

CHILDREN IN BARBADOS AND THE EASTERN CARIBBEAN

Child Rights - The Unfinished Agenda



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INTRODUCTION

This booklet presents information on the key socio-economic situation and main issues as it concerns girls' and boys' rights today in each of the 10 Small Island Developing States (SIDS) covered by the UNICEF Office for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean within its Multi-Country Programme.

The 10 SIDS are characterised by notable political stability with open and competitive democratic systems; medium to high per capita incomes and medium to high rankings on the Human Development Index. Despite the major progress made, the states are in a region which is classified as one of the most unequal in the world as they grapple with high public debts, import dependency and rising violence and crime. They are also being impacted by the global economic recession and increasing food and energy prices which are pushing vulnerable, poor and at-risk (up to 50% of the population in some countries) into poverty.

The profiles presented here are primarily intended to provide a quick overview per island state and territory as it relates to the key issues concerning girls' and boys' rights in the sub-region such as violence, social policy, early childhood development, HIV and AIDS, teenage pregnancy, adolescent empowerment and natural disasters.

The information is gathered from a number of official sources which are listed in the annex of this publication.

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The 10 SIDS in the multi-country programme are: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, British Virgin Islands, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and the Turks and Caicos Islands.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
BSS	Behavioural Surveillance Survey
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CEDAW	Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
BOT	British Overseas Territory
BVI	British Virgin Islands
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECE	Early Childhood Education
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNI	Gross National Income
HDI	Human Development Index
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IMR	Infant Mortality Rate
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
TCI	Turks and Caicos Islands
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nation's Children's Fund
UK	United Kingdom



ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

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Key Indicators

- General Population (2008 est.): 84,522
- Population under 15 (2008): 27.2 per cent
- Median Age (2008): 29.5
- GNI per capita (2006): 10,920
- HDI Ranking – High Human Development – #47 in 2009
- Net Migration Rate (2008 est.): 2.41 migrant(s) per 1,000
- Unemployment Rate (2001): 11 per cent
- Youth Unemployment Rate (15-24 in 2005): 13 per cent
- Percentage of child poverty (0-24 old as per cent of total poor): 55.1 per cent
- Proportion of women-headed households (2007): 44 per cent
- Poverty Rate: 18.3 (2007)
- Net Primary Enrolment Rate (2007): 74
- Net Secondary Enrolment Rate (2007): N/A
- Literacy rate (2003): 85.8 per cent
- IMR (2008): 17.5
- Annual homicide rate (2007): 15 per 100,000
- Annual crime rate (2007): 11.4 per cent

The Status on International Conventions and Protocols relating to the Rights of Children:

- CRC Committee invited the presentation of a consolidated 2nd, 3rd, and 4th report by 3 May 2009
- The country has not signed or ratified the CRC Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict
- The country has signed and ratified the CRC Optional Protocol on Sale of Children, Prostitution and Pornography in 2002
- The country submitted its last CEDAW State Report to the UN CEDAW Committee in 1995
- The country signed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability on 30 March

Social Policy for Children

The Commonwealth Composite Vulnerability Index lists Antigua and Barbuda as the second most vulnerable country in the world based on its social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities. The 2006 Country Poverty Assessment indicated that youth and children were more likely to be represented among the poor and in the poorest quintile: there were at least three times as many persons in the age groups 5-9, 10-14, and 15-19 in the poorest quintile than in the richest quintile.

Antigua and Barbuda has a positive migration rate and increasing numbers of immigrant children are entering the country from the non-English speaking islands, affecting the educational progress of girls and boys as most of the teachers are not bi-lingual. Only 51 per cent of the population is covered by health insurance and social assistance programmes are challenged to reach the poor and most vulnerable. With the economic recession and a recent banking scandal, people working in the tourism and the investment industry, which cover 60 per cent and 40 per cent of the GDP respectively, will be hard hit and will need to seek alternative means to cope. Despite numerous laudable initiatives, the country is still experiencing some challenges in meeting its commitments to the Convention of the Rights of the Child and other ratified human rights instruments and legislation still needs reform to ensure children's rights.

Violence Against Children

Violence by and against children is of mounting concern. In 2008, 39 different names of gangs, crews and posses were found, fuelling police unease about the rising gang phenomenon and its appeal to youth, within and outside schools. Consequently, students involved in serious violent incidences are often immediately expelled from school. The practice, combined with the lack of public safety nets (in the form of a juvenile justice system offering combined rehabilitation or vocational education options), is exacerbating the problem by triggering greater anger and delinquency among affected youth.

The legal use of corporal punishment in homes and schools does not help. A 2006 study found that 21 per cent of adolescents aged 11-14 years had carried a weapon to school; 61 per cent had been involved in a recent physical fight; and 31 per cent had felt angry at the world. Significant attitudinal change is required for both adults and children in resolving conflict.

Children are also victims of other forms of abuse. Authorities are concerned about trends in child neglect. Likewise, the 2006 study reported that 26 per cent of children ages 11-16 years had forced sex in the home, but also in school and community settings. A lingering culture of silence on the issue is unwittingly supported by inadequate systems of reporting and management.

Early Childhood development and Young Children

Results from a survey of the early childhood programming sector in Antigua and Barbuda (2007) revealed that only 46 per cent of children of eligible age participate in the formal ECD programmes that are available - 28 per cent of the children 2 years old and under and 73 per cent of the children between ages 3-5. 72 per cent of these programmes are owned by private operators, 15 per cent by the church and 10 per cent by the government. In 2009 government opened its first model preschool.

A survey of the quality of care found that there were significant weaknesses in the quality of the programming, including provisions for health and safety practices, meals and snacks, use of books and pictures, use of language to develop reasoning skills, informal use of language, encouraging children to communicate, availability of indoor space and play equipment and provisions for the professional needs of staff.

The government has taken very focused action aimed at addressing these problems through the strengthening of the enabling environments, including the development and implementation of National Policy and Regulatory Frameworks and National Service Standards, education and professional development of ECD practitioners, implementation of appropriate curricula and improvements in the learning environments to provide stimulating experiences for children. To assist the government in sustaining these initiatives and increasing the enrolment rate, there is still a need for technical and financial support.

HIV, AIDS, Teenage Pregnancy and Empowerment of Adolescent Girls and Boys

While only an estimated 0.67 per cent of the population is living with HIV in Antigua and Barbuda, HIV and AIDS is still a concern in the twin-island state. HIV is primarily spread through heterosexual transmission with the highest infection rates in the 15-49 age group. AIDS is the leading cause of death among people 20-59 years. Young people continue to engage in behaviours that put them at risk for contracting HIV as a 2006 study found that 40 per cent of youth in the 15-24 age group did not use a condom the last time they had sex, whilst a 2005 study found that only 35 per cent of sexually active adolescents had knowledge on correct condom use.

The same study indicated that 39 per cent of adolescents between 10-14 years old were engaged in sexual relationships. The level of teen pregnancy underscores the risky sexual behaviour of adolescent girls.

There are few formal mechanisms in schools and wider communities for adolescents to participate in governance activities and assume leadership positions. Despite the fact that all schools have clubs and organizations, in 2008 only 32 per cent

of the students were involved in any of the activities that their school had to offer. Presently none of the schools in Antigua has Students Councils and there is no central mandate for these in schools.

Environment, climate change, disaster management and children

Due to the climate change, children and their families in Antigua and Barbuda live under increased threat of natural and man-made hazards. Hurricanes, storms and earthquakes are the natural hazards that are considered to be the greatest threat. When hurricanes hit, they leave devastating results. For example, Hurricane Luis in 1995 saw losses of 4,000 to 7,000 jobs, an estimated 15-25 per cent of the workforce. Undoubtedly such disasters impact on children economically as their parents' livelihoods are gone, but they also they disrupt children's education and other social systems that provide stability and a sense of normalcy.



UNICEF/BECO/2007/Asael



BARBADOS

Child Rights - The Unfinished Agenda

Key Indicators

- General Population (July 2008): 281,968
- Population under 15 (2008): 19.3 per cent
- Median Age: 35.4
- GNI per capita (2006): 9,270
- HDI Ranking – High Human Development (2009): #37
- Net Migration Rate (2008): -0.31 migrant per 1,000
- Unemployment Rate (2003): 10.7 per cent
- Youth Unemployment Rate (15-24 in 2005): 21.8 per cent
- Proportion of women-headed households: 45 per cent
- Poverty rate: 13.9 (1997)
- Net Primary Enrolment Rate (2007): 97 per cent
- Net Secondary Enrolment Rate (2007): 90 per cent
- GDP Expenditure on Education (2006): 6.9 per cent
- IMR (2008): 11.8
- Annual Homicide Rate (2006): 11 per 100,000
- Annual Crime Rate (2007): 15

The Status on International Conventions and Protocols relating to the Rights of Children:

- The initial CRC Report presented in 1998 and the second and third Report were due in 2008
- The country has not ratified the CRC Optional protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict (situation April 2009)
- The country has not ratified the CRC Optional protocol on sale of children, prostitution and pornography (situation April 2009)
- The country has not yet submitted its initial CEDAW State Report to the UN CEDAW Committee
- The country signed the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability on the 19th of July 2007 but has not yet ratified it.

Social Policy and Children

Though Barbados is considered a high development country, it is confronted with high levels of vulnerability linked to its position as a micro-state in a small islands context. Barbados is ranked No 38 on the Commonwealth Composite Vulnerability Index and has many challenges in terms of inequality in its society. Despite its high levels of investment in the social sector, education (6.9 per cent of GDP - 2006) and public health (4.3 per cent of GDP - 2004), the outcomes of these investments remain relatively low in terms of quality of services. Also children's rights are being challenged by the phenomenon of inbound illegal migration. Despite laudable initiatives, the country has not been able to meet its commitments to the CRC and CEDAW. Much of this is linked to limits in terms of institutional capacity as well as behavioral and cultural norms.

Violence and Children

With increasing use and availability of light weapons and small arms, 6.7 per cent of secondary school students have seen guns at school, although scissors (75 per cent), knives (65.5 per cent), ice picks (27.1 per cent) and cutlasses (15 per cent) are more commonly seen in the context of violence in the schools a UNICEF study indicates. At least 47 per cent of students have thought about hurting another student; 42 per cent have been involved in fights at school and 9.6 per cent have been threatened by a teacher. The issue of violence is also fuelled by psychological dimensions of "dissing" or public humiliation often witnessed by peers. These have become predominant triggers of retaliatory and premeditated youth-on-youth violence. The Police's Juvenile Liaison Scheme is a positive practice but the larger system requires significant reform.

Demand outstrips current state responses to the management of challenging behaviour by students. Corporal punishment is still a legally sanctioned punishment for children some of whom complain about humiliating treatment meted out by some teachers.

In 2005-2006, 1,076 new allegations of child abuse were received by the Child Care Board. Analysis of physical abuse shows that significant education and support is required with young, single mothers. Persistently high levels of reported sexual abuse affect the 12-16 year old cohort most. Peaks in sexual activity among primary aged school children also point to exposure to adult sexual activity, including via the electronic media. Homosexual activity perpetuated against boys is also on the increase. Political and administrative will is required to strengthen prevention, reporting and management of child abuse.

Early Childhood Development and Young Children

The attainment of universal access to Early Childhood Development services is one of the key planks in the National Strategic Plan of Barbados 2005-2025. Early Childhood Development services are provided by both the government and the private sector.

Government operates 15 day care centres catering to the birth -3 age group and at least 7 nursery schools and approximately 60 nursery units catering to the 3-5 age groups. The Barbados Child Care Board is responsible for 64 day care centres catering for the birth to 3 year old age group and there are approximately 168 privately registered preschools catering for the 3-5 age groups. These centres are all in great demand and some even have waiting lists.

Significant gains have been made in the ECD Sector, provisions of nursery aides, improvements in the physical environments and access to ECD courses at tertiary institutions. Some challenges remain in the sector, especially in relation to the maintenance of centres, adequate teacher/child ratio while broadening access, maintaining the quality in the sector through provisions such as child appropriate furnishings, increasing educational resources and the use of appropriate early years curricula. To assist government in sustaining initiatives in the sector there is still a need for technical and financial support.

HIV, AIDS, Teen Pregnancies and Empowerment of Adolescent Girls and Boys

Although the number of people dying from and living with AIDS declined significantly in recent years, the HIV prevalence rate remains at around 1.5 per cent. In 2006 over 75 per cent of reported HIV infections occurred within the 15-49 age group and the male to female ratio of HIV cases was 1:1. A continual challenge is the disconnect between knowledge and sexual behaviour. The level of knowledge on HIV among young people is quite high, however, this is not translated into appropriate sexual behaviour. Research underscores that many young people do not see themselves as being at risk for HIV despite reporting early sexual initiation, multiple partners and inconsistent condom use. Transactional and unprotected sex between young girls and older men is common and increases the vulnerability of girls to contracting HIV and other STIs. The continuing challenge with teen pregnancy also underscores the need for greater attention to this.

There are few formal mechanisms in schools and wider communities for adolescents to participate in governance activities and assume leadership positions. Despite the fact that most secondary schools have established Students Councils, many schools are perennially challenged to have these function in an optimal manner, primarily due to a lack of enthusiasm

from students. Participation in student organizations is low with only 47 per cent of girls and 27 per cent of boys resporting involvement in one or more organizations at their school.

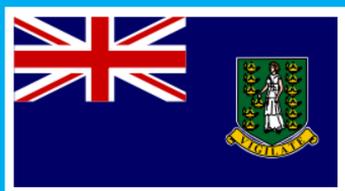
Environment, climate change, disaster management and children

Like most countries in the eastern Caribbean, children and adolescents in Barbados live under the threat of man-made and natural hazards. These hazards such as hurricanes and floods have the potential to increase in intensity due to climate change. When they impact the country, they can leave devastating results.

As in other countries, when such disasters occur, they can impact on children's education and their parents' livelihoods if income generating crops or sectors is affected. They also affect other social systems that provide a sense of stability, normalcy and protection for children.



UNICEF/BECO/2003/Baldeo



BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS

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Key Indicators

- General Population (2008 est.): 24,041
- Population under 15 year old (2008): 20 per cent
- Medium age (2008): 32
- GNI per capita (2006): US\$ 38,500
- Net Migration Rate (2008): 8.44 migrant per 1,000
- Youth Unemployment Rate (15-24 in 2005): 9.9 per cent
- Proportion of women-headed households (2007): 29 per cent
- Percentage of population below the national poverty line (2005): 22 per cent
- Child Poverty (0-24 old as per cent of total poor in 2002): 52 per cent
- Net primary school enrolment rate (2004): 96 per cent
- Net secondary school enrolment rate (2004): 80 per cent
- GDP Expenditure on Education (2006): 3.7 per cent
- IMR (2008): 15.2
- Annual Homicide Rate (2006): 38.7 per 100,000
- Annual Crime Rate: N/A

The Status on International Conventions and Protocols relating to the Rights of Children:

- The UK CRC Report for the British Overseas Territories was considered by the UN CRC Committee in 2008
- The UK has signed and ratified the CRC Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict in 2003
- The UK has signed and ratified the CRC Optional Protocol on Sale of Children, Prostitution and Pornography in February, 2009
- The 6th UK and BOT's CEDAW State Report to the UN CEDAW Committee was considered in 2008
- UK has signed but not ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability on March 30 2007

Social Policy for Children

Although relatively small in size, the population of BVI has grown by 43.7 per cent between 1991 and 2001. Migration and its different consequences impact heavily on children's rights in the context of an estimated 60 per cent non-native population. The country has a sub region record low of only 1.8 per cent of GDP being invested in public health expenditures, leaving the population with a high of 7.4 per cent of GDP privately compensating these costs. Investment in education is at 3.7 per cent of GDP. The government has undertaken some laudable initiatives, but is yet to reach the stage where the commitments to the Convention of the Rights of the Child and other ratified human rights instruments are being fully met.

Violence and Children

Though low by international standards, the crime rate is growing. Both government and opposition forces united in 2008 to mount an anti-crime rally which focused primarily on youth and substance abuse. There have been increasing reports of hooliganism and violence in schools linked to peer pressure, drugs, small arms and alcohol. The Youth Court was established to hear cases involving young people under the age of 18 who come into conflict with the law and to use new community-based sentencing options for rehabilitation. This process needs support as well as a preventive programming outreach.

Corporal punishment is still among the legal remedies that can be used in schools, although its use has been outlawed in juvenile detention institutions. Teachers and schools therefore need to be supported with education on alternative forms of discipline. The BVI was among a nine country study which found that 48 per cent of adolescent girls and 32 per cent of boys' sexual initiation was "forced". Work on a child abuse prevention and reporting protocol needs to be finalised and stakeholders trained to combat the pervasive silence that perpetuates such abuses.

Early Childhood Development (ECD)

Legislation for Early Childhood Development is a component of Virgin Islands Education Act 2004. Draft regulations for children aged 3 months to 3 years and for 3 to 4 ½ year age groups are available. Approximately 37.3 per cent of the 0-3 age cohorts, 84.3 per cent of the 3 year old children and 80.1 per cent of the 4 year old children are accessing Early Childhood Development Services.

The centres are regulated under the "Procedures for Registering and Licensing ECE Facilities" which were established in 1996 and revised thereafter. These procedures were intended to ensure that all licensed centres were operating at the minimum standards as described in the proposal. Whilst all centres should have been upgraded by July 2003, there is a need for further technical and financial for maintenance.

HIV, AIDS, Teen Pregnancy and Empowerment of Adolescent Girls and Boys

BVI has been strengthening its programmes to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV and continues to work assiduously to overcome challenges with availability of skilled human resources, drug shortages, inadequate partner coordination and a weak Monitoring and Evaluation System.

A major challenge in HIV and AIDS programming is the unavailability of data on the sexual knowledge, attitudes and practices of adolescents in the BVI. This is an important gap especially in light of the increasing incidence of HIV and AIDS among youth. The country also needs to strengthen its education of children and adolescents through the development of a systematic school-based prevention programme to deliver information and lifeskills.

Teen pregnancy is of concern as 8.1 percent (2006) of all births is to teenage mothers, causing one to infer that young people are engaging in unprotected sex and hence increasing chances of contracting HIV.

There are few formal mechanisms in schools and wider communities for adolescents to participate in governance activities and assume leadership positions. Presently secondary schools in BVI have provision for Students Councils, however, as with other Caribbean countries there is room for more dynamism and greater involvement of a wider cross-section of students.

Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Children

Due to the climate change children and their families live under increased threat of natural and man-made hazard in BVI. Hurricanes and earthquakes are the natural hazards that are considered to be the greatest threat. The effects of hurricanes and tropical storms such as wind damage, inland flooding and coastal surge are of significant concern. Hurricane Hugo severely affected the BVI in September 1989. Losses were estimated to be US\$ 40 million and 30 per cent of the country's housing stock was destroyed. The islands are also prone to manmade hazards. Oil spills are considered to be the greatest manmade threat to BVI, however children are also at risk of hazardous chemicals, explosions and transportation accidents. As was seen in the past when such disasters occurred, they disrupt children's education, their parents' livelihoods and other social systems that provide stability and a sense of normalcy.



COMMONWEALTH OF DOMINICA

Child Rights - The Unfinished Agenda

Key Indicators

- General Population (2008.): 72,514
- Population under 15 (2008): 24.7 per cent
- Median Age (2008): 29.4
- GNI per capita (2006): US\$ 3,960
- HDI Ranking (2009)– Medium Human Development -#73
- Net Migration Rate (2008): -5.46 migrant per 1,000
- Youth unemployment rate (15-24) (2002): 56 per cent
- Proportion of women-headed households (2002): 34 per cent
- Poverty Rate (2003): 39 per cent
- Percentage of child poverty (0-24 old as per cent of total poor in 2002): 55 per cent
- Net primary school enrolment rate (2004): 90 per cent
- Net secondary school enrolment rate (2004): 88 per cent
- GDP Expenditure on Education (1999): 5 per cent
- IMR (2008): 14.12
- Annual Homicide Rate (2007): 7.1 per 100,000
- Annual Crime rate (2007): 15 per cent

The Status on International Conventions and Protocols relating to the Rights of Children:

- The CRC Committee in Geneva invited the presentation of a consolidated 2nd and 3rd Report by 1 September 2006. The Report has not been submitted.
- The country signed and ratified the CRC Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict in 2002
- The country signed and ratified the CRC Optional Protocol on Sale of Children, Prostitution and Pornography in 2002
- Dominica submitted its CEDAW State Report to the UN CEDAW Committee in 2008
- Dominica signed but not ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability on 30 March 2007

Social Policy and Children

Dominica is one of the poorest Eastern Caribbean countries and is exposed to high levels of environmental, social and economical vulnerabilities, as illustrated by its 12th place on the world ranking for the Commonwealth Composite Vulnerability Index. Dominica has the largest population of indigenous people in the Eastern Caribbean; approximately 4 per cent of the population is descendants of the Kalinago (Caribs). The 2003 Country Poverty Assessment Report concluded that more than 55 per cent of the poor are under 24 years old. Approximately half of the children in Dominica live in poor households; 22 per cent in indigent. Seventy per cent of poor households included children, compared with 44 per cent of non-poor households. The incidence of child-headed households reflects one of the consequences of outward migration on family patterns. The country scores worst in the Eastern Caribbean with relation to youth (56 per cent) and women (32 per cent) unemployment. The current level of public assistance is below the indigence line. Many more resources are needed to reach the poor, but the public budget is limited with a 83.3 per cent public debt as percentage of GDP. Despite numerous laudable initiatives, the country has been unable to meet its commitments to the Convention of the Rights of the Child and other ratified human rights instruments.

Violence and Children

The absence of parents due to outward migration and the lack of adequate parental supervision, particularly within female-headed households and schools due to teacher absenteeism, contribute to youth offending. Between 2000 and 2005, juvenile offenders rose from 47 to 65, with assaults to robbery followed by possession of drugs, being the most widely committed offences. Studies have highlighted structural weaknesses in the social and economic systems that impede more appropriate responses. Expansion of diversion services for at-risk youth by non-governmental organizations, such as the Social Centre, requires more long-term support to ensure their sustainability.

The education system requires significant reform to prevent drop-out by students whose cognitive skills are below par. These students contribute disproportionately to ill-discipline and violence in schools and the legal use of corporal punishment is unhelpful. Surveys show 67-79 per cent of boys and 45-63 per cent of girls had been hit by another child and 88-94 per cent had experienced corporal punishment at home and school. Similarly, 22-55 per cent reported being burned, or witnessed someone being burned at home, as punishment. Teachers, parents and children all need support in resolving conflicts positively.

Child sexual abuse remains the major form of reported abuse, constituting 87 per cent of police cases for child abuse. While the Sexual Offences Act has helped improve reporting, a concerted

approach for further law reform, screening, public education and intervention is required.

Early Childhood Development and Young Children

Results from a survey of the early childhood programming in Dominica (2007) revealed that only 33 per cent of the birth to five cohorts participate in institutionalized early childhood programming – 10 per cent of the birth to 2 age grouping and 55 per cent of the 3 -5 year old grouping. This low level of participation is believed to be influenced in part by the high levels of poverty in Dominica.

A survey of the quality of care being provided found significant weaknesses in the quality of the ECD programming, including provisions for health and safety practices, meals and snacks, use of books and pictures, use of language to develop reasoning skills, informal use of language, encouraging children to communicate, availability of indoor space and play equipment and provisions for the professional needs of staff.

Government has taken some initiatives aimed at addressing these problems through the strengthening of the enabling environments, including the development of national policy frameworks and national service standards, education and professional development of ECD practitioners, the implementation of appropriate curricula and improvements in the learning environments to provide stimulating experiences for children. To assist governments in reducing some of the challenges, the ECD sector needs significant technical and financial support.

HIV, AIDS, Teen Pregnancies and Empowerment of Adolescent Girls and Boys

Dominica has an HIV prevalence rate of 0.75 per cent (2007) with males representing 72 per cent of all diagnosed cases. Although the absolute number of HIV infections is low, there is the potential for escalation of the disease, with severe consequences in this small island state.

It is estimated that 16 per cent of all births in Dominica are by teenage mothers. Sexually active girls are especially at risk of HIV as studies have shown that many of them lack the skills to negotiate condom use with their partner. The challenge is to put programmes in place to prevent the escalation of the disease in the face of social and behavioural norms that fuel the epidemic.

There are few structured mechanisms for adolescents to participate in a positive manner on issues affecting their lives. Even when opportunities exist, adolescents are often ill prepared to assume leadership positions. There is a need for greater attention to providing leadership training as well as institutionalised avenues for teacher/parent/student partnerships to better develop capacities in this regard.

Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Children

Tropical storms, hurricanes, landslides, volcanic eruption, earthquake and climate change are the key hazards to children and their families in Dominica. Hurricanes and landslides are the most recurrent as has been seen throughout the last 10 years. In recent times Tropical Storm Debbie and Hurricane Dean left devastating effects on the infrastructure and livelihoods in agriculture, livestock, fisheries, manufacturing, tourism, construction and international financial services. In emergencies it is often children who are most affected. They may lack food, shelter and health care. They are more likely to be affected by disease or injury. Their physical and emotional development may be halted. They may not receive basic literacy and essential life skills, and their education could be interrupted. Also during emergencies, children can be abandoned or orphaned, or become separated from their families.



UNICEF/BECO/2007/Asael



UNICEF/BECO/2003/Baldeo



GRENADA

Child Rights - The Unfinished Agenda

Key Indicators

- General Population (2008 est.): 90,343
- Population under 15 (2008): 32.4 per cent
- Median Age (2008): 22.4
- GNI per capita (2006): 4,420
- HDI Ranking (2009)– #74
- Net Migration rate (2008 est.): -11.23 migrant(s) per 1,000
- Child Poverty Rate (0-24 old as per cent of total poor in 1999): 56.8
- Unemployment Rate (2004): 13 per cent
- Youth Unemployment Rate (15-24 in 2006): 32 per cent
- Proportion of women-headed households (2004): 48 per cent
- Poverty Rate (1999): 32.1 per cent
- Net Primary Enrolment Rate (2004): 84 per cent
- Net Secondary Enrolment Rate: 78 per cent
- GDP Expenditure on Education (2003): 5.2 per cent
- IMR (2007): 15
- Annual Homicide Rate (2007): 11.5 per 100,00
- Annual Crime Rate (2007): 6.3

The Status on International Conventions and Protocols relating to the Rights of Children:

- Grenada submitted their second CRC Report in 2008
- The country has not signed or ratified the CRC Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict
- The country has not signed or ratified the CRC Optional Protocol on Sale of Children, Prostitution and Pornography
- The country has not submit its initial CEDAW State Report to the UN CEDAW Committee
- The country has not signed or ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Social Policy for Children

In 1999 Grenada ranked number 15 worldwide in the Commonwealth Composite Vulnerability Index and has ever since been grappling with various challenges linked to social, economic and environmental (eg. Hurricane Ivan in 2004) hazards. The 1998 Country Poverty Assessment (1998) found a high gini coefficient of 0.45 and an OECS record high poverty gap ratio of 15.3 per cent and 12.9 per cent of the population as indigent poor. 56.8 per cent of the poor are under 24 years old, which is reflected in the high youth unemployment rate of 32 per cent and teenage pregnancy. A total of 48 per cent of the households are headed by women, of which more than half of the women (58.4 per cent) have never married. In a 2005 survey 44 per cent of female heads appeared in the bottom three quintiles, while only 18.6 per cent of male headed households were found in the lowest quintile. An estimated 60 per cent of all Grenadians have no access to formal social protection coverage (2004). Additionally, the Grenadian Government has the highest level of public debt in the Eastern Caribbean reaching 99 per cent of its GDP especially after the hurricane in 2005.

Violence and Children

Gangs, although loosely organized, are becoming a major attraction for youth. The system to deal with youth offenders is inadequate in terms of diversion, prosecuting, sentencing, rehabilitating and monitoring, leading to an over-reliance on the punishment approach to crime reduction. Significant numbers of male youth in a survey reported earning money through informal activities that range from selling pirated CDs, prostitution, and drug peddling employment in the private sector to support girlfriends and families and seasonal. Drugs have been identified by the Police as the major issue for juvenile delinquents whose main crimes are breaking and entering.

Grenadians remain adamant on the retention of corporal punishment in their education system, although its use is not countering behavioral challenges among children. In a 2006 survey, 6 per cent of adolescents 11-14 years reported carrying a weapon to school; 37 per cent reported having been in a physical fight; and 25 per cent felt angry at the world. Other forms of abuse are also prevalent. While a child abuse reporting protocol has been in place for some time, it is yet to be backed by law, so compliance remains inconsistent.

Early Childhood Development and Young Children

Grenada has established Government programmes for each of the three phases in early childhood. In 2002, the Grenada Government approved a policy on Early Childhood Development to guide the development of the sector. Results from a survey of the ECD programming revealed that participation in ECD

programming varied between the different age cohorts, so that 42 per cent of the 0-5 age cohorts is enrolled in a formal ECD programmes, representing only 9 per cent of the 0 to 3 age groups compared with 95 per cent of the 3-5 age cohorts. The high preschool enrolment rate is a reflection of the fact that access to the government owned preschools is free.

Since 2002, a number of developments have directly impacted on the ECD sector. Foremost among these has been the impact of hurricanes Ivan and Emily, which significantly damaged the facilities in the sector and affected the sector's ability to offer the level of services that were being targeted by the policy. A survey of the quality of care being provided found that there were significant weaknesses in the quality of the programming, including provisions for health and safety practices, nutrition, appropriate use of educational materials, communication skills, availability of space and equipment for play and provisions for the professional needs of staff. There is therefore a need for government to benefit from technical and financial support to in order for some of these challenges to be tackled.

HIV, AIDS, Teen Pregnancy and Empowerment of Adolescent Girls and Boys

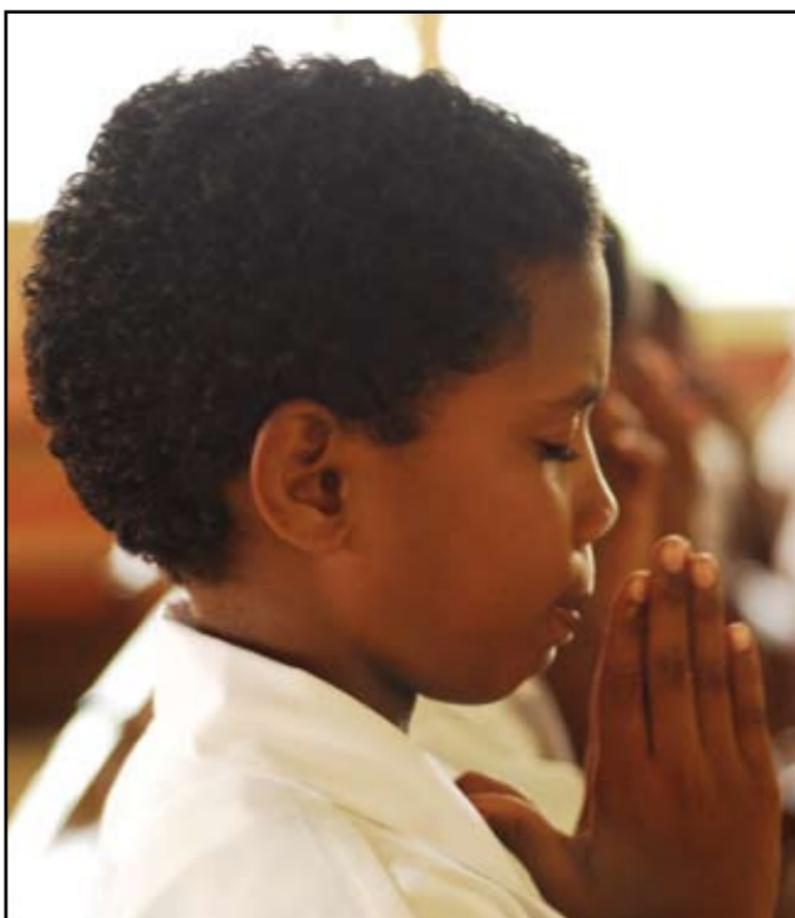
In Grenada, HIV and teenage pregnancies continue to be of concern. During a 2006 survey, 6 per cent of girls and 38 per cent of boys between 10 and 11 years old reported having sex and 2/3 of these children had not used a condom.

Studies indicate that whilst many young people are knowledgeable about HIV and AIDS, this has not translated into the adoption of the requisite protective behaviours. Almost of 20 per cent of first time mothers are teenage girls. For many young mothers, pregnancy means the end of their schooling and the beginning of their attempt to provide food, clothing and housing for themselves and their children. Research has shown that young mothers on average have four children with intermittent partners and support.

Social norms do not place priority on the participation of children and adolescents. Consequently there are few formal mechanisms for adolescents to participate in governance activities and assume leadership positions. Despite the fact that 15 of the 16 secondary schools in Grenada have Student's Councils (2007) there is concern on the level of functioning of these councils. Student participation in school clubs ranged from 65 per cent among females to 36 per cent of males.

Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Children

Based on Grenada's geographic location, children and adolescents living there are under the threat of man-made and natural hazards. These hazards such as hurricanes and floods have the potential to increase in frequency and intensity due to climate change. These events often leave devastating results. For example 20,000 children were affected by Hurricane Ivan in 2004. It caused the schools to be closed for a significant period of time as many of them were severely damaged. Children's parents' livelihoods were impacted as many income generating agriculture crops such as nutmeg were destroyed and the tourism sector was affected. Overall there was in excess of \$900 million in damage—200 per cent of Grenada's gross domestic product (GDP).



UNICEF/BECO/2007/Asael



MONTSERRAT

Child Rights - The Unfinished Agenda

Key Indicators

- General Population (2008): 5,079
- Population under 15 (2008): 27.8 per cent
- Median Age (2008): 28.1
- GNI per capita (2006): US \$8,780
- Net Migration Rate(1991): - 6
- Unemployment Rate (1997): 8 per cent
- Youth unemployment Rate (15-24): N/A
- Proportion of women-headed households (2000): 33 per cent
- Percentage of child poverty (0-24 old as per cent of total poor in 2001): 53.7 per cent
- Net primary enrolment rate (2004): 94 per cent
- Net secondary enrolment rate (2004): 100 per cent
- GDP Expenditure on Education (2004): 3.2 per cent
- IMR (2008): 16.5

The Status on International Conventions and Protocols relating to the Rights of Children:

- The UK CRC Report for the British Overseas Territories was considered by the UN CRC Committee in 2008
- The UK has signed and ratified the CRC Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict in 2003
- The UK has signed and ratified the CRC Optional Protocol on Sale of Children, Prostitution and Pornography in February, 2009
- The 6th UK and BOT's CEDAW State Report to the UN CEDAW Committee was considered in 2008
- UK has signed but not ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability on March 30 2007

Social Policy and Children

Montserrat is one of the smallest dependent territories of the UK. The territory underwent a drastic change when the Soufrière Hills Volcano erupted in July 1995 and created a massive evacuation of the population overseas and to a small safe zone on the other side of the island. As a small micro-state, Montserrat is confronted with many challenges linked to its limited institutional capacity, its dependency to environment disasters (volcano and hurricane) and is currently also affected by inequality linked to in and outbound migration. Some 3.2 per cent and 6.1 per cent of GDP are invested towards public education and health outputs respectively (2004). Social services delivery is challenged by access and availability of qualified human resources. Despite numerous laudable initiatives, the territory is still being challenged in meeting its commitments to the Convention of the Rights of the Child and other ratified human rights instruments.

Violence and Children

The stealing of cell phones, burglaries and personal assaults comprise the majority of juvenile crimes and while the numbers remain relatively low, police sources indicate the need for a youth crime prevention strategy to ensure that emerging signs do not escalate.

Corporal punishment is still on the statute books but the Ministry has persistently cautioned against its use, in anticipation of the banning of the practice under a forthcoming revision of the Education Act. Teachers therefore require skills to manage this change in classroom management.

Child sexual abuse comprises the majority of cases reported to the Police and more frequently occurs between teens and older men. Police sources also believe that physical abuse may be more prevalent than reports suggest. Continual monitoring and public education are therefore required to stimulate action against tolerance of child abuse.

Early Childhood Development and Young Children

The volcanic crisis in Montserrat caused a disruption in the provision of Early Childhood Education between 1996-97 when volcanic activity forced many persons to relocate overseas and reduced the number of buildings available for holding school. Prior to the volcanic crisis there were 3 day care centres and 10 nursery schools, catering to a total of approximately 440 children. At present the government operates 2 day care centres which cater for approximately 46 children in the 1-3 age cohorts and 3 nursery schools which cater to approximately 127 children in the 3-5 age cohorts.

A survey of the quality of the ECD environments highlighted some challenges for the Ministry of Education. These challenges surround inadequate physical space which results in overcrowding;

deficiencies in safety and supervision practices; deficiencies in the quality of the developmental experiences; inappropriate furniture and a lack of sufficient educational equipment; inadequate space for indoor and outdoor play. To assist governments in reducing some of these challenges, the ECD sector needs technical and financial support.

HIV, AIDS, Teen Pregnancies and Empowerment of Adolescent Girls and Boys

Confirmed cases of AIDS deaths have been reported but in general, the prevalence of HIV, AIDS and teen pregnancies are low. In 2006, there were no young people (aged 15-24 years) diagnosed with HIV but it is critical that programmes are put in place to mitigate against any escalation of HIV.

Given the size of the country, there are few structured recreational spaces for adolescents or formal mechanisms for adolescents to participate in a positive manner on issues affecting their lives. The lone secondary school has made significant efforts to involve their students in school life and provide opportunities for them to contribute through formal and informal mechanisms in sport, school governance, theatre and other extra-curricular activities.

Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Children

Children and adolescents living in Montserrat continue to live under the threat of natural and man made hazards. Each year, the island like others of the eastern Caribbean, face the threat of hurricanes, which has been increasing due to climate changes worldwide. In addition, they live under the threat of a potentially dangerous volcano which in 1997 destroyed the southern part of the island (including its capital Plymouth) leaving it uninhabitable. These disasters disrupt children's education, their parents' livelihoods and other social systems that provide stability and a sense of normalcy.



ST.VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

Child Rights - The Unfinished Agenda

Key Indicators

- General Population (2008): 118,432
- Population under 15 (2008): 25.1 per cent
- Median Age (2008): 28
- GNI per capita (2006): US\$ 3,930
- HDI Ranking (2008)– - #91
- Net Migration rate (2008): - 7.56 migrant per 1,000
- Unemployment rate (2001): 15 per cent
- Youth Unemployment rate (15-24 in 2006): 39 per cent
- Proportion of women-headed households (2007): 40 per cent
- Percentage of population below the national poverty line (1996): 37.5 per cent
- Net Primary Enrolment Rate: (2004) 94 per cent
- Net Secondary Enrolment Rate: (2004) 62 per cent
- GDP Expenditure on Education (2005): 8.1 per cent
- IMR (2007): 17
- Annual homicide rate (2007): 12.9 per 100,000
- Annual crime rate (2007): 26.5

The Status on International Conventions and Protocols relating to the Rights of Children

- The CRC Committee invited St.Vincent and the Grenadines to submit their 2nd and 3rd CRC Report by 24 November, 2005. The report is pending submission.
- The country has not signed or ratified the CRC Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict.
- The country has signed and ratified the CRC Optional Protocol on Sale of Children, Prostitution and Pornography in 2005
- The country submitted its latest CEDAW State Report to the UN CEDAW Committee in 1991
- The country has not signed nor ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability

Social Policy and Children

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines is one of the poorest countries in the Eastern Caribbean with 3590 USD per capita as GNI. It also ranks lowest in terms of human development (HDI of 93) and has the highest level of indigent poor (25.7 per cent). Despite its high investment in education (20.3 per cent of total Government expenditure), it is confronted with a high level of public debt (63.6 per cent of GDP) and low investment in the health sector (3.9 per cent of GDP). Preliminary data from the 2008 Poverty Assessment shows a 5 per cent decline in poverty since 1991, dropping from 38 per cent to 33 per cent. However, the assessment also estimates that 51 per cent of the population is vulnerable to any external shocks. A UNICEF 2006 study found that over half of the children in St. Vincent and the Grenadines are at risk of food insecurity followed by chronic illness of a parent. A 2008 Survey found the existence of street children in St. Vincent. Despite numerous laudable initiatives, the country is still experiencing some challenges in meeting its commitments to the Convention of the Rights of the Child and other ratified human rights instruments.

Violence against Children

The crime rate, and its youth factor, is cited as the single most serious national challenge. The majority of at-risk youth are male, 15-19 years, come from families and communities dealing with unprecedented challenges; have little or no formal secondary education and ascribe to cultures marked by substance abuse and criminal activity. The system which deals with such offences is woefully inadequate. The Family Court attempts to deal with these cases in a child-friendly manner, but lacks sufficient support services for prevention, rehabilitation and monitoring.

Schools lack the level of readiness to both prevent and mitigate youth crime and violence. An apparent over-reliance on punitive measures, including the legal use of corporal punishment, helps to fuel the number of students who drop out of school and become among those most at-risk of offending.

Since 2006, there have been increasing reports of incest involving girls. Significant sexual abuse is suspected but vastly under-reported and there are reports of children being involved in commercial sexual exploitation to supplement family income. Laws, policies and systems to govern the care and protection of children are woefully outdated. In 2007, of 511 cases of child abuse reported, only 47 victims actually received care and support. Street children are also an emerging phenomenon.

Early Childhood Development and Young Children

There is a thrust by the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines to move towards universal preschool education by 2012. Research statistics on access to quality pre-primary

education indicate that 58.4 per cent of children between birth and three years access the services. A major concern is the lack of accessibility to quality ECD services in the rural communities. The Government provides financial support in the form of subventions to approximately 70 per cent of private operators and a food package to approximately 50 per cent. Recognizing that access requires quality assurance, policy frameworks, regulations and standards have been drafted and submitted to Cabinet for approval.

A 2006 survey of the quality of care being provided found that there were significant weaknesses in the quality of the programming, including provisions for health and safety practices; appropriate use of educational materials; communication skills; availability of space and equipment for play and provisions for the professional needs of staff.

HIV, AIDS, Teen Pregnancy and Empowerment of Adolescent Girls and Boys

The Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines considers HIV to be a serious health challenge with the epidemic being driven by a complex set of social, economic, cultural, legal and physiological factors, including gender inequality and stigma and discrimination. About half of all new infections occur in young people under the age of 25 years.

With 29 per cent of males and 17 per cent of females in the 15-19 age group (2005 BSS) indicating that their sexual debut was before age 15, and 28 per cent of the males and 45 per cent of the females indicating that they had more than one partner in the last year but did not use a condom at their encounter, this underscores the vulnerability of adolescents to HIV.

St. Vincent has worked assiduously to improve the secondary school enrolment rates, nevertheless a significant number of young people continue to leave school without adequate qualifications to enter the job market. There are few structured mechanisms for adolescents to participate in a positive manner on issues affecting their lives. Even when opportunities exist adolescents are often ill prepared to assume leadership positions hence, whilst several schools have Student Councils, these often lack vibrancy.

Environment, climate change, disaster management and Children

Children and their families in St. Vincent and the Grenadines live under increased threat of natural and man-made hazards. Hurricanes, storms, and earthquakes are some of the natural hazards that are considered to be the greatest threat. When hurricanes or storms hit they leave devastating results. This is especially as many families reside in low-lying coastal areas as was seen in 2008 when many children families were severely affected

by the storm surge and resultant widespread flooding caused by Hurricane Omar. In the aftermath of these disasters, children's education are disrupted for periods of time as schools have to close. Parents' livelihood are also affected especially when crops are destroyed.



UNICEF/BECO/2007/Asael



UNICEF/BECO/2003/Baldeo



ST. KITTS AND NEVIS

Child Rights - The Unfinished Agenda

Key Indicators

- General Population (2008): 39,817
- Population under 15 (2008): 26.7 per cent
- Median Age (2008): 28.4
- GNI per capita (2006): 8,840
- HDI Ranking – (2009) #62
- Net Migration Rate (2008): - 2.31 migrant per 1,000
- Unemployment Rate (1999): 4.5 per cent
- Youth Unemployment Rate (15-24 in 2005): 11 per cent
- Proportion of women-headed households (2007): 45 per cent
- Poverty Rate (2000): St. Kitts – 30.5 per cent; Nevis 32 per cent
- Percentage of Child Poverty (0-24 old as per cent of total poor 2002): 66.3 per cent
- Percentage of live births that are from teens (2005): 19 per cent
- Net primary school enrolment rate (2004): 94 per cent
- Net secondary school enrolment rate (2004): 87 per cent
- GDP Expenditure on Education (2005): 9.3 per cent
- IMR (2007): 16
- Annual homicide rate per 100,000 (2006): 35.5
- Annual crime rate: N/A

The Status on International Conventions and Protocols relating to the Rights of Children:

- The country was invited to submit their second CRC Report in 2002. The report is still pending.
- The country has not signed or ratified the CRC Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict
- The country has not signed or ratified the CRC Optional Protocol on Sale of Children, Prostitution and Pornography
- Saint Kitts and Nevis submitted its CEDAW State Report in 2006 to the UN CEDAW Committee
- Saint Kitts and Nevis has not signed or ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability

Social Policy for Children

St. Kitts and Nevis is a small independent country, highly vulnerable to external social, environmental and economic shocks and ranked as the 29th most vulnerable country in the world according to the Commonwealth Vulnerability Index.

Intergenerational social inequality is strongly affecting children's rights, and this is reflected with gini-coefficient of income inequality of 0.38 (2000). The island has the highest OECS level of child representation amongst the poor, with 46.2 per cent of children under 15 and 66.3 per cent under 24.

The country is suffering from public budget deficits which currently have risen up to 79.7 per cent of the GDP (2005). This limits the country's responsiveness to social investment needs, which is reflected in only 2.5 and 4.4 per cent of respectively public health and education expenditures as part of GDP.

Despite numerous laudable initiatives, the country is still being challenged in meeting its commitments to the Convention of the Rights of the Child and other ratified human rights instruments.

Violence and Children

These islands are affected by the transshipment of drugs destined for the US and European markets, which is a contributing factor to the involvement of adolescents in gangs, and the handling of drugs, small arms and light weapons. Between 1990 and 1998 alone, crimes committed by juveniles rose from 1.2 per cent to 17 per cent of all crimes and the rates are still rising today. Diversion of youth from the court and custodial systems are being practiced informally, but are in need of expansion and more professional capacity.

Corporal punishment is legally permitted under the Education Act and significant re-training of both teachers and parents is required to eliminate its use.

On average, 200 cases of child abuse are reported to the Child Protection Services yearly. These comprise child neglect (62 per cent), physical abuse (20 per cent), sexual abuse (8 per cent), issues of access to children (5 per cent), maintenance of children (4 per cent) and abandonment (1 per cent). There are mandatory reporting laws which are yet to be enforced.

Early Childhood Development and Young Children

Formal early childhood programming in Saint Kitts and Nevis was led by private organizations until the early 1970s when the government became involved in the sector. There was an ECD Policy Manual guiding the sector from 1982 and a formal establishment of the regulatory framework was achieved in 1994. In 2009 the Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis revised and implemented this Early Childhood Development Policy.

Despite early advances, a number of weaknesses have been identified in the ECD programming in St. Kitts and Nevis. Results from a survey of the sector (2007) revealed that only 53 per cent of the children between the ages of 0-5 participate in formal early childhood programmes – 38 per cent of the 0-2 age groups and 76 per cent of the 3-5 age groups.

Despite the existence of commendable levels of service provision, the survey of the quality of care found that there were still significant weaknesses in the quality of the programming, including provisions for health and safety practices, use of educational material, use of language and communication skills, availability of space and play equipment and provisions for the professional needs of staff.

HIV, Aids, Teen Pregnancy and Empowerment of Adolescent Girls and Boys

Despite a very progressive approach to facilitate the continuing education of adolescent mothers, this problem continues to be troubling one for St. Kitts and Nevis, with 19 per cent of births in 2005 being to teen mother. The lack of a population based sero-prevalence study mitigates against accurate estimates of the incidence of HIV among young people, nevertheless the need for programmes which educate adolescents on HIV prevention is critical. A 2008 Study revealed that only 21.1 per cent of sexually active adolescents used a condom every time they had sex. Adolescents most commonly mentioned that they were too embarrassed to buy a condom in a store.

In St. Kitts and Nevis, generally participation among children and adolescents is not widely promoted and there are very few formal mechanisms in schools for adolescents to participate in school governance or assume leadership in extra-curricular activities.

Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Children

Children and their families in St. Kitts and Nevis live under increased threat of natural and man-made hazards. Hurricanes and storms are some of the natural hazards that are considered to be the greatest threat. When hurricanes or storms hit, they leave devastating results.

The most recent hurricanes that passed through St. Kitts and Nevis were Omar (2008) and Dean (2007) in left widespread flooding, especially for those children and families living on the coastal areas.

When such disasters occur, they can impact on children's education; their parents' livelihoods if income generating crops or sectors are affected. They also affect other social systems that provide a sense of stability, normalcy and protection for children.



ST. LUCIA

Child Rights - The Unfinished Agenda

Key Indicators

- General Population (2008): 159,585
- Population under 15 (2008): 25.2 per cent
- Median Age: 29
- GNI per capita (2006): US\$ 5,110
- HDI Ranking (2009) – # 69
- Net Migration Rate (2008): - 4.33 migrant(s)/1,000
- Percentage of Youth unemployment (15-24 in 2006): 39 per cent
- Proportion of women-headed households (2005): 45 per cent
- Percentage of population below the national poverty line (2006): 25 per cent
- Percentage of child poverty (0-24 old as per cent of total poor): 59.5 per cent
- National Literacy rate (2001): 90 per cent
- Net primary school enrolment rate (2007): 99 per cent
- Net secondary school enrolment rate (2005): 93 per cent
- GDP Expenditure on Education (2006): 6.6 per cent
- IMR (2007): 14
- Annual Homicide Rate (2007): 12.9 per 100,000
- Annual Crime Rate (2007): 20.2

The Status on International Conventions and Protocols relating to the Rights of Children

- The CRC Committee has invited St. Lucia to present its consolidated 2nd, 3rd, 4th report by 15 July 2010.
- The country has not signed or ratified the CRC Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict
- The country has not signed or ratified the Optional Protocol on Sale of Children, Prostitution and Pornography
- The country has submitted its last CEDAW State Report to the UN CEDAW Committee in 2002
- The country has not signed or ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability

Social Policy and Children

Saint Lucia is ranked 19th on the Commonwealth Composite Vulnerability Index reflecting its vulnerability to external shocks such as environmental, economical and social risks. The country has seen an increase in poverty from 19 to 25 per cent between 1995 and 2005, while its extreme poverty decreased from 7.1 per cent to 1.6 per cent in the same period. The country is facing a high level of youth unemployment (39 per cent) and many households are headed by women (45 per cent), reflecting the social challenges of the St. Lucian society. A UNICEF 2006 study found that over half of the children in St. Lucia are at risk mainly from food insecurity followed by chronic illness of a parent. A 2004 review of social protection programmes found that the institutional framework for the efficient and effective delivery of social protection is weak. There is little coordination of the delivery of social protection instruments. Persons in the rural areas, children, the disabled, the elderly and the poor are disadvantaged and not all covered in social protection programmes.

Violence and Children

Crime is of great concern given a homicide rate which more than doubled from 9 to 20 per 100,000 people over the 1999-2005 period and continues to rise. With youth unemployment at 44 per cent, drug dons are an important source of admiration for youth due to their wealth and power. The World Bank estimated the cost of youth crime as .45 per cent of GDP in 2003. The number of children involved as perpetrators doubled in six years – from 90 in 1998 to 181 by 2004 and comprise mainly boys. In the 2000 Youth Health Survey, 17 per cent of children 10 to 19 years said they belonged to a gang; 45 per cent had stolen from family members; 29 per cent of boys belonged to a gang; 21 per cent had carried a weapon to school and 35 per cent had damaged another's property.

Corresponding high levels of domestic violence and the legal use of corporal punishment in homes and schools are both risk factors likely to promote future violent behaviour.

Major concerns also relate to the increasing reports of child abuse and neglect since 1999, particularly in reported cases of child sexual abuse. However, poor interagency collaboration results in the duplication of information and roles by agencies and presents a fragmented and unrealistic status of the magnitude of incidence of child abuse and neglect in St. Lucia. Nevertheless, based on a self-reported sexual victimization study in 2000 involving 1,526 St. Lucian students aged 10 to 19, with respect to sexual abuse, 1 in every 10 students reported that they had been abused in the past year. Females (14.2 per cent) were twice as likely to have been abused as males (6.3 per cent). There were no differences in the percentage of students sexually abused in the different age groups. Further, of those who reported having

had sexual intercourse, 63.1 per cent of the girls and 24.6 per cent of the boys indicated that their first intercourse was either “forced” or “sort of forced”. These findings would suggest that under-reporting of child sexual abuse is a very significant problem. Issues related to child maintenance, and behavioural and emotional problems are prevalent

Early Childhood Development and Young Children

The provision of ECD services in St. Lucia started as a private initiative concentrating on the provision of preschool education for children 3 – 5 years old. In 1985, a Unit was established in the Ministry of Education with responsibility for developing a Comprehensive Pre-school Education Program for 3 – 5 year olds.

As of June 2003, approximately 15 per cent of the children of eligible age ratio were enrolled in day care centres raising questions regarding the adequacy of the early care received by the 85 per cent of children from the birth to two age cohort who do not access formal early childhood services. At the preschool level, the gross enrolment ratio for the eligible age group declined from 78.7 per cent to 68 per cent in 2003.

A 2006 quality survey of a representational sample of centres revealed that while there were commendable provisions in some cases, similarly to other ECD sectors in the region, there was a need for significant improvement in areas of physical facilities, space, supply and use of educational equipment, staff skills and competencies and provisions for staff.

HIV, AIDS, Teen Pregnancy and Empowerment of Adolescent Girls and Boys

St. Lucia has a relatively low HIV prevalence rate (<1 per cent), however, like the rest of the Caribbean it has the potential to rapidly become a generalised epidemic if effective programmes are not put in place. 12 per cent of people living with HIV are in the 15-24 age group.

16 per cent of all births in St. Lucia are to teenage mothers (2007). It means that young people are engaging in unprotected sex and increasing their chances of contracting HIV, dropping out of school and continuing the intergenerational cycle of poverty. The lack of adolescent friendly health services also contributes to this problem.

There are few formal mechanisms in schools and wider communities for adolescents to participate in governance activities and assume leadership positions. Even when these mechanisms exist, adolescents are not prepared to assume leadership roles. In 2008, 61 per cent of schools reported having established Students Councils but the majority of these were relatively new and the vibrancy of the organisations were of concern to the schools. Students felt that they lacked guidance

on the operation of these councils and the Council members tended to focus on “insignificant things such as Dress Down Day. They did not advocate for empowerment or address serious school or other issues“.

Environment, climate change, disaster management and Children

Children and their families in St. Lucia live under increased threat of natural and man-made hazards. Hurricanes, storms, and volcanic eruptions are some of the natural hazards that are considered to be the greatest threat.

When hurricanes or storms hit, they leave devastating results, this is especially so for those families who reside in low-lying coastal areas. For example in 2008, St. Lucia coastal areas were severely affected by storm surges from Hurricane Omar. Undoubtedly disasters, whether they are hurricane, volcanic eruptions or others, impact negatively on children. They disrupt children’s education, their parents’ livelihoods and other social systems that provide stability and a sense of normalcy.



UNICEF/BECO/2007/Asael



TURKS AND CAICOS ISLANDS

Child Rights - The Unfinished Agenda

Key Indicators

- General Population(2007): 34,862
- Population under 15 (2008):30.7 per cent
- Median Age: 28
- GNI per capita (2004): US\$17,660
- Net Migration Rate (2008): 9.5 migrant per 1,000
- Unemployment rate (1997): 10 per cent
- Youth unemployment rate (15-24 in 1991): 7.5 per cent
- Proportion of women-headed households (2000): 35 per cent
- Per cent of Population below the Poverty Line (2006): 25.9 per cent
- Percentage of child poverty (0-24 old as per cent of total poor in 2001): 53.7 per cent
- Net primary enrolment rate (2004): 81 per cent
- Net secondary enrolment rate (2004): 78 per cent
- GDP Expenditure on Education (2006): N/A
- IMR (2008): 14.35
- Annual Homicide Rate: N/A
- Annual Crime Rate: N/A

The Status on International Conventions and Protocols relating to the Rights of Children:

- The UK and BOT's CRC Report for the British Overseas territories was considered by the UN CRC Committee in 2008
- The UK has signed and ratified the CRC Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict in 2003
- The UK has signed and ratified the CRC Optional Protocol on Sale of Children, Prostitution and Pornography in February 2009
- The 6th UK and BOT's CEDAW State Report to the UN CEDAW Committee was considered in 2008
- UK has signed but not ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability on March 30 2007

Social Policy and Children

The Turks and Caicos Islands experienced relatively stable growth until the islands were severely hit by the Tropical Storm Hannah and Hurricane Ike in 2008. These systems caused severe flooding and destruction of homes and schools. This has been compounded by the economic crisis and recent political tensions.

The territory is facing inequalities linked to massive illegal migration and a high level of poverty (25.9 per cent) in a context of female and youth exclusion expressed by 53.7 per cent of the poor being less than 24 years old and 35 per cent of the families being headed by women. The 2007 population estimates of 34,862 marks a 57 per cent increase over 2001 Census figures. The majority of the increase is due to an influx of immigrants (legal and illegal), many of whom are from Haiti and the Dominican Republic, in search of economic opportunities.

Children's rights are especially being challenged with this large influx of immigrant children who often fall outside the formal education and health care system. The territory also has issues concerning birth registration. Due to language barriers it has been challenging to embrace these children in existing social services. The government has undertaken initiatives to meet its commitments to the Convention of the Rights of the Child and other ratified human rights instruments, but all of these commitments have not been met.

Violence and Children

Between 2003-2004, 26 juveniles were arrested and charged. Anecdotal information suggests that increasing numbers of children are appearing before the courts for juvenile delinquency, including acts carried out in schools. The emergence of a 'gang culture' and drug use are also of concern. National studies show that 74.6 per cent of students had tried alcohol; 21.8 per cent had used marijuana; 12.8 per cent had used solvents/inhalants and 1.7 per cent had tried crack cocaine. In the absence of resident facilities and second chance programming, incarcerated youth were sent to either Jamaica or Virginia. The former facility has since closed and 11 youth have returned to the islands without the appropriate care plans and support in place.

Data gaps for child abuse and neglect highlight glaring deficiencies in state systems for prevention, reporting and management of child abuse. Available data shows that sexual and physical abuse was a significant problem in the 2002/3 period but reported incidents have reduced since. However, using teen pregnancy as a proxy for child sexual abuse indicates that there is significant underreporting.

The practice of corporal punishment remains a legal option for use in homes and schools and authorities report its frequent use particularly among the huge Haitian population. Apart from law

reform, this merits the urgent need for parenting education and support by personnel fluent in French and Creole.

Early Childhood Development and Young Children

In the Turks and Caicos Islands, the ECD sector is being guided by a five-year Education Plan which articulates the aims and objectives of the education sector. One of the mandates of the Education department is to provide quality education to the three critical levels of children's development- pre-primary, primary and secondary .

Early Childhood Education (ECE) is provided for children in the 3-5 year age groups, however, data from the Ministry of Education (2005) indicates that the gross enrollment rate for preschoolers (118.4 per cent) is higher than the actual capacity, with more boys enrolling than girls.

In an ongoing effort to improve the capacity and quality of the ECD provision, emphasis is being placed on developments in infrastructure and curricula, investments in professional training and enrichment of teachers with capacity building at management level and the fostering of closer partnerships and liaisons in the private sector.

HIV, AIDS, Teen Pregnancies and Empowerment of Adolescent Girls and Boys

Prevalence rates for 2006 and 2007 were 0.6 per cent and 0.7 per cent, respectively. However, the true rates are difficult to determine in the absence of sound epidemiological data, and because stigma, discrimination, and confidentiality concerns prevent people who may be at risk from seeking counseling and testing.

It is felt that the HIV rate is directly related to immigration and migration. There is also a general sense of invincibility among young people, who despite their high knowledge on HIV, still persist with risky behaviours, particularly multiple sex partners and inconsistent condom use. Currently 8.1 per cent of all births in TCI are of teenage mothers.

Like other Caribbean islands, there are few formal mechanisms in schools and wider communities for adolescents to participate in governance activities and assume leadership positions. In TCI traditional pedagogic methods continue to dominate schools and there is a need for mechanisms to promote greater social inclusion for adolescents - both within and outside the school system.

Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Children

Children and adolescents continue to live under the threat of man-made and natural hazards. These hazards such as hurricanes

and floods have the potential to increase in frequency and intensity due to climate change.

As was seen in 2008 with the passage of Hurricane Ike and Tropical Storm Hannah, where 90 per cent of the buildings, including schools, in Grand Turk and South Caicos were damaged, disasters impact negatively on children lives. Ike disrupted children's education for over five weeks as schools were either destroyed or severely damaged. It also affected the social systems that provide stability and a sense of normalcy for children.



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**BARBADOS AND EASTERN CARIBBEAN
 CONNVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD
 STATUS REPORT 2009**

	Ratified	Initial Report	Original Due Date of 2nd Periodic Report	Exceptional measures
Antigua and Barbuda	5 Oct 1993	Due: 3 Nov 1995 Submitted: 4 Feb 2003 Considered: 28 September 2004	Due: 3 Nov 2000	CRC Committee invited the presentation of a consolidated 2 nd , 3 rd , and 4 th report by 3 May 2009
Barbados	9 Oct 1990	Due: 6 Nov 1992 Submitted: 12 Sept 1996 Considered: 18 May 1999	Due: 6 Nov 1997	State Party is expected to submit report and then will be advised on future consolidations.
Dominica	13 Mar 1991	Due: 11 Apr 1993 Submitted: 21 Jan 2003 Considered: 28 May 2004	Due: 11 April 1998	CRC Committee invited the presentation of a consolidated 2 nd , 3 rd and 4 th report by 1 September 2006.

Grenada	5 Nov 1990	Due: 4 Dec 1992 Submitted: 24 Sept 1997 Considered: 24 Jan 2000	Due: 4 Dec 1997 Submitted: 26 May 2008 Considered: May 2010	State Party Report will be considered in May 2010 and State Party be advised on future due date
St Kitts and Nevis	24 Jul 1990	Due: 1 Sept 1992 Submitted: 22 Jan 1997 Considered: 20 May 1999	Due: 1 Sept 1997	State Party is expected to submit report and then will be advised on future consolidations.
St Lucia	16 June 1993	Due: 15 July 1995 Submitted: 2 Jun 2004 Considered: 17 May 2005	Due: 15 Jul 2000	CRC Committee invited the presentation of a consolidated 2 nd , 3 rd , 4 th report by 15 July 2010.
St Vincent and the Grenadines	26 Oct 1993	Due: 24 Nov 1995 Submitted: 5 Dec 2000 Considered: 2 Jun 2002	Due: 24 Nov 2000	CRC Committee invited the presentation of a consolidated 2 nd and 3 rd report by 24 November 2005
British Overseas Territories: Anguilla, British Virgin Islands Montserrat, Turks & Caicos Islands	7 Sept 1994	Due: 7 Sept 1999 Submitted: 26 May 1999 Considered: 21 Sept 2000	Due: 15 June 2007 Submitted: 16 July 2007 Considered: 23-24 Sept 2008	Due date 5 th Periodic Report UK including the BOTs: 14 Jan 2014

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