

2002



United Nations Development Assistance Framework

for

***BARBADOS
& THE OECS***

***ANTIGUA & BARBUDA, ANGUILLA, THE COMMONWEALTH OF
DOMINICA, GRENADA, MONTSERRAT, ST. KITTS & NEVIS,
SAINT LUCIA, ST. VINCENT & THE GRENADINES***

**UNITED
NATIONS
DEVELOPMENT
ASSISTANCE
FRAMEWORK**

**For the
SUBREGION OF
BARBADOS AND THE OECS**

2002-2004

United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2001-2004

We, the United Nations Subregional Team for Barbados and the OECS, pledge our commitment to promote cooperation and coordination among all our Agencies to enhance development assistance in the Subregion of Barbados and the OECS.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACP	African Caribbean Pacific
AIDS	Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CARTAC	Caribbean Regional Technical Assistance Centre
CEDAW	Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CSN	Common Strategy Note
DS	Development Strategy
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
FIVIMS	Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Mapping Systems
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GATT	General Agreement and Tariffs on Trade
HIV	Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus
HOA	Heads of Agencies
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IGO	Inter-governmental Organisation
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NGO	Non Governmental Organisations
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
PAHO	Pan American Health Organisation
PAMS	Poverty Alleviation Mapping System
PSIP	Public Sector Investment Programmes
SCA	Sub-regional common assessment
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SME	Single Market Economy
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDCP	United Nations International Drug Control Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN-ECLAC	United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNGASS	United Nations General Assembly Special Session
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UPU	United Postal Union
UNST	United Nations Sub-regional Team
WTO	World Trade Organisation

**UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK
(UNDAF)
for the
*Subregion of Barbados and the OECS***

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the Subregion of Barbados and the OECS (Organization of Eastern Caribbean States) is intended to advance the development agenda of the United Nations system in the subregion by its focus on attaining sustainable human development through a multi-dimensional approach to poverty reduction. Guided by the Secretary General's Programme of Reform and committed to the '**right to development**' as established by the United Nations *Declaration of the Right to Development*, as well as to various United Nations mandates for development, the United Nations Subregional Team has sought to lay a foundation for development in the subregion which may be utilized by the stakeholders and development assistance partners in the development process for the next four years.

Through the Subregional Common Assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework, the United Nations Subregional Team has outlined the major obstacles to development in Barbados and the OECS, with some analysis of their implications for increasing subregional poverty levels. The Team set "poverty reduction" as the most significant thrust for their operations for development activities and has sought to outline the most strategic goals and objectives for addressing poverty and assisting governments in their efforts to do the same.

This UNDAF also details various cooperation strategies intended to increase collaboration within the UN system and between the UN system and the Governments through the OECS Secretariat. The process of follow-up and review will aim for continued collaboration and improvement in the development operations of the UN system and a continued deepening of the relationship between the Government and the UN system. It is hoped that a stronger and more integrated network of development partnerships across the subregion will be achieved.

Given the differing number of countries covered by each UN agency on both a subregional and regional basis, (for example, UNDP covers 10 countries, UNICEF 13, and UNDCP 19), an agreement is in place to address certain priority programmes for the OECS and programme resources will be utilized in accordance with this agreement.

Part 1. RATIONALE

Committed to the Programme of United Nations (UN) Reform outlined by the UN Secretary General at the 51st Session of the General Assembly, guided by the United Nations *Declaration of the Right to Development* (...), resolved to reduce poverty by half by the year 2015, and determined to make a valuable contribution to the development agenda of the Eastern Caribbean; the United Nations Subregional Team (UNST)¹ for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean formulated the *United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for the Subregion of Barbados and the OECS* to respond to selected development challenges of the collective countries in the subregion.

The United Nations operational activities for development in the subregion of Barbados and the OECS are determined by the constitutional, social, economic and cultural diversities of the ten countries which also are at different points along the development curve yet exhibiting both common and varying development constraints. Such diversities present significant challenges to the UNST to find the most effective avenues for delivering development assistance to the states and territories. For this reason the UNST was not mandated to formulate an UNDAF for the subregion. However, the Subregional Common Assessment² (SCA) identified several obstacles to development which presently and potentially affect the subregion and which therefore, necessitated a response from the United Nations. These include broad based environmental vulnerabilities requiring both national and regional solutions; various economic vulnerabilities; multiple social development concerns including illegal drugs, crime, violence, corruption and the rights of special groups; and limitations in human resource capacities and their impact on state functions.

These multiple threats and vulnerabilities to development may be subsumed under a more profound development concern, that being the increasing incidence of poverty at the regional and national levels, filtering down to the communities. Poverty assessments conducted over the past five years have quantified (statically) the real incidence of

¹ The UNST comprises representatives of the United Nations Funds, Programmes and Agencies for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean: Rosina Wiltshire, Resident Coordinator of the United Nations System's Operational Activities for Development and Resident Representative UNDP/Barbados; Joseph Johnson, Subregional Representative, FAO/Barbados; Willi Momm, Director, ILO/Trinidad and Tobago; Philip Cross, Representative, ITU/Barbados; Veta Brown, Caribbean Programme Coordinator, PAHO/Barbados; Michael Platzer, Representative, UNDCP/Barbados; Len Ishmael, Director, ECLAC/Trinidad and Tobago; Colleen Winter-Braithwaite, Representative, UNESCO/Barbados; Caspar Peek, Representative a.i., UNFPA/Jamaica; Hadi Toron, Director, UNIC/Trinidad and Tobago; Aboubacar Saibou, Area Representative, UNICEF/Barbados; Joycelin Massiah, Regional Programme Director, UNIFEM/Barbados; Herbert Niles, Representative, UPU/Saint Lucia.

² Subregional Common Assessment of Barbados and the OECS, published by the UN Development System for the Eastern Caribbean, January 2000, Bridgetown, Barbados was the first step for the preparation of the UNDAF and established the ground work for the UNDAF for the subregion as required by the 1999 UNDAF Guidelines towards the UN Secretary General's Programme of UN Reform.

poverty in the Caribbean region³. In response to this revealing data, Caribbean governments, individually and collectively through their IGO, and international development institutions have made poverty reduction and eradication priority development goals. These efforts have been supported by several UN agencies particularly with programmes designed to collect, analyse and feedback poverty data and at the same time to empower poor communities to improve their quality of life. However, these multi-sourced, multi-level interventions could have benefited from improved coordination and an appropriate policy environment, such as an integrated social development policy framework that includes a focus on poverty reduction.

The UNSRT noting that, “...the existence of widespread poverty inhibits the full and effective enjoyment of all human rights and renders democracy and popular participation fragile;”⁴ was motivated by its overwhelming comparative advantage to remedy the need for an appropriate social and economic development policy framework that focuses on poverty reduction in the subregion. Although the subregion is not characterized by significant infractions of human rights, human rights issues such as social exclusion and marginalization, discrimination and poverty continue to impact upon the rights of vulnerable citizens to achieve social development. The UNSRT’s commitment to “promote, protect and realize” the right to development, as established in the United Nations *Declaration on the Right to Development*, “...as an integral part of the promotion and protection of all human rights ...” towards the “[creation of an] economic, political, social, cultural and legal environment that will enable people to achieve social development ...” also motivated the decision to focus on poverty reduction.

Most of the States of the subregion have ratified the major rights related UN Conventions and the UNSRT continues to provide technical assistance to strengthen national and regional institutional capacities to comply with the provisions of the various core UN conventions and treaties and to implement programmes around the political commitments to the right to development of the people⁵. However, recognizing that most of the citizenry of the region are not aware of their rights and that social development policy is rarely conceptualised in the context of human rights, the UNSRT determined that it was

³ For the purposes of this UNDAF, the definition of poverty was derived from the poverty assessments conducted by the CDB. Based on a standard set by the Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute, the weekly regional per capita minimum subsistence was calculated using the commonly available foods in the region as follows: the minimum cost food basket - comprises 27 items and provides 2,400 calories per day; if food expenditure takes 60 per cent of the total expenditure of the poor households, the weekly regional per capita minimum subsistence is estimated at EC\$40-65 per day or US\$15-25. From these estimates, approximately 35 per cent of all households in the subregion would be classified as poor with the following national results; Dominica (1994), 27.6 per cent below the poverty line; Grenada (1998), 17 per cent below the poverty line; Saint Lucia (1995), 18.7 per cent below the poverty line and St Vincent and the Grenadines (1996), 30.6 per cent below the poverty line.

⁴ United Nations *Declaration On The Right To Development* (...)

⁵ The UNSRT is also committed to the full implementation of UN Drug Conventions (1961, 1971, 1988), the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime, the Firearms Protocol, the Anticorruption conventions,, and Conventions relating to Terrorism.

necessary to establish a framework for supporting poverty reduction in the subregion as a human rights issue. This UNDAF is intended also to serve as a catalyst for a strengthened political imperative to reduce poverty in the subregion by 2015.

Also, it is expected that the wide scope of the UNDAF, spanning multiple human development concerns with a multi-dimensional sensitivity to poverty and the special vulnerabilities of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), should provide a platform for improved coordinated follow-up to UN Global Conferences and facilitate the implementation of international conventions; as it (the UNDAF) supports resolutions of the *Special Session of Small Islands Developing States; World Summit for Social Development* and all the goals of the *Millennium Declaration* including the rule of law, development and poverty eradication, protecting the environment, human rights, democracy and good governance and protecting the environment. The Millennium Declaration sets as priorities interventions targeted towards vulnerable groups such as children as mandated by the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*; women as mandated by the *Convention on the Elimination of All Form of Discrimination Against Women* and agreed at the *Beijing Declaration and Plan of Action*; and youth as mandated at the *International Conference on Population and Development*. The approach to poverty in the UNDAF is sensitive also to development issues such as food security as elaborated at the *World Food Summit*, to education as articulated in the *Education For All Plan of Action*, to drugs as proclaimed by the *General Assembly Special Session Devoted to Countering the Word Drug Problem Together* and to crime as articulated in the *UN Plans of for the implementation of the Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice: Meeting the Challenges of the 21st Century*.

Since the UNDAF for the Subregion of Barbados and the OECS as a development tool and a planning framework is intended to “lay the foundation for cooperation among the UN system, government[s] and other development partners through the preparation of a complementary set of programmes and projects”, the UNST has sought to improve the modalities for coordination and cooperation within the UN system and between the UN system and the OECS Secretariat. This action takes into account priorities for OECS member states established in the *OECS Development Strategy (2000)*⁶ and the Letter of Agreement (1999) between the OECS and the UNST, and the Small Island Developing States SIDS Special Session (UNGASS, 2000). Additionally, there is significant congruence between the major objectives of the UNDAF and the World Bank Country

⁶ The ten strategic programmes of the OECS Development Strategy include:

1. Management of the External Environment
2. Sustainable Economic Development
3. Integrated Production and Marketing
4. Education and Training
5. Poverty eradication
6. Job Creation
7. Health services
8. Sustaining the Stock of Natural Capital
9. Empowering Disadvantaged groups
10. Implementing the Strategy

Assistance Strategy for the Eastern Caribbean which seeks “... to assist the Eastern Caribbean to help to reduce poverty in close collaboration with countries ...”⁷, as well as with the Caribbean Development Bank overall objectives to: (a) foster economic growth; (b) reduce poverty and improve the status of the most vulnerable; (c) promote good governance and efficiency in public policy formulation; (d) promote improved environmental management as an integral part of programme and project planning; and (e) foster closer economic integration of the Borrowing Member Countries⁸. This UNDAF allows for collaboration with the World Bank, the Caribbean Development Bank, and other development institutions.

In summary therefore, the UNDAF for the Subregion of Barbados and the OECS serves a critical function as one of the major initiatives to establish a framework for development assistance with a focus on poverty reduction as a right in its attempt to accomplish the following:

- Reinforce the moral and social responsibility of governments to focus on poverty reduction and sustainable human development as a human rights concern as well as a social and economic development priority.
- Outline the obstacles to development and needs of the subregion in terms of poverty reduction.
- Highlight avenues for development assistance towards poverty reduction/eradication.
- Identify how and where the UN system can make the greatest impact in the reduction of poverty given the uniqueness and the comparative advantage of the UN system.
- Establish a planning framework for the development operations of the UN system on poverty reduction.
- Lay a foundation for cooperation among the UN system, governments and development partners, facilitating the preparation of a complementary set of programmes and projects to achieve a more integrated approach to development and more efficient use of limited resources towards the reduction/eradication of poverty in the subregion.
- Function as an advocacy tool and a reference document for the entire subregional development community.

⁷ The World Bank 2001 Country Assistance Strategy for the Eastern Caribbean, pg. 20.

⁸ The strategic objectives of the Caribbean Development Bank’s 2000-2004 Strategic Plan, Caribbean Development Bank Annual Report 2000, pg. 8.

Part 2. THE PROCESS OF THE UNDAF

The challenge of preparing the UNDAF for the Subregion of Barbados and the OECS required much consideration of the best options for promoting the right to development at the micro level and selecting the current most critical priority development needs of the subregion given the diversity of development issues within the context of peculiar multi-country coverage of the UN agencies. The formulation of the UNDAF was therefore organized into five major stages comprising:

- ✓ *Stage 1* – Diagnostic - determination of the most relevant focus for the UNDAF;
- ✓ *Stage 2* – Methodology - research to examine existing and current information on poverty in the sub region
- ✓ *Stage 3* - Consultation - within the UN System;
- ✓ *Stage 4* - Formulation of the UNDAF document; and,
- ✓ *Stage 5* - Review by and consultation with regional stakeholders.

Stage 1 - Diagnostic:

- Following the completion of the SCA, a Task Force of UN Agencies was formed in mid-2000 to facilitate UNDAF support.
- The Task Force reviewed the SCA to determine the critical implications and opportunities for development assistance.
- Consensus was achieved that "poverty reduction" would be the focus of UNDAF.

Stage 2 - Methodology:

- Following reviews of the existing data on poverty in the subregion, it was determined that additional qualitative community-level research would be necessary as the poverty assessments conducted during the latter half of the 1990s consisted mostly of quantitative data. *It is worthy to note that social data collection in the subregion is only in the initial stages, with UN support for the development of an OECS social statistics database.*
- TOR were drawn up for research to: (a) Assess Pockets of Poverty in the Eastern Caribbean, (b) Examine the Relationship between Drugs and Poverty in the Eastern Caribbean, and (c) Assess the Situation Regarding Poverty, the Labour Market and Labour Policies in the Eastern Caribbean."
- A team of consultants, including specialists in sociology, gender, drugs and crime, telecommunications, labour and employment, and spatial mapping, were contracted to conduct: (a) an assessment of poverty and its relationship to health, education, conduct telecommunications and specific effects on vulnerable groups such as women and children in eight selected communities in the Windward Islands and, (b) research towards a common approach to community interventions in poverty. The research was supplemented by previous poverty assessments⁹.

⁹ Poverty Assessments in the Eastern Caribbean conducted by the Caribbean Development Bank in the 1990's

Stage 3 - UN system Consultation:

- The UNDAF process received considerable assessment and evaluation by the UN system Heads of Agencies through the use of electronic media, discussion at HOA meetings and the collaboration of the UNDAF Task Force. The Annual HOA Retreat 2000 held in Nevis (St. Kitts and Nevis), afforded in-depth discussions on the approach to poverty reduction in the subregion. At this retreat, HOA agreed that both macro-level factors and micro-level factors were important considerations for the UNDAF if it was to adequately reflect the multiple dimensions of poverty. Indeed, it was felt that there should be further examination of how to marry institutional and macro-level considerations with downstream activities, towards a comprehensive coordinated approach to poverty. The ‘Nevis Consensus’¹⁰ of October 2000 determined that a multi-disciplinary and multi-dimensional approach to poverty reduction should be achieved through wide ranging input from the UN system Agencies.
- Additional input from non-resident UN Agencies and key development partners including the World Bank and the OECS Secretariat was accessed.

Stage 4 - Formulation of the UNDAF document:

- The data and research findings were integrated and the draft UNDAF was prepared by the Resident Coordinator Unit.
- The draft UNDAF was circulated to the UN Agencies Heads for further comments, reviewed at a special HOA Meeting and HOA’s comments were incorporated into a further draft.
- The draft UNDAF was reviewed by UN programme staff and additional amendments made for a semi-final draft.

Stage 5 - Consultation with Regional Stakeholders:

- A virtual/electronic stakeholders’ consultation was conducted to gain feedback and achieve buy-in. The stakeholders included OECS governments, the OECS Secretariat, development partners, and civil society organisations.
- Consensus on the finalised version of the UNDAF was achieved.

¹⁰ The ‘Nevis Consensus’ was achieved through the commitment of the HOA of the UN Subregional Team, at the Annual HOA Retreat in Nevis, to establish an approach to poverty reduction, which would make a valuable impact on subregional efforts at poverty eradication. Extensive discussions between the HOA accomplished significant consensus on the UNDAF for the subregion as well as UN system support to the OECS Development Strategy process.

Part 3. OBSTACLES TO DEVELOPMENT IN THE SUBREGION OF BARBADOS AND THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN

Overall, the economies of Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean (OECS States) have performed well despite fluctuation in growth performance of the world economy, declines in terms of trade, and the constant impact of natural disasters including severe hurricanes and a long period of sustained volcanic eruption in Monsterrat. During the decade of the 1980s, the combined GDP of all OECS states averaged 5.8% per year despite two international recessions and several natural disasters. During the period 1990-1996, the average real rate of growth slumped to 2% but there was some recovery in the later half of the decade for an overall average of 3.5% for the period 1990 to 1999. The subregion also boasts a fair standard of living as defined by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report. According to the 2000 edition of the Report, the Human Development Index for the subregion ranges from Barbados 30 (high human development) to Saint Lucia 88 (medium human development).

Notwithstanding the good economic performance in the past and relatively impressive standard of living, the subregion faces tough problems and challenges as the OECS countries, as a grouping, are close to the world aggregate average for poverty in developing countries. For example, poverty assessments revealed that over 30 per cent of the population is living below the poverty level in St. Vincent and the Grenadines while in Saint Lucia, 18 per cent are considered poor. In addition, these SIDS classically exhibit all the characteristics that define the grouping; and as "small states" they have all been classified as "High Vulnerability" according to the Commonwealth Vulnerability Index¹¹

As stated previously, the multiple threats and vulnerabilities to development, spanning macro-, meso- and micro- level factors, in the small-island-developing-states of the Barbados and the OECS are manifesting through increasing incidence of poverty and all its attendant social ills. The UN *Declaration on the Right to Development* "urges States to eliminate all obstacles to development at all levels ... and to implement comprehensive development programmes ... integrating ... rights into development activities ...". It is not within the mandate or capacity of the UNST to address all the special development challenges in Barbados and the OECS but within the context of this UNDAF, some of the levels of obstacles to development in the subregion that must be tackled in a comprehensive poverty reduction programme are outlined below:

¹¹ Small States: Meeting Challenges in the Global Economy, 1999. Washington, D.C.. Ibid. Table 6

GLOBAL LEVEL FACTORS

Global trade regimes: On average in the subregion, the ratio of trade to GDP is above 100 per cent with exports being highly concentrated in a narrow range of products, services and markets. Subregional economies are now particularly vulnerable to changes in the trade regimes following the 1993 Uruguay Round of the GATT . In particular, the WTO removal of the preferential trading arrangement governed by the Lomé Convention between the European Union and African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) States for bananas has underscored the urgency with which Barbados and OECS member countries have to address the economic and social impacts of trade liberalization. Intensifying competition from Latin American and other lower-cost banana producing countries continues to impact adversely on Caribbean banana producers, particularly in the Windward Islands, where bananas account for as much as 80 per cent of export earnings and 70 per cent of the labour force employment in some cases. Other States are likewise facing problems with the sugar industry caused by declining prices in the EU which stems from an Agreement on Agriculture that entails reduction in subsidies on domestic production. This agreement has reduced the price of EU domestic and imported sugar and has placed Caribbean sugar production at serious risk. Similarly, preferential market access to the North American market has been hampered since NAFTA (1993) and has placed regional garment exporters to North America at tremendous disadvantage vis-à-vis Mexican producers.

As nascent players in the global economy, the immediate recourse must be to build national and regional capacity to negotiate trade agreements and move towards a greater level of regional economic independence. The creation of the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (SME) under the aegis of CARICOM is an initiative intended to strategically reposition the economies to face the impact of globalisation. This process of economic integration calls for the “free” movement of goods, capital, services and human resources. It also requires the harmonization of policies for capital market development, social security services, monetary and fiscal policies, trade relations with the rest of the world and policies for the development of institutional and technological resources and telecommunications in general. This is expected to assist the countries in their drive for economic diversification. Further, the SME will create an enabling environment and provide policy support – in training and new or modified regulatory frameworks – to encourage new activities. To successfully effect these changes, the region’s institutions and entrepreneurs will require capacity enhancement.

Declining Overseas Development Assistance : The global decline in ODA coincided with the graduation of several countries in the OECS region from concessionary financing. In addition, the flow of available ODA is restricted due to weak national capacities to address the administrative details for accessing funds and divergent priorities between the state and the development institution. This has left development institutions providing grant aid to pursue their own programmes out of alignment with the PSIP. The UNST must therefore advocate for more ODA and coordinated aid management and mobilize additional resources to support *development as a right* in the subregion. The UNDAF provides an opportunity to catalyse such action.

REGIONAL LEVEL FACTORS

Limited Capacity of Governments: Presently, there are no regional/national social development policy frameworks that integrate a total development perspective spanning the environmental, economic, social and human dimensions of development in general and poverty in particular. Additionally, there is a limited information base and limited statistical capacity in the subregion that hamper efforts to respond to the social development needs. There is a critical need, therefore, for support to the establishment of a social development policy framework and the development of an information system with sensitive indicators, concomitant reporting and analysis of social development variables in the subregion to achieve improvements in the quality of assessments of social and economic circumstances in the subregion.

Furthermore, there is need for gender perspectives to be incorporated into social development policies and efforts must be made to strengthen the capacity of professionals responsible for development in gender. This includes strategies that integrate gender into development policies and take into account the reality that development decisions affect men and women differently.

The absence of technologies for accurately assessing and monitoring poverty and targeting poverty reduction strategies also poses a significant challenge. Such technologies are needed in order to accomplish the following:

- To assist in the collation, storage and processing and dissemination of poverty related data and information.
- To enhance and facilitate analysis, planning and the delivery of social services at various spatial scales.
- To link governmental agencies involved in planning and the delivery of social services.
- To monitor social and economic changes and provide a basis for forecasting trends.
- To contribute to poverty alleviation planning at the local, regional and international level.

Research conducted to inform the UNDAF on the capacity for the development of Poverty Alleviation Mapping Systems (PAMS) and Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information Mapping Systems (FIVIMS) for the subregion noted several constraints, which limit efforts to identify and plan programmes and assistance to reduce poverty. These include the following:

- The absence of inter-institutional support and cooperation.
- Poor data standards and a paucity of detailed mapping at the community level and a lack of relevant and accurate documentation.
- Poor quality control of data.

- Limited resources to devise and maintain such development assistance tools.
- Absence of skilled personnel to manage and maintain such technologies.

Another critical issue has been the lack of financial and human resources for implementing the priorities of the UN Global Conference on Small Islands Developing States Plan of Action - (*SIDS-PoA*), Bridgetown 1994.

Such limitations significantly affect the ability of governments to address social development as a human rights responsibility and it is necessary therefore that the capacity of governments to accurately assess their national circumstances with regard to poverty and to respond effectively with pro-poor policies, which assist the development process, be strengthened through training in the necessary technical skills.

Environmental Vulnerability: The recurring phenomena of hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes and other natural disasters in the Caribbean present severe challenges to the sustainable development of the islands. The damages they cause to life as well as to social infrastructure, the productive apparatus and the ecosystem, together with the dislocation this implies for the economy and the entire society can retard the development of a country by several years. A disaster assessment methodology¹² developed by UN-ECLAC¹³ to calculate the middle to long- term indirect and secondary effects of hurricanes on island economies reveals the devastating declines in economic growth in the aftermath of hurricane systems in the subregion.

While natural disasters cannot be controlled, their effects on human lives and on the productive infrastructure can be minimised if subregional/national regulatory systems for disaster risk assessments and mitigation are incorporated into national physical development plans and instituted through Acts of Parliament. The capacity of governments of the subregion to effectively deal with environmental issues and their implications for development will therefore have to be significantly improved if this obstacle to development is to be managed successfully. The OECS Environment Policy, St. George's Declaration and Strategy April 2001, will be an important catalyst towards achieving this goal.

Economic Vulnerability: The small open economies are dependent on limited sources of foreign exchange and are highly vulnerable to external economic shocks. The primary sources of foreign exchange range from tourism, commodity agriculture to preferential markets, remittances, offshore financial services and concessionary finance. The dependence on limited export-driven cash crops means that the countries are vulnerable to slight changes in terms of trade and commercial agreements. Subsistence agriculture is also limited and local production of food does not match internal demand, thus food security is therefore dependent on external conditions. The limited size of the economies does not allow economies of scale and competitiveness in the world market

¹² <http://community.wow.net/eclac/CARLINKS/DISMENTH.HTM>

¹³ United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Port-of-Spain.

and natural disasters annually threaten the maintenance and expansion of the social and economic infrastructure.

Economic growth has slowed during the first two years of this decade and the present global economic environment exacerbates the pressures the subregion has providing basic services to its people. In some areas, general living standards have substantially declined increasing the number of pockets of poverty throughout much of the subregion. In addition, increases in crime and violence, retrenchment of workers, a drop in the real value of social insurance and social assistance, and changes in family structures have contributed to the declining living conditions. Such vulnerability threatens the rights of the people to human security and the realization of sustainable human development, and therefore calls for capacity building on a scale that spans multiple sectors with support for economic diversification.

Unemployment: In the agriculture based economies of the Windward Islands, unemployment rates range from 15 per cent in Grenada to 23 per cent in Dominica¹⁴; while in the more service oriented and robust economies of the Leeward Islands, unemployment fluctuates between 10 and 12 percent. However, recorded unemployment figures understate the problem due to inefficient data collection systems that do not capture underemployment, subsistence informal sector activity and discouraged workers. Much of the unemployment is related to macro-economic conditions as well as mismatch of skills to jobs and inadequate human resource development planning.

Poverty assessments conducted in the OECS reveal that although unemployment rates are generally the same for the poor as the non-poor, the duration of unemployment is longer for the poor. While the non-poor experience involuntary or transitional unemployment, the poor face the pervasive problem of structural unemployment because of low educational attainment, lack of skills, medical problems and forms of discrimination. Women constitute a high percentage of the unemployed throughout the subregion, a figure double that of men¹⁵, youth in the age group 15-19 are also acutely affected with high unemployment levels recorded.

The contraction of employment associated with globalisation and the push for competitiveness in traditional labour-intensive economic sectors - agriculture, manufacturing and construction - are not only restricting the flow of new entrants into gainful employment, but is also returning to the ranks of the poor many of those who were on the margins. Many small-scale farmers and industry workers have been forced out of the traditional export oriented sectors or industries with little or no readily available alternate production or employment opportunities.

¹⁴ United Nations Development Programme, Development Co-operation Report, 1998, Bridgetown, Barbados.

¹⁵ The St. Vincent and the Grenadines Poverty Assessment Study shows that women in the poorest 20 percent of households have the lowest participation in the labour force and are employed at the bottom end of the salary scale.

Governments have sought to cushion the shocks by way of short-term public sector programmes but these too, are not sustainable. Emerging trends such as migratory movements, increasing social dislocation and the expanding drug trade indicate that both short and long term solutions are required. Economic development coupled with fast-track human resources development programmes and more flexible labour policies have been identified as the requirements to eradicate unemployment. The issue is one of finance. Assistance is therefore needed to protect the right to work through support for job creation, skills training and human resource development, especially for vulnerable groups such as women, youth and indigenous populations.

BOX 1

The assessment of '*Poverty, Labour Market and Labour Policies in selected Eastern Caribbean Countries*'¹⁶, reported the following:

- High levels of unemployment were discovered with a higher percentage of the poor living in rural areas and involved in agriculture.
- Income derived from farming was very low.
- Men formed the majority with access to agricultural land and those with title to lands.
- The decline in the banana industry has exacerbated poverty in the banana growing areas of the subregion.
- The failure to develop other industries and the slower growth of tourism have meant that more urban areas of the island economies have not expanded.
- Manufacturing has been in decline and given the moderate growth of tourism there has been little expansion in formal sector employment in the trade sector.
- A growth in construction has been a mitigating factor, however, this improved construction activity is attributable to the building of schools, roads and housing through the public sector and thus the employment generated has not been strong enough to absorb the unemployed and underemployed.
- The levels of education and training among the poor are low.
- Most of the poor are involved in the informal sector and some of the expansion in the informal sector has been positive and is evinced in the growth of craftwork directed at the cruise ship industry and the beginnings of small-scale enterprises are emerging.
- In response to declining activity in agriculture, illegal activity such as growing marijuana has been viewed as a viable alternative especially in territories such as St. Vincent and the Grenadines.
- The increase in poverty has impacted more severely on women and their children, given that in a segmented labour market and in the absence of major growth in sectors that employ women, opportunities for employment would mainly be in the

¹⁶ As part of the UNDAF process, research on 'Poverty, Labour Market and Labour Policies in selected Eastern Caribbean Countries' was conducted by ILO to inform the UNDAF with more recent qualitative information on the circumstances of poverty and unemployment in the Subregion.

informal sector. Women also have less access to credit, usually because of lack of collateral and when they do get credit, often their husbands or male companions exercise full control over these resources.

Education and Human Resource Development: Generally, the subregion is committed to education and has invested heavily in education resulting in comparatively high educational levels for the majority of the population. However, in recent times, there has been a decline in education expenditures as a result of the challenge of managing other social and economic development concerns.

TABLE 1: EDUCATION IN THE OECS¹⁷ (1990-1997)

Country	1	2	3	4
Antigua and Barbuda	89	19	18	14.3
Dominica	82	22	17	22.3
Grenada	98	19.5	20	16.6
St. Kitts and Nevis	98	23	14	8.8
Saint Lucia	82	27	18	12.9
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	96	20.3	18	16.3

- 1. Adult literacy rate (per cent)(latest available year 1997)
- 2. Pupil-teacher ratio - Primary (1994)
- 3. Pupil-teacher ratio - Secondary (latest available year between 1992-1995)
- 4. Education as percentage of total Government expenditure (1993-1996; Antigua and Barbuda 1990)

The education system provides the foundation for the productive human resource capacity of the subregion and weaknesses or limitations at any level of the system have implications for broader human resource development and labour market policies. Unfortunately, there are several weaknesses across all levels of the system that threatens equal access to education as a right - a necessary foundation for development and as a way out of poverty.

Poor children begin with an educational advantage because most pre-schools are private and fee paying. Generally, provisions for education are good at primary, secondary and tertiary level. Primary level education is universal with high enrolment rates while secondary school enrolment rates are much lower with limited percentages of the 16-18 age cohorts receiving certified accreditation in examinations. There is concern at the under-achievement of pupils, especially boys and the apparent gender bias across all levels of the education system. There is also concern about a higher level of female

¹⁷ Source: OECS Reports 1990, 1994, 1996; UNDP. Human Development Report 1999 New York: Oxford University Press

participation in schools, especially secondary schools and females outperforming males at all educational levels and consequently increasing their relative numbers in the labour force. This educational advantage however, does not, translate into lucrative employment in the job market because of gender inequality.

Substance abuse by children and adolescents is another concern, as is the drop out rate from school due to teenage pregnancy. Furthermore, it has been reported that across all levels of the education systems, there is a high attrition rate among trained personnel and physical structures have deteriorated due to inadequate maintenance. Additionally, the education sector is challenged to meet technological advances and needs in services and trades, as computer capacity and literacy are limited.

BOX 2

The assessment of '*Pockets of Poverty in the Windward Islands*',¹⁴ reported the following in the poor communities:

- There was poor nutrition among many children in the poor communities with serious implications for school performance.
- Some children are not able to attend school regularly due to family circumstances.
- Girls tend to perform better in schools than boys, more females are trained in a skill than males and few young men participate in educational activities.
- There was a high rate of teenage pregnancy in the poor communities.
- There was limited knowledge of computers, the Internet and a lack of technology related skills in the poor communities.
- The level of education and training among the poor was generally low.
- Few programmes for adult education were found.

Many young adults and out-of-school youth are particularly handicapped by illiteracy, which inevitably undermines any strategies for sustainable development, the alleviation of poverty and the empowerment of the excluded. Access to formal skills training programmes is limited due to location, space availability and prohibitive tuition cost. There are also limitations in the quality of the trainers and basic infrastructure difficulties such as guaranteed electricity supply. With contraction in the construction sector, skills apprenticeship opportunities are severely restricted and many young males are lured by "get rich quick" schemes into illegal activities.

While the subregion has invested in education *per se*, human resources development as an agenda item for national development has received less attention. Rapid training needs assessments conducted in several countries to identify the human resources capacity gaps and the priority training needs identified weaknesses in all areas due to: (a) the need for skills upgrading within the senior ranks of the public service, (b) absence of succession planning in the public service, (c) increasing demand for skills in areas that

are presently being provided by expatriates, (d) increasing demand for skills in new areas with the advent of globalisation, and (e) the higher incidence of attrition due to increased labour mobilization created by the Caribbean Single Market and Economy (SME) and globalisation. The proliferation of new, electronic technologies (alongside new inroads made by traditional technologies), new trade arrangements, new workplace demands, and the advent of new governance systems all serve as powerful invitations to rethink the very underpinnings of *human resource capacity development*.

The role of education in any long-term vision of poverty eradication is undeniable. It is a basic human right, which combats poverty and exclusion. There is therefore a great need to strengthen the educational systems and to give human resources development the priority attention it requires. More resources must be invested at all levels of the educational system to ensure equal access in order to break the intergeneration cycle of poverty. It also requires adequate teacher training to improve the quality of teaching in response to changing development needs including technical and vocational training in education planning. Comprehensive national Human Resources Development Plans consistent with the subregional/national development goals and strategies must be prepared. The challenge is to equip people, industries, management systems and institutions with the technologies and training to allow the integrated economies to compete effectively in the global economy.

Food Security: In tandem with the export of cash crops and the exploitation of natural resources for tourism, the countries have been heavily dependent on food imports to meet a significant percentage of the staple diet using the foreign exchange earned to pay for the imported food. With the challenges of globalisation and trade liberalization, the subregion is losing foreign exchange earnings from which food can be purchased. The outcome of this reduced subregional/national income and household income is increasing food insecurity and related nutritional problems.

While some data on "traditional" food insecurity in the subregion is available, additional information is needed in order to fully understand and address the problem of "modern" food insecurity. Important issues that will need to be addressed include: who are food insecure or vulnerable to food insecurity; their location; their main source of livelihood; what foods they typically have access to; and why are they food insecure or the factors making them food insecure.

Access to food to ensure a healthy and productive life may be considered as the most basic of human rights. In keeping with the UN's commitment to address human rights issues and the plans of action from the global conferences to reduce hunger and malnutrition and poverty by the year 2015, it is incumbent that top priority be given to reducing poverty and related food insecurities in the subregion. A major effort thus will be necessary towards greater diversification of the economies through the promotion and development of other economically viable agricultural enterprises that displaced farmers and workers may turn to, but also to diversify the economies to reduce reliance on agriculture and primary products. Such an effort must also include training and overall

capacity building of the concerned stakeholders to operate in the new sub-sectors or industries.

The 'Digital Divide': While the 2001 Population and Housing Censuses will provide accurate data on the number of communication devices per household, it is known that inequities exist due to the absence of infrastructure. Governments are making significant strides to liberalise the telecommunications sector and the transition from a monopoly environment to one with additional service providers is expected to increase access to telecommunications facilities and bring significant socio-economic benefits to the subregion, though it may be some time before the effects are felt.

Greater access to ICT services is required since only then will the subregion be able to take advantage of the opportunities available through technological developments. The lack of access to ICT limits the opportunity for many to develop the skills necessary to compete in the global market and to participate in the new "global village". In response, several governments in association with the telephone service providers are establishing Internet connection in schools and establishing full telecentres at the multipurpose community centres in rural districts and inner cities. These efforts need to be continued along with the development of e-commerce infrastructure to take advantage of the opportunities provided by globalisation. Advantage should also be taken of developments in mobile communications technology, which must be used to supplement the existing terrestrial networks.

BOX 3

The assessment of '*Pockets of Poverty in the Eastern Caribbean*'¹⁸, reported the following in the poor communities:

- Telecommunications charges and equipment costs are major constraints for households in poor communities.
- There is a lack of knowledge of computers and the Internet and a general absence of technology related skills.
- There are few households with access to telephone services and telephone lines often disconnected due to non-payment of bills.
- In some households there is limited access to electricity due to inability at times to pay bills.

¹⁸ As part of the UNDAF process, research 'Assessing Pockets of Poverty in the Windward Islands' was conducted to inform the UNDAF with more recent qualitative information on the circumstances of telecommunications development, health, education, gender and children in the Subregion.

The problem of the digital divide concerns governments, the private sector, multilateral organizations, financial institutions, non-governmental organizations and the citizens of the subregion. Collaborative efforts are needed if the digital divide is to be closed.

Health and HIV/AIDS:

General health

Although generally, the health systems in the subregion provide adequate care, there is still a need for strengthening of these systems and improving efficiency. The present health profiles of the Eastern Caribbean show that lifestyle is now the critical factor in disease causation. HIV/AIDS, and chronic non-communicable diseases such as hypertension, diabetes and heart disease are the major threats to the population. There is also special concern for the poor who are more susceptible to lifestyle diseases due to poor dietary practices. Additionally the poor may be more susceptible to the effects of substance abuse and reproductive health problems due to lack of education, limited access to or limited use of health facilities.

TABLE 2: HEALTH IN THE OECS¹⁹ (1990-1997)

<i>Country</i>	1	2	3	4	5 a	5 b	6	7	8
<i>Antigua and Barbuda</i>	74.3	14.5	93	13	95	100	11.2	n.a	5.9
<i>Dominica</i>	77.3	16.4	99	14	94	84	4.93	35.9	12.9
<i>Grenada</i>	71.4	14.3	92	18	80	-	4.9	54.9	11.5
<i>St Kitts and Nevis</i>	67.6	22.9	97	6	100	100	11.7	64.1	7.1
<i>Saint Lucia</i>	70.4	17.9	95	11	98	-	4.7	33	10.9
<i>St Vincent and the Grenadines</i>	73.4	18.2	99	6	93	98	8.7	n.a	11.8

1. *Life expectancy at birth (years)(1998)*
2. *Infant mortality rate (IMR)(per 1000 live births)(1997)*
3. *Vaccination under 1 year of age (combined figures for DPT3, Oral Polio, Measles)(1997)*
4. *Reported AIDS cases in adults and children (per 100,000 of the population)(1996)*
5. *Population (per cent) with access to **a.** safe water **b.** sanitation (latest available year 1998)*
6. *Physicians per 10,000 population (around 1998)*
7. *Hospital beds per 1,000 population (1998)*

¹⁹ Source OECS: Statistical Booklet 1998; PAHO: Socio-economic Indicators PAHO, Washington, D.C., 1995; PAHO: Health Situation Analysis Programme, Division of Health and Human Development Basic Indicators 1998; UNDP: Human Development Report 1999 New York: Oxford University Press

8. *Health as percentage of total Government expenditure (1994)*

Governments of the subregion are challenged to incorporate strategies for health promotion across policies and programmes of all sectors and in the frameworks for poverty reduction and food security to ensure the rights of the people to appropriate health services.

BOX 4

The assessment of '*Pockets of Poverty in the Eastern Caribbean*'²⁰, reported the following in the poor communities:

- Undernourishment and malnutrition of some children.
- Poor sanitation, lack of toilet and bath facilities and few houses with pipe-borne water which can contribute to poor hygiene practices and lead to poor health.
- Poor roads and inadequate drainage, litter, human waste and poor garbage disposal are common health hazards.
- The use of illegal drugs and alcoholism.
- High levels of promiscuity with low condom use, which has serious implications for the spread of STIs and HIV/AIDS.
- A high rate of teenage pregnancy.
- A higher incidence of hypertension and diabetes among women with more women than men utilizing health facilities.

HIV/AIDS

While the Caribbean as a whole has the highest incidence of reported AIDS cases in the Americas and the fastest growing HIV prevalence rate after Africa south of the Sahara, island specific rates in the Eastern Caribbean are much lower. AIDS has become the leading cause of death for both males and females in the 25-44 age group. The structural ramifications of this epidemic are declining levels of skilled human capacity and a resulting weakening of the productive base of subregional economies. The high cost of providing health care and expensive medications to an increasing number of affected individuals at a time when economies are weakening is also a source of concern. Some countries cannot even provide basic treatment (generally antibiotics) for opportunistic infection, let alone contemplate the expensive and sophisticated arsenal of antiretrovirals and the laboratory support and health care infrastructure (including counseling services) to adequately follow patients. There are also fewer resources for maintaining the public

²⁰ As part of the UNDAF process, research 'Assessing Pockets of Poverty in the Windward Islands' was conducted to inform the UNDAF with more recent qualitative information on the circumstances of telecommunications development, health, education, gender and children in the Subregion.

awareness and behaviour modification programmes needed to curtail the spread of HIV/AIDS. This has significant implications for social and economic development and must be urgently addressed.

Additionally, in-depth examination of the relationship between poverty and HIV/AIDS is necessary in order to tease out both the subtle and direct impacts of poverty on HIV/AIDS and to mainstream HIV/AIDS in development policy, particularly social development policy with a focus on poverty reduction.

Illicit Drug Trafficking, Crime and Corruption: Illicit drug trafficking in the Caribbean poses serious obstacles to fragile development processes. Unemployed youth are particularly vulnerable to participation in illegal drug activity, this vulnerability also extends to females and is witnessed in the increasing numbers who act as couriers.

BOX 5

The assessment of '*Drugs and Poverty in the Eastern Caribbean*'²¹, reported the following in the poor communities:

- Joblessness and poverty have been identified as major factors contributing to crime; especially among young people and marijuana usage has become a part of youth culture in the subregion.
- Women are often involved in prostitution as a source of income and prostitution is often a method utilized to sustain drug habits.
- Some poor families engage in planting and trafficking in marijuana as a lucrative economic alternative to their circumstances of poverty and this "alternative" is seen as the fastest way to earn money and improve one's standard of living.
- Mental health institutions and other areas of the health system are being strained by an increase in the drug abuse case load due to the lack of access to well developed treatment centres in the sub region has left many drug abusers abandoned and on the streets.
- Adequate capacity does not exist in law enforcement to respond to the problems of illicit drug activity and crime.

In-transit trafficking has also sparked some local consumption and is of increasing concern touching many societies across the subregion. Also, those who become substance abusers and addicts often reach serious levels of poverty and destitution as a result of efforts to maintain their habits. The social and economic harm done by drug abuse and drug related crime, may constitute a risk to the implementation of social sector programmes, including employment creation, health and education. Drug trafficking and

²¹ As part of the UNDAF process, research on 'Drugs and Poverty in the Eastern Caribbean' was conducted by UNDCP to inform the UNDAF with more recent qualitative information on the circumstances of drugs, crime and poverty in the Subregion.

drug abuse may reinforce the social exclusion of certain groups, and the economic burden that substance abuse places on the health services is often unrecognised. In addition, substance abuse in the workplace is lowering productivity due to increased absenteeism and the frequency and severity of accidents.

Already deprived and marginalized communities are the most vulnerable to drug-related crime, providing ready recruits and a haven for criminal gangs, and contributing disproportionately to national rates of crime both against property and the person, including murder. The capacity of the criminal justice systems across the subregion is limited in the face of such challenges and a heavy burden is placed on the penal system to address these problems. Additionally, the poor are often the primary victims of a defective criminal justice system and their access to the official judicial system to redress their rights is limited. The effects of increasing crime and violence is increasing the levels of insecurity among the populace and having detrimental implications for the tourism industry.

There is also concern regarding increased levels of corruption that is intrinsically associated with drug trafficking and the consequent implications for good governance. Money laundering and corruption present a serious risk to good governance and the integrity of the State in a subregion where (traditionally), "Surveys ... do not indicate the existence of wide-spread systemic corruption at the administrative level."²²

The growing offshore financial services sector is very vulnerable to the illicit drug-trade for money-laundering, and are increasingly coming under the microscope by OECD regarding "*harmful tax practices*" and weak capacity of the financial regulatory frameworks to combat money - laundering.

Urgent efforts are therefore needed to address these problems and their implications for increasing poverty across the region and at the level of communities.²³

COMMUNITY LEVEL FACTORS

The Nature of Poverty in the Subregion: Information from the poverty assessments undertaken in the Windward Islands during the latter half of the 1990s' indicate that between 25 per cent (Saint Lucia) and 37 per cent (St. Vincent and the Grenadines) of the population lived below the poverty line, while between 17 per cent (Grenada) and 30 per cent (St Vincent and the Grenadines) of households were in a state of poverty. The incidence of poverty tends to be high among the rural population, young females and the

²² OECS: Institutional and Organizational Capacity Review of the Core Public Sector, World Bank, April 2001.

²³ The Caribbean countries agreed to a Plan of Action for Drug Control Coordination and Cooperation in the Caribbean (The Barbados Plan of Action) in 1996. This plan was reviewed and updated at a high level Meeting on Drugs on Crime in Trinidad in December 2001 and a 'way forward' identified. The promotion of integrated demand reduction programmes emphasising community development alternative schemes as well as youth development and improved linkages with AIDS and comprehensive development plans were stressed.

elderly. Also the low human capital base is a major factor affecting poverty in the subregion. The poor are more susceptible to the lifestyle diseases.

When compared with the norm for their respective countries, the poor also have high rates of malnutrition, less education, less potable water and liquid and solid waste disposal, and often live in unsanitary, overcrowded urban areas. Additionally, the assessments identified the main characteristics of poor households that are relevant for targeting and social safety net policies:

- ✓ The *elderly* whose lifetime savings and pension benefits are eroded by micro economic changes and those without incomes and family support systems;
- ✓ *Children* living in poor households and vulnerable to poor nutrition which affect their educational performance and future job prospects;
- ✓ *Women*, especially in the context of the high incidence of poverty among poor female headed households;
- ✓ *Unemployed youth* who also lack skills and are becoming increasingly vulnerable to risky life styles with gangs, drugs and criminal behaviour;
- ✓ *Unskilled workers*, unable to support their families and increasingly drifting into the informal sector, with low and often unpredictable economic returns;
- ✓ *Small-scale farmers* in the rural areas who are most affected by the downturn in the banana industry.

The complex nature and impact of poverty in communities therefore necessitates community development initiatives designed to target the most vulnerable groups and respond to the sustainable development needs of the communities in order to protect the rights of these groups.

Constraints to Community Development: The most appropriate response to poverty at the level of the community appears to be comprehensive Community Development Planning²⁴.

²⁴ The importance of Community Development Planning and the constraints to such development in the Eastern Caribbean, were contributed by Consultant Dr. Patricia Ellis in her research, which assessed pockets of poverty in the Windward Islands. Additional data was made available through a landmark study prepared by Consultant Toni. J.K. Burrowes, entitled An Assessment of the Community Development Divisions in selected OECS Member States (February 2001) under an OECS/UN Preparatory Assistance Project.

BOX 6

The assessment of '*Pockets of Poverty in the Eastern Caribbean*'²⁵, reported the following in the poor communities:

- The majority of households are headed by unemployed women who have sole responsibility for providing for their children.
- There is a high incidence of violence against women.
- Although unemployment is high, more females are trained in a skill than men and more are employed than men in poor communities..
- Many communities are characterized by unsatisfactory relationships between men and women.
- Roles and tasks tend to be organized along traditional gender lines.
- A large number of children live in overcrowded, unsanitary conditions.
- The majority are members of single parent female-headed households and not supported by their fathers.
- Many mothers are unemployed or underemployed and earn insufficient money to provide their children with adequate food or a well balance diet.
- There is a relatively high incidence of child abuse.
- There is a high incidence of teenage pregnancy.
- There is some undernourishment and malnutrition of children.
- There are some reports of school-age children using alcohol and drugs and some involvement of children in illegal activity.
- Some children are not always able to attend school regularly due to family circumstances.

Various NGOs and development assistance partners have shown interest in supporting community development and models of successful community development in the region do exist. Presently however, there are several constraints to community development that must be addressed in order to successfully reduce poverty. These include:

- Lack of national policies and plans for community development.
- A macro economic framework that does not provide a framework for community development.
- Bureaucracy and red tape.
- Weak, understaffed and under-resourced community development departments, without an adequate supply of field officers trained in community development methods and techniques.

²⁵ As part of the UNDAF process, research 'Assessing Pockets of Poverty in the Windward Islands' was conducted to inform the UNDAF with more recent qualitative information on the circumstances of telecommunications development, health, education, gender and children in the Subregion.

- Limited funds to assist communities in implementing programmes and few physical resources, e.g. vehicles available to field officers.
- Political polarization of community development initiatives.
- A decrease in volunteerism and participation by community members, therefore few active community groups.
- *Ad hoc* uncoordinated activities and programmes being implemented by various agencies in the same communities.
- Depletion of the human resource base in communities as individuals whose situation improves move out.

There is therefore great scope for programmes aimed at addressing capacity building for community development in which the UN system can play a facilitating role.

Gender: Efforts to mainstream gender in the subregion have had moderate success. Despite concerns about the feminisation of poverty little action has been taken to develop a subregional social sector policy on gender and to mainstream gender issues. Gender-sensitive indicators and gender-disaggregated data are only now being addressed. Additionally, the limited capacity of professionals responsible for development in gender and unfamiliarity with terms and strategies to achieve empowerment of women contributes to reduced emphasis on gender in policy development and a lack of sensitivity to the reality that development decisions affect men and women differently.

The Special case of Women

Women's rights continue to be a major concern in the subregion. In spite of women's higher educational achievement women tend to be in lower paid jobs and experience higher levels of unemployment than men. More women than men are poor and the number of female-headed households continues to increase in the region.

Indicators to monitor poverty must, therefore, be sensitive to the gender dimensions of poverty and be capable of monitoring how various interventions, strategies and programmes, are addressing poverty from a gender perspective. They must also be able to measure and evaluate the different ways in which poverty eradication interventions, programmes and projects, are affecting and impacting on men and on women differently. Much also needs to be done to change the social and cultural attitudes to women and to sensitise the public to women's rights in terms of violence against women, as domestic violence against women continues to be a threat to women in the subregion.

TABLE 3: WOMEN AND FAMILY IN THE OECS²⁶

Country	1	2	3	4
<i>Antigua and Barbuda</i>	46.1	31	63	1.9
<i>Dominica</i>	37.0	29	59	0.8
<i>Grenada</i>	45.2	26	69	0.8
<i>St. Kitts and Nevis</i>	43.9	26	66	1.9
<i>Saint Lucia</i>	40.4	30	60	0.5
<i>St. Vincent and the Grenadines</i>	39.0	25	70	0.8

1. Percentage of households headed by women
2. Percentage of women aged 25 and over that are married
3. Percentage of women aged 60 and over that are not married
4. Percentage of women aged 25-44 who are divorced

There is an urgent need to empower women in poor communities and to protect their rights to full participation in the development process.

CONCLUSION

Given such wide-ranging development challenges and their implications for increasing the incidence of poverty in the subregion, and the challenges to the capacities of the governments to manage the development process, the UN system for the Subregion of Barbados and the OECS has through the UNDAF outlined a development assistance tool which is intended to respond to the immediate need for poverty reduction and support to the efforts of governments. The UNDAF formulation has been guided by this imperative and it is hoped that the framework will provide an effective development approach that can be utilized by all regional stakeholders and development partners towards achieving the International Millennium Declaration Development Goals.

²⁶ Source: CARICOM Report - Towards Equity in Development: Status of Women in Sixteen Commonwealth Caribbean Countries, 1995

Part 4. GOALS and COOPERATION STRATEGIES

This first UNDAF for the Subregion of Barbados and the OECS follows on from the integrated UN project on poverty reduction, Support of the Formulation of A Regional Framework For Poverty Eradication and Social Development in the OECS, led by UNDP and begun in 1998. Under this project, the process of collaboration on poverty eradication within the UN system was initiated. The process of the UNDAF further developed a cooperative approach across the UN system through the establishment of the UNDAF Task Force under the Resident Coordinator System.

The overall goal of the UNDAF for the Subregion of Barbados and the OECS is to achieve a common approach by all United Nations system Agencies to interventions to address poverty through a multi-dimensional approach. This goal is framed within the context of the *Right to Development*, that is, to eliminate the obstacles to development in the subregion and to achieve a social, cultural, political, economic and legal environment that enables people to achieve sustainable human development.

A common approach by UN system Agencies is expected to contribute, *inter alia*, to the long-term development of communities through interventions in health, education and training (including drug awareness education), enterprise, labour market characteristics, and unemployment and underemployment issues, food security and technological development, with gender as a cross-cutting theme. Additionally, the UNDAF will provide an interactive development database for use by policy makers and planners and a methodology for on-going community development. It is expected that the UNDAF, as a development tool, will mobilize resources from other development assistance partners.

The continued work of Inter-Agency theme groups will further the process of cooperation across and within the UN system and the objectives of the assistance will be achieved through inter-agency cooperation as will be shown below.

OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES OF THE UNDAF

The major objectives of the UNST will be to protect, promote and facilitate the realization of the *right to development* and to act as a catalyst for a paradigm shift from the perception of poverty as merely a general development issue to a basic human rights issue. Through this UNDAF and other supportive advocacy initiatives, the UNST will seek to sensitise the people of the region to their human development rights and to the responsibility of all stakeholders at all levels in society to ensure full participation of all persons in the development process towards the reduction of poverty by 2015 and the attainment of sustainable human development. The major objectives and strategies of this UNDAF are as follows:

A.. THE RIGHT TO A SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD

Objective: To support sustainable economic development.

Strategy: Recent global economic trends have increased the vulnerability of the economies of the subregion to poverty. The UN system will support the attainment of sustainable economic development in the subregion and support the capacity of governments to negotiate global trade agreements.

UNDP and UNECLAC will collaborate to support "protection against economic vulnerability" through research, training and technical assistance on macro-economic concerns and for the modernization and strengthening of the financial sector. Inefficiencies in planning and in the priorities of policies and programmes by national governments and the private sector will also be examined in efforts to support the capacity of governments to increase productivity, diversify the economies and improve fiscal management.

Objective: To promote job creation and the right to work

Strategy: Economic vulnerabilities and labour market shifts increasingly limit opportunities for many. The UN system will promote job creation through various strategies spanning multi-sectoral avenues.

ILO will lead the UNST in collaboration with UNDP, UNECLAC and UNDCP in monitoring labour market characteristics and their relationship to conditions of poverty. Micro-enterprise development will be promoted and technical assistance will be provided for human resource capacity development planning and management.

B.THE RIGHT TO SECURITY OF PERSON

Objective: To strengthen national capacity to limit the social and economic harm done by illicit drugs and related crime including money laundering.

Strategy: The UNST acknowledges the impact of drug related crime including money laundering, violence and corruption and the role of transnational organized crime upon the governance and economy of small island states. Led by UNDCP, the UNST will seek to build capacity to address such obstacles to sustainable development, in keeping with the Barbados Plan of Action for Drug Control Coordination and Cooperation in the Caribbean (1999), the Declaration of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (1988), and the new UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime. UNDCP actions will be enhanced by technical assistance for capacity building under the UNDP/IMF executed CARTAC Programme (Caribbean Regional Technical Assistance Centre).

UNDCP will lead the UNST in efforts to build the capacity of criminal justice systems in the region to apply legislation in keeping with the UN Conventions of 1961, 1977 and 1988 to control drugs and related crime. Penal reforms aimed at reducing the proportion of young offenders in prisons and reducing recidivism will also be supported.

The UNST will seek to secure sustainable alternatives to illegal drug activity, especially for young marginalized males and the poor, and to facilitate the implementation of programmes of drug abuse prevention education, treatment and rehabilitation in collaboration with UNICEF and PAHO/WHO.

Objective: To advocate that interventions be targeted to vulnerable groups such as children, women, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities and the indigenous populations.

Strategy

As a follow-up to the *World Summit for Social Development, the Beijing + 5 Plan of Action, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Conference on Population and Development* and recognising that different social groups are affected differently by poverty, the UN system will target interventions to children, women, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities and the indigenous population across its programmes and projects.

Recognising the need to break the inter-generational cycle of poverty, UNDP, UNIFEM, UNFPA, UNECLAC and the UNST will collaborate in a focus on the special vulnerability of women as heads of households and the circumstances which contribute to the ‘feminisation of poverty’. Although all OECS Governments have ratified the CEDAW and the Beijing Plan of Action, the rate of implementation is slow. Additionally, the absence of a subregional social sector policy on gender, sensitivity to gender mainstreaming and issues related to the feminisation of poverty, needs to be adequately addressed in order to uphold UNGA resolution 54/175, which emphasizes that the empowerment of women and their full participation on a basis of equality in all spheres of society is fundamental for development of the subregion. The rights of women to participate fully in the development process will therefore be a major emphasis of the UNST and gender sensitivity training and gender mainstreaming across the public and private sector will continue to be a major goal of these agencies.

The UNST led by UNICEF and PAHO will target interventions towards children with a focus on maternal health, early childhood development/education, teaching parenting skills, providing community support services to families, ensuring access to education for all children and advocating for the protection of children’s rights.

Additionally, the UNST will focus on older persons, persons with disabilities and youth (especially marginalized young males) and will support community development within the indigenous Carib communities across the subregion. Efforts will be made to empower these disadvantaged groups, to strengthen the capacity of policy makers to

formulate, implement and evaluate social policies and to develop social statistical databases and a methodological approach for a Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) for small-island-developing-states.

Objective: To support sustainable environmental management

Strategy

The subregion is highly vulnerable to natural disasters and has placed sustainable biodiversity on the priority development agenda. As a follow-up to the UN *Special Session on Small Island Developing States*, the UNST will support sustainable environmental management in the subregion.

UNDP will lead interventions to strengthen environmental management, and with PAHO, natural disaster preparedness. UNDP, through GEF, will support an OECS project on ecosystems management to develop national, long-term integrated island strategies for the conservation and management of globally significant biodiversity throughout this eco-region. Several projects have already been implemented across the region to support national biodiversity strategies/action planning and the management of climate change. These projects cover a wide range of activities including education campaigns to stimulate wide stakeholder participation of CBO and NGO, policy dialogue and advocacy, assessment of existing information related to biodiversity resources and drafting of action plans among others. The UNST will continue support for such projects.

C. THE RIGHT TO FOOD SECURITY

Objective: To ensure food security, protect the right to adequate nutrition and promote agricultural development.

Strategy

In keeping with the *World Food Summit Plan of Action*, promotion of food security in the subregion has been prioritised by the UNST. Efforts will continue to promote agricultural development including fisheries, and the attainment of food security as a fundamental human right (by the year 2010.)

FAO and UNDP will collaborate to develop programmes to ensure food security for the disadvantaged and will support the development and diversification of the agricultural sector, especially for whom agriculture is the main source of economic support.

D. THE RIGHT TO HEALTH AND EDUCATION

Objective: To support sustainable social development

Strategy

As a follow-up to the *World Summit for Social Development*, the UNST will support sustainable social development. Current UNDP support to the preparation and publication of an OECS Subregion Human Development Report in 2001 providing baseline data is an initial intervention. As a whole, the UNST will push for and support social sector development frameworks at both the subregional and national levels.

Objective: To advance the development of health management systems in keeping with the right to development

Strategy

Recognising the long-term implications for development of poor health status at all stages of the life cycle, the UNST led by PAHO/WHO will implement strategies to advance the development of health management systems. Emphasis will be placed on the development of health management information systems for making appropriate and timely interventions, healthy public policies, education and empowerment, ensuring access of the most vulnerable to adequate health care and the development of youth friendly services. Collaboration with UNFPA on sexual and reproductive health services and education will be a priority especially as it relates to HIV/AIDS and the necessity for interventions among youth. UNDCP, UNICEF and PAHO/WHO will collaborate on the promotion of health and family life education. Additionally, FAO will collaborate with PAHO/WHO to improve food safety and security, nutrition and nutrition education for the disadvantaged.

Objective: To support the reduction of HIV/AIDS transmission

Strategy

The UN system Agencies are active members in the 2000/2002 Integrated HIV/AIDS Plan in collaboration with regional stakeholders and efforts are being made to mainstream HIV/AIDS into development policy. Emphasis is being placed on advocacy and community capacity building among young persons and people living with HIV/AIDS.

The UNST led by PAHO/WHO and in collaboration with the Eastern Caribbean UNAIDS theme group will promote the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS to adequate health care. Through an HIV/AIDS prevention management programme, emphasis will be placed on behaviour modification recognizing the gap between knowledge and behaviour. The focus will be on community capacity building, targeting interventions towards the most vulnerable, youth and people living with HIV/AIDS and the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS.

HIV/AIDS will be mainstreamed into development policy, particularly poverty strategies recognising the bi-directional relationship between HIV/AIDS and poverty. A number of studies will be undertaken including: (a) the implications for the economies of the subregion due to loss of productive members of the population and the absence of resources for expensive drugs and treatments; (b) the role of gender in HIV/AIDS with a focus on gender socialization and attitudes as well as an examination of cultural patterns with effects on behaviour.

Objective: To support development in education and opportunities for life-long learning

Strategy

The *Education For All* Plan of Action outlines priorities for education as it relates to development with particular focus on the importance of education as a way out of poverty. Led by UNESCO, the UNST will continue efforts at achieving developments in education. It will elaborate an Education Programme within the context of the subregional/national poverty eradication strategy frameworks and explore the extent to which education can be re-oriented toward wealth generation harnessing the traditional skills of communities for economic gain.

UNESCO has prepared a framework for cooperation and a strategy for education which will guide UNESCO collaboration with its member states. UNICEF, UNESCO and UNDCP will collaborate to prioritise early childhood education as mandated in the *World Summit for Children* and based on ***Development as a Right***. As an extension, these agencies will seek also to develop the education system across primary, secondary and tertiary levels. UNESCO will lead efforts at adult education programmes and support for life-long learning, and will work with the ILO to pursue opportunities for human resource development and job training, and with ITU to facilitate advancements in the use of telecommunications in education.

Objective: To facilitate technological development and reduce the ‘digital divide’

Strategy

The UNST will facilitate technological development and seek to reduce the digital divide to empower the poor to benefit from globalisation.

ITU will facilitate the introduction and use of appropriate technology to improve efficiencies and delivery; with PAHO/WHO in the social services such as health information systems and the use of distance technologies in diagnosis, with FAO in agriculture, and with UNESCO in education. UNDP will seek to reduce the digital divide between the disadvantaged and mainstream society by supporting the establishment of Community Resource and Internet Centres (CORICS).

E. THE RIGHT TO PARTICIPATION AND EQUAL PROTECTION UNDER THE LAW

Objective: To strengthen the capacity of the justice sector to ensure the rule of law and to protect the human rights of the people of the subregion.

Strategy

The UNST will facilitate initiatives that hold governments accountable for the rights guaranteed by their constitutions. Efforts will be made to strengthen the justice sector through judicial reform and legislative amendments which protect civil and political rights with special emphasis on women's rights, the rights of children and the rights of vulnerable groups. Assistance will be provided to support the strengthening of programmes of action on various UN Conventions and to empower civil society to serve as advocates for their own rights. UNICEF and UNDCP are collaborating on Juvenile Justice reform in the Caribbean and improving the institutions which deal with abandoned children, youth at risk, and young people in conflict with the law. Joint activity between UNDP and UNDCP will also support institutional and judicial reform.

The UNST will advocate for the implementation of crime victimization surveys to better understand the nature of crime; both the impact of crime on households as well as the perceptions of various segments of society regarding the effectiveness of the police and the judicial system. UNDCP has developed a questionnaire for a, "Survey of Crime Trends and Operation of Criminal Justice Systems" as well as an, "International Victims Survey" used in some 60 countries across the globe. The OECS, CDB and IDB have expressed interested in such surveys in order to better target criminal justice resources.

F. CAPACITY BUILDING OF GOVERNMENTS

Objective: To support capacity development of Civil Society Organisations

Strategy

The UN system will support programmes to empower and develop capacity of CSO to achieve full participation in the democratic process towards good governance and will facilitate community development between governments, NGO and communities across the subregion.

The UNST will support efforts of civil society to respond to poverty through advocacy, education programmes and consultation with CSO on critical development issues.

Objective: To strengthen the capacity of governments to manage development and to protect the rights of the people of the subregion with particular focus on poverty eradication.

Strategy

Led by UNDP, the UNST will seek to strengthen the capacity of governments to manage development and generate “effective and efficient development policies” with particular focus on poverty eradication, the elimination of legislative constraints to poverty reduction, pro-poor policy development, community development programmes and institutional reform utilizing a multi-sectoral approach with sensitivity to gender issues and gender mainstreaming.

Some of the methodologies to be employed include: technical assistance, development of poverty assessment tools and technologies, support to policy dialogues and provision of training. UNDP and the UNST will support the capacity of governments to negotiate trade agreements in the international arena in support of regional economic security.

Objective: To support capacity for monitoring and evaluation of programmes and policies

Strategy

One of the major limitations of both governments and development agencies in the subregion has been effective monitoring and evaluation of programmes and policies. Such capacity is a critical element of determining the success of implementation and the effects of programmes and projects. Indeed, if the goal of development is change and improvement in life circumstances, monitoring and evaluation must be an essential part of development activity. The UN system will seek to support capacity development for monitoring, evaluation of programmes and policies and meeting development targets across the subregion, especially the MDGs set by the Millennium Declaration. Led by UNDP, collaboration with the OECS Secretariat and the ECCB to develop and consolidate aid coordination and management initiatives will be given high priority.

Objective: To facilitate the development of Poverty Alleviation Mapping Systems (PAMS) and Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems (FIVIMS).

Strategy

The UNST recognizes the present limitations of responding to the needs of the poor in the subregion. Beyond simply knowing that there are ‘the poor’, efforts to effectively target the most vulnerable require mechanisms for determining who exactly are the poor, where poor families and individuals are located and what specifically are their needs. The UNST will facilitate the development of Poverty Alleviation Mapping Systems (PAMS) and Food Insecurity and Vulnerability Information and Mapping Systems

(FIVIMS) as both a critical guide for grounded policy responses, as well as a supplement to existing and future poverty eradication plans.

INCREASING COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE UN SYSTEM AND THE OECS SECRETARIAT

The UNDAF and the OECS Development Strategy

The OECS Development Strategy (DS) lays a strong foundation for understanding the kind of framework necessary for development assistance in the subregion. The DS outlines the strengths within the region that offer potential for harnessing development capacity and at the same time outlines the weaknesses that not only need to be addressed within the subregion, but also need to receive external support through such assistance as the UNDAF.

The plan for integrated work between government, the private sector, trade unions, civil society organizations and the OECS Secretariat in implementing the DS at the national level, coincides also with the intended plan of the process of the UNDAF to achieve cooperation and coordination within the UN system and between the UN system and the OECS Secretariat and other development partners.

The DS therefore serves as a guide for articulating the development challenges of the subregion, particularly with regard to poverty eradication, and provides an adequate launch pad for a framework of UN development assistance. Many of the UNDAF objectives are based on the objectives of the DS. Therefore, the DS will be used as a basis of cooperative action in alignment with the UNDAF, as the philosophical basis of the goals of the UNDAF and the OECS Development Strategy are highly congruent, and this complementarity lends itself to continued cooperation and a deepening of the partnership between the UN and the OECS Secretariat.

This alignment is expected to achieve ownership and buy-in by OECS governments into the UNDAF. It is hoped that together, the OECS Development Strategy and the UNDAF will significantly buttress the planning framework for development assistance in the subregion and contribute to the eventual realisation of the eradication of poverty.

Mechanisms to increase collaboration between the UN system and the OECS Secretariat

Mechanisms to increase collaboration between the UN system and the OECS Secretariat will include the following:

- Appointing of focal points within UN agencies, the OECS Secretariat and the individual governments for exchange of views and ideas and development of a partnership approach to development.
- Establishing programmes to supporting capacity development of the OECS Secretariat.
- Setting up a monitoring system between UN agencies, the OECS and governments at the thematic level and through the OECS statistical database.

- Conducting joint reviews, workshops, meetings and collaborative work on projects and programmes (including at the level of project formulation).
- Utilizing OECS consultants and facilitating participation of the OECS Secretariat in research.

How will the objectives of the UNDAF be achieved?

The UNST proposes to achieve the objectives of the UNDAF through the following means:

- 1) Continued advocacy for human rights issues and holding governments accountable to their commitment to ensure their moral and social responsibility to protect all social, cultural, political, economic and civil rights of the people of the subregion.
- 2) Continued utilization of the SCA and the UNDAF documents as advocacy tools by wide dissemination to all stakeholders and development partners including Governments, development institutions both regional and international, international financial institutions and civil society organizations.
- 3) The UNDAF will serve as a framework for policy dialogue across these groups and the results of this dialogue will advance the process of the UNDAF on a continued basis.
- 4) The UNST will build on existing programmes and projects that are in alignment with UNDAF goals.
- 5) Through the UNDAF, the UN system Programmes and Funds will seek to provide assistance to governments for capacity development and to continue to provide support for the establishment of mechanisms for the delivery of essential economic and social services.
- 6) The sensitivity of the UNDAF to cross-cutting issues such as gender, vulnerable groups, HIV/AIDS and environmental vulnerability will support continued efforts to target assistance to specific groups and address these concerns in the development process in the subregion.
- 7) The multi-dimensional nature of the UNDAF approach will ensure continued inter-agency programming and operational activities towards the development agenda.

Part 5. FOLLOW-UP AND REVIEW

Implementation and Review

The implementation and review of the UNDAF will be achieved through a comprehensive process involving:

- Follow-up by the UNDAF Task Force under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator and UNST.
- Reprioritization of UN system programming in the context of poverty eradication.
- Mobilization of resources from multiple sources including governments, development institutions, the UN system and IFIs in support of UNDAF priorities.
- Harmonization of the UNDAF poverty programme with OECS Development Strategy programmes and projects.
- Sustained cooperation between UNDAF programming and OECS programming as well as national programmes of governments of the Subregion.
- Focus by the theme groups and inter-agency collaboration between UN systems Programmes and Funds on the multiple dimensions of poverty.
- Sustained collaboration, periodic consultation and review with all stakeholders, development assistance partners and civil society organizations.
- Periodic updating and amendment of the UNDAF priorities in collaboration with development partners.

Monitoring and Evaluation

In order to effectively monitor and evaluate UNDAF implementation, further development of the social development policy and research capacity within the subregion and continued support for the development of the OECS social statistics database will be needed. Through this ongoing work on the social statistics database, benchmarks and indicators for programme areas may be established and reported. These are presently ongoing processes supported by the Poverty Working Group under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator.

Additionally, UNDAF implementation and results achieved will be assessed against the goals set by the UN Conventions and Declarations, noting especially the Millennium Declaration. "Lessons Learnt" will be an integral part of all assessments so that the UNDAF programming may be further strengthened.