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**REPORT OF THE
ECLAC-CDCC/CIDA GENDER EQUALITY PROGRAMME
REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND
THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE**

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REPORT OF THE ECLAC/CIDA REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean/Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (ECLAC/CDCC) secretariat, in collaboration with, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) Gender Equality Programme (GEP) convened the regional conference on gender-based violence and the administration of justice on 3-5 February 2003, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Trinidad and Tobago.

Fourteen Caribbean countries were present at the conference, namely: Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago. There was also participation from several organizations, such as, the Caribbean Community Secretariat (CARICOM), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and the University of the West Indies (UWI) and two experts from Canada. The list of participants of the conference is attached to this report as Annex III.

The conference provided a forum to review the investments made by the CIDA Gender Equality Programme (CGEP) to eradicate gender-based violence in the Caribbean over the past five years. The objectives of the conference were two-fold: firstly to review the justice system responses to gender-based violence with specific focus on police training and supporting social services and, secondly to develop an integrated plan of action to gender-based violence with particular attention to the justice system. Participants were expected to focus on rethinking the issues involved in violence against women and on charting institutional policy responses, guided by international standards on gender-based violence and human rights.

Opening

Ms. Denise Noel-DeBique, Regional Coordinator, CGEP, chaired the opening programme. In her welcoming remarks, Ms. Noel-DeBique outlined the genesis of the initiative and welcomed the participation of member countries of the Caribbean, the CARICOM Secretariat, United Nations organizations, UWI, the Ottawa Police Service and the IDB. Welcoming remarks also came from His Excellency, Mr. Simon Wade, High Commissioner for Canada, Ms. Roberta Clarke, Social Affairs Officer, ECLAC/CDCC secretariat and the Honourable Ms. Glenda Morean-Phillip, Attorney General of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

Ms. Tracy Robinson, Lecturer in the Faculty of Law, UWI, Cave Hill, Barbados and Sir Dennis Byron, Chief Justice of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court, gave the feature addresses. Ms. Robinson stated that gender-based violence was a mirror to social relations and spoke to the imperative of maintaining a woman-centred approach to gender-based violence in which there was an understanding that gender-based violence was, at its core, linked to the goal of eradicating unequal gender power relations. She noted that the gains made were largely at the initiative of the Caribbean women's movement, and described the domestic violence statutes that existed in most English speaking Caribbean countries as one of the most successful legislative reform initiatives relating to women in the subregion. Still, for all the progress made, Ms. Robinson cautioned that there was a risk that the focus on the gendered nature of violence was in danger of being lost and she called for a rescuing of gender as the first step to recovering and reintegrating that political agenda in the translation to policies and programmes.

Sir Dennis Byron advanced that the legal system was central to the enjoyment of human rights and as such it had received sustained focus as a site of reform to ensure the protection, punishment and elimination of all forms of gender-based violence. However, the law reform agenda had not been completed and many countries were now in the process of reassessing the need for a family court and for a legal response that would be more effective in punishing and preventing gender-based violence. Sir Dennis Byron also pointed out that law reform was not sufficient and that those involved in the administration of justice, such as judicial officers, police officers, and social workers, needed to be sensitized to address attitudes, views and opinions that led to a less than serious approach to gender-based violence.

Police training on domestic violence

Mr. Keith Renaud of the Association of Caribbean Commissioners of Police (ACCP) gave the overview to the Caribbean Association of Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA)/IDB/ACCP Police Training Project. He stated that the ACCP recognized the challenge of overcoming the traditional responses and attitudes of police to domestic violence. He explained that throughout the subregion domestic violence was vastly underreported and said that the persistence of the traditional response by police was rooted in historical views concerning the role of women, as property, and the characteristic of submissiveness that they were expected to possess. Mr. Renaud said that the introduction of the concept of community policing was one of the initiatives that was expected to make a difference in the response of police to the issue of domestic violence, and other community problems. He explained that very important to the implementation of this concept were the twin objectives of community policing, problem solving and collaboration with society. He admitted however, that in spite of the training received by police, there were a

number of challenges associated with changing the entrenched attitudes of police to domestic violence.

Mr. Renaud indicated that approximately one third of all police officers and social workers had been exposed to training in the area of gender-based violence. As a result of the perceived resistance, and based on training received by the police, a number of initiatives had been implemented in many countries of the subregion in order to better implement the required changes. In this context, it was noted that Barbados had developed a Protocol for dealing with issues of gender-based violence. Mr. Renaud urged patience from the implementers of the training programmes in their expectations of behavioural and attitudinal changes. He ended his presentation by reiterating the commitment of the ACCP to supporting all citizens.

The perspective of police trainers

Ms. Carla Bakbord of Suriname explained the genesis of the CAFRA Police Training project. She observed that there had been some changes at the governmental, civil society and judicial levels as a result of the training. The police service in Suriname, for example, had appointed a domestic violence coordinator to deal specifically with the issue of domestic violence. There had been training for prosecuting officers, lawyers and judges, and the media had started its own programmes on domestic violence. Religious organizations and political parties had also been involved in these training initiatives.

Dr. Janice Jackson speaking to the experience in Guyana, reported that between 1992 and 1999, the police force had benefited from training programmes in the area of domestic violence carried out by various agencies. She observed that the effectiveness of the training programme rested on the ownership of the programme by the police. The fact that training programmes were often designed and funded by development agencies for the police contributed to a lack of ownership of the programme by the police. One consequence of this was that trainers were often unable to maintain their schedules and meet their targets in the training of the police.

As a result of her experiences in Guyana, Dr. Jackson made a number of recommendations regarding the delivery of training programmes on the issue of domestic violence to police, including the following:

(a) The roles and responsibilities of the partners in the training process should be clearly stated and periodically revisited;

(b) Mechanisms for institutionalization of the training should be developed at the highest level of the police force. The responsibility for police training should not continue to be the main responsibility of external agencies. Police were best suited to developing training most relevant to their needs;

(c) A reporting system should be developed to document the activities, challenges and impact of the programmes in order to lessen the impact of the loss of some of the trainers due to retirement or transfers;

(d) Sensitization of senior officers must be effected if the environment was to be made more receptive to domestic violence training; and

(e) A policy on training in domestic violence should be articulated.

Plenary discussion on police training on domestic violence

The possibility of developing a universal concept of community policing was raised, since some participants felt that this would contribute to standardizing the response of the police to issues of gender-based violence. However, it was pointed out that while community policing was based on some fundamental principles, the peculiarities of countries in the Caribbean subregion meant that each country had to be given the freedom to develop the kind of community policing that best suited its needs.

The role of the media in reporting issues of gender-based violence was also discussed. It was felt that the media did not truly understand the nature of violence. A recommendation was made that, as a part of their training, police should be exposed to tips on how to deal with the media.

The participant from St. Kitts and Nevis made the observation that over the past three years, there had been an improvement in the way most police officers were collaborating with social workers on matters of domestic violence. The Bahamas supported this statement.

Evaluation of police training: Country presentations

Thirteen countries evaluated the training received by police in the area of gender-based violence. These were Antigua and Barbuda, the British Virgin Islands, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago. Over 4,452 police received training on gender-based violence throughout the subregion. The presentations also included evaluations of the competence of the trainers, material presented, impact of training on the police and recommendations for improving the training programmes, as well as strengthening the response of the police to incidents of gender-based violence.

A number of recommendations recurred in the presentations. Among these was the need for police officers at the highest level to give public support to the training programme and thus strengthen its legitimacy. A call was also made for greater sensitization of school children within the education system to issues of domestic and gender-based violence. (See Annex I.)

With regard to sexual assaults, the presentations revealed that in some countries units had been created to receive and investigate reports of sexual offences. Typically, specially trained female officers staff these units. However, prosecutions of sexual offences were complicated by victim reluctance given evidentiary and procedural provisions which were seen as a deterrent. In a number of countries, there was substantial delay in the hearing of these cases and such charges were still heard in open court. A number of recommendations were made to strengthen policing, including the enhancement of forensic capacity, sensitization of police and legislative reform. (See Annex II.)

Participants raised a number of concerns in response to the country presentations. One of the major issues involved the role of the police officers when treating with incidents of domestic violence. According to participants, especially those in the police service, police officers felt that their roles in this regard were becoming too diverse and sometimes were in contradiction with their main role of enforcers of the law. It was also pointed out that in small Caribbean countries, there was some reluctance on the part of the police to arrest perpetrators of gender-based violence who happened to be family members or friends.

The issue of whether female officers should be the only persons dealing with victims of gender-based violence was raised. Male police officers present at the conference felt that this was a form of gender discrimination, since their training was supposed to equip them with the skills to deal with victims as much as their female counterparts. It was however pointed out that given the nature of gender-based violence, victims were not always comfortable being interviewed by male police officers. It was further indicated that in the Bahamas, there was a predominant use of female police officers with child victims. There was a general agreement in the conference that there could not be a standard rule, but rather the guiding principles should be the need to ensure sensitive and effective policing to support victims of gender-based violence.

It was felt that mediation could only be used in relationships where there was equal power. Since women who were victims of violence did not have such power, there was much discussion among participants about whether mediation could be a recommended form of intervention between men and women in situations of domestic violence.

Calls were made for the establishment of a Domestic Violence Unit within the police services throughout the subregion.

Evaluation of training initiatives

Ms. Jeanette Bell, Coordinator, CGEP, Barbados and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), indicated that the Canadian Government was committed to the work on domestic violence in the subregion. This commitment started after the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995. The work of the CGEF in Barbados and the OECS had focused on economic issues, violence, and women's low levels of participation in politics.

Ms. Bell reported that CD\$500,000 had been provided for domestic violence programmes, including police training in Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, Saint Lucia and to the Regional Police Training Centre in Barbados.

According to Ms. Bell, the IDB/CDB/CAFRA training had been received by a substantial number of police officers in the OECS. She, however, pointed to the need to review and evaluate certain aspects of the training programme. These included its content; the duration of the programme; the methods of training used; the policy framework in which the training took place; the extent to which police had full knowledge of the support services available to victims and perpetrators of gender-based violence; and sustainability. She also pointed to the need for an institutionalisation of the police training in which the impact of the training would be closely monitored. She called for the development of protocols for intervention and responsibilities to be shared between the police and social service agencies.

In her presentation, the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat representative advanced that the police training implemented to date concentrated on greater sensitization to the gender issues involved in gender-based violence. The focus of the training had contributed to the police response which had continued to be one of counselling and mediation and less of law enforcement. She called for a review of the police training manual to ensure that, in addition to its focus on the social psychology of violence, it enhanced the effectiveness of the law enforcement response. She also referred to a recent evaluation of the implementation of domestic violence legislation which found an absence of due diligence on the part of the police to intervene as law enforcers in cases of domestic violence.

She also agreed that the ownership of the training was an issue to be addressed, since the training that had so far been received by police officers, had been initiated by the women's movement and not by the police themselves.

Staff Sergeant Kai Lui, Head, Domestic Violence Unit, Ottawa Police Service, acknowledged that there was a time in the Ottawa police service when the issue of domestic violence had been viewed as a private matter. During those early years, the option was given to the victims to press charges against the perpetrator. He explained that domestic homicides had been increasing in

Canada and the victims were primarily female. He also said that evidence showed that the majority of the perpetrators of such violence were men. There was therefore a concerted effort, on the part of the Ottawa Police Service, to focus on domestic violence as a scourge to be eradicated. Among the measures adopted to achieve this objective was an increased partnership between the Ottawa Police Service and the community and the creation of a Domestic Violence Unit within the police service.

The Domestic Violence Unit was a specialised investigative, centralised unit within the Ottawa Police Service. Among the policies reported as being key to the success of the Domestic Violence Unit in the Ottawa Police Service were the following:

(a) The investigation of all reports related to domestic violence based on a standardised investigative protocol;

(b) All police officers in the Ottawa Police Service, including the Chief of Police, were trained to deal with issues of domestic violence;

(c) A mandatory charge policy developed by the Solicitor General which ensured that in all instances of domestic violence, a charge must be laid where there was reasonable evidence to do so; and

(d) The development of a Policing Standards Manual, which outlined the actions that must be taken by a police officer when dealing with an incident of domestic violence, even in the face of the unwillingness of the victim to cooperate.

Staff Sergeant Lui explained that the Domestic Violence Unit was responsible for supervising and monitoring whether the various policies relating to the policing of domestic violence were being enforced. In this context he pointed to the various internal policies that were put in place to guide the officer and to ensure that incidents were adequately dealt with.

Review of social service support to the justice system

Dr. Adele Jones, Lecturer, Social Work Department, UWI, St. Augustine, made a presentation on the impact of incest on children. According to Dr. Jones, there was very little research conducted in this area in the Caribbean. Research conducted outside of the subregion however indicated that incest, involving children, was vastly underreported and that the impact of this abuse on the child and on the family was generally severe and long lasting.

Dr. Jones explained that available statistics showed that heterosexual men made up the largest proportion of incest perpetrators. This abuse generally took place within the context of the family home. There was also an

increase in child sexual abuse by stepfathers, which was a contributing factor to domestic violence and to the reason so many women stayed silent even when they were aware of the abuse.

In describing what generally happened when incest was reported, Dr. Jones explained that many children spoke up because they wanted the abuse to stop. Unfortunately, because the justice system was not child sensitive or child friendly, in many instances, reporting often caused more harm than good to the child. In many cases, counselling services were withheld from the child pending the outcome of the court matter. The stated reason for this approach was based on the need to ensure the integrity of the criminal justice system. Dr. Jones concluded that in the process of reporting incest or sexual abuse, the cost to the child was overwhelming. She recommended the development of models for dealing with this issue that were specific to the Caribbean. She pointed to the experiences of the Netherlands and Belgium where incest was addressed firstly as an issue for a social service intervention and appealed for measures that would not result in a revictimization of the child.

Ms. Jackie Sealey-Burke called for a redefinition of the traditional model of the justice system to include social service deliveries in order to arrive at creative solutions to the problems facing victims of gender-based violence in the Caribbean. She warned against the development of legislation without the necessary social service support base and pointed to the Child Protection Act of 1998 and the Domestic Violence Act of 2001 in Grenada which, while providing for counselling services for women and children, did not take into account the paucity of counselling services that were available in that country.

She pointed to the power of the State to remove children from the home in cases of abuse. According to Ms. Sealey-Burke, the removal of a child from his or her home without the necessary support of counselling and conditions for return to the home also constituted an abuse of the child. Among the necessary social service interventions identified by Ms. Sealey-Burke for victims of abuse were:

- (a) Counselling;
- (b) Mediation;
- (c) Alcohol/drug abuse counselling;
- (d) Psychological/psychiatric therapy;
- (e) Specialized medical services;
- (f) Specialized police service;

- (g) Adequate placement system;
- (h) Advocacy services; and
- (i) Legal aid services.

Ms. Sealey–Burke spoke of the advantages offered by the creation of a family court. She noted that judicial officers tended to make judgments in family-related matters, sometimes without the benefit of expert advice from social workers. She noted that in the OECS, the New Civil Procedure Rules contained provisions for mediation. While agreeing that mediation should not be used as a mechanism to resolve violence, she felt that it did have a role to play in the resolution of corollary issues, such as child visitation, child maintenance and other such situations.

Dr. Jacqueline Sharpe, Psychiatrist, presented research findings on child abuse cases seen at the Child Guidance Clinic in Trinidad and Tobago. She informed the meeting that 50% of abused children were seven years or younger; 65% were female and 35% were male. Of the perpetrators, 78% were men, while 22% were female. Fathers were the most likely abusers of children. She stated that while 45% of the children were referred to the child guidance clinic because of behavioural problems, only 25% were referred because of the abuse itself. In 40% of the cases, domestic violence was evident in the home. Although reports of such child abuse were made to the police, few arrests or prosecutions were made.

Because child abuse was a complex phenomenon, Dr. Sharpe urged that interveners needed to be clear about their roles and eschewed the blurring of professional boundaries.

Ms. Donna Watson-Elliot, Manager, Counselling Centre, Ottawa Police Department, made a presentation. She informed participants that in 1995, the Centre was involved in a community consultation called "Putting The Pieces Together", which resulted in a victim support programme - Partner Assault Support Team (PAST). Under this programme, victims were provided with a continuum of services, including referral to a shelter or a hotel, if the shelter was full. The infrastructure also catered for children who witnessed or were victims of domestic violence. Such children were referred to the Child Protection Unit. The system extended protection to persons within same sex relationships.

Ms. Watson-Elliot indicated to participants that police officers were not relied on to make referrals to the Centre since the system was computerized. This meant that as soon as the police filed a report the Centre was immediately

notified. The Centre also had a Victim Fund, which was funded by the fines paid by perpetrators.

Other services offered by the Centre included:

- (a) A safety assessment of victims;
- (b) Information to victims on their rights and responsibilities; and
- (c) Court preparation of victims.

Plenary discussion

The participants debated whether in cases of sexual abuse of children, the criminal justice system should be seen as the solution of last resort. It was generally agreed that the criminal process was essential to ensuring justice for victims of sexual abuse.

Participants also discussed the removal of victims and perpetrators from the home. Although the removal of the perpetrator was allowed under the domestic violence legislation, some participants felt that, in the interest of protecting victims, this power was not sufficiently exercised. It was pointed out, however, that in many cases child victims were removed from the home because it was more difficult to ensure compliance with an exclusion order.

It was advanced that a redistribution or reallocation of resources towards social services might enhance efforts to eradicate gender-based violence. One participant compared the ratio of police officers to the population in Ottawa, on one hand, and the ratio of police officers to the population in Trinidad and Tobago. The latter country had more police officers per person. It was agreed that some priority should be given to preventive measures.

Experiences of counselling

Dr. Veronica Salter, UWI, Jamaica, noted that the CAFRA/IDB/CDB workshop in Jamaica did not include training in counselling. She called for greater support for counsellors and described characteristics required of a counsellor/interviewer as well as the common mistakes made in interviewing. She said that counsellors needed to continuously examine themselves for personal prejudices and biases, and needed to be aware of how this might impact on the services they were providing.

Ms. Ann Peters, Director, Legal Aid & Counselling Clinic, Grenada, underscored the need for greater support for providers of counselling in her presentation of the experiences of her organization. Due to the constraints of resources and the diversity of needs of the clients, she pointed out that the

counselling services offered by her organization might often not be recognized as counselling. The counselling provided by the clinic was described as non-therapeutic, creative, and was done on a case-by-case basis. The typical client of the service was a victim of domestic violence or sexual assault. The social support service offered by the Clinic sought to first meet basic needs such as safe accommodation, medical attention and the provision of financial support before counselling commenced.

Based on the work of the Legal Aid Clinic, Ms. Peters called for the development of an integrated social service support network.

Ms. Rumelia Dalphinis-King, Director, Family Court, Saint Lucia, informed the meeting that the Family Court had been established in 1994. It was set up to eliminate delays in the judicial process and was the only court to have a social service support section. The work of this section involved social work interventions, counselling, mediation and social investigative reports. Every person who worked in the Family Court was trained to understand the domestic violence cycle. Special attention was given to assisting children who were to give or had given evidence in sexual assault cases.

Batterer intervention programmes: The possibilities of counselling

Dr. Peter Weller, Clinical Psychologist, UWI, Mona, Jamaica, made a presentation on Jamaica's experience with a formal, structured intervention programme for men who had been deemed to be abusive. This programme was called "Brothers for Change" and was a collaborative effort between FAMPLAN – a non-governmental organization (NGO) and the Probation Department of the Government of Jamaica. The programme, drawing on the experience of other batterer intervention programmes, had components of community outreach as well as intervention with perpetrators. Dr. Weller stated that one of the strengths of the programme was that it exploded the myth about men's unwillingness to demonstrate affective behaviour.

Some of the weaknesses of the programme included:

- (a) The lack of support from the Courts for monitoring the progress of persons in the programme even though those persons were recommended by the Court.
- (b) The training and experience of the facilitators were inadequate to conduct counselling sessions, especially in the context of the group setting;
- (c) Lack of collaboration from the probation department;
- (d) Participant absenteeism;

- (e) Limited community support; and
- (f) Resource limitations to ensure continuity.

Dr. Weller concluded his presentation by calling for the removal of the wall of secrecy surrounding domestic violence. He said that collective effort was needed for change to occur.

Ms. Andrea Hamm, Director of the Women's Bureau, British Virgin Islands, spoke of her experiences in counselling at the Batterer's Intervention Programme in the United States Virgin Islands. She made the observation that counselling was not appropriate in all circumstances and explained that certain characteristics of a perpetrator, for example, being a substance abuser, would make counselling inappropriate.

The programme had been conducted over a period of 24 weeks, and bearing in mind the importance of labels, the programme had been dubbed 'classes' instead of 'counselling'. Ms. Hamm noted that almost all of the programme participants had attended the classes because they had been ordered to do so by the Courts. When this sentence was handed down, participants who were accepted into the programme were expected to sign a contract, which if violated, would result in the revocation of their pre-sentence and the institution of a fine. She explained that the Family Court judges and magistrates were educated about issues of domestic violence and clear guidelines were established to guide their deliberations. There were also protocols established for all agencies that dealt with victims of domestic violence and a Domestic Violence Unit in the Police Service.

According to Ms. Hamm, accountability was a part of the batterer intervention programme and, as such, perpetrators had to take responsibility for their actions. Abusers were required to name the person or persons they had abused. An initial assessment of the perpetrators was conducted at the beginning of the programme. At the end of the programme, a final report was prepared to indicate whether compliance with the terms of the contract had taken place and whether there was a need for further remedial action, such as individual counselling. The programme was not offered to repeat offenders.

Dr. Sandra Dean-Patterson of The Bahamas, underscored the importance of intervention programmes for perpetrators of domestic violence. She said that homicides relating to domestic violence were on the rise in The Bahamas, 42% in 2000, 44% in 2001, and 53% in 2002, respectively.

Dr. Dean Patterson explained that most batterers tended to be in a state of denial over their actions and therefore psycho-educational programmes that led to self-recognition were recommended. The Men's Group Programme instituted in The Bahamas was voluntary since facilitators had not been

successful in getting the Courts to mandate abusers to attend the programme. The drop-out rate from the programme was quite high with relatively few men completing the full 26-week programme.

She concluded her presentation by making the following recommendations:

- (a) A mandatory arrest policy was required for perpetrators of domestic violence;
- (b) Batterer intervention programmes needed to be developed; and
- (c) Probation officers should be mandated to develop protocols for monitoring batterer intervention programmes.

General discussion on batterer intervention programmes

In the discussion that followed, participants noted that counsellors had a responsibility to ensure, as a first step, that the victim was safe and was not being abused. In that context, it was essential that issues of confidentiality be respected in order to ensure the safety of the victim.

There was also a call from participants for greater education and sensitization of young men around issues of domestic violence. Participants were informed that in Ottawa, police officers worked in the schools and universities to educate persons on domestic and gender-based violence

Plenary session: Working group reports

Three working groups convened to consider the development of guiding principles for victim and batterer intervention programmes; strengthening police training; and developing police response protocols. The following are the recommendations of the working groups.

Developing guiding principles for victims and batterer intervention programmes

The working group considered programmes that were already implemented in the subregion. Among these programmes, were the following:

- (a) A fee was charged;
- (b) The cognitive-behavioural approach was used;

- (c) Programme length was 26 weeks. One programme went up to 40 weeks;
- (d) In most instances there were only female facilitators;
- (e) The philosophy of family preservation guided the intervention; and
- (f) Couple counselling.

The group recommended that all batterer intervention programmes needed to be guided by basic principles that included the prioritization of the safety of the abused and the acknowledgement of accountability and responsibility by the perpetrator. Central to persons involved in such programmes was the conviction that behaviour could be changed given an appropriate intervention.

The development of batterer intervention programmes as well as response protocols should be the outcome of a coordinated approach between all relevant actors in the administration of the justice system, social services and the NGO community. All partners needed to agree on the ideology or philosophy guiding the interventions, on the goals of the collaborating agencies and the methods of work within and among the agencies.

The following recommendations were made on the structure and content of batterer intervention programmes:

- (a) Participation at such programmes should be mandatory for persons found to have engaged in conduct amounting to domestic violence. Attendance could also be voluntary to other persons and not necessarily linked to the court process;
- (b) An initial psycho-diagnostic assessment of the abuser was necessary in order to determine readiness and suitability for the programme;
- (c) Individual counselling might be recommended as needed, but was not to be the main method of programme delivery;
- (d) Programmes should be structured and include group sessions;
- (e) Monitoring and supervision of facilitators, participants and of programme was important;
- (f) Contact should be made with the victim to give support and monitor the progress of the perpetrator; and
- (g) Victims' information must be absolutely confidential.

Victim support services

The working group considered that victim support services should be coordinated among the relevant agencies and be based on an understanding that women should have control of their lives and that safety of the victim and her family was of paramount importance. All personnel should be trained appropriately.

In relation to victim support services, the following recommendations were made:

- (a) Police officers should be trained in crisis intervention skills;
- (b) Proper training was necessary to highlight the limits to the use of crisis intervention skills by police officers;
- (c) Social workers must also have crisis intervention skills;
- (d) Front line staff (police, social workers, crisis centre workers and health workers) should be exposed to post trauma counselling;
- (e) Counselling should be funded by government agencies;
- (f) All ranks in the police service should be trained to deal with victims of gender-based violence;
- (g) There should be clear sanctions for non-compliance with policing guidelines;
- (h) Legal aid support should be made available to all victims of gender-based violence;
- (i) Government should fund advocacy services performed by NGOs;
- (j) Sustained public education was necessary in the fight against domestic violence;
- (k) Medical personnel needed to be properly trained to deal with victims of gender-based violence;
- (l) Government should consider the development of a national policy statement and plan of action for domestic violence; and
- (m) The needs of children who were affected by gender-based violence had to be seriously addressed and addressed in an integrated manner.

Strengthening police training: The way forward

The following recommendations were made with regard to the need to extend and deepen police training programmes:

- (a) A needs analysis should be conducted to identify deficiencies in the training of police to handle gender-based violence;
- (b) Gender-based violence training must be mandatory and made part of the curriculum in police training;
- (c) The Domestic Violence Act must be included as an issue in examinations for the promotion of police officers;
- (d) There should be ongoing training and sensitisation in gender-based violence for police officers of all ranks, including senior police officers;
- (e) Training was also needed for front-line operators, dispatchers, and 911 operators;
- (f) Frontline persons also need specialised training in dealing with sexual offences;
- (g) Police officers who were going to work in the sexual offence area should be carefully selected;
- (h) Resource personnel, other than the police, must assist in police training;
- (i) There was a need for constant briefing sessions for frontline workers to remind them of protocols taught in training;
- (j) Police training should emphasise problem-solving and critical thinking; and
- (k) Regional standardization should be considered in the development of police training in gender-based violence.

Content of police training programmes

While the training that had been implemented had improved the understanding of police officers on the dynamics of domestic violence, the working group observed that the time had come for a more technical and practical approach to be incorporated into the training. Such training should pay attention to:

- (a) Resource support and networking;
- (b) Incidence and response management;

- (c) Process management - referrals, investigation, and power of arrest;
- (d) Crime scene investigation and responsible investigation management;
- (e) Policing techniques especially in the absence of victim cooperation; and
- (f) Media training, to ensure sensitive and accurate reporting.

Developing police response protocols

The working group on police protocols recommended the development of a response protocol to guide the actions and responses of police once a report of gender-based violence was made. Such protocols, it was suggested, should be premised on the notion of zero-tolerance. These protocols should address the following:

- (a) A response checklist for dealing with situations of gender-based violence;
- (b) A mandatory arrest policy where there were reasonable grounds for an arrest;
- (c) The conduct of a thorough and careful crime scene investigation, to enable police to make a correct judgement as to who was the primary offender;
- (d) Bail as a mechanism that could be used to ensure the safety of victims;
- (e) A mandatory reporting system for domestic violence which included reporting the crime to a higher officer in a timely manner;
- (f) Third party reports of gender-based violence should be accepted and must be responded to;
- (h) Police officers should, as far as possible, assist victims in getting medical attention;
- (i) Copies of protection orders should be kept at district police stations and mandatory arrest for breaches of protection orders should be effected;
- (j) The actions and responses of police officers in the area of gender-based violence should be monitored by all stakeholders, including women's organizations.

The need for an integrated approach -the CARICOM perspective

In considering the need for an integrated approach to gender-based violence, Ms. Gemma Tang Nain, Deputy Programme Manager, CARICOM Secretariat, stated that there was need to develop policies and programmes for gender-based violence that included legal, economic, political, social and cultural components. Despite the fact that, in principle, agreements had been reached that gender equity goals were to be mainstreamed throughout the public sector, national women's machineries continued to have the major responsibility for formulating programmes to address gender-based violence. She questioned whether the responsibility should lie, instead, with the police/justice system.

She cautioned that the under-achievement of boys within the education sector should not be seen as a contributing factor to gender-based violence, as violence against women was centrally connected to discrimination and unequal power relations between men and women.

In response to Ms. Tang Nain's comments, many participants stated that the national women's machineries had acted as catalysts for change and had guided legislative and other policy developments. The meeting agreed that there needed to be much greater networking at the national level among the gender affairs departments, the police, the courts, social services and the non-governmental sector. Such a network would facilitate the development of national plans of action to support an integrated approach to gender-based violence.

In response to the suggestion that a regional conference on gender-based violence for senior police officers be held, Mr. Keith Renaud informed the conference of an ACCP conference to be held in Bermuda in May in which the issue of domestic violence would be addressed. He suggested that this might be a forum for the outcome of this conference to be presented.

Concluding remarks

The ECLAC/CDCC representative commended the participants for their productive contributions to the meeting. She highlighted a number of issues and recommendations that had recurred over the three-day conference, including the following:

(a) Police training had focused on sensitization to gender and violence issues. More work was needed to support police in the exercise of their core functions;

(b) Careful consideration should be given to the question of police officers engaging in counselling activities, particularly where they had not been so trained;

(c) Improved police responses should include the consideration of a mandatory arrest policy which might be accompanied, though not necessarily, by mandatory prosecution.

(d) Clarity of roles of police, social workers, and psychologists should be sought within the context of an integrated response to gender-based violence; and

(e) Social service support should be at the core of the administration of justice response to gender-based violence.

Dr. Len Ishmael, Director, ELCAC/CDCC secretariat, in her concluding remarks, drew the meeting's attention to the increase in crime and violence within the Caribbean. She stated that this brought into focus the need to consider socialization patterns as well as the need to empower women to speak out against gender-based violence in their lives.

Ms. Phyllis Roett, Senior Development Officer, CIDA concluded that there was need to move beyond the sensitisation in police training towards strengthening law enforcement responses. She called for the development of national plans of action for gender-based violence as well as for legislative reform where this was needed. Ms. Roett recommended that the conference deliberations be forwarded to the ACCP as well as to the offices of the Attorney General and ministries of social services in the subregion. Finally, Ms. Roett recommended close donor coordination to ensure the effective use of available funding.

The ECLAC/CDCC representative thanked the representatives of the CIDA's Gender Equality Programme for their cooperation and support in the convening of the conference and stated that the ECLAC/CDCC secretariat would continue to look for opportunities in which it could collaborate with CIDA.

Annex I**COUNTRY PRESENTATIONS ON POLICE TRAINING ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

Country	No. of persons trained	Impact of Training on Police	Key Recommendations
Antigua & Barbuda	293	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officers had a better working knowledge of the issue which affords them a better mediating role. • More sensitive to the dynamics of domestic violence. • Development of closer relationship with other agencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous and advanced training. • Design of specific forms to collect data related to domestic violence • Networking with other agencies for quick response.
British Virgin Islands	100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in the arrest of perpetrators of domestic violence – from 16.7% in 2001 to 37.4% in 2002. • Increase in the number of persons being prosecuted. • Mediation being done by some officers; others do referral within the organization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous training. • Separate unit to deal with victims professionally. • Coordinated approach to be developed and implemented. • Continuous education programme in the community - media, churches, community groups, schools
Barbados	215	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better understanding of gender-based violence. • Closer collaboration with other agencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for continuous training. • Need for review of the legislation. • Public education needed.
Belize	350	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in the number of cases referred by the police. • Police do mediation. • Clear understanding of violence. • Strengthening of the multi-sectoral approach. • Improved networking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officers trained should remain in the Unit. • There should be training on how to deal with the perpetrator.
Dominica	250	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too early to say. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police should be trained in counselling. • Domestic Violence Unit should be established in the police force. • Support system must be established - shelters.

Grenada	200	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More complaints are being made to the Police and they are being dealt with better. • Police has instituted a system for the record of domestic violence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advanced training for trainers. • Longer training. • Protocol system needed for persons who are part of the system. • Training in counselling. • Country to country network and linkages. • Data collection from all units.
Guyana	980	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater awareness and sensitization among members of the Police Force. • Better appreciation for victims of domestic violence. • Increase in number of arrests and prosecutions of abusers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special unit should be set up in the Police College to coordinate training programmes on domestic violence interventions in all branches. • Funding should be made available for the development of the Unit and the institution of systematic training. • Training sessions should be three days. • Participation of senior officers to heighten their awareness of the issue. • Examination of self must be an essential part of the programme.
Jamaica	800	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heightened awareness among police officers of domestic violence. • Increase in the arrest of perpetrators. • Increase in mediation. • Decrease in homicide as a result of domestic violence. • Increase co-operation and working with NGOs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More training for front line officers. • Training of police or mediators in conflict resolution. • Regional conference on domestic violence with attendance of international resource persons
St. Kitts and Nevis	365	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police officers now respond in a timely manner. • Increase in cases of assault reaching the Magistrate Court. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of more training.
Saint Lucia	148	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased arrests. • More responsive policing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing training needed. • Training in mediation and counselling.

Saint Vincent & the Grenadines	123	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More confidence displayed by police officers in arresting perpetrators. • Increase in arrests. • Greater awareness and sensitivity to the issue of domestic violence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic violence training be placed on the syllabus of the police training institutions. • All police officers be exposed to the training. • Establishment of institutions to temporarily house victims.
Suriname	460	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More sensitized police officers. • Improved administration and processing of cases of domestic violence. • Better cooperation with other agencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of database surveillance system. • Domestic violence protocol with key agencies in health and social services • Continued police training.
Trinidad & Tobago	670	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve knowledge on crimes related to domestic violence. • Improve relationship with persons reporting crime. • Network with other agencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous training. • Educate more officers on domestic violence. • Increase human resources. • Better accommodation needed to interview victims.

Annex II**Country presentations on Policing Sexual Assaults**

Country	Factors limiting the effectiveness of the police response to sexual abuse	Initiatives to strengthen police response to sexual abuse	Recommendation to strengthen police response
Antigua & Barbuda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Lack of cooperation from the immigrant community. -Shortage of resources. -Language barrier. -Fear and embarrassment by victim. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Use of Spanish speaking person to assist in the immigrant community. -Interviewing family members and educating them on the need to report incidents. -Work in partnership with other agencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Establishment of a 24 hour department to deal with domestic violence. -Safe houses or foster homes for victims. -Strengthening of the legislation with regard to sexual offences and domestic violence. -Victim to give evidence by video link.
British Virgin Islands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Limited human resources -Family intervention -Victim reluctance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Strengthening of the Criminal Investigation Department with human resources and vehicles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Continuous education about domestic violence through use of the media, social groups, church. -Repeal and revise the laws when necessary.
Barbados	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Lack of communication among social agencies. -Lack of privacy. -Parental and family disbelief. -Victim tardiness in reporting. -Fear of the court system, -Perpetrator being the sole breadwinner. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Two updates on protocols - Protection Order and Guidelines as to how officers should behave. -Evaluation of responses in an attempt to narrow the complaint. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Wider scope of legislation needed to remove offenders even before the hearing. -Continue relationship among the agencies. -All ranks of the police service must be sensitized.
Dominica		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Establishment of a core group of female officers to deal with sexual offences matters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Institution of a Family Court for speed and privacy. -Training of Police Officers to be more effective. -Availability of forensic facility. -Mandatory for parents to report offences.

Country	Factors limiting the effectiveness of the police response to sexual abuse	Initiatives to strengthen police response to sexual abuse	Recommendation to strengthen police response
Grenada	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Lack of structures as to how victims can report. -Limited cooperation and support from the social services. -Inadequate resources, -Long hours at hospital for care for victims. -Lack of cooperation from victim. -Parental condoning of the abuse. -Prosecutors not adequately trained to handle abuse. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Transportation needs must be addressed. -Professional and ongoing training. -Protocol system for all persons involved. -Proper support systems for victims. -Sensitization within the justice system.
Guyana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Reluctance of victims and family members to press charges - Abuser may be the sole breadwinner. -Unwillingness of victims to report matter promptly. -Non-attendance of victims and witnesses at Court to testify. -Lack of improved forensic capabilities, e.g., DNA testing. -Poor handling of exhibits. -Traumatisation of child witnesses. -No shelter for children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Special office established in police stations to interview victims. -Distribution of flyers and information on the rights of victims and on steps to be taken in reporting cases of abuse. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Specialized training for more officers to deal efficiently with sexual offences. -Better networking between the police and NGOs.
Jamaica	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Victim reluctance to cooperate because of fear or embarrassment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of rape involvement centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Regional Police Conference on Domestic Violence. -More community support for victims. -Additional funding. -Improved witness protection programme.

St. Kitts and Nevis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Refusal of child victims to talk as they may be scared. -Protection of abusers by mothers. -Maternal consent for minor daughters to be in relationships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Trained female officers are now at all stations. -Investigate and take to court reports of sexual offences and domestic violence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Revision of law needed. -Establishment of a Domestic Violence and Sexual Offences Unit. -Ongoing training of police officers and civil society.
Saint Lucia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Settlement of matters outside the court system. -Lack of mandatory reporting of sexual offences. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -More training in interviewing skills and techniques. -Closer ties with medical authority.
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Insufficient evidence from victims due to fear. -Delay in medical procedure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Attachment of a female police officer to all police stations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Continuous training in domestic violence. -Review of the impact of the training. -Establishment of a Domestic Violence Unit with trained counsellors. -Establishment of a temporary shelter for victims. -Legislation to deal with persons who obstruct the course of justice, e.g., make up cases.
Suriname	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -The legal framework e.g. different legal definitions of 'child'; no clear definition of sexual molestation; no legal provision for rape within marriage. -Report by victims of instances of abuse to other agencies than to the police. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Continued sensitization training at all levels. -Incorporation of domestic violence in police training curriculum. -Expanded cooperation with NGOs and government agencies.

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