public Sector in underpinning CSR.[53] In a time when numerous countries in the Caribbean are adopting innovative development policies, Governments have the opportunity to engage the private sector to align CSR practices with domestic priorities and to localize CSR policies from large MNCs so that they are rooted in local sustainable development concerns and not imposed from above by "fourth party" stakeholders. As highlighted by Jones (2003), fiscal incentives and regulations should also be explored as tool to increase the companies' engagement in CSR.

The second are CSR tools, guidelines and standards, which provide an essential support for the companies in the planning and implementation of CSR. The access and awareness of these instruments by local companies in the region should be increased to facilitate their engagement in CSR.[54] In addition, the increasing focus on international standard makes CSR an inescapable obligation for local companies in the Caribbean in order to access the global market.[55]

The third *Enabling Element* is the local demand for CSR. There is a need to improve people's awareness of the ethical practices associated with products on the market, an issue that is often overlooked in many developing countries because of a lack of consumer advocacy and the general

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services. Finally, certain fast food firms from Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago use their brand name to franchise operations in other Caribbean countries.

[53] These are: (i) mandating (i.e. establishment and implementation of minimum environmental and social standards and other laws, regulations and penalties), (ii) facilitating (i.e. incentives, setting clear overall policy frameworks and positions to guide business investment in CSR, regulations on transparency and disclosure, advocacy), (iii) partnering (i.e. public-private partnerships to leverage complementary skills and resources to tackle issues within the CSR agenda) and finally (iv) endorsing (i.e. showing public political support for particular kinds of CSR practice, promoting specific award schemes and the adoption of guidelines and standards; and leading by example, such as through public procurement practices).

[54] For example, the UN Global Compact (UNGC) can be used as an overarching international framework that enables business corporations and social business enterprises to move beyond voluntary compliance with CSR practices. The fact that in Argentina the number of companies that are signatories to the 10 principles of the UNGC increased from 1 organization to 222 during the official launching of the initiative (Peinado-Vara, 2004) shows how the UNGC can exert a great attractiveness to companies, ensuring greater local ownership and participation.

[55] In 2008/2009 the ISO will publish the ISO 26000, a guidance standard on Social Responsibility.

absence of consumer associations.[56] The presence of a contractors' demand for ethical products and services and ethical funds also exerts attractiveness for companies to integrate CSR in their practices.

Finally, the civil society is a key player in the CSR process, both as a partner and as a watchdog of private companies. With respect to the first aspect, there is the need to create and share spaces and opportunities for the private sector to work with and contribute to community and civil society driven projects and strengthen civil society to liaise with the private sector in partnership opportunities.[57] With respect to the second aspect, with their presence on the ground CSOs should strengthen their capacity for supervising the projects, increasing the transparency and information disclosure, in order to reduce the asymmetry of information between what private companies market and what they actually do.

The *Structural Elements* are elements which are specific of the Caribbean regional and which should be adequately capitalized to increase their impact in the development of the practice of CSR.

First of all, this study showed that large MNCs are leading the way in CSR in several countries of the region but their contribution to national development could be further enhanced through practices such as supply-chains development, local content development policies and expanding their areas of intervention beyond the fence-line communities to include areas such as disaster recovery and alternative energies.[58] In addition, the international standards practiced by these companies can affect the CSR practices of local suppliers and contractors, provided that the same standards are applied to the headquarters and the subsidiaries. [59] However, while the contribution of MNCs to the development of CSR is evident for some countries, there is still an open mark on its possible role at the regional level.

The second *Structural Element* is the increasing number of Trans-Caribbean Corporations (TCCs). Differently from large MNCs, these companies are concentrated in the countries endowed with some specific resources, but are quite spread all over the region. Therefore countries should capitalize on the increasing engagement of TCCs in CSR programmes at the regional level, as highlighted in Trinidad and Tobago, directing these efforts to regional development priorities. With the provision of an adequate framework and incentives, this trend could be lead to a progressive alignment also in the internal CSR across the region, overcoming the existing differences due to country-specific elements. Other institutions could play a key role to facilitate this process, such as the Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce (CAIC), providing a regional forum for the discussion and implementation of common CSR standards, or regional umbrella organizations for CSOs, establishing common registration requirements across different countries.

Finally, the third *Structural Element* are SMEs. There are approximately half a million SMEs in the region which employ around 70% of the total workforce[60], therefore the issue of SME needs some further consideration. In fact, CSR as such is often seen as the natural territory of medium and large enterprises,

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[56] In recent times, some countries such as Trinidad and Tobago, Barbados, and Jamaica have established Fair Trading Commissions and appropriate consumer legislation to correct these deficiencies.

[57] For example a regional database for CSOs could provide an excellent exchange market for CSOs and the private sector. The inclusion of financial information on the projects undertaken would increase the reliability of these organizations as possible counterparts, addressing the current lack of trust highlighted among the conclusions.

[58] The government has a key role in setting standards for MNCs, providing guidance on possible areas of interventions. This role of the Government is well accepted in the economic doctrine. For example Boone (1995) clarifies that: "a country which imports all the products of the markets concerned has an incentive to raise its minimum quality standards as long as both firms enter the market in the country because their consumers can realize a higher surplus whereas the diminished profits leave the country anyway".

[59] A survey conducted in 2002 by the National American Manufacturers (www.nam.org) showed that the direct positive impact of these companies on labour and environmental standards in the broader policy context can be more effective than punitive actions, for example trade sanctions, against developing country governments.

[60] Organization of American States (OAS) statistics.

while SMEs' social investment is usually more targeted towards sponsorship and charity contributions, and the study in Trinidad and Tobago confirmed a very limited engagement of SMEs in CSR practices. However, while it is true that SMEs experience various constraints that limit their capacity to engage in CSR, a recent study by the European Commission (2006) pointed out that "attitudinal barriers are more important in explaining the inactivity of SMEs in socially responsible activities than lack of resources (lack of money/time)".[61] Finding adequate ways to remove these barriers would be of crucial importance for the region since, due to their high labour-content, even a minimal improvement in their internal CSR practices would have a great impact on the living conditions of millions of households.

This leads us to the final strategic driver, *Making the Business Case for CSR*. The research has revealed that companies that are more aware of the strategic implication of CSR and of its capacity to strengthen the business plan increase the level and effectiveness of their CSR. In addition, it has also a positive impact on the long-tern sustainability of the programmes undertaken (UNDP, 2005). Therefore raising the awareness of the value and benefits of good corporate social behaviors and strengthening the capacity of firms to include CSR in their business planning on strategic lines should be in the first place in the agenda of regional organizations and industry associations, as a powerful mean to increase the local ownership of CSR, including SMEs.

[61] European Commission, European SMEs and Social and Environmental responsibility, *Observatory of European SMEs*, 2002, No. 4, p. 17.

ANNEX. Summary of the main findings of the country-studies

Table 3
External CSR and programme planning in Trinidad and Tobago

Questions		All	Excluding Energy	SMEs
Companies involved in social and environmental programmes		98%	97%	98%
Classification of programmes from a budgetary perspective	Marketing and PR	20%	26%	14%
	Charity/Donations and Sponsorships	42%	56%	62%
	Corporate Social Responsibility	12%	6%	0%
	Community development	20%	15%	17%
	Miscellaneous/Non specified expenditure	8%	11%	14%
Pre-assigned annual allocation for these programmes		60%	49%	36%
Company has identified its stakeholders		92%	90%	87%
Stakeholders have been consulted to assess the development priorities and areas of intervention		58%	52%	50%
Consideration local needs in the planning process		76%	73%	60%
Feedbacks from identified stakeholders are taken into consideration		59%	54%	51%
Social and environmental programmes are aligned with on going company policies and products		72%	66%	55%
Company engaged in partnerships		71%	66%	55%
Company undertakes formal impact assessments of social and environmental programmes		18%	8%	7%
Benefits derived from the social and environmental programmes undertaken	Improve branding and image	51%	43%	47%
	Increase sales/market share/access to capital	20%	19%	21%
	Licence to operate	5%	0%	0%
	Long term relationship with stakeholders	20%	10%	15%
	Increase employee loyalty/potential labor pool	19%	2%	11%
	Goodwill and corporate citizenship	24%	24%	25%
	None	19%	24%	33%

Table 4
Internal CSR practices in Trinidad and Tobago

	All	Excluding Energy	SMEs
CSR practices with the workforce			
Monitor compliance with labour laws	94%	93%	92%
Health and Safety policy in place	82%	77%	72%
Health and Safety policy enforced	91%	90%	90%
Provision of programmes for employee/management training and development	91%	89%	85%
Provision of employee programmes for succession planning	60%	54%	37%
Provision of employee programmes for work life balance	52%	43%	25%
Provision of programmes for ethics training	52%	44%	42%
Employee assessment programmes	72%-82%	69%-77%	67%-72%
Provision of Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP)	67%	62%	55%
CSR practices in the area of environment	**All**	**Excluding Energy**	**SMEs**
Monitor environmental laws	74%	64%	67%
Adoption of a precautionary approach to environmental challenges	81%	76%	72%
Educating employees on the potential impact of their activites on the environment	60%	49%	44%
Adoption of initiatives to promote greater environmental awareness and preservation	66%	55%	54%
Implementation of waste reduction programmes	50%	52%	45%
Environmental Management Systems (formal/informal)	56%	43%	37%
Achievement of international environmental certification	24%	11%	15%
Company believe that environmental certification could bring competitive advantage	70%	64%	62%

Table 5
Profile of CSR Programmes in Barbados (Summer Class Summer Class of 2007, UWI, Cave Hill Campus

Corporation	CSR Projects	CSR Reports
RBC (Barbados)	Donations to culture, apprenticeship programmes, sports	2006
C&W (Barbados) Ltd.	Donations to projects in education, health, sports (18 yrs cricket), community development (15yrs NIFCA)	
E&Y (Barbados)	Community outreach (Optimist Club/2000), Internship awards, sponsorships and donations	
FirstCaribbean Int.	Scholarship programmes, UWI partnership programme, adopt-a-cause programme, Unsung Heroes programme (2003), community and entrepreneurship programme	
KPMG (Barbados)	Barbados Jazz Festival, UWI annual scholarships, Adopt-a-school programme, Make a Difference Day Initiative, donations of cash to less fortunate citizens, internship programmes at UWI and SJPP.	
RBTT	Arts and culture, adopt-a-school programme, Peace and Love in Schools (J'ca), sport, environment, community outreach (NGOs, CBOS)	
Barbados Ice Co. Ltd.	Charity	
Barbados Salvation Army	Spiritual upliftment, feeding programmes, men's hostels, shelter for disaster victims, thrift shop, League of Mercy, Youth Education Centre, prison ministry	
L&W Fish Processors Inc.	Charities	
Soroptimist Int. of Barbados	Social activities	
Barbados Red Cross	Meals on wheels programme, HIV/AIDS prevention programme, ambulance service, youth commission & youth links	
BCA/BCL	Cricket training	

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THE CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN TO THE ECONOMY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION ESPECIALLY IN RELATION TO UNPAID WORK PERFORMED BY WOMENIN THE CARIBBEAN

By

Sheila Stuart

ABSTRACT

This paper examines concepts of unpaid work as performed by women, the care economy and time use. It seeks to provide linkages between reproductive and productive work, the importance of such work for economic and social development and women's participation in decision-making. The concepts of "public" and "private" are explored from the gender perspective.

Reference is made to international agreements relating to unpaid work by women, in particular the BPFA, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and agreements of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) which include articles relating to gender equality and maternity and paternity rights. In addition, reference is made to the incorporation of these mandates within the constitutions and legal frameworks of countries in the subregion.

INTRODUCTION

There is a direct link to women's lack of access to power and decision-making in the invisibility of their contribution to the economy through the unpaid domestic work they perform on a daily basis in the home and community. The 1999 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report addressed the issue of care and the global economy, linking the care economy to the invisible heart, and the often neglected care and caring labour necessary for the economic development of societies. *"The task of providing for dependants, for children, the sick, the elderly, and (do not forget) all the rest of us, exhausted from the demands of daily life. Human development is nourished not only by expanding incomes, schooling, health, empowerment and a clean environment, but also care. And the essence of care is in the human bonds that it creates and supplies. Care, sometimes referred to as social reproduction, is also essential for economic sustainability."*

An important and yet unrecognized aspect of women's contribution to economic development of the subregion is in the area of food security, through their involvement in food production – where women are responsible for kitchen or backyard gardens which for decades have provided food for their families, friends and the community. In addition, women have been involved in cottage industries, garment making/needlework, and the vending of fish, agricultural and other food products. It is Caribbean women who have been responsible for intraregional transportation of food – though this activity is now dwindling.

Today unpaid work needs to be recognized, especially for understanding the contribution of women to the national economy and for assuring women better living conditions. The only Caribbean country to recognize women's unwaged work is the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago in 1996. This achievement was the result of ongoing advocacy by the women's movement in that country, particularly the work of

the National Union of Domestic Employees[62] (NUDE), which was in the forefront of advocating for government to count women's unremunerated work. NUDE is also affiliated to the International Wages for Housework Group which stressed that all women do housework – a job for which they receive no money. The Wages for Housework campaign linked the powerlessness of women to their lack of money.

The Counting Women's Unremunerated Work Bill was introduced into Parliament by Senator Diana Mahabir-Wyatt in February 1995, as a private members Bill as an act to *"require the Central Statistical Office and other public bodies to produce and maintain statistics relative to the counting of unremunerated work and to provide a mechanism for quantifying and recording the monetary value of such work."* The Bill was expected to take into account and give value to a wide range of domestic tasks including agricultural work, care-giving of the sick, the disabled, the elderly and very young; work carried out in and around households; unpaid "Social Safety Net" work, and work carried out by both men and women in Non-governmental Organizations, *not as part of the overall GDP but, hopefully, parallel to it, to recognize the value of the work that is being given to society."*[63]

In addition to the limited legislative and constitutional provisions which recognize and value the care work performed by women, feminist and gender and development literature have also helped to contribute to our understanding of the relationship between the household and the role of women in the economy or, more specifically, women's role in the labour force. This literature has provided a critique of the private and public spheres of women's lives, in which the household is presented as the private domain to which women are relegated as opposed to the public spheres of the economy and polity which is seen as the almost exclusive domain of men. Feminist economists have redefined the sphere of economic enquiry by emphasizing the concept of the provisioning of human life which encompasses all the tasks that women undertake to maintain human life.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Twelve years after Beijing and three years following the last review, not much change has occurred with respect to the recognition of women's contribution to the economy. There continues to be lack of equality because of the unequal sharing of reproductive work between women and men, and the invisibility of women's work continues – despite commitments to CEDAW, BPFA, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and numerous recommendations emanating from subregional forums on the promotion of gender equality. Research on methods to strengthen the definition and the implementation of counting women's unpaid work is greatly lacking in the subregion.

Historically, gender mainstreaming gained currency from the Third World Conference on Women, held in Nairobi in 1985, which called for the recognition of women's unpaid work. Areas identified for action were:

(a) The recognition of the extent and value of women's unpaid work, inside and outside the home;

(b) Inclusion of women's paid and unpaid work in national accounts and economic statistics;

(c) The sharing of domestic responsibilities;

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[62] Ms. Clotil Walcott of Trinidad and Tobago, was the founder of the first trade union for domestic employees in Trinidad and Tobago – the National Union of Domestic Employees (NUDE).

[63] Parliamentary Debates of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Tuesday, 7 February 1995 – 1453.

(d) The development of services, to reduce women's child-care and domestic workload, including introduction of incentives to encourage employers to provide child-care facilities for working parents; and

(e) The establishment of flexible working hours to encourage the sharing of child-care and domestic work between parents.

Paragraph 206 of the Beijing Platform for Action calls for "Actions to be taken by national, regional and international statistical services and relevant governmental and United Nations agencies, in cooperation with research and documentation organizations, in their respective areas of responsibility, specifically to: *Develop a more comprehensive knowledge of all forms of work and employment by:*

(i) Improving data collection on the unremunerated work which is already included in the United Nations System of National Accounts, such as in agriculture, particularly subsistence agriculture, and other types of non-market production activities;

(ii) Improving measurement that at present underestimates women's unemployment and underemployment in the labour market;

(iii) Developing methods, in the appropriate forum, for assessing the value, in quantitative terms, of unremunerated work that is outside national accounts, such as caring for dependents and preparing food, for possible reflection in satellite or other official accounts that may be produced separately from but are consistent with core national accounts, with a view to recognizing the economic contribution of women and making visible the unequal distribution of remunerated and unremunerated work between women and men;

Calls were also made for the introduction of policies to promote harmonization of work and family responsibilities for women and men.[64] In 2004 Caribbean governments, in preparation for the Ninth Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, adopted a number of recommendations aimed at strengthening the process towards the attainment of gender equality, social justice and development in the subregion with particular reference to:

(a) Continuing to collect and examine data on women's and men's unwaged work as a contribution to the domestic economy;

(b) Strengthening the gender framework (including time use surveys) within the methodology for poverty assessment in the subregion in order to capture the differential impact of poverty on women and men; and

(c) Reviewing and examining the policies and laws in order to enhance provisions for child support and maintenance in so far as the vulnerability of women and the households that they head is integrally linked to women's disproportionate responsibility for child care.[65]

Twelve years after the Beijing Conference a vital achievement has been the decision of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC to include gender statistics in the working programme, but many of the agreed actions remains to be taken, especially in relation to time-use surveys. These surveys focus on the frequency and duration of human activities and attempt to measure the different ways in which

[64] Beijing Platform for Action.

[65] Accelerating Gender Equality. Report of the Technical Meeting of National Machineries for Women; and Fourth Caribbean Ministerial Conference on Women: Review and Appraisal of the Beijing Platform for Action. 11-13 February 2004.

people use their time during a 24-hour period. A primary motivator for the conduct of time-use surveys is a growing recognition that traditional statistical methods, such as national censuses, undervalue women's contributions to the economy.[66]

In the Caribbean there is definitely an urgent need for counting women's unwaged work. The overwhelming responsibility of Caribbean Community (CARICOM) women for unwaged caring work both explains and masks their poverty. It is masked or invisible because it forces poor women to search for avenues for making money whether via the formal or informal sector or via remittances or male financial assistance.

There is also need to quantify the value of housework to the economy. The findings of a recent survey in the United Kingdom indicated that if housework was paid, it would be worth an estimated 700 billion British pounds. The Caribbean subregion is still to undertake a comprehensive time use survey of households to calculate the monetary value of unpaid housework to the economy.

WOMEN AND CARE WORK

One of the most enduring facts of life is that assumptions and beliefs about the roles that men and women perform in society (as breadwinners and mothers/caregivers) remain universal and entrenched. Despite advances in the status of women and their entry into the paid labour force, women's central life interest continues to be viewed as being more focused on the traditional family life, what Barriteau[67] refers to as the ideological relations of gender, where the cultural specific construction of what it means to be a 'man' and a 'woman' in a given society remains stubbornly unchanged.

Mark Figueroa[68] identifies what he coins as gender privileging to the socio-economic outcomes and status of males and females in Caribbean society. Gender privileging is defined as a system of rights, exemptions, advantages and impunities enjoyed by one gender over the other and which gives one gender control over or access to expanded social space, resources, prestige and/or power.

In the context of the subject matter of this paper, it could be argued that the male gender has generally been privileged in the public sphere, where they dominate the public social space (males in work outside the home; males socializing in public spaces; males in soldiering), whereas there has been a privileging of the female gender in certain facets of the domestic private sphere (females in domestic work; females in childrearing). This translates into *the fact that boys, young men and indeed older men have the right to be in the streets day and night while they female relatives tend to be confined to the home.*

However the *privileging of the female gender with respect the domestic sphere does not in general bring with it a gender privilege for women* in the public sphere. Without getting too much into a theoretical discussion, the underlying thesis is that there is privileging of the female gender when it comes to domestic tasks such as washing, cleaning and cooking in the home, which is taken for granted as appropriate to the female gender. *It is not gender inappropriate for a female to put a man out of the kitchen or indeed the house if she is cleaning or in certain circumstances to direct him on the clothes he may wear.*

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[66] See Joyce Mary, Stewart Jay, "What can we learn from time-use data?", in *Monthly Labour Review,* Bureau of Labour Statistics of the U.S. Department of Labour, Washington D.C., August 1999, pp. 3-6

[67] Violet Eudine Barriteau, 2002. Understanding Relations of Gender in Contemporary Barbados. UWI Centre for Gender and Development Studies. Paper presented to the National Advisory Council on Gender, Barbados.

[68] Mark Figueroa. 1998, Gender Privileging and Socio-Economic Outcomes: The case of Health and Education in Jamaica, in Gender and the Family in the Caribbean, Proceedings of the Workshop "Family and the Quality of Gender Relations" 5-6 March 1997, Edited by Wilma Bailey. ISER, UWI, Mona, Jamaica.

This privileging of the female in the domestic sphere is closely linked to the historic under-privileging of the female gender, which precludes them from exercising power in the public sphere. Control of the public space translates into control of the market economy by the males, who have the ownership and control of wealth, higher incomes and the ability to spend a larger portion of their incomes on themselves. In stark contrast, females have less access to income and control of wealth, and any money they earn is spent first on food and clothing for their children and other family members, leaving very little for them to spend on themselves. In fact women's access to the labour market is severely affected by their reproductive work, thus limiting their access to economic resources.

The nature of women's and men's participation in the labour force is also very different. Women still have to reconcile family responsibilities and market work and they are employed in different jobs and occupation than men, often with lower wages. Women have engaged in the less formal types of work, working as unpaid workers in family businesses, in the informal sector or in various types of household economic activities. They continue to receive less pay than men. Official statistics on home-based work are scarce and its importance is grossly underestimated. Today the major factor still influencing gender-based differentials in the labour market is the division of work within the household and the time spent in the unpaid work. Women continue to spend more time on unpaid work than men.

According to the ILO, women throughout the world are primarily responsible for the care of family members and household tasks and therefore face greater constraints than men in terms of the amount of time and effort they can put into paid employment and productive work. In developing countries, there is still considerable reliance on the extended family – usually women and girls – for care of children, the sick and the elderly, and few public or private services have emerged in response to the increasing demand for care.

DEFINING UNPAID WORK

> *I am referring to domestic work which is necessary for the sustenance of life and health, to the care of the elderly, to the care of the handicapped, to childbearing, child-rearing, the socialization of children, the teaching, the feeding, the transporting, all that essential, emotional and psychological work which goes into developing people so that they become productive members of society, rather than unproductive and antisocial. All this work has traditionally been women's work.*[69]

Caribbean feminist research has explored the interactions between gendered divisions within the household and the labour market in an effort to dispel the artificial closures which ignore the interplay between domestic, family and community life. There has been much speculation that the need of the Caribbean woman for employment is caused by her major responsibility for family welfare, whether as heads of households or as secondary income earners, brought about by the increase in single parenting; the increased cost of living which demands the employment of two persons to support the household and the fact that it is now common for women to work outside the home.[70]

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[69] Senator Diana Mahabir-Wyatt as recorded in the *Hansard* of Trinidad and Tobago during the debate of the Counting Women's unremunerated work bill in 1995-1996.

[70] Stuart, Sheila. Demystifying Gender and Economics: The Role of Women in the Economies of the Caribbean. 1996. Paper presented to the WCC/CCC Consultation on Economic Justice for Women. Antigua and Barbuda.

Available literature refer to domestic work[71] or housework as *unpaid or unwaged or unremunerated* work[72], and all agree that this work is performed predominantly by women in their own homes, and while it primarily involves the care of children, is not limited to childcare but involves a wide range of activities. The literature identifies many different types of unpaid work, such as: (i) unpaid domestic work; (ii) unpaid subsistence activities; (iii) unpaid family work; (iv) unpaid work in paid workplaces; and (vi) volunteering.

The unpaid domestic work tasks performed by women for their households and families include preparation of meals, cleaning, clothing care, gardening, home maintenance and management, care for children and adults, and in some instances the provision of unpaid help to other households. It also includes shopping or obtaining services, and unpaid work in family businesses. It s important to underline that each category of work performed includes a subset of tasks, for example, unpaid subsistence activity is another kind of unpaid work, performed predominantly by women, and includes activities such as cultivation of vegetables, fetching wood and water and the care of livestock animals.

Volunteering which represents another category of unpaid work is often performed for persons that are not family members. It means both work done for formal non-profit organizations and care provided in an informal way by individuals for other individuals. Volunteer work is varied and extensive. It includes caring for neighbours, forming community groups and institutions, advocacy, helping out in political campaigns, working with people in or leaving prison, agriculture work community gardens, international producing theatre and arts, counseling and education. In the Caribbean, women also perform unpaid labour in the agricultural sector, and yet continue to have more responsibilities than men in the household, which reinforces women's marginalization and contributes to the gendered dimension of poverty.[73]

As mentioned in the introduction to this paper, the NUDE in Trinidad and Tobago, and the International Wages for Housework advocacy group, called repeatedly for an analysis of women's workload and lack of income emphasizing that women's workload was continually expanding yet they received the lowest wages. The call for the inclusion of women's unpaid work either in the Gross Domestic Product, or in a "Satellite Account" of each country in the subregion is seen as one of the most concrete ways of supporting women's fight against poverty.

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago stands alone as the only Caribbean State to pass legislation to Count Women's Unremunerated Work in 1996. The Counting Women's Unremunerated Work Bill was first introduced in February 1995, as an Act to *"require the Central Statistical Office and other public bodies to produce and maintain statistics relative to the counting of unremunerated work and to provide a mechanism for quantifying and recording the monetary value of such work."* The Bill was expected to take into account and give value to a wide range of domestic tasks including agricultural work, care-giving of the sick, the disabled, the elderly and very young; work carried out in and around households; unpaid "Social Safety Net" work, and work carried out by both men and women in Non-governmental Organizations, *not as part of the overall GDP but, hopefully, parallel to it, to recognize the value of the work that is being given to society."*[74]

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[71] The concept of domestic work has been variously referred to as housework and/or domestic labour and these terms are used interchangeably in this paper to refer to work in the domestic economy, also referred to as the care economy or reproductive work.

[72] It is argued that the time devoted to housework limits women's opportunities to earn wages or salaries in the formal labour market.

[73] www.unpac.ca (February 2007).

[74] Parliamentary Debates of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Tuesday, February 7, 1995 – 1453.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Another aspect of the unpaid work performed by women is best described as an extension of the social services that should in essence be provided by the State. This was magnified during the period of structural adjustment, when a greater burden was placed on women to provide social services once provided by the State which mirrored the unpaid care work carried out at the domestic level, for example, health care and other unpaid community services. This trend has continued over the last decade and has been exacerbated by the growing Human Immuno-deficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) epidemic.

The additional burden of care caused by the impact of HIV-AIDS in most countries of the Caribbean has added not only to the unpaid workload of predominantly older women, but it has also added to their poverty. These grandmothers and other relatives are increasingly being called upon to take care of their sick children and/or spouses and are often left to look after the orphaned grandchildren when parents afflicted with the disease die.

In many instances women are the ones looking after family members with AIDS-related illnesses because of the lack of hospital beds or because of the stigma and discrimination associated with the disease, which again makes this unpaid work very invisible. Further, women are likely to fall victim to poverty when the male head of household falls ill, leaving them to bear the burden of caring for orphaned children. Further, the loss of income is often the catalyst for women to seek other sources of income, whether legitimate of illegitimate.

This and other responsibilities underscore the myriad of social services provided by women at all stages in their lifecycle and for which they receive no payment or economic reward. In this regard, women contribute to what are very weak and inadequate social service delivery programmes and in no small measure to social protection.

SURVIVAL STRATEGIES

The gradual erosion of women's livelihoods in the agricultural sector as a result of trade liberalization policies have resulted in severe economic hardships for women as countries in the subregion battle with declining economic growth. Many women have been forced to adopt their own survival strategies, many of which are yet to be documented. The available studies point to an escalation in the informalisation of economies, the steady contraction of already inadequate social services, lack of a comprehensive welfare system, and negative fall-outs from the loss of preferential markets for their agricultural exports brought about by the global trade.

Women who once played a key role as marketers of agricultural produce in the domestic food marketing system and the inter-island or intraregional trade are now faced with a growing number of challenges which militate against their economic activity in this sector. The two greatest challenges are: (a) the increasing importation of agricultural produce, leading to a reduction in the domestic market for local produce, but which also impacts significantly on the lowering of income for family-sized producers who are forced to sell at lower prices in order to compete; and (b) the diminished markets for primary goods as a result of the removal of preferential markets, particularly for bananas.

In the aftermath of the sleuth of economic reforms, strict monetary policies and the elimination of barriers to the movement of goods have had a corrosive effect on the lives of Caribbean people, especially on women who have been forced to find new strategies for survival in order to feed their families. The

unequal gender relations within this changing process also means that women are more disadvantaged than men.

These challenging economic circumstances have led to an increased involvement in risky '*employment activities'* by women as an alternative means of survival. These activities include an increase in migration and drug trafficking, commercial sex work and involvement in the cultivation and marketing of illegal drugs. Women as heads of households who no longer have access to legitimate work avenues face lives of acute poverty leading many to take desperate actions as they struggle to ensure an everyday survival for their children.

The available information point to the fact that even in this sphere of illegal activity, there is blatant exploitation of women, their labour, their sexuality and their time which urgently needs to be further investigated. A growing number of women are prepared to swallow pellets of cocaine filled packets, (risking their very lives) and board a plane to travel intra and extraregionally in exchange for money to feed, clothe and educate their children or to make improvements to their social situation. Some women engage in this risky activity in order to meet the costs of taking care of family members, while others are coerced into this activity by gangs.

While information on this clandestine activity is still to be researched, anecdotal information reveals that the majority of women who engage in illegal activities are typically poverty-stricken and are often in a desperate state. For example, most of the 'drug mules' who end up in prisons in foreign countries leave children in their home countries, who are often forced to fend for themselves as the majority of drug couriers are single mothers. "Their main worry is their children, who have been left with mothers or sisters or friends, and how they can keep in contact with them."[75]

At the other end of the spectrum is the growing numbers of women, displaced from the legitimate agricultural sector and economy who are now engaged in the cultivation and marketing of illegal drugs as a means of supporting their families.

Another important factor in this complex maze of economic dependency that helps to push poor women into situations which make them vulnerable to HIV infection is the lack of employment opportunities and their sole responsibility for family, childcare and other dimensions of the domestic workload, which have forced many women and girls to resort to direct and indirect sex work as a survival strategy. The gender-power relations are such that it is usually men, not women who are the decision makers in sexual relationships. The power disparities includes access to material and financial resources which makes it extremely difficult, if not impossible for a woman to negotiate for safer sex practices with her partner, especially if she is financially dependent on him.[76] In this respect transactional sex (usually unsafe) is exchanged for money and/or other necessities.

Unfortunately it is complex and untenable situations such as these described here which subject many poor women with family responsibility to exclusion, vulnerability and in some instances societal ostracism. In situations where there is pressure to feed her children, risk-taking by the sex worker may assume secondary importance:

> *"When you are hustling in order to feed yourself and your children, the extra money that a man offers for unsafe sex lets you take the chance and forget about any disease*[77]*.*

[75] The United Kingdom-based Hibiscus Project, which works with Jamaican Prisoners and their families.
[76] See Stuart, 2000
[77] See Antonius-Smits, Christel C.F., Juanita Altenberg, Teersa Burleson et al. 1999.

THE INFORMAL SECTOR

The informal sector represents a significant component of the economic structure of many developing countries and in many instances represents an important provider of employment and economic opportunity[78] which, though central to the economy, often remains invisible. The informal sector has always been an avenue of employment for Caribbean women and has traditionally been regarded as the domain of women without a regular paid job or those who cannot survive on income from a male breadwinner.

These women have used a variety of subsistence activities to provide for their families including agricultural work in backyard gardening and the rearing of animals for family and sometimes community consumption, as well as other marginal economic projects and unpaid work in the home on the periphery of the cash economy.

This sector has expanded rapidly in the last two decades in response to the changing economic environment including the structural adjustment policies and other economic upheavals such as natural disasters and the loss of much of the export manufacturing sector, which employed large numbers of women in the export processing offshore operations, and the loss of the banana industry in the Windward Islands.

More and more women and men, who have no other avenues for employment, crowd into the services sector of the informal sector, particularly in the tourism sector operating in such areas as street vending, operating taxi services, selling food or other commercial goods and domestic work.

In many respects the avenues for economic sustainability for women are being shaped by the demands of the shifts in the global economy. For example, the subregion has witnessed a decline in the female hucksters and the inter-island trade in agricultural trade which once dominated an estimated 80 per cent to 90 per cent of the inter-island trade in agricultural goods and fuelled a vibrant informal economy.[79]

Further informal work is unprotected work and falls outside the mainstream of social protection, much needed by poor families to advance their social and economic development. Increasingly, informal work has expanded to work in the cash economy, characterized by the move from street vending and such operations to more sophisticated trading and marketing in unregistered small businesses which are not taxed.

Informal work nonetheless contributes substantially to the economy and national accounts, but there is no accurate measurement of this contribution in official statistics. Without the official statistics, alike the uncounted unpaid domestic activities, "*estimates of female participation rates could be implausibly low, GDP significantly underestimated and the share of population living below the poverty line overestimated."* The lack of data also impacts on the formulation and implementation of evidence based policies and programmes which seek to promote gender equality and eliminate child labour and poverty.

It is this dearth of information on the measurement and dimension of activities in the informal sector and its impact on social and economic development that has led the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean to embark on a research project aimed at raising public awareness and improving the availability and analyses of data on the informal sector – including employment, and the contribution to GDP. It is anticipated that the availability of data on the informal sector and informal employment will

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[78] UN-ESCAP. 2006. Project Document on Inter-regional Cooperation on the Measurement of Informal Sector and Informal employment.

[79] See Nurse and Sandiford. 1995.

improve data on women's economic participation and facilitate the development of more adequate measures of gender equality and women's economic empowerment. In addition, more reliable information will be generated on the *relationship between informal economic activities and poverty, gender inequalities in economic opportunities and participation, and the need for promoting decent work for all workers.*

MIGRATION AND THE CARIBBEAN TRANSNATIONAL FAMILY

Another survival strategy adopted by Caribbean women in search of better economic opportunities is that of migration. In fact, Caribbean peoples out of sheer economic necessity have migrated both internally and externally for decades, which is another critical factor in the formation of female headed households. However migration has also been responsible for the formation and structure of triangular family links creating what has been termed the Caribbean transnational family, which has been described as one of the most effective functioning family units brought about as a result of migration.[80]

Recent literature on Caribbean kinship has reversed the negative image once held of the Caribbean family unit as one of fragmentation, breakdown and dysfunction by highlighting functioning and supportive extended family networks despite residential and geographical separation[81], "viewed from the perspective of interdependent linkages the Caribbean family emerges as a transnational institution, powerful and resilient."

Within this context the transnational family extends across national boundaries, where migrant parents live overseas leaving children and grandmothers in the home country. Economic and emotional support continues to be provided through remittances which are sent home on a regular basis. Migrant parents in the host countries perform the breadwinner role, while the nurturing of children is carried out by extended family members such as grandmothers or other relatives with whom children reside, until they are reunited with their parent(s).

It is interesting to note that the majority of women who migrate, particularly to North America, often end up working in household domestic service as maids or babysitters, replicating their unpaid reproductive role, for which they receive an income in the productive sector. Added to this is the fact that a growing number of women who migrate are now the sole economic providers of their family household.

Patterns of migration have been shifting over the years, including changes in the patterns of migration and economic flows to the Caribbean which point to the fact that gender is a critical dimension in migratory processes and which demonstrate that economic resources whether these be monetary or in kind make a significant contribution to national development, which also needs to be counted.

ASSESSMENT OF RESPONSES TO THE ECLAC QUESTIONNAIRE ON UNPAID WORK

Responses to the ECLAC questionnaire on unpaid work were received from a total of 13 Caribbean countries. The assessment presented in this section is based on those responses. The majority of Caribbean countries lack constitutional provisions that recognize the unpaid housework performed by women. Trinidad and Tobago is the only country, which explicitly recognizes unpaid housework performed by women.

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[80] Rosina Wiltshire-Brodber. 1986. The Caribbean Transnational Family.
[81] See UNICEF 2003.

Assessment of the responses to the ECLAC questionnaire, indicate that efforts have been made by a number of Caribbean countries to measure the unpaid work of women. These are Jamaica, the Cayman Islands, and Belize. For example, Jamaica in 2004 introduced new statutory rules to provide for the equitable division of assets upon marriage or relationship breakdown. The Property (Rights of Spouses) Act, 2004, though gender-neutral in its provision, should be beneficial to women in proving entitlement to property. The new Act recognizes the contribution made by a spouse in the performance of unpaid domestic work. It recognizes women's contribution made in the areas of child-care and home duties. It stipulated that there should be no presumption that a monetary contribution is of greater value than a non-monetary contribution.

Belize introduced a National Gender Policy which seeks to accelerate progress in this area by addressing issues such as the unpaid economic value of domestic labour, equity in employment opportunities, child-care, access to credit and pension entitlements. The placing of an economic value on childcare and domestic duties in cases of separation or divorce is a step towards the empowerment of women and poverty alleviation particularly for those women who do not work outside the home. The recognition of common law unions is also vital since not only married persons are entitled to this benefit. Amendments by the government in 2001 to the *Supreme Court of Judicature Act* (91 148A) provide for the value of unpaid domestic labour, including child-rearing, to be included in the distribution of property upon the termination of a marriage or common-law union.

Dominica accounted for unpaid domestic work in national statistics in the last census in 2001. In their response to the ECLAC questionnaire, it was noted that there are no known available research studies specific to time use in unpaid domestic work/care-giving in Dominica. Nonetheless at various consultations, the contribution of the housewife to the household economy and the valuing of such work have come up for discussion especially as regards property rights or benefits to women in unions both married and common-law. Such consultations informed:

(a) The 2003 Draft Report on Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW);

(b) Report on the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) Domestic Violence and Family Law Reform Initiative;

(c) Preparation of Census 2001; and

(d) Preparation of the gender policy.

The Cayman Islands reported that there were no official research projects conducted specifically in relation to unpaid domestic work and/or caring activities. However, the Cayman Islands are in the process of conducting a National Assessment of Living Conditions in which some data regarding unpaid domestic work and/or care giving activities should be revealed. In addition, the 1999 Cayman Islands Population and Housing Census collected data regarding the number of hours persons self-reported that they spent on unpaid housework, unpaid childcare and unpaid elderly care. This data is broken down by district and sex. However, the Economics and Statistics Office was unable to confirm whether or not this data was sufficient enough to actually capture these unpaid activities.

Suriname made reference to a study "Verkennend beoordeling van mensenhandel in het Caribisch gebied" (Investigation of Trafficking in persons in the Caribbean) by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), June 2005, which states that paid domestic work is mostly carried out by women and is also informal, hardly noticeable, undervalued and unprotected. Investigators have not focused on this

subject, because it is one of the most concealed jobs and takes place in private buildings. There is no specific law or regulation regarding women's paid domestic workers in Suriname and most of the women have no employment contract, which makes them more vulnerable for exploitation.

The Bahamas, Barbados and St. Vincent and the Grenadines reported that there were no mechanisms for measuring the unpaid domestic work of women. While Trinidad and Tobago did not complete the questionnaire, this is the only Caribbean country with legislation which provides for the counting of women's unremunerated work. Act No. 29 of 1996 of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago require "*the Central Statistical Office and other public bodies to produce and maintain statistics relative to the counting of unremunerated work and to provide a mechanism for quantifying and recording the monetary value of such work"*.

In addition to the responses from the ECLAC questionnaire, selected data taken from census data is presented below which records the "non-economic" home duties performed by men and women in the Caribbean. The information in tables 1 and 2, show that in Belize and Guyana women have the greater burden of responsibilities for household work. The data also show that in Guyana men's participation in home duties is high, where it is almost equal to that of women. The lowest percentages are in St. Kitts and Nevis and in The Bahamas. The highest percentages of domestic duties performed by men are in Guyana and Jamaica; and the lowest in Trinidad and Tobago and The Bahamas. CARICOM women's responsibilities for unwaged work are numerous. They have overwhelming responsibility for child/family care; the poorer the household, community and/or country, the greater the burden of work. Because of this responsibility, women "hustle"[82] more than men to find a means of survival, often by finding multiple sources of waged work and/or other income.

Table 1
Percentage of non-economically active with home duties as main activity, 1980-1981 and 1990/1991.[83]

	1980/1981		1990/1991	
Country	Women	Men	Women	Men
Antigua and Barbuda	...	...	56	12
The Bahamas	50	1	51	8
Barbados	57	2	56	9
Belize	94	8	85	23
Dominica	75	11	71	25
Grenada	75	24	72	40
Guyana	86	10	89	60
Jamaica	...	...	65	44
Montserrat	59	10	56	20
St. Kitts and Nevis	...	...	53	11
Saint Lucia	80	15	69	28
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	75	7	71	28
Suriname	...	...	69	<1
Trinidad and Tobago	73	5	69	8

According to Andaiye[84], women's wages are kept down by the persistent treatment of women as primarily unwaged care-workers. In addition, economic restructuring has increased the burden of both unwaged and low-waged work and the expansion of women's presence in the informal sector which is undirected, unregulated, insecure, and oriented towards survival.

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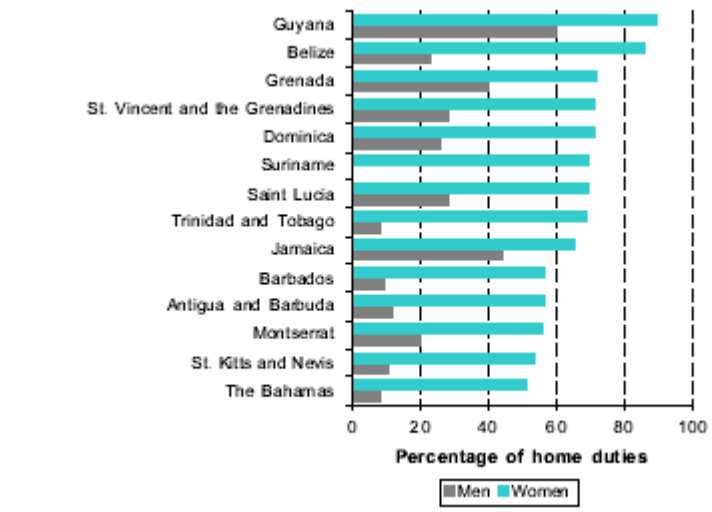
82 That is to underline the arduous efforts of women in finding the necessary resources for a decent life.

83 See Caribbean Community Secretariat, *Women and Men in the Caribbean Community. Facts and figures, 1980-2001,* Caribbean Community Secretariat, Georgetown, Guyana, 2003, p.88.

84 See Gender Equality in the Caribbean – Reality or Illusion 2003

Table 2
Home duties the main activity of most non-economically active women.[85]



VALUING UNPAID WORK

The assumption of a sexual division of labour ignores the importance of women's work and introduces a gender bias, through the undervaluing of the economic contributions of women in the domestic economy. As Andaiye argues, the foundation on which waged work continues to be segmented between women and men is the sexual division of labour at the level of unwaged caring labour in the household. According to her this recognition has provided the conceptual breakthrough, which led CARICOM governments to support the mandate to count women's unwaged work at the Beijing Conference. *"This mandate has been called one of the two most important decisions taken at Beijing because it addresses the basis of women's particular economic exploitation."*[86]

Despite these hard won battles, there stubbornly remains a reluctance to view housework as real work because it does not earn money. *Even among feminists who have emphasized that housework is real work, there is strong tendency to take the model of market employment as basic.* (R.M. Blackburn, 1999). It is interesting to note that economist Kenneth Galbraith as early as 1975 developed a proposal to value unpaid work. In "*Money: Whence it Came, Where it Went,"* Galbraith argues that if the value of our money is work, than all work can provide the value foundation for money.[87]

Some have argued that that there is a fundamental theoretical flaw[88] in the application of market conceptions of pay to the domestic economy, pointing out that it is erroneous to describe the domestic work performed by women as unpaid work because housework is carried out in the domestic economy and not in the 'capitalist' market economy. Indeed in the parliamentary debate of the *"Counting Unremunerated Work Bill"* in Trinidad and Tobago one of the male Senators admitted his own skepticism regarding merely documenting the unremunerated work of women and adding it to the country's GDP as

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85 See Caribbean Community Secretariat, *Women and Men in the Caribbean Community. Facts and figures, 1980-2001,* Caribbean Community Secretariat, Georgetown, Guyana, 2003, p.88.

86 Andaiye, Op Cit, Page 88

87 See Galbraith John Kenneth, *Money whence it came, where it went,* Houghton Mifflin, 1975.

88 R. M. Blackburn argues that housework is non-market work and therefore cannot be viewed in the same way as work in the market sector. See "is Housework Unpaid Work" in International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy, Volume 19 Number 7/8 1999.

making the GDP look bigger – and feared that this would lead to the country being graduated to a higher level of development and not being eligible for funds.[89] As a result, it called for the creation of a separate account to assess and quantify women's contributions to economic development.

> Strategic Objective 8 of the BPFA, calls for the development of an international classification of activities for time-use statistics that is sensitive to the differences between women and men in remunerated and unremunerated work, and collect data disaggregated by sex. At the national level, subject to national constraints:
>
> (i) Conduct regular time-use studies to measure, in quantitative terms, unremunerated work, including recording those activities that are performed simultaneously with remunerated or other unremunerated activities;
>
> (ii) Measure, in quantitative terms, unremunerated work that is outside national accounts, work to improve methods to assess its value, and accurately reflect its value in satellite or other official accounts which are separate from, but consistent with core national accounts.
>
> (Paragraph 206, item G).

Responses to the ECLAC questionnaire reveal that very few studies have been conducted in the Caribbean on women's paid and unpaid domestic work, however, the Government of Belize in 2001 amended its Supreme Court of Judicature Act to provide for the value of unpaid domestic labour, including child-rearing, to be included in the distribution of property upon the termination of a marriage or common-law union. In addition, in May 2006 the government appointed a Minimum Wage Council to examine paid domestic work, as well as other wages. In January 2007, Cabinet received the recommendations of the Council and approved that wages for domestics would be increased from $2.25 to $3.00 per hour.

Belize also reported that a non-governmental organization - Women Issues Network – Belize conducted a study in 2006 on paid domestic wages, which was submitted to the Minimum Wages Council. Dominica reported that while there were no known available research studies specific to time-use in unpaid domestic work/care giving in that country, the contribution of the housewife to the household economy and the valuing of such work have been discussed at various consultations. Areas of concern relate to property rights and benefits to women in unions, both married and common-law.

These consultations informed a number of initiatives and activities, including the preparation of the 2003 draft CEDAW Report, the Report on OECS Domestic Violence and Family Law Reform Initiative; preparation of the 2001 Census; and preparation of the Gender Policy which was presented to Cabinet in March 2006. Recommendations have also been made with respect to the issue of P*roperty Rights of Spouses in Marriage*, namely to have the indirect contributions by parties considered for provisions on the breakdown of the union, and with respect to *Matrimonial Property & Financial Provision Breakdown*, the criteria for division of property should not be the status of marriage, but the contribution of the parties. Further, the draft CEDAW Report makes recommendation under *Article 16 – Equality in Marriage and Family Law*, for the recognition of the contribution of women to work at home and joint enterprise in division of property upon divorce or breakdown of relationship.

It should be noted that a number of Caribbean countries do have legislation relative to domestic employees, for example, Barbados has a *Domestic Employees (hours of Duty) Act, 1982*, which makes provision for minimum pay or maximum hours per week. Rest periods and hours of work are controlled by statute.

[89] Senator Prof. John Spence, Tuesday 28 May 1996.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TIME-USE SURVEYS IN MEASURING UNPAID WORK

> *Activities excluded from the System of National Accounts (SNA), are household upkeep, such as preparing food, cleaning, taking care of children, the sick, the elderly and the disabled, paying bills, personal development, volunteer work, that is performed both in formal and informal sector.*

In the Caribbean there is the need to implement time-use surveys for understanding how unpaid work contributes to the national economies. These studies help to build a solid basis of information necessary for the implementation of gender sensitive policies, and the promotion of the value of women's work, their role in the society and their contribution to national production. Interestingly, the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago is yet to conduct a time-use survey, despite the passage of legislation in 1996 on *counting women's unremunerated work*. In fact as early as 1997, one Senator lamented the fact that "there was no disaggregation of the contribution of women to the Gross Domestic Product – unpaid work done mainly by women. The Senator was critical of the fact that the legislation was a *public relations effort*[90], but had immense value in helping to determine the extent of poverty because attached to the legislation was the proviso for government to periodically hold a household survey a minimum of once every three years.

A Draft International Classification of Activities for Time-Use Statistics (ICATUS) was adopted in October 2000 at a United Nations Statistics Division Expert Group Meeting on *Methods for Conducting Time-Use Surveys: Gender issues in the measurement of paid and unpaid work*. The adoption of the ICATUS was viewed as a step toward promoting the collection and compilation of data on paid and unpaid work. It addressed two main issues:

(a) Better measurement of production of goods by household members for own final use. These involve activities considered as work within the production boundary of the System of National Accounts (SNA) but are generally underestimated in labour force statistics, and

(b) Better identification of SNA work in informal sector enterprises. Many of these activities are not covered well in data collection on economic activity for several reasons – women and men who engage in such activities may not consider these as work because they are perceived as too small-scale, of subsistence-level, of short duration or seasonal, or because many of these activities may actually be done as part of production of services for own final use (e.g. cooking food for both the household and for sale); designers of surveys may not identify these accurately in operational definitions and in survey instruments; enumerators may have inadequate knowledge of what these activities are and may impose their own biases and judgments in recording them.[91]

The Draft ICATUS differentiates between activities with respect to the relationship they bear to the production boundary of the SNA. It consists of 15 main categories, which are indicated by alphabetical labels from A to O. Each category consists of eight or more divisions. For example, categories A to E

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[90] Senator. Prof. John Spence, Senate Debates, December 30, 1997.

[91] United Nations Secretariat Statistics Division, *Draft International Classification of Activities for the Time Use Statistics,* Expert Group Meeting on Methods for conducting Time-Use Survey, New York, 23-27 October 2000.

correspond to System of National Accounts work, namely those activities done in relation to production, categories F to H correspond to non-SNA work, namely those done in relation to production, but which fall outside of the SNA boundary; and categories I to O correspond to non-production activities.

> *The non-productive activities are classified in two groups: personal care, such as eating, sleeping, personal health, dressing and taking care of one's body, and personal recreation, as social visit, reading the newspaper, watching TV, going to the cinema, listening to the music, sports and resting. They are labeled as non productive because their product cannot be received for another, they are not exchangeable.*[92]
>
> *Actually there are three main problems linked to this revision:*
>
> 1. *Underestimation of the value of the good produced for household consumption;*
> 2. *Omission of the value of the household maintenance and care work from gross domestic product (GDP);*
> 3. *Self-education performed within the home is classified as entirely "non-productive".*[93]

Time-use surveys are the starting point for creating satellite accounts to measure unpaid work. They are an alternative mechanism for measuring the value of unpaid work and household production. One weakness of the satellite accounts is that they may not be the most effective way to measure many types of unpaid work such as community participation, self-education, travel time to and from paid work, which are not included in the SNA or extended-SNA production boundaries. Obstacles to the implementation of time-use surveys are a lack of updated and recent statistics, an insufficient appropriation of the concept of gender equality at the national level, antiquated judicial systems that have difficulties to implement gender sensitive public policy, an external impetus to conduct them and insufficient capacity-building and follow-up.

Assessment of the responses to the ECLAC questionnaire, as well as the results of the on-line dialogue carried out in early 2007 indicate that there has been no comprehensive conduct of a time-use survey in the Caribbean. The lack of research on unpaid work and time-use was linked to the lack of financial and human resources to bring effect to this research. Jamaica was the only country that reported the conduct of research by the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) on *Social Reproduction in Jamaica* in 1999. The results are included in Jamaica's first Human Development Report 2000, which has a companion document on gender indicators.

In addition to the summary provided, the following information can be observed from the table below, identifies a total of 17 activities carried out by women in any one week in Jamaica, and which do not appear in national statistics. The case studies of the six women indicate that five are in full-time productive employment with hours varying between 44 to 30 hours. When the reproductive tasks are added, the total hours increase significantly and shows that the three women identified as household helpers had a weekly time use of 117.0; 102.5; and 80.5 hours, respectively, while the three women identified as middle-income earning housewives (presumably with paid household help) recorded hours of 52.0; 42.5; and 35.0. It is interesting to note that these women did not undertake tasks such as caring for children even though two spent a total of five hours per week "picking up children". While the sample

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[92] See UNDP (United Nations Development Program), *Global Conference on Unpaid work and the Economy: Gender, Poverty, and the Millennium Development Goals,* Conference Proceedings, Levy Institute, New York, 1-3 October 2005.

[93] See UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), *Costing the Care Economy,* Columbia University, New York, December 2004, pp. 32-35.

size is extremely small, the data does provide interesting information on the productive and reproductive tasks carried out by women.

Summary of Research findings from **Data in Social Reproduction on Jamaica**, Judith Wedderburn, 1999

1. There are many roles played by women in social reproduction which are not market-oriented and consequently do not appear in national statistics. This includes the bulk of household and voluntary/community work;
2. The outputs and outcomes associated with these activities redound to the benefit of family, the community and the country as a whole and make an important contribution to national development;
3. Unpaid unrecognized activities are more numerous in low-income households where any addition to output impacts greatly on the welfare of the family in terms of meeting the basic needs of the family;
4. The inability to measure and assign a value to those economic activities not only prevents an accurate assessment of output, but also contribute to the low value placed by societies on these activities;
5. The non-monetary contribution of women are undervalued in economic terms and as well as in terms of their inherent human value;
6. The non-monetary activities performed by some women have an intrinsic use or human value which is not captured by its value for exchange.

WOMEN'S PAID AND UNPAID DOMESTIC WORK -JAMAICA

" In order to arrive at a more accurate assessment of output in the Jamaican case, an in-depth study needs to be carried out to assess the value of women's unpaid work".
(Source: Human Development Report 2000)

No in-depth research has been conducted since this preliminary study was done. However attempts are to be made in this year (2007) to develop appropriate gender indicators which would also capture this type of information on time use and unpaid work. The Bureau and the Statistical Institute of Jamaica will be working collaboratively toward this end particularly after the participation of both entities at the recent technical meeting on the status of gender indicators in the Caribbean held November 2006 in Trinidad and Tobago.[94]

In addition to this Jamaica research, the non-governmental organization, Red Thread of Guyana, conducted the first systematic time-use survey in that country amongst grassroots women in 2004 with the assistance of the International Women Count Network. Red Thread was critical of the fact that the fundamental work that women perform to ensure the continuation of Caribbean societies remained uncounted and invisible, in spite of *the thirty years of Conferences, Papers* and international Commitments about women's unwaged work.

[94] Jamaica response to the ECLAC Questionnaire on unpaid work and political participation, 2007.

TABLE V.1

Women's Use of Time in Social Reproductive Activities, Selected Responses

Hours Occupied Weekly

Task	Annemarie*	Pam*	Esperanze*	Annette+	Nevine+	Nina+
Cleaning	3.0	3.0	5.0	0.0	15.0	0.0
Cooking	7.0	3.0	10.0	0.0	5.0	0.0
Caring for Children	30.0	3.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Washing	2.0	2.0	15.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Working	44.0	40.0	40.0	40.0	0.0	30.0
Pick up Children	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.0	5.0	0.0
Ironing	2.0	2.0	10.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Supermarket/Market	3.0	2.0	0.0	0.0	12.5	0.0
Exercise	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Home Improvement	3.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.0
Shopping	5.0	0.0	2.0	2.0	0.0	0.0
Doing Errands	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Watch TV	1.0	4.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Bible Study	2.0	7.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Caring for Plants	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Transporting	0.0	14.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Sewing	0.0	0.0	10.0	5.0	0.0	0.0
Total	102.5	80.5	117.0	52.0	42.5	35.0

* = Household helpers
+ = Middle income-earning housewives
Source: Background paper in Social Reproduction in Jamaica, by Judith Wedderburn, 1999

The survey included women from all racial groups as well as illiterate women. The highlights from the findings showed that women from all racial/ethnic groups had a typical working day which "*ranged from 14 to 18 hours, with little help from anyone, often with minimal or unreliable technology, limited access to amenities and with very little leisure or free time for themselves".* The limited access to amenities included the lack of pipe borne water and electricity, which impacted on the length of their day and the types of activities in which they engaged.

Although women were impacted by pregnancy and ill-health of themselves and other family members, this did not stop them from undertaking a full day's work, which often included performing tasks such as chopping wood. As a result, some women had work days that extended to 21 hours and in some instances to 24 hours.

Red Thread, in its analysis, was critical of the lack of attention paid to the goal of measuring and valuing women's unpaid work won from governments at the Beijing Conference and lamented the fact that women's work continued to be hidden. Several reasons were given for this, namely the fact that: (i) *sexism continues to trivialise and refuses to acknowledge the importance of what women are doing; and (ii) the design and outcome of surveys are increasingly determined by political agendas that would push women into waged jobs on the pretext that this would deal with poverty. Such agendas justify this policy by trying to show that waged work can be easily fitted in with housework … flying in the face of universal experience, including of women's desperate overwork, even before this second job for wages".*[95]

[95] Red Thread report on Time Use Survey by the International Count Network, 30 November 2004.

BOX V.2

Women's Use of Time in Social Reproductive Activities, Jamaica, 1993

Domestic Activities	Average Hours/Week
Prepared Food	24.69
Carried Water	5.34
Washed Clothes	6.60
Ironed Clothes	2.46
Cleaned House	5.02
Cared Child	28.80
Shopped	8.18
Repaired house and furniture	4.22
Sewed/Mended Clothes	1.37
Paid Bills	1.59
Cleaned Yard	5.70
Tended Garden	11.63
Transported Children/Other	13.33

Source: From Data in Social Reproduction in Jamaica, by Judith Wedderburn, 1999

This seminal research has nonetheless provided a glimpse of reproductive and productive work that women perform on a daily basis in one Caribbean country.

RECONCILING WORK AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

An important aspect of participation in productive work is the ability to reconcile work outside the home with family responsibilities, because many women are confronted with their greatest problems when trying to reconcile their numerous domestic tasks with their work responsibilities within a 24-hour day. The fact that women are burdened by their family responsibilities therefore restricts them from participating in paid employment outside of the home, which is often compounded by the lack of facilities for child care and, in a growing number of cases, elderly care facilities. The BPFA highlighted "*the lack of a family friendly work environment, including a lack of appropriate and affordable child care, and inflexible working hours further prevent women from achieving their full potential,"* and also hampers women in their contribution to the economy.

Governments agreed to take actions to "provide affordable support services, such as high-quality, flexible and affordable child-care services, that take into account the needs of working women and men," and also to eliminate discriminatory practices in the workplace to enable women to carry out their reproductive functions by providing facilities for breastfeeding and other child-care responsibilities.

In the Caribbean, there are no public policies explicitly designed to reconcile paid and unpaid work. Such policies have not yet become established in the language or in government discourse. It should be noted that policies for maternity protection and social security in general are still conditional on the labour market and as such the exclusion of women from such services (especially women engaged in informal employment remains high).

Caribbean countries have subscribed to a variety of conventions and international standards, especially the ILO conventions, such as those on maternity protection and its revision, equal pay for equal work, discrimination in employment and occupation and reconciliation of work with family responsibilities.[96] In addition, they have introduced national legislation and reforms and implemented State programmes and projects t complement these conventions.

The ILO Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156) is intended to promote equality of opportunity and treatment in employment for workers with family responsibilities, and among workers with such responsibilities. Belize is, however, the only Caribbean country to ratify this convention. The ILO focus on maternity protection, reconciling work and family, and working hours has highlighted the specific requirements of women and men in the workforce and the need to adopt appropriate measures with respect to work arrangements.

Despite the recognition and support for child care programmes in the Caribbean subregion, available information support the view that the vast majority of children under the age of three remain at home in the care of parents or other family members, creating its own dynamics not only in terms of the restrictions placed on mothers who are desirous of becoming part of the productive sector but also in terms of the quality of child development amongst home-based caregivers.

For many Caribbean women, providing and managing resources for proper child care and the sacrifices that have to be made to carry out these duties are everyday realities of the mothering role. However the female kinship networks once used by women as a 'safety net' are fast disappearing, making it increasingly difficult for poorer women to enter into paid employment, since few women have the benefit of a non-working mother, friend or other family member to provide much needed child care services. The need for day-care services is therefore a very real one and increasingly these facilities are also required for older family members as the subregion is faced with a steadily increasing ageing population.

The breakdown of the extended family structure has deprived communities of accessible informal care traditionally provided by grandmothers, neighbors, and others. Parents' reliance has shifted to the formal care sector, with residential and day-care services provided primarily by government through the Child Care Board, complemented by private operators and non-governmental organizations.[97]

The institutionalization of child care arrangements has been identified as one of the critical issues relating to improvements in women's participation in the labour market.[98] In countries where child care is provided, it is mainly for pre-schoolers and provided by a mix of government and private agencies. In many instances, the use of these facilities is no longer restricted to children from lower income households but increasing from middle and upper income households.

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[96] See Annex 1.

[97] BARBADOS Statement by Hon. Hamilton Lashley Minister of Social Transformation at the Twenty-Seventh Special Session of the General Assembly on Children, 8 May 2002, New York.

[98] Joycelin Massiah. 1982. Women who Head Households in Women and the Family. WICP. UWI Cave Hill Campus.

The number of day-care facilities and the costs of services vary across the Caribbean, for example in Belize there is one day-care centre that is managed by the Ministry of Human Development, which accommodates a maximum of 15 children. Fees are US$7.50 for children who come half day every day of the week and $12.50 for children who come all day every day of the week. Most countries seek to provide early childhood education, for example, Barbados provides 80 per cent coverage of three year olds in government and private day-care centres. However, many gaps remain due to lack of access and lack of resources/income to pay for these services.

In response to the concerns with respect to the quality of child development of those children who do not have access to organized early childhood development programmes, a project is currently being piloted in the Caribbean with support from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and local non-governmental organizations, known as the "Roving Caregivers" which provides support and training for parents or other caregivers to enable them to better care for their children, especially those who do not have access to day-care or pre-school facilities. The programme is currently being piloted in communities in Dominica and Jamaica. The programme provides child development support and parenting education through home visits to families who cannot afford day care or who do not understand the importance of providing correct stimulation for early childhood cognitive development.

In addition to the need for childcare as hinted to earlier, there is a growing need for elderly care services in the subregion, which adds to the conflict many women face between their employment and family responsibilities.

More alarming, the phenomenon of poor children who are placed in other families to undertake unpaid domestic work, called *restavek* in Haiti underlines the relationship between the invisibility of unpaid work and the needs of poor women who are heads of household to receive child care support to be able to go to work. These children called *restavek*, a (derogatory) term which literally translates as domestic child workers, are placed in households other than their own to perform labour in the domestic sphere in what has been likened to slave-like conditions.

The gender implications of this practice are immense because it is estimated that three quarters of *restavek* children are girls, many of whom are as young as four years old, who perform arduous household tasks with no pay, no schooling and who are isolated from parental love and care. This practice has tremendous impact on family structure and gender and power relations and is a major contributory factor in the perpetuation of the cycle of poverty and violence and therefore needs to be addressed with greater urgency.

OVERVIEW OF LEGAL REFORMS

This assessment provides an overview of legal reforms taken by Caribbean countries to remove provisions which discriminate against women and to ensure equal treatment with men. In the context of this paper, the review focuses on legislation that seeks to reconcile work and family life and therefore includes legislation in the field of employment, equal opportunity and maternity protection, as well as gender policies or gender-oriented national projects.

A number of countries have also undertaken legal reform measures relating to maintenance of women and children, in which there is some recognition that in some cases domestic work could be taken into account in cases of separation and divorce. In Jamaica for example, the *Maintenance Act, 2005* repealed and replaced the old Maintenance Act and the Affiliation Act and makes comprehensive provisions for maintenance within the family. It confers equal rights and obligations on spouses with respect to the

support of each other and their children. This Act is a companion measure to the Property (Rights of Spouses) Act, accordingly "spouse" is similarly defined to include a de facto spouse.[99]

The Property (Rights of Spouses) Act, 2004 introduced new statutory rules to provide for the equitable division of assets between spouses upon marriage or relationship breakdown. It legislates a presumption of equal shares in the family home, permitting a variation where equal division would be unfair having regard to the circumstances of the particular case. A single man and a single woman who have cohabited in an informal union for five years or more qualify as spouses for the purposes of this act. This act, though gender neutral in its provisions, should be beneficial to women in its practical application, as the deficiencies under the old law which placed women at a disadvantage in proving entitlement to property have been removed. Of interest in this regard is the recognition by the new act of the contribution made by a spouse in the performance of the role of homemaker and parent and the stipulation that there shall be no presumption that a monetary contribution is of greater value that a non-monetary contribution.[100]

In Belize, the National Gender Policy was passed by the Cabinet in 2003. Priority areas of this policy are health, wealth and employment generation, gender-based violence, education and training, power and decision-making and coordination and implementation. The policy also focuses on minimum wage levels, equal pay for work of equal value, the economic value of unpaid domestic labour, gender equity in employment opportunities, child-care opportunities, employee pension entitlements, pension entitlements for the employee's spouse and dependants, maternity leave provisions and access to credit.

Two of the provisions relate to the area of the economic value of unpaid domestic labour:

(a) The practice of the Supreme Court in valuing unpaid work labour will be reviewed, with a view to establishing appropriate criteria and guidelines.

(b) The Government of Belize will urgently review the current adequacy of provisions for assistance to those who cannot afford access to legal representation, and whose access to justice is thus limited, in order to introduce or expand appropriate legal assistance provisions (this extends beyond the issue of divorce or settlement).[101]

The "Women's Agenda 2003 – 2008" commits the government to implement the recommendations of the National Gender Policy. As reported by the International Women's Rights Action Watch in Belize, women consistently receive less pay than men for the same work and occupy lower level positions. The majority of women are concentrated in traditionally female, low status and poorly paid occupations, such as manufacturing, tourism and domestic work.

A gender policy was also approved in Dominica in 2006; it was an outcome document of a consultative process to sensitize people on the importance of gender mainstreaming as a strategy to achieve gender equality in the country. In addition, the Women's Bureau collaborated with an inter-sectoral committee to compile and submit to Cabinet a Draft National Action Plan on Gender Mainstreaming. This plan aims to ensure that gender is incorporated in all policies, plans and programmes both at national and sectoral levels.

The Country Poverty Assessment Report of June 2003 showed a high level of poverty in the households (29 per cent), however no major difference was found between men and women's income, but it was argued that this analysis was not sufficiently focused on gender disparities.

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[99] Jamaica response to the 2006 ECLAC Questionnaire, pages 20-21.
[100] Ibid. page 20
[101] Belize National Gender Policy, Articles 70, 71.

In Dominica, legislative and policy changes have specifically addressed the needs of poor women and have attempted to improve women's equal access to economic resources and employment, and to promote an equal balance between paid work and family responsibilities for women and men. The Amendment to Maintenance Act increased the allowance to children; additionally, the maternity grant increased by 100% in 2003.

SOCIAL PROTECTION

In the Caribbean subregion, social security schemes are relatively new and provide a wide range of benefits. As in other countries the systems are pay-as-you-go (PAYG). In some countries, contributions are shared equally between employer and employee, while in others the employers contribute a higher percentage. Barbados is the only country that provides an unemployment insurance scheme, while Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize and St. Kitts and Nevis provide a non-contributory pension as part of the services offered by social security.

Broad components of social development

Provision of an enabling environment; (includes resources such as physical environment; human and financial resources);
Eradication of poverty;
Expansion of productive employment and reduction of unemployment;
Social integration, inclusion and cohesion;
Full respect for human dignity – equalization of opportunities for all;
Equality and equity between women and men;
Equitable access to quality education; healthcare and other social protection measures; (Decentralization is critical as services are brought closer to the people who need them).

Social protection has traditionally been defined in terms of a range of public institutions, norms and programmes aimed at protecting individuals and their households from poverty and deprivation. It addresses poverty and social exclusion. Social protection includes labour and employment standards, programmes aimed at ensuring maternity leave and pension for old people, norms and programmes directed at work related contingencies, such as unemployment or work related injuries, and basic safety nets[102]. It is generally taken to be broader than social security, normally associated with compensatory, comprehensive, welfare State programmes, and social insurance, generally restricted to contributory programmes.

[102] *Social Safety Nets* ensure that all the different groups of the population have reasonable access to minimal income and basic social services in situations as involuntary unemployment, old age or sudden economic crisis. They traditionally are introduced during economic crisis and phased out during periods of recovery. If there are no safety nets, a fall in income can lead to permanent poverty.

GENDER AND SOCIAL PROTECTION ISSUES

Gender is critical to social protection policies because of the direct impact on women's living conditions. Although available data is scattered, the information points to the fact that women and children, including the elderly, face considerable social and economic risks and are among some of the most vulnerable groups in the Caribbean subregion. Among the specific risks that women face are those related to health, life cycle including childbearing, household economic risks, ageing and other social risks, such as social exclusion, and vulnerability to domestic violence.

Discrimination and marginalization of women is also prevalent. This is found particularly amongst women who predominate the informal labour market – thus increasing their vulnerability – while at the same time having responsibility for the care of children. Later in their life cycle find that they do not quality for pensions, either public or private, because the structure of social security systems excludes large numbers of women who find themselves outside of the largely contributory systems.

This is because social protection systems were structured when family and labour functions of men and women were significantly different, which means that in many instances women are not direct beneficiaries of social protection mechanisms, hence the need for comprehensive reform of these systems to be more gender sensitive. For example, despite the higher vulnerability to risks faced by women and the poor in the informal sector, traditional social protection schemes continue to target those in the formal labour market.

There are a number of the key assumptions underlying economic policies which impact on gender and social protection:

(a) The structuring of the economy is undeniably male centered;

(b) Economic and other inputs are targeted to men; and

(c) Women's needs as producers are ignored.

The reality is that large numbers of Caribbean women are heads of households because of divorce, death of spouses and, in some instances, because of choice or other circumstances resulting in the fact that many women are living in poverty. Often their health is diminished – double burden + costs of health care; (some States provide for the elderly in terms of assistance with medication, but this is not always comprehensive).

It is clear from the available information that women need a reliable source of income, but for many this is problematic because many are precluded from engaging in paid employment because of their responsibilities in the "care economy", while others are forced to take precarious employment in low-paid jobs or in the informal sector which offers no income security and no protection, forcing them further into poverty. The association between unpaid work and participation in insecure work on the periphery of the economy is vital in explaining how women are disadvantaged and excluded from social protection systems.

When we add to this the changing demographic profile of the subregion with an increasing ageing population, which is predominantly female, the situation becomes even more untenable and fragile. While the expectation is that women will receive support from their male partners, the reality is woefully different. In some respects married women are more disadvantaged because they cannot claim benefits such as old age pensions if their husband is already a beneficiary.

Defining Social Protection
Social protection should be viewed as an integral part of a country's attempt to restructure its economy and pursue social and economic development, address poverty and social exclusion, and achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

Social protection programmes can potentially ensure that the fruits of development reach vulnerable households and communities, which are unable to participate fully I economic activities by guaranteeing a minimum level of welfare.

Social protection is intended to provide households and communities with protection against risks and vulnerabilities and promote their access to new opportunities. It helps sustain households' living standards in the face of adverse conditions, but also supports the investment in human and physical capital, which is central to economic growth and long-term well-being.

Source: Promoting an Integrated Social Protection for the Caribbean. Paper prepared by the Caribbean Development Bank in conjunction with the Department for International Development; the European Commission for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean; the United Nations Development Programme; and World Bank, for the twelfth Meeting of the Council for Human and Social Development (Gender) April 2, 2005.

SUMMARY OF SOCIAL SECURITY/PROTECTION SCHEMES

Caribbean countries nonetheless provide an impressive range of programmes to support vulnerable groups, however these are plagued by significant gaps and deficiencies in existing social protection mechanisms to assist households and communities. This section provides a brief country overview of maternity provisions which are designed to benefit women and their families. Although many of the schemes are similar there are slight differences in terms of the required number of contributions to receive benefits, which for most countries require an average of 50 contributions; the length of payment of benefits and the quantum of monies payable to beneficiaries. Most countries provide for the granting of 12 weeks of maternity leave, and most provide for employment protection to ensure that when a woman returns to work she maintains her seniority, resumes her former work or its equivalent and does not receive lower wages than before she went on maternity leave.

The Bahamas has social insurance which covers employed persons, self-employed persons and the voluntarily insured. The social insurance system is based on cash benefits. In order to receive maternity benefits, under the National Insurance Act of 1972, amended in 1999, a woman must have paid 50 weeks of contributions. Maternity benefit is equal to 60 per cent of average weekly insurable earnings. The minimum benefit is B$43.85 a week. No coverage is provided for workers in the informal sector. To receive the maternity grant, which is paid as a lump sum of B$400.00 she must have at least 50 paid contributions.

In Barbados, the Social Insurance and Social Security Act of 1966, amended in 2002, covers all employed persons, public-sector employees and the self-employed aged 16 to 64, but it excludes unpaid family labour. The Social Insurance System is based on cash benefits. Maternity benefits are equal to 100 per cent of average insurable weekly earnings. The maternity grant is also payable to women who are not insured or who fail to meet the requirements for cash maternity benefits, but whose spouse does meet the requirements. Payment is a lump sum of Bds. $800.

In Belize the Social Security Act of 1979 provides social coverage for employed persons aged 14 to 64, including public servants and self-employed persons. It excludes casual labour, persons employed for

less than eight hours a week and military personnel. It does not provide coverage for workers in the informal sector. Women must have 50 weeks of contributions to receive maternity benefits and the maternity grant of B$300 which is paid for each child. Maternity benefit is equal to 80 per cent of average weekly insurable earnings.

The Dominica Social Security Act (1975) provides coverage for employed persons and apprentices aged 16 to 60, it excludes the self-employed and people employed in the informal sector. Women must have 13 weeks of contributions to receive maternity benefits, which are equal to 60 per cent of average weekly earnings in the last 30 weeks. Maternity grants are payable to an insured woman or a non-insured spouse of an insured man with at least 26 weeks of paid contributions in the 52-week period before the expected date of childbirth. It is a lump sum of EC$500.

The Grenada National Insurance Act (1983) and the Maternity Leave Law (1980) provide coverage for all employees in private and public sectors and for self-employed persons aged 16 to 59. A woman must have at least 30 weeks of contributions to receive maternity benefits, which is equal to 65 per cent of average weekly insurable earnings in the 30 weeks before the start of the claim. The minimum maternity benefit is EC$450. The grant is payable to the uninsured wife of an insured man. The minimum grant is EC$450.

In Guyana, the Social Security Act of 1969 covers persons employed in the private and public sectors and the self-employed between ages 16 and 59. Family labour and casual labour are excluded. Women benefits must have 15 weeks of contributions to receive maternity benefits, which are equal to 70 per cent of average weekly covered earnings. Maternity grant is payable to an insured woman who does not meet the qualifying conditions for a maternity benefit but whose insured husband does; it is a lump sum of G$2,000.00.

The Jamaica National Insurance Act (1966) and the National Health insurance Act (2003) provides a social coverage for resident female employees aged 18 or older, with the exclusion of self-employed women. In order to receive maternity benefits, women must have 26 weeks of paid contributions in the 52 weeks before the expected date of childbirth; the benefit is equal to the national minimum weekly wage (J$2,400.00).

In St Kitts and Nevis, the Social Security Act (1977) provides coverage for employed and self-employed persons aged 16 to 62. Women must have 39 weeks of contributions for maternity benefits. The benefit is equal to 65 per cent of the average weekly wage. The maternity grant of EC$450 is paid for every child birth and is payable to an insured woman or the wife of an insured man.

The Saint Lucia National Insurance Act (2003) covers employees and apprentices aged 16 to 65. To receive maternity benefits, women must have at least seven months of contributions in the 10 months immediately before the claim. The benefit is equal to 65 per cent of the insured's average salary in the last 10 months. A maternity grant of EC$600 is payable to women receiving cash maternity benefits and to women whose husband have at least seven months of contributions.

In St Vincent and the Grenadines, the Social Insurance Act of 1986 provides a social coverage for employed persons aged 16 to 59 and a voluntary coverage for self-employed persons aged 16 to 59. Women must have at least 30 weeks contributions to receive maternity benefits, the benefit is equal to 65 per cent of the insured's average earnings in the last 30 weeks of employment. In order to receive the maternity grant of EC$550, the woman or her spouse must have at least 20 weeks of contributions in the 30 weeks immediately before the birth of the child.

The Trinidad and Tobago Social insurance Act of 1971 covers employed persons aged 16 to 64, including agricultural and domestic workers, apprentices and public-sector employees. Maternity benefits are equal to 60 per cent of average weekly earnings. A maternity grant of TT$2,000.00[103] is paid if the pregnancy is of at least 26 weeks duration.

HOW UNPAID WORK CAN BE INTEGRATED INTO PUBLIC POLICIES

The principal mechanism for integrating women's unpaid work in employment, economic and social policies is to implement reforms in these areas. These reforms must be designed to ensure equitable access to economic resources, access to credit, access to health services and the provision of more benefits for women employed in the informal sector.

The information above highlights the limited public policy actions and/or legislation that recognize the unpaid work performed by women in the "care economy". Further, policies to harmonize work and family duties are also lacking, even in areas where the impact of HIV and AIDS as well as the ageing population has dramatically increased the burden of care on working women. There is still little recognition of the contribution of household work to national economic outcomes and therefore little change in the corresponding economic and social policies for care work being promoted.

Caribbean countries, however, often face considerable constraints in implementing necessary gender sensitive reforms because of the lack of funds and the ongoing weakening of women's/gender bureaux is also a challenge both at the national and regional level. Further and perhaps more instructive is the fact that the models of development in the subregion privilege growth over social development, thereby perpetuating the cycle of poverty and inequality which continues to marginalize women. There is need to understand that investments in social development such as child care, social security and other social services are vital if economic progress is to be maintained.

In respect of employment policies, governments have a responsibility to ensure more equitable access to employment for women. They need to establish the necessary legal and an institutional framework, and enact and enforce more equitable labour laws. These laws must prohibit discriminatory practices by employers in both formal and informal sectors. Additionally reforms in this area have to ensure an equitable access for women to economic resources, including the right to inheritance and ownership of land and other property.

Governments and national machineries with responsibility for women's advancement and gender equality must encourage financial institutions to adopt new policies, aimed to reduce transaction costs and make the access to credit easier for women. There is also need for a more gender approach on taxation, for example, governments could include reforms in terms of tax exemption from goods mainly used by women, such as items used for child care, items related to household functions, items related to reproductive health and hygiene.[104]

Twelve years after the Beijing Platform for Action and seven years after the Millennium Development Goals, there is still no public policies which recognize unpaid work against a background where this work is increasing and continues to be the sole responsibility of women, despite decades of advocacy and public education programmes to transform not only gender relations but also the gender

[103] www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/progdesc/ssptw/2002-2003/americas

[104] See Brunnich Gabriel B., Vacarr Danielle, *The challenges in integrating unpaid work into economic policy in lower and middle-income countries,* Paper for the 2005 Global Conference on Unpaid work and the Economy: Gender, Poverty, and the Millennium Development Goals, September 2005, p. 16 – 20.

roles assigned to men and women. Although there have been some minor breakthroughs in acknowledging women's economic role in the development process as evidenced from the responses to the ECLAC questionnaire, women's unpaid work remains largely invisible and uncounted in national accounts.

CONCLUSION

This assessment indicates that Caribbean countries, like most of the world's developing countries, still have a long way to go in recognizing, understanding and valuing the important role played by women in the national economies. In spite of commitments to a wide range of international agreements, the domestic unpaid work performed by women in households, in the agriculture sector and the community remains in many cases invisible and unvalued.

This assessment has also revealed what many of us already know, that social protection programmes have tended to be discriminatory rather than inclusive, leaving out large numbers of women who work outside of the formal labour market. Many of the benefits payable to women are often still dependent on the contributions made by their spouses. In addition, there is need for the implementation of comprehensive social protection programmes ensuring coverage for women employed in the informal sector to reduce the precarious nature of much of this work.

There is clearly a need for governments to implement strategies to assist women in managing their unpaid work and reducing the burden of care work through the provision of more equitable social protection programmes, which would reduce women's vulnerabilities and social exclusion. There is also need for more governments in the subregion to implement policies to count women's unremunerated work and make their contribution to economic development more visible. There is also need to invest more in data collection and in the conduct of time-use surveys because it is only through the implementation of research on how people use their time and on how much time is spent by women in domestic work and in producing goods for their households and for the social community, that there will be an accurate understanding of the relevance and the importance of women's contribution to the national economy and to social development.

ENDNOTES

The gender division of labour*:* Andaiye (2003) notes that a direct result of the gendering process "is the gender division of labour whereby women and men cluster in the different kinds of work for which they have been socialized. This socialization takes place first within the household and family and then in education, the wider society and the economy. Building on biological difference (the fact that women bear children and breastfeed) women are socialized into having the main responsibility for social reproduction, that is, child and family care, including housework, although there is no biological basis for this. The work is ascribed little value: it is unwaged when performed within the household and low-waged when performed for strangers (e.g. domestic work, nursing, and teaching)."

Valuing unpaid work: The work done by care-givers and volunteers can be the foundation for creating the "volunteer" sector's own money supply. According to Galbraith this could be done by reversing the operational perspective of that system, and creating a separate parallel system of the money needed to pay for the unpaid work of care-givers and volunteers. Although it would still considered as "outside of the economy", Galbraith suggested that it be determined "economic" by viewing it as a debt owed by the community. So if it is a debt, it is also money. This debt is the basis for creating the money to pay for unpaid work. With this method the money necessary for paying the work of care-givers and volunteers will have been created by their own work.

Annex 1

SELECTED ILO CONVENTIONS ON GENDER EQUALITY IN EMPLOYMENT
RATIFICATION BY CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES

Country	INTERNATIONAL LABOUR CONVENTIONS																									
	29*	**81+**	**87***	**89**	**94**	**95**	**98***	**100***	**103**	**105**	**111***	**122+**	**138***	**141**	**142**	**144+**	**149**	**150**	**151**	**154**	**155**	**156**	**158**	**175**	**177**	**182***	**183**
Antigua & Barbuda	X	X	X	-	X	-	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	-	X	-	-	X	-
Bahamas	X	X	-	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-
Barbados	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-
Belize	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	-	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	-	-	-	X	X
Dominica	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	-	X	-	-	X	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-
Grenada	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	-	X	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-
Guyana	X	X,	X	-	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	-	-	-	-	X	-	X	-
Jamaica	X	X	X	-	X	-	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	-	-	X	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-
St. Kitts & Nevis	X	-	X	-	-	-	X	X	-	X	X	-	X	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-
Saint Lucia	X	-	X	-	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	X	-	-	X	-
St. Vincent & The Grenadines	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	X	-	X	X	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-
Suriname	X	X	X	-	X	X	X	-	-	X	-	X	-	-	-	X	-	X	X	X	-	-	-	-	-	X	-
Trinidad & Tobago	X	-	X	-	-	-	X	X	-	X	X	-	X	-	-	X	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-
TOTAL	13	10	12	1	11	9	13	12	2	13	12	4	11	2	2	11	2	6	4	4	2	1	2	1	0	13	1

Titles of Conventions

No. 29 Forced Labour, 1930
No. 81 Labour Inspection, 1947
No. 87 Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize, 1948
No. 89 Night Work (Women) (Revised) [and Protocol], 1990
No. 94 Labour Clauses (Public Contracts), 1949
No. 95 Protection of Wages, 1949
No. 98 Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining, 1949
No. 100 Equal Remuneration, 1951
No. 103 Maternity Protection (Revised), 1952
No. 105 Abolition of Forced Labour, 1957
No. 111 Discrimination (Employment and Occupation), 1958
No. 122 Employment Policy, 1964
No. 138 Minimum Age, 1973
No. 141 Rural Workers' Organizations, 1975
No. 142 Human Resources Development, 1975
No. 144 Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards), 1976
No. 149 Nursing Personnel, 1977
No. 150 Labour Administration, 1978
No. 151 Labour Relations (Public Service), 1978
No. 154 Collective Bargaining, 1981
No. 155 Occupational Safety and Health, 1981
No. 156 Workers with Family Responsibilities, 1981
No. 158 Termination of Employment, 1982
No. 175 Part-time Work, 1994
No. 177 Home Work, 1996
No. 182 Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999
No. 183 Maternity Protection, 2000

* Fundamental Conventions
+ Priority Conventions

Annex 2

National Legislations on Employment, Equal opportunity and Maternity Protection in the English-speaking Caribbean countries.[105]

Antigua and Barbuda	Social Security Act (1973)
Bahamas	Fair Labour Standard Act (1970), Employment Act (2000), National Insurance Act (1972), Early Childhood Care Act (2004), National Health Insurance Act (2006)
Barbados	Employment Act (1977), Employment of Women Act (1978), National Insurance and Social Security Act (1966)
Belize	Labour Act (1988), Labour (Maternity Protection) Regulations no. 34/1960, Social Security Act (1979)
Dominica	Labour Standards Act (1977), Social Security Act (1975)
Grenada	Employment Act (1999), Maternity Leave Law (1980), National Insurance Act (1983)
Guyana	Labour Act (1984), Equal Rights Act (1990), Anti-discrimination Act (1997), Social Security Act (1969)
Jamaica	The Women (Employment) Act, The Employment (equal pay for men and women) Act, National Insurance Act (1966), The Maternity Leave Act (1979), National Health Insurance Act (2003)
St Kitts and Nevis	Fair Labour Standards Ordinance (1988), Social Security Act (1977)
Saint Lucia	Equality of opportunity and treatment in employment and occupation Act (2000), National Insurance Act (2003)
St Vincent and The Grenadines	Equal pay Act (1994), Employment of women, young person and children Act, Social Insurance Act (1986)
Trinidad and Tobago	Equal opportunity Act (2000), Legal profession Act (1986), Social Insurance Act (1971), Maternity Protection Act (1998)

[105] Source: www.ilo.org (February 2007).

Annex 3

Responses of Governments to the Questionnaire on Unpaid Work sent out in 2006

Country	Constitutional Provisions which recognize women's unpaid domestic work	Legislation that promote harmonization of work with family life	Statistical research on unpaid domestic work
Anguilla			
Antigua and Barbuda	-	-	-
Bahamas	No constitutional provisions	None	None
Barbados	No constitutional provisions	None	None
Belize	Amendments by the Government in 2001 to the *Supreme Court of Judicature Act* (91 148A) provide for the value of unpaid domestic labour, including child-rearing, to be included in the distribution of property upon the termination of a marriage or common-law union. The Belize National Gender Policy through its commitments seeks to accelerate progress in this area by addressing issues such as the unpaid economic value of domestic labour, equity in employment opportunities, child-care, access to credit and pension entitlements.	None	While no research was carried out on unpaid work - The Government of Belize appointed in May 2006 a Minimum Wage Council to examine paid domestic work as well other wages. In January 2007 Cabinet received the recommendations of the Council and approved that wages for domestics would be increased from $2.25 to $3.00 per hour. Women Issues Network- Belize, a non-governmental organization, conducted a study in 2006 on paid domestic wage. This study was submitted to the Minimum Wages Council.
British Virgin Islands	-	-	-
Cayman Islands	No constitutional provisions	Part II, Section 19 of The Labour Law (2001 Revision) allows for 12 calendar weeks of Maternity Leave in any 12 month period. Within the 12 calendar week period, 20 working days are full pay and 20 working days ½ pay. This law also acknowledges 9 calendar weeks (15 working days full pay) for female employees who are adopting a child under 3 years. Adoption leave may be granted to any female employee once in any 36 calendar months. The Public Service Management Law 2005, Personnel Regulations 2006 provides female government employees the same Maternity Leave benefits as the Labour Law. Additionally, this law allows for two weeks Paternity Leave for male civil servants (one week paid, one week unpaid). Note: The current Labour Law (2001) operating does not allow for Paternity Leave. However, Section 21 of the Employment Law 2004 which is assented to but is not in force/not operational does allow for 2 weeks Paternity Leave (½ paid, ½ unpaid) as well as paternity leave for adoption.	None – However, the 1999 Cayman Islands Population and Housing Census does have data regarding the number of hours persons self-reported that they spent on unpaid housework, unpaid childcare and unpaid elderly care. This data is broken down by district and sex.

Dominica	-	Although there are no legal provisions with reference to harmonization of work with the family life, there has been public discussion or dialogue resulting in representation of such issues: In a recently developed national gender policy, and current OECS family laws and domestic violence law reform initiative. Policy recommendation includes among others Provisions for child care Flexi time and Paternity leave	No Study - In the last census unpaid domestic work was accounted for in national statistics
Grenada	-	The following Sections of the Employment Act (No. 14) 1999;26 – Provisions prohibiting discrimination in employment 32-35 – Prohibition of Child Labour 37-40 – Hours of Work; 40 - Special Provisions for Young Persons; 59-70 – Provisions governing Maternity Leave 72 - Provisions allowing employees to take leave for family responsibilities-	-
Haiti	-	Fair labor standards act, treating Chapter III of the weekly rest and the public holidays; art: 107, 108 - Fair labor standards act, chapter VII, treating work of the women.	Investigation ENFOFANM into the Remunerated House work, completed by Myriam Merlet, article AYITI FANM, a publication ENFOFANM, Vol.14 No 56, December 2003, January, February, Mars 2004.-
Jamaica	The Property (Rights of Spouses) Act, 2004 introduced new statutory rules to provide for the equitable division of assets upon marriage or relationship breakdown. The Act recognizes the contribution made by a spouse in the performance of unpaid domestic work. It recognizes women's contribution made in the areas of child-care and home duties. It stipulated that there should be no presumption that a monetary contribution is of greater value than a non-monetary contribution	None	Women's use of time in Social Reproductive activities – 1999 by the Planning Institute of Jamaica. Publication – Jamaica Human Development Report 2000.
Saint Lucia	-	-	-
St. Maarten'			
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	No constitutional provisions	None	None
Suriname	No constitutional provisions	Personnel act December 31, 1962, amended SB 1990 No 36. (Article 45.1.a and 46 is about maternity Leave): states that in case of maternity dispensation of duty is given. Women have the right to 12 weeks paid maternity leave; 6 weeks before and 6 weeks after delivery date.	A study "Verkennend beoordeling van mensenhandel in het Caribisch gebied" (Investigation of Trafficking in persons in the Caribbean) by the International Organization for Migration, June 2005 states that paid domestic work is done most by women and is also informal, hardly noticeable, undervalued and unprotected.
Turks and Caicos Islands	-	-	-

Annex 4

Proportion of households and unemployment rates by sex for ECLAC/CDCC member countries

Country	Head of household by sex (1995)		Unemployment rate by sex (2000*)	
	Proportion of males (%)	Proportion of females (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
Anguilla	67.8	32.2	6.3	9.0
Antigua & Barbuda	58.5	41.5	6.4	5.6
Aruba	77.3	22.7	6.7	8.4
Bahamas	64.1	35.8	6.0	9.7
Barbados	56.5	43.5	7.5	11.4
Belize	78.0	22.0	9.0	20.3
British Virgin Islands	71.3	28.7	3.4	3.1
Cuba	72.0	28.0	…	…
Dominica	62.7	37.3	19.6	27.2
Dominican Republic	70.0	30.0	…	…
Grenada	57.3	42.7	10.5	21.2
Guyana	70.5	29.5	6.2	14.3
Haiti	61.3	38.7	…	…
Jamaica	58.0	42.0	10.2	22.3
Montserrat	60.0	40.0	…	…
Netherlands Antilles	66.0	34.0	10.4	18.1
Puerto Rico	72.0	28.0	…	…
St. Kitts and Nevis	56.1	43.9	…	…
Saint Lucia	59.6	40.4	12.6	20.7
St. Vincent & The Grenadines	60.5	39.5	18.4	22.1
Suriname	80.0	20.0	7.2	17.0
Trinidad and Tobago	73.5	26.5	10.2	15.2
U.S. Virgin Islands	67.0	33.0	…	…
Mean	66.0	33.9		
Low	56.1	20.0		
High	80.0	43.9		

*2000 or most nearest available

Source 1: Poverty Eradication & Female-Headed Households (FHH) in the Caribbean (POV/96/2) ECLAC Source 2: ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean

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INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE AFRO-CARIBBEAN DIASPORA

Regla B. Diago Pinillos

ABSTRACT

One of the most important factors to be considered in terms of the development of the countries of our region is the Afro-Caribbean Diaspora.

Millions of individuals from Africa and their descendants contributed and are currently contributing to the region's cultural, economic, political and social development.

Historical factors determined not only by the transatlantic trade in African slaves, but also by the entire process of the slaveholding system and ignorance regarding the true history of Africa, even today, result in many Afro-descendants being excluded from countless development possibilities.

"Social cohesion" both inside and outside the Diaspora and the understanding of the African legacy "as machinery for development", are necessary in order to truly access the significant and profound roots of that Diaspora.

This article is focussed on the following objectives:

1. Contribute to the knowledge of several details ignored in the history of Africa in the fields of social, economic, political, ethical, aesthetic and cultural relations, among others.

2. Analyse the specific impact that the current critical global situation has on the interrelation of the changes occurring in the socio-historical, economic and cultural domains, both inside and outside the Afro-Caribbean Diaspora.

This article introduces the approach to a theoretical-methodological quest to recognise African Oral Tradition as one of the most import social sciences for Latin American and Caribbean studies that would help to eliminate marginalisation and religious, gender and ethnic minority conflicts within our region, in addition to which, it seeks to open up another channel through which fruitful exchanges of opinion from different perspectives could continue regarding the possibilities of integration and co-operation among the countries of the region.

INTRODUCTION

"The Caribbean is the region of a thousand and one definitions". Regla Diago Pinillos (2005:1)[106]

The arrival of the first slave ship to the coasts of what was erroneously referred to as the "New World", launched one of the most complex and polemic processes known in the history of humanity: the slave trade.

The forced departure of millions of Africans from their continent of origin to unknown lands, under inhumane conditions, is unparalleled. The advocates of this horrendous buying and selling of human beings gave rise to the entire macabre sequence of events that led to the existence of the Afro-American and Afro-Caribbean Diaspora. Studies that shed light on the motives and consequences of that "trade" will always abound. Nevertheless, there is a growing need for highly profound analyses with respect to the complex effects produced, which after more than five centuries, can be observed in the tangled plot that this complicated socio-economic, political, historical and cultural phenomenon has become.

Authors of various trends have approached the history of this phenomenon with more or less objectivity. Millions of books, in different languages, tackle the history of African slavery, and astonishingly, we always discover that many of its problems can even be analysed and many of them are also likely to be changed, in so far as approaches are concerned.

The advent of the twenty-first century, marked by one of the most convulsed stages in the history of mankind, presents various challenges to Africanists and other scholars; since the globalising and hegemonic trends in social studies and in other important areas of knowledge, quite often, complicate the serious and rigorous advancement of research on this topic.

For a long time, the so-called "western world" disregarded the voices of African researchers in their analyses regarding the phenomenon of the enslavement of millions of their compatriots. Today, there is still a great deal of vital information pertaining to this cruel stage in history that remains "dormant", fervently safeguarded in European archives that are virtually "inaccessible" to its legitimate heirs. Moreover, transnational companies continue to overexploit the resources of the African continent:

> "Tens of western multinational biotechnological and pharmaceutical companies are illegally using African biological resources to develop highly lucrative products in their laboratories whose benefits do not reach their countries of origin, thereby violating the UN Convention on Biodiversity, as indicated in a joint US and South African report (…) The report reveals that multinational companies are combing the entire African continent in search of samples of both plants and bacteria, which they subsequently process in their own laboratories. With those samples, the companies develop patented products that are particularly lucrative, whether plants for gardens in Europe, natural remedies for impotence or products used to fade designer jeans".[107]

Poverty, hunger and disease loom over most Africans and, in Latin America and the Caribbean, the heirs of their patrimony - the Afro-descendants - continue to increase the legions of the marginalised and excluded.

The valuable efforts undertaken by UNESCO in recent decades, together with those of other numerous national and international organisations and institutions, in many countries, have led to the

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[106] Diago Pinillos, Regla. The Caribbean: zone of resistance and sustainability. (El Caribe: zona de resistencia y sostenibilidad) Paper presented at the International Academic Seminar "Diplomacy and International Relations in the Greater Caribbean". Higher Institute of International Relations "Raúl Roa García" (ISRI). Page 1. (Not published) 07-Dec-2005. Havana.

[107] Report published by the daily London newspaper 'The Independent' on 23-02-2006; disseminated via the website: http://www.rebelion.org/noticia, on the same date.

opening up of a gap in the intricate web produced by the history of the entire course of the African Diaspora and its links - recognised or not - with its African ancestors. One of the most outstanding efforts of this endeavour is The Emancipation Support Committee of Trinidad and Tobago[108] founded in 1992, by the renowned economist and Trinidadian Pan-Africanist Khafra Kambon. This Organisation, together with the Clement Payne Movement of Barbados, established in September 2004, the African Diaspora Civil Society Network of the Caribbean, sponsored by the African Union (AU).

The Greater Caribbean, so rarely described in the large information transnationals, with its group of small, delightful and charming islands - "is Africa infinite and multiplied".[109] In order to recognise this, one needs to only look closely at the daily behaviour of the majority of the Afro-descendant population of these countries -'invisible' to a large extent by their being disregarded in censuses and news commentaries.

These small states, thriving and heroic territories that periodically come face to face with severe natural disasters - hurricanes, floods, droughts, etc.- are reservoirs and in turn laboratories of and for the demonstration of the way in which it has been carried on in those states, on the shoulders of the women, the elderly, men and children, the most valuable of the legacies of the African continent: cultural resistance.

According to the distinguished Senegalese intellectual and scientist Cheik Anta Diop (1986: 58):

> "The cultural identity of a people is linked to three key factors - history, linguistics and psychology, the last of these, in its broadest sense, can encompass religious characteristics - where importance varies according to the historical and social circumstances of each society. Without the absolute presence of these three factors, whether in a people or an individual, complete cultural identity will not be possible."[110]

Despite the fact that usually there are always studies conducted on the socioeconomic impact of the African slave trade, without a doubt, that trade - in light of the specific characteristics of those who were involved in it as 'commodities'[111] - had a tremendous cultural impact.

It was the same Anta Diop who said that "the strength of Black Africa lies in its cultural unity". We can find this unifying characteristic throughout the Caribbean and, undoubtedly, the cultural events of the African Diaspora are those that pave the way to establishing the identifying characteristics of the region in general. It is imperative to closely examine the historical roots of the Diaspora in order to conduct any

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[108] Every year, since its inception, this Committee celebrates the Emancipation Season, which begins in June, with a 'Series' of Conferences led by eminent Africanists from different countries; these run until the last week in July, during which numerous activities are developed - like the now well recognised Transatlantic Trade and Investment Symposium - which conclude on August 1 with the multitudinous and eye-catching national celebration of Emancipation Day, in commemoration of the date of the Abolition of Slavery in the English-speaking Caribbean; although by its spirit, scope, and the numerous nations participating in it, it is now a celebration that belongs to the entire Caribbean, to Africa and to the world. Website: www.emancipationtt.org

[109] Idem cit. 1.

[110] Diop, Cheik Anta. The three building blocks of culture. (August-September.1982). In The UNESCO Courier. (May-June. 1986). Paris.

[111] It is a question of men, women and children, with a series of innate biological characteristics and a certain physical make-up that allowed them to use their bodies and minds as executers and reservoirs, respectively, of special skills and extraordinary capacities, on one hand; and whose particular training in the conditions of a daily life strongly linked to the community and nature, on the other hand, transformed them into veritable moving archives of an immense wealth of various types of cultural events and actions, in the midst of the terrible living conditions imposed on them in lands unknown to them, to which they adjusted after transforming and recreating the new environment to which they were violently transplanted.

type of analysis of its attributes and perspectives. And those roots are firmly planted in Africa, with its lands still unknown and with an evolution that is quite often concealed and distorted.

It is therefore essential - as the first step - to make known many aspects associated with the history of Africa prior to the arrival of the first “missionaries”, “travellers”, “adventurers” or whatever their name may be; who, after the initial moment of astonishment in the face of so much magnificence of every kind, shifted to a second moment of pillaging and depredation.

Scores of “western” publications echoed the racist and excluding criteria of their authors and clamoured about the lack of history in that continent, as a means of hindering that of its inhabitants and that of those who were taken “beyond the sea” on a journey from which there was no return.

A great deal of time has passed, more than five hundred years, since the arrival of the first African slaves to the lands of the Caribbean and it may be surprising that, after so many generations, it is possible to find among Afro-descendants the unmistakable marks of their ancestry. However, if we delve deeply into the attributes of traditional African cultures we find that everything is part of a process, part of what is referred to as the “endless cycle”.

The linguistic factor has a fundamental influence on the studies of the Afro-Caribbean Diaspora, not only due to the well-known difficulties that exist in order to achieve communication among the citizens of the countries that constitute the region, but also by the extraordinary role that it played and continues to play in many aspects which, on a daily basis, can go by unnoticed. It is an essential element of unity. It was not by chance that the slave masters separated the members of the same African “nations” at the time of their departure for unknown lands, nor was it happenstance that the slaves were forbidden from playing the drums, which in pre-colonial Africa served as an important means of communication at both proximate and long distances.

Finally, the psychological element, obviously fundamental for our analysis, that which was driven to immeasurable extremes throughout the entire process of the African slave trade: from the moment of the capture and the uprooting of individuals from their families and environment; then, during the endless journey to the coasts, whether via land or through the rivers running parallel to said coasts so as to avoid scrutiny; at the moment of the departure, being part of a one way journey; followed by the Middle Passage, that interminable period with a mixture of crushing wood, chains, promiscuity and foul odours, mercilessness, saltpeter and hopelessness; then, the arrival at strange lands; later on, landing in situations that were quite often desperate and infuriating, whether by the conditions of the heavy swell, very far from the presence of the “safe” wall, or by the pressure and urgency brought about by the fear of being discovered in the midst of such an important time in the chain of events of that illicit trade; next, the sale in the midst of extreme humiliation reduced to the category of animals and quite often lower than that and who knows if this was accompanied by a second uprooting from the family. Later on, the daily torture of the plantations, mines or other work sites: the shackles, the iron masks, the clamps, the cracking of the whip, the merciless sun or rain, the branding with the hot iron, the unceasing degradation, or the domestic service, with its subtle and constant mark of annihilation of the personality. In both settings (on the plantation or in the houses) there always lived the ghost of sexual abuse inflicted by the masters on the slaves in their service, accompanied by the intrigues and lies with respect to those who started the interminable series of love conflicts arising out of ‘the pleasure of the forbidden’. For that entire period, ‘sanctifying’ the venture and creating the genocide of bodies and also aspiring to that of the souls, there was the endeavour of forced religious conversion. The imposition to renounce their intimate spirituality, branded as pagan and evil.

The coming of Emancipation after several centuries of the slaveholding system - with the well-known, very much “Caribbean” mixtures of different economic social formations - and the sudden socio-

historical political changes that characterise our lands, left their mark on the shaping of the Afro-Caribbean Diaspora.

Each of the different countries that constitute this region, with their own attributes, systems of government and environmental particularities, today exhibit an astonishing kaleidoscope of African cultural heritage. Cognisant or not of that, whether assuming themselves to be heirs of those cultures or ashamed of them, the Afro-Caribbean people are here, leaving their mark, making an impression, openly fighting to offload the burden imposed by the old metropolises - slaveholders at first, then colonialists and neo-colonialists, but always dominant.

THE SITUATION OF THE AFRO-DESCENDANTS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN IN CONTEMPORANEITY

"The causes and effects of racism and discrimination lie at the root of our Latin American societies and cultures" Bello, Álvaro and Rangel, Marta (2002:40)[112]

Historically, Afro-descendants are those who further inflate the statistics generally almost always promoting the various negative aspects that mark the social division existing in the region.

They are many, the vicissitudes which, for many centuries, Afro-descendants have had to undergo as consequences of the slavery to which their ancestors were subjected. We must not lose sight of the fact that their true names and last names were snatched from them to be replaced with others that did not belong to them: those of their slave masters. Added to this initial loss of patrimonial and maternal identity, on a daily basis, was what the notaries imposed on them in the Notarial Records of the various populations by giving them names and last names according to their own consideration. Therefore, many brothers and sisters, sons and daughters of the same father and mother - especially in the Spanish-speaking Caribbean and Latin America - do not have the same last names; since they were given as their first name that of the parent who agreed to register them in spite of the legislation in force that stipulated that the first name would be that of the father. In requesting the Registration of Birth for any legal procedure - after several years had passed - the irregularity was discovered, whose amendment was sometimes virtually impossible or highly costly and difficult for those involved. Today, many of these conflicts still affect Afro-descendants who have become "pages torn from a large book whose sheets - violently ripped out - were cast to the wind".

After time, this has led to numerous problems when establishing kinship or seeking to prove affiliation with a specific family or origin in a specific country. 'Forced' intra-Caribbean migrations during the time of slavery, the product of the illicit coming and going of slaves from one island to another, or the kidnapping and subsequent sale as slaves of individuals who previously were not - understandably without their identification documents in the last of these cases - up to today, affect the descendants of third and fourth generations who have no way of proving the certainty of the origin declared by their grandparents and great grandparents and which has been preserved in family stories handed down from generation to generation.

Additionally, throughout the course of history, a process of "whitening" was developed which included, during the colonial era the 'legal' purchasing of titles indicating possession of "white blood" on

[112] Bello Álvaro and Rangel, Marta. Equity and exclusion in Latin America and the Caribbean: the case of indigenous and Afro-descendant people. (La equidad y la exclusión de los pueblos indígenas y afrodescendientes de América Latina el Caribe). ECLAC Journal (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean) United Nations. No. 76. Santiago de Chile. April, 2002. Page 50.

the part of many individuals of mixed race, born of African mothers and European fathers and, to a lesser extent, the opposite case involving children of European mothers and African fathers. This, coupled with the sense of their own contempt for their origins, brought about and even continues to lead to the denial of African origin in the population censuses that have been carried out for years in the region. Hence, the reason why on countless occasions, the statistics officially released do not reflect the reality of the number of Afro-descendants living in the zone and in some countries, there is no reflection of the presence of those who quite often populate those countries by great numbers. Countless censuses during the colonial era did not even take into consideration the presence of the blacks.

It is also true that "since the olden days, the countries of the region in which there is an Afro-descendant population, have developed category formats that dilute this population into various groups or segments. For example, in some countries they have been included in the *ethnic group* category or directly as the *indigenous group.* In several countries like Brazil, Costa Rica and Honduras, there is only one question regarding origin. In Brazil, the interviewee identifies him/herself by "colour or race", in Costa Rica by the "culture" to which he/she belongs and in Honduras, by "population" group (Garífuna and/or English black). In Guatemala self-identification is done on the basis of the ethnic group that the interviewee considers him/herself to be a member of and in Ecuador, the question asked is how the individual "perceives him/herself" using response options such as indigenous, black, Afro-Ecuadorian, mestizo/mixed, mulatto and other, (Rangel, 2005). In Brazil, the black population corresponds to all "pretos" (blacks) and "pardos" (mestizos/mixed and mulattoes). According to the same study in Costa Rica it includes those individuals who responded that they belong to the "Afro-Costa Rican or black" culture. In Ecuador, the Afro-descendants correspond to all "blacks (Afro-Ecuadorian)" and "mulattoes".

In addition, in relation to the Afro-descendant population, demographic censuses do not ask about this characteristic in all the countries. Secondly, where the race/colour variable is asked about, the response of the interviewee is conditioned by a number of factors such as income and education levels, (*) awareness of negritude, the need for "whitening", etc. All this makes it difficult to compare the data of different countries."[113]

Undoubtedly, the extensive quote above reveals to us the degree of complexity of the situation with respect to the knowledge of the exact number of Afro-descendants in the region, a matter that should be given greater attention due to the fact that "the problem of statistics is fundamental. Without reliable data, without indicators and periodic measurements, it is impossible for political decisions to be taken in order to address the problem of discrimination. Statistics also have an undeniable political component, since for those affected it means the visibility of their situation as well as a form of recognition in the eyes of others. For States and governments, the management of statistics has been linked quite often to the denial of racism, discrimination and xenophobia."[114]

Despite these difficulties and others of a different nature that limit true knowledge of the exact number of Afro-descendants in the area, it is expressed that "a very rough estimate of the black and mulatto/mestizo population yields a total of some 150 million Afro-descendants for the region (see table), or about 30% of the total population. Geographically, they are to be found chiefly in Brazil (50%),

(*) The authors then introduced the following quotation: "In Brazil, for example, persons who classify themselves as white have longer years of schooling and fall into a higher income bracket, while those who classify themselves as black, have fewer years of study and fall into a lower income bracket. Which can lead to the absurd conclusion that money *whitens* and that inversely, poverty *blackens* (Silva, 1994).

[113] Hopenhayn, Martín, Bello Álvaro, Miranda Francisca. Indigenous peoples and Afro-descendants in the new millennium (Los pueblos indígenas y afrodescendientes ante el nuevo milenio.) *Social Politics Series, No. 118.* Social Development Division. ECLAC. United Nations. Santiago de Chile, April 2006.

[114] Idem ant.

Colombia (20%) and Venezuela (10%) and in the Caribbean (16%), where they are the majority in several countries".[115]

The events occurring in contemporaneity speak of the pressing need to return to that almost one third of the population of the region, all its civic rights. Although it is true that there is an interest in achieving this and that numerous actions have been undertaken in order to do so (*), it does not change the fact that there is still much to be done. The technological advancements that seeks to keep those interested informed of the agreements and resolutions that continue to be unconditionally formulated by institutions, governments and civil society are simply not enough. Most of them would not learn of such advancements since they do not have access to them. In these times, there should not be the occurrence of the situations related by grandparents and great grandparents to their grandchildren and great grandchildren that speak of the way in which many African slaves died without knowing that they were free, since slavery had been abolished for many years and no one bothered to give them the news. Many never learnt of it. Even that 'right' was withheld from them. What is most important is to make it known by all means possible, the many aspects addressed in the preceding pages and in those to come. Simple procedures often contribute to the achievement of great undertakings.

[115] Idem cit. 7. Page 49. Also appears in Hopenhayn et al. page 26.

(*) In order to have a broad perspective of several advancements related to the improvement of the living conditions of Afro-descendants in various countries within the region, see: (Hopenhayn et al: 2006:41-51).

The table[116] (*) appearing below illustrates some of the issues expressed earlier:

TABLE 1

Latin America and the Caribbean: Estimates for the black and mulatto population,[a] by country, 1998

Country	Year %	Blacks (%)	Mulattoes (%)	Population 1998	Black + mulatto population
1. Antigua and Barbuda	1970	81.4	8.6	67,000	60,300
2. Netherlands Antilles				213,000	
3. Argentina				36,125,000	b
4. Bahamas				300,000	
5. Barbados	1980	91.9	2.6	268,000	253,260
6. Belize	1991	6.6	43.7	230,000	115,690
7. Bolivia				7,957,000	b
8. Brazil	1995	4.9	40.1	166,296,000	74,833,200
9. Chile				14,822,000	b
10. Colombia	1991	5.0	71.0	40,804,000	31,011,040
11. Costa Rica				3,840,000	b
12. Cuba	1981	12.0	21.8	11,116,000	3,757,208
13. Dominica	1981	91.2	6.0	71,000	69,012
14. Ecuador				12,175,000	b
15. El Salvador				6,031,000	b
16. Grenada	1980	82.2	13.3	93,000	88,815
17. Guadeloupe				443,000	
18. Guatemala				10,802,000	b
19. Guyana	1980	30.5	11.0	856,000	355,240
20. Haiti	1999	95.0		8,056,000	7,653,200
21. Honduras				6,148,000	b
22. Jamaica	1970	90.9	5.8	2,539,000	2,455,213
23. Mexico				95,830,000	b
24. Nicaragua				4,807,000	b
25. Panama				2,767,000	b
26. Paraguay				5,223,000	b
27. Peru				24,801,000	b
28. Dominican Republic	1991	11.0	73.0	8,232,000	6,914,880
29. St. Kitts and Nevis	1980	94.3	3.3	41,000	40,016
30. St. Lucia	1980	86.8	9.3	148,000	142,228
31. St. Vincent and the Grenadines	1980	82.0	13.9	115,000	110,285
32. Suriname		15.0[c]		416,000	62,400
33. Trinidad and Tobago	1980	40.8	16.3	1,284,000	733,164
34. Uruguay				3,289,000	b
35. Venezuela	1991	10.0	65.0	23,242,000	17,431,500
Total				*499,447,000*	*146,084,651*

a. The black and mulatto population percentages were obtained from the United States Bureau of the Census, International (www.census.gov), except for Brazil (www.ibge.gov), Haiti (www.odci.gov) and Colombia, the Dominican Republic and Venezuela (Larousse Moderno, 1991). Population totals were obtained from ECLAC (1999).
b. The census does not ask about (African) racial origin.
c. Price (1995)

[116] Idem cit. 7 page 50.

(*) The letter 'c' that appears at the end, has no reference in the table, as can be observed. It is possible that it corresponds with the blank spaces in the right column.

Despite the ongoing efforts of the international community, including the governments and local authorities of many of the countries involved, the statistics corroborating the arduous situation of the Afro-descendants are not on the decline. At the same time, they are the ones receiving lower salaries for work done in positions where employees with lighter skin receive a higher remuneration. Both men and women feel the severity of these circumstances, but among women, this situation takes on a greater dimension with the addition of the categories of both gender and race. Illustrative examples of these situations are found in Brazil, "the country with the largest black and mulatto population in Latin America. In the metropolitan area of Rio de Janeiro, about 60% of black and mulatto men carry out manual work in industry, as against 37% of white men. While some 40% of black and mulatto women work as domestic servants, the figure for white women is just 15%. (Rangel. 1998)."[117]

This reality is coupled with the fact that they are also the ones most distanced from the benefits of access to education, health services and - paradoxically - the full enjoyment of the cultural assets that they contributed to development.

Moreover, reports indicate that in that country, up to 2001, "in no age group, nor any combination of gender and race, did the rate of labour instability fall below 50% of the population analysed. The percentage of black workers in situations of precarious employment was much higher than that of white workers throughout the period 1992 to 2001, in both sexes and in all age groups, always recorded around two-thirds or more of the population analysed. Among young blacks between the ages of 16 and 24, the rate always exceeded 70% and reached 76.5 in the case of black women. (Borges Martins, 2004)."[118]

ECLAC surveys speak of extreme poverty among the indigenous people and Afro-descendants of 14 Latin American and Caribbean countries, namely Costa Rica, Haiti, Colombia, Honduras, Peru, Ecuador, Brazil, Bolivia, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Chile, Mexico, Panama and Paraguay, where estimates indicate that the level of poverty is exceeded by 1.6 (Colombia) and 7.9 (Paraguay) when compared to the rest of the population. It is interesting to observe that the cases of Costa Rica and Haiti have been omitted, where according to the results, ethnicity does not seem to affect levels of poverty.

The same source indicates that "in the English-speaking Caribbean countries, Afro-descendants generally constitute the majority of the population, although in countries such as Belize, Dominica, Guyana, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago, other ethnic groups also account for a significant part of the population. In these countries, the situation of the Afro-descendants differs from the rest of the region, since they do not experience the same exclusion of the Latin American societies, owing to the fact that they represent the demographic majority and thanks to the structural changes that took place before and after independence and, especially, as a result of the equality that exists in terms of access to education. Nevertheless, according to poverty estimates during the 1990's, in Caribbean countries like Guyana and, to a lesser extent, Dominica, there are ethnic inequalities as well, since the Amerindian populations have high representation among the poorest. (ECLAC and other agencies, 2005, pages 52-53)."[119]

It should be pointed out that this does not mean that the population segment that we are focussing on has all its problems solved in those countries - besides their situation is obviously much more favourable than in the rest of Latin America and the Caribbean - and that they have completely escaped from all the indicators that can conceptualise them in specific cases as marginalised or excluded, as well as discriminated.

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[117] Idem cit. 7.
[118] Idem cit. 8 page 30.
[119] Idem cit. ant, page. 28.

In recent years, several important analyses conducted on social exclusion and poverty by organisations such as ECLAC, for example, do not include - as did other similar analyses at the start of the millennium - the term "Afro-descendants" in the population categories that are the subject of studies such as that which we are undertaking. Important data could be found in the sections that included this population segment as "*indigenous peoples and Afro-descendants*". For example, one crucial analysis that allows for a better understanding of the current situation of the populations that make up the societies of different Latin American and Caribbean countries, introduces a new category: "*indigenous peoples*" and "*non-indigenous peoples*" which "dilutes" "*Afro-descendants*" within the 'denial' of the category, and with this, denies the possibility of knowing today, the real situation of that important population that originated from Africans and which continues to be submerged in exclusion, marginality and discrimination. The variables measured in the statistical data appearing in Tables 'III.4' to'III.11' - with the information to which they are attached - would provide data of an inestimable value (ECLAC: 2006: 170-208).[120]

It is interesting today, the introduction of the "relative poverty" approach to analyse the evolution of this social catastrophe that has a direct impact on the marginalised and excluded in Latin America and the Caribbean. Nevertheless, it would be highly beneficial to know its indicators in the life of the Afro-descendants of the region where "the definition of poverty that emphasises the inability to deploy the capacities they need to relate properly to the society in which they live. Measuring this type of relative poverty is very challenging in terms of the information required. There is a methodologically simpler alternative, however, which has been used systematically in the European Union. This method consists of setting a poverty line as a percentage of the population's mean or median income.

The rationale is that, as a country grows and new needs emerge, the standard of poverty shifts on its own, without there being any need to define explicit needs. Based on this method, an assessment of relative poverty can be conducted for Latin America as a complement to the "absolute poverty" approach (*) usually employed in the region."[121]

The variables that are analysed, whose data appears in the statistics included in various tables and charts, provide invaluable information which, if applied to Afro-descendants, would contribute to the endeavour to make them visible to others. In addition, the section entitled "Poverty, inequality and vulnerability in the Caribbean" from the same source (ECLAC: 2006:68)[122] is highly appropriate in order to 'visibilise' Afro-descendants.

<u>Development:</u> The Caribbean is not only lived, it is felt (Regla Diago Pinillos)[123]

The Caribbean region is one of the most interesting areas on the planet in terms of historical evolution. Each of its different stages marked the events that characterise it today as one of the most complex of its time.

The contemporary Caribbean bears the imprint of this entire process. Multiethnic and pluricultural nations struggle in an environment where diversity is such that it is becoming more and more difficult to

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[120] 15. 2006. Social Panorama of Latin America. ECLAC (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean) United Nations Publication. (LC/G.2326-P) Santiago de Chile.

[121] Idem ant. Page 24.

(*) Its main characteristic is "establish a poverty line that represents the cost of satisfying a set of needs that might be considered essential in any society."

[122] Idem ant. Page 78.

[123] Diago Pinillos, Regla. Intervention during the preparatory Meeting of the Caribbean Studies Programme of the University of Havana (UH), by the Delegation to the International Congress of the Caribbean Studies Association (CSA) to be held in Trinidad and Tobago. (July 14, 2005). Havana.

find channels for necessary and urgent understanding. It is in the midst of this whole socio-historical-political-economic-cultural environment that the Afro-Caribbean Diaspora emerges as a component worthy of consideration when establishing accuracies in terms of the entire current problem being experienced by the region and humanity in general.

The first element to be considered in order to analyse any attributes in relation to Afro-descendants is their undeniable links to the history of the African continent from which their ancestors came, mostly as slaves.

For a long time, Africa was denied the right to display all its historical values. In view of the fact that most of its traditional societies were agraphic, researchers and writers with a racist tendency used this determinant as the main argument on which to base their theories regarding said historicity. The metropolises concealed the reality of the valuable potential accumulated by the African peoples prior to the commencement of the African slave trade.

With that they sought, with the passing of time, to erase forever, the historical consciousness of the slaves and their descendants, as a way of perpetuating colonial dominion over the metropolises and the concept of racial superiority.

This is explained by McPherson, James M. et al (1972:25-26):

> "Previous generations of Western historians described Africa as the "Dark Continent", full of savage tribes and devoid of any attributes of civilisation before the coming of the white man. According this view, slaves brought to America came from a primitive, barbarous culture, and their experience of slavery in the New World was actually a great benefit because it brought them into contact with progressive white civilisation.
>
> In the words of Ulrich B. Phillips, slavery was a "school" in which the black man learned the superior ways of the white man. Without the schooling of slavery (and the later impact of Western imperialism in Africa) blacks would have remained a backward, benighted continent (…) Black historians strove to correct this view, but made little impact on culture-bound white scholarship until the 1940s and 1950s, when new studies in archaeology, anthropology, and history began to confirm black assertions that Africa had enjoyed a rich and complex cultural heritage before Europeans came to exploit the continent. For early black efforts to rehabilitate the image of Africa, see W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Negro* (New York, 1915), chs. 1-8, and *Black Folk: Then And Now* (New York, 1939), chs. 1-7. (…) A classic revisionist study was Melville J., Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past* (New York, 1941), especially ch. 3"[124]

Traditional African societies had a community organisation mechanism that was forced, subtly at first, with the arrival of the missionaries and then drastically with the subsequent arrival of the slaves.

It is said that it may never be known with certainty, the number of millions of human beings who were uprooted from Africa during the slave trade that spanned for centuries. The 'nations' that constituted the continent, upon the arrival of the slaveholders, traversed through different economic-social stages. Many of their government structures were comparable with those existing in Europe, while others surpassed them. Flourishing in those nations were nobility, dynastic successions, protocol and advanced parliamentary systems with the full exercise of Common Law.

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[124] McPherson, James M.; Holland, Laurence B.; Banner, James M. Jr.; Weiss, Nancy J.; Bell, Michael D. Blacks in America. *Bibliographical Essays*. Anchor Books Edition. New York. 1972.

The community awarded a privileged place to the "griots"[125] - men and women who were masters of the spoken word, which was considered in all of those societies as a divine gift. These conscientious custodians of the historical-cultural patrimony formed one of the most respected 'casts'[126] within the prevailing social strata. Their work toward the community was the use of the spoken word, or rather, the preservation and dissemination of the entire historical-cultural inheritance of the African continent. Their action unfolded in various directions, whether to safeguard the history of the dynastic successions or for the preservation of heroic events of war; the roles of artistic nature; or the complex protocol services in which the nobility was wrapped up in its exchanges within the 'nation' itself or in delicate diplomatic services abroad.

So firmly established throughout Africa is the imprint of the 'spoken word', that excellence in its use was a characteristic "feature" since ancient times. Many famous Latin American and Caribbean authors wrote essays in which they drew reference to the "loquacity" of the blacks of the Diaspora and in many pejorative references spoke of "chatty" slaves, with the intention of ridiculing an obvious 'identifying characteristic'. That same characteristic was very much known by the slave masters and is reflected in the sophisticated punishment used to reprimand the boldness of the most rebellious slaves: placing on them an iron mask or muzzle that not only prevented them from eating and quenching their thirst, it also prevented them from speaking. The subtlety in globalised and globalising modernity sometimes results in the upper echelons of power - racist - depriving brilliant Afro-descendant intellectuals, men and women, of the right to freely exercise their inherent capacities for oral expression and the preservation of ideas. They are discriminatory contemporary hegemonic influences.

The pre-colonial history of the continent amounts in its splendour to Ancient Egypt, from the time of the dawn of that civilisation, in the city of Meroe, in the area of the Sixth Cataract of the Nile, to the extreme south of the Great Pyramids, with its black Pharaohs, those whose features appear on the Sphinx and on the colossal statues of the Valley of the Kings and of which "western" European propaganda has not been able to provide 'whitened' and 'stylised' images – as was done with the face of Queen Nzinga Mbandi Ngola in an image that appears, among other places, on the cover of the text of her biography made into a novel and published by the Angolan writer and diplomat Manuel Pedro Pacavira. She was the heir to the throne of the kingdom of the Congo (christened Doña Beatriz by the Portuguese, whom she tormented constantly).

The unknown history of the African continent also speaks of vast empires such as Matamba (founded by the aforementioned Angolan Empress) as well as many other kingdoms of the Congolese Basin, such as that of the Mboshi - with its tradition of underlining the eyes of the King using the same style as that of the Egyptian Pharaoh Teti I; or that of the Bateke kingdom, also known as Bantu, with the story of the required leopard skin at the feet of its king; or of the Mandinka, an Empire that included the territories of Mali, Senegal and Guinea (Conakry) mainly with Sundjata Keita, and his exciting story as the leader; or of Songhai, also in Mali, with Sonni Ali Ber - or Askia Muhammad - at the helm, who scattered gold along the way of his pilgrimage to Mecca. Mention must be made of the Ghana Empire and the splendour of the Ashanti and the Akhan; as well as the Monomotapa - with the ruins of Great Zimbabwe that continue to amaze humanity up to today; and the Zulu, in South Africa with Shaka as leader, who was one of the greatest military strategists known in universal history. Among the most recognised is the Yoruba

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[125] They are known by this name throughout the Maghreb - essentially in the territories that were grouped under what was previously called French West Africa. In the different languages of the various ethnic groups of the entire continent, there is a name to identify individuals who are responsible for such a crucial function; for example, 'chiorinke' in one of the Cameroonian languages; but in recent times, the word "griot" has become very well known among Africanists and those interested in a better understanding of the traditional cultures and modernity of that continent.

[126] The class structure of traditional African societies incorporated the 'nobles': individuals of the high ranks of government and the wealthy; in addition to the citizens of 'casts' that corresponded with different positions: weavers, blacksmiths, fishermen, artisans, builders and creators of the spoken word (griots), among others.

Empire "one of the oldest dynasties in the world, with the Oni[127] of Ife, ancestral home of the Yoruba, belonging to an unbroken succession which dated back to the ninth century" (Aiyejina, Funso & Gibbons, Rawle: 2000:2).[128] These constitute one of the most renowned ethnic groups of current Nigeria, whose famous kings and queens, brave warriors and important personalities, became the divinities of the world of the Orishas - Omisas, Rule of Ocha, Ocha or Santería - similar to the gods of Greek Olympus; but with the crucial peculiarity of being one of the most widespread and practised Afro-Caribbean and Afro Latin American religions in the world today - quite often behind closed doors - together with other religions whose deities come from the Iyessa, Ibibio, Efik and Efok kingdoms, the last two of these from the region of Calabar, or from the Hausas - Muslims - all in Nigeria; or of the Kongos of the Congo, Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo or the Hereros of Namibia.

The ignored history of Africa also speaks of other thousands of kingdoms throughout the continent, such as the thirteen in succession that formed what is present day Benin, among which stands out former Dahomey, whose capital was the city of Abomey with its famous Palace, which is the National Museum today; as well as the Ethiopian Empire which, with the rise in 1930 of Ras Tafari, Haile Selassie I, as Emperor, laid the bases for Rastafarianism, one of the most deeply rooted religions in the Caribbean region.

Also renowned were the kingdoms of Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda; the first two of them with their secular tribal conflicts that left moments of sad memories in modernity. One needs to only mention the Massai to conjure up one of the most legendary ethnic groups of Eastern Africa, where also recognised among many others were the Makonde, with their unrivalled art and the Makua, both of these in Mozambique. To the north, up to the Mediterranean, through the Maghreb and throughout the Sahel - with the dunes of the Sahara - the Sirocco, Harmattan or Simoom - wind of the desert - records the histories of the nomadic peoples, masters of immensities and participants in the same traditional and ancestral cultural strength of the continent: the Tuaregs and the Berebers who travelled on the backs of camels in mythical caravans; or on spirited steeds, they made inroads toward the interior, to the South, seeking women and riches. A magnificent story, that of the Dogon people, of Mali, conscientious guardians of an impregnable lineage like the Bandiagara Escarpment, where they became strong in their barbaric life, in the steep crags where they could never be subdued; they are creators of the spoken word in a special way; brilliant blacksmiths, with sculptural and artisanal art that astonishes the world; worshippers of Amma, the God of Water, which the griot Ogotemmeli made known to the world; curious observers of celestial bodies, very much linked to the ancient Egyptians by their knowledge of, among other things, the orbital movement of the Orion Constellation. And in the heart of Africa, the Pygmies, with their kingdoms, ancestry and unrivalled knowledge of the secrets of the impenetrable rain forest, who are believed to be the original ancestors of the Bantu peoples of the Congolese Basin. The Afro-Caribbean Diaspora is shaped by this entire complex historical amalgam.

Direct heirs of the dynastic successions of kingdoms and empires[129] came to these lands transformed into slaves; whether by war or by debt - in the early times - and later on, with the slave trade becoming such a lucrative business, there was "human hunting" with any type of resources and all forms of unhealthy complicities. Today, it is understandable the reasons why it was hidden and continues to be hidden from the eyes of the Afro-descendants, the true history of their origins: those who loathe their "savage" past do not think or feel the same, nor do they react in the same way as those who are proud of their hidden lineage. Historical consciousness is an important element that must be cultivated among

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[127] One of the acceptations of the word King, in the Yoruba language.

[128] Aiyejina, Funso & Gibbons, Rawle. Orisa (Orisha) Tradition in Trinidad. Research and Working Paper Series. University of the West Indies. Faculty of Social Sciences. St. Augustine. Trinidad. W.I. 2000.

[129] Among the millions of heirs 'of royalty' brought to our region as slaves, stands out the story of Prince Ashanti who designed and built Fort George in Port of Spain, Trinidad, W.I., as indicated on the plaque affixed to the wall of that building. Visit the place during the SOLAR World Congress 2002. November 2002.

Afro-descendants and is the first inevitable step in the process of 'Repairing' the profound consequences of the countless traumas that slavery, as a whole, has left behind with the passing of time among the descendants of those who endured more and who, at the same time, were the most resistant, both physically and intellectually, to the monstrosity that they were forced to suffer.

The linguistic factor is intimately linked to the historical. Today, from different angles, it still has a powerful impact on the Afro-Caribbean Diaspora.

Africa currently has 53 countries that provide an extremely complex linguistic mosaic. Many of those thousands of autochthonous African languages are facing the tremendous risk of disappearance. Different international organisations like UNESCO and important personalities like the South African President, Thabo Mbeki, have appealed for their preservation. Curiously, contemporary evangelising work, with its actions, has contributed significantly to this endeavour. In their publication (2007: 12-13), Jehovah's Witnesses express it as follows:

> "Sincere Bible readers from Europe and North America long recognised the need for Africans to be able to read God's Word in their own tongues. To this noble end, many men went to Africa to learn African languages. Some gave tongues a written form and produced dictionaries. After that, they set about translating the Bible into many different African languages. This was no easy task. "A man might have to search for years before he found the right term for even the simplest and most fundamental of Christian concepts," explains *The Cambridge History of the Bible*".
>
> In 1857 the Tswana people became the first to have a complete Bible translation in one of Africa's formerly unwritten tongues. (By 1835 the Bible had been translated into the Malagasy language of Madagascar, and by 1840, the Amharic language of Ethiopia. These languages existed in written form long before the Bible was translated into them).
>
> Since the 1980's, the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses has made a concerted effort to have the *New World* Translation of the *Holy Scriptures* rendered into a number of major African languages (…) Thus far, the New World Translation, in whole or in part, is available in 17[130] indigenous African tongues (…) Another milestone in the production of African-language Bibles was reached in August 2005. During that month, over 76,000 copies of the *New World Translation* in languages spoken in Africa were printed and bound at the South Africa branch of Jehovah's Witnesses. Included in that number were 30,000 Bibles in the Shona language. This edition was released at the "Godly Obedience" Conventions of Jehovah's Witnesses in Zimbabwe" [131]

Hundreds of years earlier, added to the autochthonous languages of Africa were those of the colonialists, who arrived from different European countries. Many Africans already spoke those languages - in addition to their own - when they were brought to this part of the world as slaves. As a form of self defence in the face of adversity, many of them in these lands, hid this ability from their masters.

The first multi-linguistic contact - imposed - among the languages of those who would subsequently shape the Afro-Caribbean Diaspora, was made en route to the coast of the continent, before leaving for the "journey of no return" on board the slave ships. The second contact occurred in the "forts", awaiting

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[130] The following are the African languages in which the text cited in quotation 15 is published: "Afrikaans, amharic, baule, efik, ewe, hausa, igbo, iloko, kikongo, kiluba, kiniaruanda kirundi, kongo (*), kwanyama/ndonga, lingala, luganda, lunda, malgache, sesotho, shona, swahili, tshiluba, tsonga, tsuana, umbundu, xhosa, yoruba and zulu", among others. (Opus cit.15).

(*) There really is no 'kongo' language; it is an ethnic group (of present day Angola, Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo) whose language is 'kikongo'.

[131] s/a. Milestones in the production of African-Language Bibles. *The Watchtower. Announcing the Kingdom of Jehovah*. Watchtower Bible and Tract Society. January 15, 2007. Pennsylvania.

their departure. A third moment of language refining took place during the 'Middle Passage'. That dreadful voyage was another point involving the search for the communication necessary for survival in extreme conditions. Finally, after the vicissitudes of the sale; in the plantations, in the mines, in the houses.

Perhaps, they have never been analysed in depth - in a practical way - the details of the linguistic exchanges that took place in the Caribbean zone. Studies are generally focussed more on the description of the various languages and dialects that made contact in this region: the many Amerindian, Mesoamerican or pre-Columbian languages that were spoken on the arrival of the 'discoverers', conquistadors and colonisers; the hundreds of languages from Africa and, after, those that also joined the concert: the Asian languages. However, the issue runs deeper than that. Those contacts were of a different nature: of confrontation, of impositions, of maskings, of necessities and of gratuitousness. Each one: a different psychological conditioning.

The metropolises needed to eliminate the languages of the enslaved and implant theirs, as a means of achieving greater and better job activity and therefore, greater economic returns; and also as a way of avoiding communication among the individuals of the same 'nation' exploited by them, anticipating the plotting of possible uprisings. They needed 'to kill' their spirit. The slaves tried to not forget their native languages, many of which, being merely oral languages, were lacking systems of written notation. In secret, they sought to preserve them, like in their origins, in notations that they made in their so-called 'notebooks'. In Cuba, they proliferated these incredible sources of knowledge, which were conscientiously written and safeguarded by the slaves from Africa. In those very notebooks they wrote - in a crucial first act of transcription of the African languages in Latin America and the Caribbean - their customs, their treatments, their culinary and medicinal recipes…their spirituality. Most of them were not appreciated in all their immeasurable value by their legitimate heirs and they handed them over to many notable researchers who considered them to be 'their informants'. Today, this knowledge forms part of many master pieces of Anthropology and Ethnology. Such is their value. Some are being published and sold at incredibly high prices, inaccessible to humble people, most of them Afro-descendants.

This entire complex and 'tough' process is the patrimony of the Afro-Caribbean and Afro Latin American Diaspora, although perhaps there still does not exist that 'sensitivity' toward the linguistic aspects. It is spoken and that's it. However, the transition has been much more profound than simple and necessary learning. It should be praised. It is yet another undeniable feat of the Afro-descendants. And another identifying point that must be included in the concept of 'Reparation': that of linguistic consciousness".

Language is a spiritual factor of immeasurable value. It is the identity of a nation. How does it function at the level of a continent? In the case of Africa, despite the obvious linguistic variety, there is a unifying element with respect to this particular feature and it is the fact that all their languages are 'tonal'. This affords them the possibility of a closeness of interests from the phonological point of view: a certain phonic kinship related to the pauses of articulation. Nevertheless, each one of them maintains its tonal individuality, as well as its morpho-syntactic and grammatical peculiarities; not to mention the lexical. They possess their own distinctive features, eternally linked to rhythm and musicality, to such an extent that, for example, in Mali, the griots of the Senufo ethnic group cannot interpret with their balafons (marimbulas) or their koras (harps) the Mandinka or Bambara epics and vice versa, despite their evident historical, geographic and cultural proximity. The flutes of the Peul people only accompany - in like fashion - the interpretations of their ethnic group.

In recent years, many young African musicians have begun an important movement with modern versions of the ancestral music of their respective nations, while others 'fuse' their songs, rhythms and

melodies with those of other countries, including those of Europe, in a combination that also allows for the identification, in these very rhythms and melodies, of echoes - not so distant - of African roots.

The slaves coming from Africa recreated in Latin America and the Caribbean, the 'linguistic' sonorities of their continent of origin; they readjusted them and did not allow them to die. The imprint extends beyond the obvious presence of the words of African origin. Quite often, it has become obvious in the rhythmic way of making the 'intonation curve' in the spoken chain. That's why in many Latin American and Caribbean countries, or in specific regions there, it can be said that the "people speak singing".

On numerous occasions, the Afro-descendants of the Diaspora had to readjust their languages at moments brought about by the successive changes in metropolises, whether by the sale of island or continental territories; or by losses of same during the successive pillaging wars that took place in this zone. The process of readjustment and linguistic re-adaptation was extraordinarily meritorious. It still is. Cheik Anta Diop (1986:58) masterfully explains this complex transition:

> "A distinctive phenomenon, creolisation is linked to very specific historical circumstances. This linguistic process is the action of isolated individuals, deprived of their freedom, uprooted from their place of origin and brutally submerged in another environment, to which they adapted in so far as was possible. Thus, the illiterate Africans deported to the West Indies distorted the European languages and created new languages in which researchers can rediscover as a distant echo, the syntactic and morphological structures of the African languages".[132]

That 'distinctive stamp' that is also observed in the entire musical domain is displayed today through the excellent pieces created - like inexhaustible springs - by Afro-descendant musicians, which, when heard, allow them to be identified as being of 'Afro' ancestry. In this region, rhythms and languages are 'fused', among other elements. A great deal of the music of the Caribbean has travelled to Africa and has enjoyed great acceptance in the countries where that message has arrived on a 'return journey'. They can be highlighted in the Complex of the Rumba: the Guaguancó , the Yambú and the Columbia; others are the Conga, Son, Salsa; Merengue, Bomba, Plena, Cumbia, Vallenato, Chimbanguele, Kalenda, Calypso, Reggae, Bongo, Rap, Hip Hop, just to name a few.

In Africa, the people integrated numerous skills into their daily tasks; but in many regards, they maintained a high degree of individual 'specialisation', which they raised to all time highs. The Afro-Caribbean Diaspora specialised even further this extraordinary ability and transformed it into a sort of 'pluralisation of versatility": individuals moved naturally in various directions, which internally and profoundly passed through an earlier fusion.

This 'fusing' phenomenon is characteristic of these regions and takes place among Afro-descendant citizens at a particular level of multiplicity. Hence the reason - for example - they can easily and sincerely be faithful to more than one religion.

That process of "acculturation"[133] directly affects the 'incorporation' of the rhythmic "secrets" of other languages into their cultural baggage - by the instrumentalists - and into the learning of more than one language by them and by practitioners.

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[132] Idem cit. 5.

[133] Term created by the Cuban sage Fernando Ortiz Fernandez (1881-1969) to refer to the 'give and take' process -receive and give - that is created in the exchange among different cultures that are joined, through the actions of their citizens; from which emerges a 'new' result in which it is observed that the features of the original elements that constitute it are - fused. In the Caribbean and in Latin America, this process occurred between the African and European cultures; among them, the

In religious ceremonies, for the songs that accompany the rituals in the Orisha ceremonies -which are always sung in the Yoruba language - the musical accompaniment is quite often not the 'Bata Drums': Iya, Itotele and Okonkolo, which 'speak the same language' - and this is real-; instead, the 'drummers' extract the 'Yoruba language' from the drums that organologically belong to the Kongos in their numerous representations, whether the famous congas or tumbadoras, yucca drums or box drums; or which can be a set of Djembe, Senegalese drums; or the Fon or Adja (Araras) drums of Benin, which are accompanied by drumsticks. Cuba and Trinidad and Tobago are eloquent examples of all of this.

On occasion, they brought forth their accompanying music simply from the 'stools'[134] on which they sat. And vice versa, those beating the Bata drums can accompany the songs in other languages. That linguistic and musical marvel has been the work of centuries of Afro-descendants in the Americas and the Caribbean; but we can truly say that it is the work of Afro-descendants in any part of the world. It is also evident that the Afro-Caribbean Diaspora has in turn left its mark over the centuries on other regions where it has made a type of second 'migration' or 'Rediasporisation'.

It is not by chance that the Carnival of strong Caribbean tradition is so famous - the most authentic mark of the presence of African spirituality in this region, despite its evident commercialisation in recent times - in different cities in Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany and other countries in various parts of the world. It is like a type of second relocating of the Afro-Caribbean cultural identity that has such an influence on the nature of many nations.

The complex web of historical-linguistic elements, impassively, shaped the various types of psychological conditionings that are observed among Afro-descendants over the centuries that have passed since the start of the African slave trade up to today.

Internal reactions in the Diaspora, in terms of behaviour, have continued like a destiny of the same pattern created since the departure from the continent to the arrival at the new lands where they would spend their eventful lives: the rebels, anxious to regain their suppressed freedom, many of whom became runaway slaves constantly fighting to obtain their civic rights over the centuries, proud of their past and confident of building a different future.

From this lineage emerged the men and women who made up the armies that released the Caribbean and Latin American nations from the colonial yoke of the European metropolises. On the other hand, there were the submissive ones, incapable of holding their heads high, happy with their 'destiny' and, on many occasions, the informants of the slave masters regarding the libertarian desires of their compatriots during the times of the slaveholding system. With the passing of time, those Afro-descendants with this tendency became a sort of 'renegade' of their spiritual inheritance and - sadly - real ignoramuses and predators - conscious or not - of their cultural patrimony.

The psychological factor, eternally linked to the religious characteristics, is an influential element in studies on the Diaspora. According to Patrick "Pops" Hylton (2002:1): "Historically, religion has been used to rationalise and consolidate military conquests, preserve empires through mental enslavement of the conquered, and destroy resistance by debasing and vulgarising the culture of the subject peoples.

Amerindian and Asian cultures and among the different cultures that make up the various countries of the different continents which, on arriving in this region, were merged, creating the multiethnic cultures of the nations that constitute the zone.

[134] Name given to several pieces of rustic furniture, chairs, built from wood and with the 'seat' made out of young goat or ram skin, characteristic of the houses of the Cuban 'guajiros' (peasants) (*), which could be carefully and meticulously made. The Afro-descendant farmers 'played' them like instruments in their celebrations in honour of the African divinities. They tuned the hide with fire just like a real drum.

(*) Name also used for Cuban farmers.

Those among the vanquished who refused to submit to the alien faith were treated as social outcasts and - depending on the level and effectiveness of their resistance - as outlaws. This was the role played by the culture of the European ruling classes in the Caribbean and the New World."[135]

The brutal repression to which the slaves were subjected before and after Emancipation through edicts and laws that prohibited the complete exercising of their spirituality, deeply traumatised their minds and distorted their behaviour. It can still be observed today, the way in which many Afro-descendants disregard the roots of African religions, they scorn them since they are considered evil, superstitious and obscurantist and they blindly embrace others with which - strangely enough - they acculturate the inherent African roots. Very much linked to this aspect, it is woven into our times, the plan of "preference of marginality" toward the blacks, as justification for the unjust obliviousness to which they are subjected by the majority of the elitist and racist societies that proliferate in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The sense of recovering the necessary psychic equilibrium based on a process of self-recognition and boosting of self esteem among the Afro-descendants who fail to recognise the glory of their roots is yet another element that must be taken into consideration in the macro- conception of the 'Reparation' concept.

Afro-descendant women have been and continue to be one of the most vulnerable components in the entire historical social process of the Afro-Caribbean Diaspora. Their children, boys and girls, are perpetually linked to them and, logically, also face the same difficulties. According to Asha Kambon (2002:248): "African woman and their children comprise a significant proportion of the poor in the Caribbean. Poverty Assessment surveys undertaken in the 1990s identified the African populations as forming the largest segment of the poor".[136]

The presence of the African woman as the foundation and initial pillar of societies built on the massive extermination of the native peoples is also avoided in many societies of the region. Stories that are hardly disseminated and rarely studied in official educational programmes speak of the important role played by Afro-descendant women since the period of slavery. Many were known for being runaway slaves, for example, Nani in Jamaica and Carlota in Cuba. The latter, just like Jose Dolores, in the province of Matanzas, with their courage and intelligence - both tacit and strategic - dignified the organisational capabilities of the runaway slaves in their battles for freedom. Examples such as these two Afro-descendant women abound throughout the entire Caribbean area, but they remain in oblivion. They must be brought to light. They were present at the pro-independence battles and the post-emancipation stage found them sometimes as enterprising hosts of lucrative businesses, solid pillars and the support of their families or engrossed in jobs that were necessary for the development of the community, such as midwives, key players in the complex exercise of helping mothers bring their children into the world.

Crudely, the African woman was pejoratively referred to in a sort of slogan that was very popular in 19th century Latin American and Spanish-speaking Caribbean that stated: "white women for marriage, mulatto women for the bed and black women for work". Unfortunately, globalisation has sometimes helped to strengthen in today's world - obviously for the worse - the profound sexist, male chauvinistic and racist sentiment that comes through in that message.

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[135] Hylton, Patrick "Pops". The Role of Religion in Caribbean History. *From Amerindian Shamanism to Rastafarianism.* Billpops Publications. 2003. Washington. D.C.

[136] Kambon, Asha. The Impact of Globalisation on Poor Women in Small Island Developing States of the Caribbean in *Black Women Globalisation and Economic Justice. Studies from the Africa and the African Diaspora.* Schenkman Books, Inc.2002. Rochester. Vermont.

As regards poverty levels, Afro-descendant women are the poorest and in terms of the limits of exclusion they are the most excluded. They have been touched directly by the strongest effects of discrimination - doubly so - by their sex and the colour of their skin and for many years triply, by being discriminated also from the religious perspective, being branded as practitioners of evil or obscurantist cults.

The basic structures necessary to achieve the emotional stability of individuals and their families, cultural patrimonial assets in Africa and an historical inheritance of the Afro-Caribbean and Latin American Diaspora, were and continue to be forced in this zone. In her enlightening essay, Asha Kambon (2002:251) also delves deeply into this complex matter: "The family structure has been affected by the social dynamics of globalisation to the disadvantage of female headed households as the migrant in Latin America and the Caribbean is increasingly female. The preferred family structure among Africans in the Caribbean has been common law or visiting unions, which lead eventually to legal marriages. Multi-generational families are the norm with grandparents, or elderly uncles or aunts, forming part of a household. Invariably, such a family includes children of unmarried daughter or son of the head of the household. Large extended families sometimes comprised of persons with distant relations, all "eating out the same pot," and "living in the same yard" as fast becoming a thing of the past. Much of these changes can be attributed to migrations patterns''.[137] (*)

Following the presentation of various historical, linguistic and psychological factors, with a glimpse into religious attributes linked through all types of relationships, there has been a series of behavioural traits - throughout the centuries - of that important element to be considered among those that constitute the Caribbean region: the Afro-Caribbean Diaspora.

The journey through the main elements selected for this analysis invite true reflection on a topic that is indeed unpleasant, but which requires profound study. The natural fragility of the small and more vulnerable States, mostly Islands, where the Afro-Caribbean and Afro-Latin American Diaspora strives to advance socially, economically and culturally - in the midst of complex political situations - imposes the search for sustainability and in this endeavour - today more than ever before - Afro-descendants can and must be taken into consideration in order for those major challenges to be achieved.

In its 2006 annual report, the European Union indicates that "the economic, political, cultural and environmental aspects of sustainable development have been incorporated into the Cotonou Agreement (...) which establishes the framework for the link with the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries as a reflection of the international commitments assumed by the EU and its ACP partners (…) In order to allow for the fulfilment of the objectives of the partnership with the ACP, it has been agreed that a new *European fund for development* would be established, which will provide ACP countries with 22,682 million euros during the period 2007-2013"..[138] It is necessary for the Afro-Caribbean Diaspora to participate in these benefits.

One mine to be explored is the development of all the possibilities that were created and continue to be created in these lands by the tremendous cultural impact of the African presence. In general, the cultural element - in its vast expanse - is not taking into consideration when assessing the actual possibilities of development in the Caribbean zone. And it must be considered. It is one of the areas in which greater use can be made of the active contribution of Afro-descendants.

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[137] Idem op. cit. 31.

(*) This essay is a crucial source in order to understand how globalisation and other types of factors affect Caribbean and Latin American in general and, particularly, Afro-descendant women.

[138] European Commission. 2006 Annual Report *on the European Community's development policy and the implementation of external assistance in 2005*. Summary. Publications office. Publicaciones.europa.eu. With CD attached. 2006.

CONCLUSIONS

"**The pride and self-confidence of Africans globally can be bolstered or further undermined.**" (Khafra Kambon).[139]

Following the presentation of various historical, linguistic and psychological factors, with a glimpse into religious attributes linked through all types of relationships, there has been a series of behavioural traits - throughout the centuries - of that important element to be considered among those that constitute the Caribbean region: the Afro-Caribbean Diaspora.

In close relation to said region and quite often forming part of it, is Latin America, sharing - logically - many of the same sudden changes that are observed both within and outside the element analysed.

Said attributes were being shaped as an artistic piece on whose initial component: the Africans arrived at these lands and their descendants, were depositing active and changing layers - harmonious or not - moving with the rhythm of the economic, political and historical-social changes, marked by the strong presence of a uniting and unifying cultural imprint which, with the passing of time, was established as an unmistakable identifying mark of the entire region, beyond ethnic origin, skin colour or belonging to a specific social class.

As regards this topic, the surface has only been skimmed. It requires more in-depth examination and specific analyses with respect to the convulsed situation in which humanity is currently living and the necessary inclusion of the Afro-descendants of the Diaspora in all the benefits to be derived from scientific and technological advancements, to which they also contribute and which should result in their favour, in full correspondence.

Centuries ago, the Africans were brought to this part of the world due to their physical strength and their skill in various jobs in order to cement with their blood, sweat, pain and suffering, the brand new economies that thrived in Europe and in the new nations of America and the Caribbean. Today, paradoxically, they represent the highest rates of hunger, malnutrition, poverty and disease, which like AIDS, are a pandemic. Their descendants in this region continue to appear as the majority in appeals made for better living conditions. It is virtually the only space that marks their regular presence in the major mass media.

According to Khafra Kambon (2007:2) "Given the continuing legacy of the slave trade and chattel slavery, we have to accept the responsibility to change the unjust conditions that persist. A critical aspect of the change needed is at the psychological level and historical knowledge is a very important instrument of psychological liberation".[140] Undeniably, it is the part that must be done inside and outside the Afro-Caribbean Diaspora as part of the "Endless cycle" during times of globalisation.

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[139] Kambon, Khafra. The ESC (*) perspective of the Bicentennial. Sunday Express Section 4. 25th March 2007. Port of Spain. Trinidad and Tobago. W.I.

(*) Emancipation Support Committee.

[140] Idem ant.

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Translations:

Quotation 5. Page 5:

"The cultural identity of a people is linked to three key factors: history, linguistics and psychology, the last of these, in it broadest sense, can encompass religious characteristics - where importance varies according to the historical and social circumstances of each society. Without the absolute presence of these three factors, whether in a people or an individual, complete cultural identity will not be possible". Cheik Anta Diop. The three building blocks of culture.

Quotation 27. Page 27:

"A distinctive phenomenon, creolisation is linked to very specific historical circumstances. This linguistic process is the action of isolated individuals, deprived of their freedom, uprooted from their place of origin and brutally submerged in another environment, to which they adapted in so far as was possible. Thus, the illiterate Africans deported to the West Indies distorted the European languages and created new languages in which researchers can rediscover as a distant echo, the syntactic and morphological structures of the African languages." Cheik Anta Diop.