



The Missing Generation:

A Situational Analysis of Adolescents (10 – 14)
in the Caribbean Community



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MISSING GENERATION *(Ella Andall)*

Without truth there is no life to honour
Without love, no reason to live
There's still time to change inhumane behaviour
And to learn all that we should give
This world is not our own, we're just the lights and custodians
To guard, to guide and feed our children's needs
Yet we fill their hearts with hate alone and show no direction
We dearly kill the plant, we throw away the seed

Ch: There's a missing generation out there
Who Cares? Find them, you better find them
They are dying disappearing everywhere
Who Cares? Find them, you better find them
Somebody better pray, somebody better pray
There's a missing generation and soon, if we don't find them
They're surely going to find us one day
There's a missing generation and soon, if we don't find them
There'll be no generation to care

In this world of overriding ambitions
In this world where money must rule
Hearts of rock washed in blood and corruption
Father, only kindness can cool
Those cries that fill the night cry out for love and salvation
Are we to hear yet turn and walk away
Or should we stand with hands outstretched to show protection
And warmly still the fears that make them stray

Look behind every sound of thunder
Search beneath every mound of dirt
There you'll find the price of our behaviour
Hiding from the cause of their hurt
Look out there goes another lonely son or daughter
With unshed tears and smiles we never see
Let's all reach out and snatch just one from their destroyer
And change that heart to one that's pure and clean

With one touch there is so much to offer
Feel the hearts of those yet unborn
See the smiles, hear the joyful laughter
Of the generations to come
Let's join our hearts and dream our dreams like our ancestors
Striving, the hungry mouths and minds to feed
For this last chance to touch the soul of our creation
Let's till the ground help to prepare the seed

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Over the last two decades youth development in the Caribbean has assumed a complex and challenging character. With the end of the Cold War and the loss of geo-political importance, many Caribbean nations have experienced economic decline, due in no small part to loss of FDI and aid, and more recently from the loss of preferential treatment in agriculture markets and increasing vulnerability of the tourism sector, coupled with debt service obligations. Structural adjustment programs have resulted in reductions in health, education, housing, and social welfare programs. These prevailing economic, social and political ethos have not only conspired to undermine the capacity of the state to effectively perform its role as a facilitator of economic and social justice but has also diminish the prevalence of traditional modes of socialization¹, thereby changing the social options and possibilities for many young people. Moreover, the pervasiveness of ICTs and media coupled with the effectiveness of international criminal organizations and socially deviant forces and agents in filling the gap created by the declining influence of traditional social institutions such as the family, church, schools and many civic organizations.

Caribbean youth issues have emerged during volatile conditions and the lives of Caribbean youth reflect the socio-political, economic and cultural pressures faced by the region. High unemployment rates, migration and its consequent depletion of intellectual and social capital, weaknesses in education systems, persistent health challenges; particularly as it relates to HIV/AIDS, global trends that weaken our collective economic viability and threaten the sustainable livelihood of significant proportions of the region, spiralling crime and most recently a change in political paradigms, with new governments being brought to power in four of the five most recently held regional elections, have all coalesced to create a situation in which the well-being of youth is potentially compromised.

In keeping with the mandate of the CARICOM Commission on Youth launched in 2006, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); as an ex officio member of the Commission; assumed responsibility for the preparation of a situation analysis of Caribbean adolescents 10 – 14 years old, to inform and support the mandate of the Committee by identifying:

- a. The relevant issues by which Caribbean adolescents are affected
- b. Existing policy aimed at the development and empowerment of Caribbean adolescents
- c. Gaps in existing policy, legislative and institutional arrangements for adolescent development and empowerment in the region
- d. The social, economic and financial benefits of harnessing the assets and talents of adolescents and youth as well as the cost of non-attention to risk and vulnerability factors.

The situation analysis, which was premised on a comprehensive review of literature around youth concerns and issues in the region, is intended to be used both as a repository of information on the collective condition of adolescents in the region as well as to inform policy around youth concerns. The review was guided by the following seven areas of priority:

1. Globalisation and regional integration
2. Socio-economic situation
3. Adolescent health and well being
4. Adolescent Education
5. Crime and gun/gang violence
6. ICT's for Development

¹ The Caribbean Youth Development Agenda: From Social Welfare To Transformation

7. Participation and Intergenerational Issues

Despite efforts to limit the focus of the Situation Analysis to adolescents 10 – 14, the review of Literature revealed a lack of a conceptual clarity about the term youth; and the differences between the various developmental stages within the 0 – 24 age band, generally considered as youth. In many reports the words “youth” and “adolescent” were used interchangeably, and in many instances it was difficult to determine if reports addressed issues specific to the 10- 14 age group.

An additional concern was the lack of data that was regional in scope. Most data were country based, and; given the lack of harmonization of definitions; instructive comparisons were almost impossible. This was compounded by a lack of disaggregated data and beyond talking about boys and girls, there was little disaggregating of data based on other organising structures such as socio-economic status, ethnicity, family structure or location.

There was also virtually no data on two Priority Issues; ICT for Development and Governance, which could indicate a gap in youth provision in these areas and the need to establish and implement programmes for adolescents and youth in these areas.

Major youth concerns highlighted in the Literature included:

1. **Poverty.** Socio-economic disabilities of youth prevent many older youth from establishing their independence from their parents thereby retarding their transition to adulthood.

Situated within the context of Caribbean poverty as consequent to – inter alia - recent shifts in geopolitical significance of Caribbean countries as well as new global trading arrangements which have eroded long protected markets for Caribbean products, this chapter explores three approaches to defining poverty: poverty as economic deprivation, as denial of human rights and as deprivation of basic capabilities. With data on poverty rates presented for 13 Caribbean countries, concerns around adolescent poverty are situated in relation to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which includes adolescents.

2. **Health.** Health challenges may compromise the optimal physical, emotional, cognitive, social and spiritual development and well-being of youth preventing their ability to form caring, supportive relationships with family, other adults and peers as well as engage, in a positive way, in the life of their communities.

In this regard, the sexual and reproductive health of adolescents is of special concern, particularly as it relates to the spread of HIV/AIDS as a by-product of cultural practices, such as early sexual initiation, incest and sexual abuse and transactional sex and the high incidence of teenage pregnancy and related risk behaviours including early sexual initiation, abortion and the impact on schooling of girls.

Although to a lesser extent, this chapter also addresses other issues of concern including:

1. Tobacco, alcohol and other substance abuse
2. Emotional wellbeing
3. Rape
4. Violence

3. **Education.** Disparities in access to quality education and gendered perceptions of its usefulness remain a challenge for youth in the Caribbean, with high drop-out rates generally and attrition and performance challenges for males specifically, which threaten the ability of youth to effectively contribute to the sustainable development of Caribbean society

This chapter focuses on the two major gender equality goals of Education as espoused in the Education For All (EFA) Dakar Framework for Action: *formal equality in education*, which aims at closing numerical gaps between the sexes at various levels of education systems, as well as *substantive equality* which refers to ‘the quality of experience of education in terms of equal treatment during the educational process, and, benefiting from education beyond school in terms of the social currency of education to either sex. With regards to formal equality, the chapter examines the provision of formal education for the 10-14 age cohort in Caribbean education systems based on gross and net enrolment ratios at the primary and secondary levels as well as through repetition and drop-out rates. In terms of substantive equality, students’ perceptions of fair and unfair treatment in schools as well as experiences of verbal, physical and sexual violence of 10-14 year olds in selected Caribbean countries are explored.

4. **Crime and Violence.** Exposure to violent and abusive circumstances has led to levels rage among young people being extremely high and antecedent for involvement in gang related and other anti-social activities. Increased involvement in crime as perpetrator continues to erode the ability of youth to effectively contribute to the development of Caribbean societies.

In this section a brief overview of the situation of crime and violence in the Caribbean is presented and the involvement of youth in crime and violence is examined in terms of youth both as victim and perpetrator of crime. In the absence of regional data, a case study of the involvement of Jamaican youth, 9-15 years olds, as victims and perpetrators of criminal activities is included. The direct and non-direct cost of crime and violence and the economic and social multiplier effects are examined and strategies already undertaken by CARICOM member states to address challenges of youth crime and violence are outlined.

The Final section looks to explanatory frameworks which highlight behaviours and/or conditions and perceived causes associated with at risk youth in the Caribbean inclusive of early adolescents in the 10 to 14 age group. Few of the sources, however, locate the discussion within a conceptual framework that can be used to guide both analyses as well as show possible linkages between cause and effect.

Three such explanatory conceptual frameworks were identified in the literature are reviewed which make a distinction between micro and macro level factors.

A review of research coming out of the Region in relation to the priority issues addressed in this report suggests that the focus has been on the micro level factors and addressing symptoms and less in relation to the political and economic contexts or macro-environmental, structural root causes

The point is made that if governments want a more socially cohesive society characterised by less violence and a greater rate of human and social capital accumulation they are advised to go ‘further upstream’ and deal with the underlying structural problems.

The major structural factors predictive of high risk behaviours such as crime, violence, unprotected sex and teen pregnancy are poverty, lack of education, youth unemployment and child sexual abuse. Without the appropriate and adequate support for young people to grow into responsible and productive adults, we run the risk of²:

1. A lack of skills to contribute to the modern economy will impede economic growth and exacerbate income inequality and poverty,
2. A society with high youth crime rates, which will discourage development
3. An unemployable labour force, high fertility rates, and violence would divert resources away from productive public investments.
4. Adults who entered the challenges of adulthood unprepared are more likely to pass on to their children their negative behaviours, thus perpetuating the cycle.

If left unaddressed, these factors have worrisome implications for the future of youth and adolescents across the region.

² Youth Development in the Caribbean Countries Concept Paper (January 10, 2002)

Section One

The Terms of Reference

A Situational Analysis of Adolescents (10 – 14)
in the Caribbean Community



1. The Terms of Reference

The twenty-seventh Meeting of the Conference of heads of government of the Caribbean Community, held in St. Kitts and Nevis in July, 2006, discussed the situation of Caribbean youth and mandated the Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD) to establish a Commission on Youth Development to provide a full scale analysis of the changes and opportunities for youth in the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) and to make recommendations on how to improve their well-being and empowerment.

As an ex officio member of the Commission on Youth Development, UNICEF assumed responsibility for the completion of a Literature Review of pertinent sources relevant to adolescents 10-14 years old with the intention of completing a situational analysis of Caribbean adolescents, as well as the compilation of an Annotated Bibliography around the Literature reviewed.

1.1. Objectives of Literature Review

Based on the scope of work outlined in the Terms of Reference for a specialist to complete the review of literature and situation analysis as well as compile the Annotated Bibliography; the review was guided by the following priority areas:

1. Globalisation and regional integration
2. Socio-economic situation
3. Adolescent health and well being
4. Adolescent Education
5. Crime and gun/gang violence;
6. Participation and Intergenerational Issues
7. ICT's for Development

More specifically, the Review was designed to:

1. Capture the visions, aspirations and concerns of adolescents (and youth), thereby facilitating a more in-depth and comprehensive understanding of relevant issues by which they are affected
2. Provide a theoretical framework to guide the process of establishing benchmarks/standards for institutionalized adolescent and youth consultations, participation and representation in development and integration
3. Highlight the social, economic and financial benefits of harnessing the assets and talents of adolescents and youth as well as the cost of non-attention to risk and vulnerability factors.
4. Support the completion of a regional Annotated Bibliography and situation analysis of adolescents 10-14 years old

1.2. Methodology

The Literature Review was completed in the following phases:

1. Contact was established with UNICEF Caribbean country offices to identify existing research and data on youth generally and adolescents in the 10 – 14 age group specifically, with respect to the outlined priority areas.
2. A review of conceptual and theoretical perspectives on global and regional definitions of adolescence and youth and their characterizations was completed
3. A profile of adolescents, age 10 through 14, in CARICOM member states was established based on key demographic indicators using latest available CARICOM census data (2001)
4. A review of relevant Literature on regional adolescent concerns

1.2.1. The Literature Review: Presentation of Data

The findings presented in this situational analysis of adolescents in the Caribbean Community, are based on the comprehensive review of relevant international and regional agreements and protocols, legislative frameworks and relevant research/studies/papers on adolescent concerns related to priority areas as outlined in Table 1.1

The Report is divided into five main sections:

1. The Terms of Reference
 - a. This section outlines the TORs for the consultancy as well as challenges experienced and insights gained in undertaking the task.
2. Background and Introduction
 - a. This section explores the rationale and justification for the completion of the Review as well as offers a general situational analysis of youth both globally and regionally.
 - b. The demographic profile of Caribbean adolescents in the 10-14 age group is also presented.
3. A Review of the Priority Issues
 - a. This section examines more closely the issues raised in the situational analysis by priority area (See Table 1.1) and presents the opportunities as well as the challenges of each area in relation to adolescent and youth development.
 - c. Country specific data is presented at the end of the discussion of each priority area.
4. An analysis of the Conceptual Explanatory Frameworks of Youth and Adolescence
 - a. This section presents conceptual frameworks of youth and development and offers policy direction based on areas of significance presented in the review of priority issues
5. An Annotated Bibliography of sources used in the completion of the Review
 - a. This section presents an annotation of all the sources used in the completion of the Literature review

1.2.2. Research Priority Issues

Table 1.1: Research Priority Issues

PRIORITY ISSUES
<p>1.2.2.1. Globalisation and regional integration Describe the global and regional context for Caribbean adolescent development, paying particular attention to global and regional Issues and initiatives; and macro-micro environmental and factors that impact on adolescent risk, vulnerability and protection/resilience:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Demographics, citizenship, regional definitions of children, adolescent and youth, b. Migration, brain drain, harnessing Caribbean Diaspora skills and resources c. Relevant goals/targets/indicators/protocols and International instruments signed by Heads, including Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) Treaty of Chaguaramas, the Regional Strategy for Youth Development (RSYD) d. Legislative issues e. Adolescent participation in global and regional decision making and program-policy development; hindering, facilitating factors
<p>1.2.2.2. Socio-economic situation Describe the regional socio-economic situation of adolescents paying attention to regional Issues and initiatives; and macro-micro-environmental and individual factors that influence adolescent risk/ vulnerability; and protection/resilience, in particular</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Poverty and exclusion b. Parental support and influence
<p>1.2.2.3. Health and well being Describe the health status of the region's adolescent paying attention to regional Issues and initiatives; and macro-micro-environmental and individual factors that influence adolescent risk/vulnerability and protection/resilience, in particular:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. non-communicable and life-style diseases, e.g. obesity, hypertension, mental health; teen suicide; sustained drug use and abuse; b. adolescent sexual reproductive health, including STIs/HIV&AIDS, c. life skills education and health promotion d. Legislative issues e. relevant goals/targets/indicators in MDGs and CARICOM policy frameworks, including Caribbean Cooperation in Health 111 (CCH 111) and the Regional Strategy for Youth Development (RSYD) f. youth participation and partnership in regional decision making and program-policy development; hindering, facilitating factors
<p>1.2.2.4. Participation and Intergenerational Issues</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Identify factors promoting or hindering adolescent governance and participation in various spheres of the home and family, school and the community, as it relates to structures for adolescent participation and governance

PRIORITY ISSUES

1.2.2.5. Education

Describe the status of education in the region from nursery to post-secondary levels, paying attention to regional Issues and initiatives; and macro-micro-environmental and individual factors that influence adolescent risk/vulnerability and protection/resilience, in particular:

- a. enrolment, outputs (technology, etc) relevance to labour market/employer needs;
- b. access, quality, relevance and outcomes (skills, literacy, numeracy); drop out rates
- c. relevant goals/targets/indicators in the MDGs and CARICOM policy frameworks, including Regional Education reform Strategy and Regional Strategy for Youth Development
- d. gender issues
- e. educational status of adolescent in and out-of-school, including the disabled and teen mothers as well as male achievement and participation
- f. indiscipline, gang-gun violence in schools
- g. Legislative issues
- h. adolescent participation in regional decision making and program-policy development- mechanisms for consultation, representation; hindering, facilitating factors

1.2.2.6. Crime and gun/gang violence

Describe the regional situation of adolescents as main victims and perpetrators of crime and gun-gang violence, paying attention to regional Issues and initiatives; and macro-micro-environmental and individual factors that influence adolescent risk/ vulnerability; and protection/resilience, in particular:

- a. arrangements underpinning crime and security as the fourth pillar for Caribbean integration
- b. regional statistics; youth violence, gender based violence, cyber violence, trafficking in children
- c. child abuse and neglect
- d. child labour
- e. impact of home, school, peers, media, community, spirituality;
- f. deportees
- g. relevant goals/targets/indicators in the MDGs and CARICOM policy frameworks, including the Regional Strategy for Youth Development (RSYD)
- h. Legislative issues and juvenile justice
- i. child protection
- j. Adolescent participation and partnership in regional decision making and program-policy development; hindering, facilitating factors

1.2.2.7. ICT's for Development

- a. Access to ICT's and Gender disparities in access
- b. Use of ICT's for development
- c. Cyber threats

1.3. The Literature Review: Challenges and Insights

Despite the proposed methodology, major challenges presented themselves during the Literature Review and preparation of the Review and Situational Analysis. These included:

1.3.1. A lack of a conceptual clarity about the term youth and the differences between the various developmental stages within the 0 – 24 age band.

In order to complete the Review, it was first necessary to define the concept of youth, as it specifically related to adolescence, which proved challenging for several reasons. To date, a unanimous definition of *youth* remains elusive and the concept is used ambiguously, within various contexts and with various interpretations. Quantitatively, the United Nations and other international agencies have delimited *youth* as 10 -24 years old, which is accepted to varying degrees, as according to Williams (1997)³ the literature is replete with caution on the use of chronological age to distinguish phases of the life cycle. This ambiguity in the definition of *youth* is further complicated by the fact that the period 10-24 encompasses several stages of development for an individual. To use the term *youth* may therefore mask the needs and subjectivities of each stage of development and may result in the design of interventions that are not as sharply differentiated as they could and need to be.

In the Literature, the terms ‘young people’, ‘youth’ and ‘adolescents’ are often used interchangeably and, at best, describe overlapping periods in the life of individuals between the ages of 10 and 24 years. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)⁴ defines ‘young people’ as those between 10 and 24 years of age. Adolescents are defined as being between 10 to 19 years and this age band is further divided into two sub-periods: early adolescence (10 to 14 years) and late adolescence (15 to 19 years). Youth is then defined as 15 to 24 years and therefore, according to these definitions, incorporates persons in late adolescence.

On the other hand, the World Bank Report on Caribbean Youth Development⁵, states that in the study from which the report is derived, youth is defined as spanning the adolescent period between 10 to 24 years of age and that in the report, the terms ‘youth’ and ‘adolescents’ are used interchangeably. This definition, the report claims, deviates from that of the United Nations and the Caribbean by lowering the onset of youth to age 10. The UN definition of youth is 15 to 24 years old and, the report states that in the Caribbean the majority of youth policies view youth as beginning at age 15 and ending at 30 years. In this report the Feldman and Elliott classification is embraced where the 10 to 25 age range is broken down into three periods:

...early adolescence (ages 10 to 14) during which intense physical and social changes corresponding with puberty take place; middle adolescence (ages 15 to 17) during which youth people become increasingly independent; and late adolescence (ages 17 to mid-20's) which applies to those who for social or other reasons delay entry into adulthood (p.7)⁶

3 Tomorrow's Adults: a Situational Analysis of Youth in the Commonwealth Caribbean

4 Adolescents Fact Sheet. State of World Population 2005. UNFPA. http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2005/presskit/factsheets/facts_adolescents.htm

5 A World Bank Country Study. Caribbean Youth Development: Issues and Policy Directions. The World Bank. Washington, D.C. 2003.

6 Feldman, S. & G. Elliott. 1997. At the Threshold: The Developing Adolescent. Cambridge, Mass. Harvard University Press.

According to Williams⁷, in the Caribbean the situation is further compounded by the presence of a significant Indo-Guyanese and Indo-Trinidadian population in which early marriage, from as early as 12 years for girls, undermines consensus on age definitions. For the purpose of his review of youth in the Caribbean, William maintains that adolescence spans the years between 10 to 14, and youth 15 to 24 years of age. Distinctions between the stages of childhood, youth and adulthood are explored more fully in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2: Defining Characteristics of Stages in the Life Cycle

0 - 10	11 - 25	Over 25
Children	Youth	Adults
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> acquire their basic values and norms during the first three years of life are not fully developed physically (or mentally) are in the process of developing their identity are in a learning process learn fast and are open to new ideas are highly dependent on their parents or other adults need protection live with their parents in most cases do not decide for themselves are poorer than adults often contribute to the income of the family through personal income may not vote cannot be charged for a crime and are not financially responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> are at their prime physically subject to adequate nutrition and care are in the process of developing their identity are in a learning process question ideas and perceptions of (adult) society are flexible, open-minded and quick to adjust are sexually active most often still live with their parents, but are about to establish a family and find a place to live compete with adults for learning opportunities and jobs are often dependent on their parents or other adults do in many cases decide for themselves, however not in all (e.g. economic, marriage) are poorer than adults often contribute to the income of the family may have the right to vote can be charged for a crime but are not always considered financially responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> are fully developed physically - some (especially the elderly) are physically deteriorating have developed their identity are not in a formal learning process often become more conservative as they grow older are less flexible and quick to adjust are in control of finances have the opportunity to decide for themselves are responsible for income of the family have the right to vote can be charged for a crime

Source: Who are Youth?

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTCY/0,contentMDK:20261632~menuPK:4694460~pagePK:210058~piPK:210062~theSitePK:396445,00.html>

Most agree that one of the key stages of the life cycle within the 10-24 age range is adolescence. It is seen to begin at the onset of physiologically normal puberty, and ends when an adult identity and behaviour are accepted.⁸ As defined by the United Nations, Adolescence is the period of significant *biological and psychological changes sweeping through young people in the years from 10-14 years... a time of transition when young people acquire the knowledge and skills they need for adult life*⁹. It is believed that *during adolescence, young people establish their emotional and psychological independence, learn to understand and manage their sexuality and consider their future role in society*¹⁰.

⁷ Williams, Lincoln. A Review of the issues arising from selected quantitative and qualitative literature on youth in the Caribbean

⁸ <http://www.cps.ca/English/statements/AM/ah03-02.htm>

⁹ UNAIDS, Seen but not heard: Very young adolescents aged 10-14 years, Geneva: UNAIDS, October, 2004.

¹⁰ Adolescence: A Time that matters. http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/pub_adolescence_en.pdf

The very specific changes undergone by adolescents in their movement from childhood through early and mid-adolescence can be categorised into five distinct aspects: body development, brain development, social development, emotional development and sexuality development, as explored in Table 1.3

Table 1.3: Defining Characteristics of Adolescents, 10 - 14

Ages and developmental stages	Early Adolescence (aged 10–12)		Mid-Adolescence (aged 13–14)	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Body Development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Growth of testes 2. Pubic hair 3. Growth of penis 4. Growth spurt 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Growth of breasts 2. Pubic hair 3. First period 4. Taller than boys 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Growth spurt 2. First ejaculation 3. Masturbation 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Growth spurt 2. More fat increase 3. Masturbation
Brain Development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Responds best to visual stimuli 2. low impulse control 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Responds best to sound stimuli 2. Impulse control low but greater than boys 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begins to gain some impulse control 2. Increase in sensation 3. seeking 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Impulse control earlier than boys
Social Development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sport & competition 2. Little interest in 'girls' issues' 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Personal relationships 2. Begins concern over body image 3. Uses training bra 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Companionship & joint activity with other boys 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self-disclosure and interpersonal skills 2. Concern over weight and body image
Emotional Development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase in physical aggression 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Aggression channelled through avoidance or criticism 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Report more stressful self-relevant events 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Report more interpersonal stress 2. Increase in stress
Sexuality Development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Becomes aware of masculinity in self 2. 'Feminine' behaviours considered 'deviant' 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Becomes aware of femininity in self 2. 'Tomboy' behaviours accepted 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sexual exploration 2. Little regulation of sexual arousal 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sexual exploration discouraged 2. Emphasis on inhibition 3. of sexual arousal

Adapted from *The Evolution of the Young Adolescent* presented by Dr Cecilia Brembauer, Child and Adolescent Unit, PAHO. In *Seen but not heard: Very Young Adolescents at Risk*

There is obviously an urgent need to conceptualise adolescence as distinct to youth, not only in terms of age, but in expanded ways, such as in terms of their unique social and cognitive attributes, as well as individuals with distinct rights and in need of a unique policy environment. Such a conceptualization would facilitate a more holistic approach to the analysis of adolescent vis-à-vis youth development issues and would allow for a more focused approach to policy formulation specifically targeting adolescents. This, no doubt, would eliminate ambiguity and conflicting and overlapping effort on the part of those who plan for various sub-groups in the 10 and 24 age range.

1.3.2. The paucity of studies truly regional in scope.

Even reports that are entitled regional only addressed three countries at best. Most data were country based, and would take a considerable amount of time to collate similarities and differences between countries in systematic ways.

Moreover, given the lack of harmonization of definitions, comparisons were almost impossible. The possibility of conducting a thorough regional analysis of Caribbean adolescents, using a comparative approach, was therefore virtually impossible.

1.3.3. Limited Data on Priority Issues – ICT and Governance

There was virtually no data available the Priority Issues of ICT for Development and Governance, in relation to the 10-14 age cohort. This could be indicative of a gap in adolescent and youth provision in these areas as well as the need to establish and implement programmes for adolescents and youth in these areas.

1.3.4. Limited Disaggregated Data

Beyond talking about boys and girls, there was little disaggregating of data based on other organising structures such as socio-economic status, ethnicity, family structure or location. This also has far reaching implications for the development and implementation of policy as youth, inclusive of adolescents, in the Caribbean are not a homogeneous group, and beyond the commonality of age, they live in different circumstances and have different needs. The treatment of youth as a homogenous group denies a true voice to be given to their varied concerns.

Section Two

BACKGROUND and INTRODUCTION



2. BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

2.1 The Global Situation of Youth and Adolescents

The Secretary-General of the United Nations in his 2006 World Population Day Message noted that... It is now widely accepted that providing for youth is not simply a moral obligation but a compelling socio-economic necessity, as the situation of young people today will shape our world and the prospects for the future.¹¹

In 2007, nearly half the world's population - more than 3 billion people - were under the age of 25, representing the largest ever cohort of young people in human history.¹² According to the 1989 *Convention on the Rights of the Child*¹³, all children are entitled to access to services such as education, health and information as well as recreation, justice, safe and supportive environments and opportunities to participate and have their voices heard. Regrettably however, many youth continue to confront bleak prospects based on gender bias, illiteracy, abject poverty, community violence, threats of trafficking and voicelessness.

The *UN Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples* of 1965¹⁴ recognized that the ideals and energies of young men and women are vital for the continuing development of the societies in which they live. The sentiment was further endorsed twenty years later, when the UN General Assembly called for 1985 to be observed as *International Youth Year* under the theme *Participation, Development, Peace*,¹⁵ which emphasized the important role young people play in the world and, in particular, their potential contribution to development and the ideals of the United Nations Charter. Since then, the United Nations has consistently renewed its commitment to making youth a developmental priority, as evidenced by the following resolutions.

Table 2.1: UN Resolutions on Youth

Year	RESOLUTION involving YOUTH	
2007	General Assembly Resolution on Policies and Programmes Involving Youth	(A/RES/62/126)
2006	Commission for Social Development, 44th Session	2006/15 (Ref. E/2006/26)
2005	General Assembly Resolution on Policies and Programmes Involving Youth	(A/RES/60/2)
2004	General Assembly Resolution on tenth anniversary of World Programme of Action for Youth	(A/RES/59/148)
2003	General Assembly resolution on Policies and Programmes Involving Youth	A/RES/58/133)
2001	General Assembly resolution on Promoting Youth Employment	(A/RES/57/165)
2001	General Assembly resolution on Policies and Programmes Involving Youth	(A/RES/56/117)
1999	General Assembly resolution on Policies and Programmes Involving Youth	(A/RES/54/120)
1997	General Assembly resolution on Policies and Programmes Involving Youth	(A/RES/52/83)
1995	General Assembly Resolution on the World Programme of Action for Youth tot 2000 and Beyond	(A/RES/50/81)
1985	General Assembly Resolution on the International Youth Year	(A/RES/40/14)

¹¹ World Population Day 2006: Message from UN Secretary-General. <http://www.unfpa.org/news/news.cfm?ID=823>

¹² United Nations World Youth Report 200 <http://www.un-gaid.org/en/node/397>

¹³ <http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/k2crc.htm>

¹⁴ <http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/65.htm>

¹⁵ <http://www.un-documents.net/a40r14.htm>

Most importantly, on the tenth anniversary of International Youth Year (1995) the United Nations in an attempt at directing the international community's response to the challenges to youth into the next millennium, adopted *The World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond*,¹⁶ which sought to comprehensively address the issues of young people globally and to increase opportunities for their participation in society. The Programme provided a policy framework and practical guidelines for national action and international support to improve the situation of youth.

It identified ten main areas of focus to promote an improved well-being and livelihood among young people:

1. Education
2. Hunger and poverty
3. Environment
4. Gender
5. Employment
6. Health
7. Drug abuse
8. Juvenile delinquency
9. Recreation and Leisure-time activities
10. Participation and decision-making

In concession to the continued adverse situation of youth the United Nations General Assembly at its sixtieth session (New York, 21 September 2005) adopted Resolution 60/2,¹⁷ which requested the United Nations Secretariat; in collaboration with other relevant UN programmes and agencies; to establish a broad set of indicators related to youth, which Governments and other actors could use to monitor the situation of young people, based on the issues outlined in the *World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond*, as well as the additional issues of Globalization, HIV/AIDS, ICT and conflict.

2.2 The Caribbean Context

*The issue of youth assumes great urgency and importance in the emerging regional development panorama where today's youth must take full charge, upholding democracy, good governance and equity for a widening and more complex Caribbean...*¹⁸ so states the 2007 Caribbean Youth Day Message.

Williams¹⁹ opines that the concept of youth is a relatively new one to the Caribbean that has been constructed out of the experiences of slavery and the struggle for emancipation. He points to the fact that during slavery, childhood and youth were almost indistinguishable from adult life as regards the experience of harsh work, violent abuse, harsh discipline and powerlessness. The use of children and young people in the labour force was integral to the productive process well into the 1940's in the Caribbean and youth, at that time, was therefore conceptualized in economic terms. It was not until the 1940s that the trade union movement recognised that child labour was undermining adult labour and in a bid to protect adult labour argued against child labour.

¹⁶ <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/50/a50r081.htm>

¹⁷ http://www.unhabitat.org/downloads/docs/4451_59152_N0548766.pdf

¹⁸ Caribbean Youth Message by Mr. Henry Charles, Regional Director, Caribbean Youth Programme. www.thecommonwealth.org/document/154631/170133/caribbean_youth_day_message_2007.htm

¹⁹ Williams, Lincoln. A Review of the issues arising from selected quantitative and qualitative literature on youth in the Caribbean.

Williams further suggests that it was the introduction of mass elementary education in the post-emancipation period that created a space within which ideas of *childhood*, *adolescence* and *youth* emerged. With the introduction of mass education, according to Beckles, “youth was no longer viewed in purely economic terms as under slavery, but began to be conceptualised in broader social terms”.²⁰

Lewis, cited in *Tomorrow’s Adults: A Situational Analysis of Youth in the Commonwealth Caribbean*, suggests that:

*These new circumstances afforded them the opportunity hitherto denied, of collectively defining some of the social spheres of their lives into domestic chores/activity...In this context also, they created and recreated values still influenced by the culture and reality of slavery but at the same time also imbued by new technologies of self. It is upon these new conceptions of youth that modern notions of the same are built from the challenges of the independence and post-independence of Caribbean Society. (p.11)*²¹

Regrettably however, the inability of post-colonial governments to deliver on promises of radical changes, due in part to the adoption of poorly implemented models of development, meant that post-colonial youth found themselves in societies in the region in which “the rhetoric of self-reliance, of new visions for youth, of education as a vehicle for democracy, of youth entrepreneurship, all these promises did not materialize in viable amounts” (Deosaran in Williams).

Over the last two decades youth development in the Caribbean has assumed a far more complex and challenging character. With the end of the Cold War and the loss of geo-political importance, many Caribbean nations have experienced economic decline, due in no small part to loss of FDI and aid, and more recently from the loss of preferential treatment in agriculture markets and increasing vulnerability of the tourism sector, coupled with debt service obligations. Structural adjustment programs have resulted in reductions in health, education, housing, and social welfare programs. These prevailing economic, social and political ethos have not only conspired to undermine the capacity of the state to effectively perform its role as a facilitator of economic and social justice but has also diminish the prevalence of traditional modes of socialization²², thereby changing the social options and possibilities for many young people. Moreover, the pervasiveness of ICTs and media coupled with the effectiveness of international criminal organizations and socially deviant forces and agents in filling the gap created by the declining influence of traditional social institutions such as the family, church, schools and many civic organizations.

Caribbean youth issues have emerged during these volatile conditions and the lives of Caribbean youth reflect the socio-political, economic and cultural pressures faced by the region. High unemployment rates, migration and its consequent depletion of intellectual and social capital, weaknesses in education systems, persistent health challenges; particularly as it relates to

²⁰ See George Danns et al, *Tomorrow’s Adults: A Situational Analysis of youth in the Commonwealth Caribbean*, Commonwealth Youth Programme, Commonwealth Secretariat. P15

²¹ George K Danns, B. Ivan Henry & Patrice LeFleur. 1992. *Tomorrow’s Adults. A Situational Analysis of Youth in the Commonwealth Caribbean*. Commonwealth Youth Programme. Commonwealth Secretariat.

²² The Caribbean Youth Development Agenda: From Social Welfare To Transformation

HIV/AIDS, global trends that weaken our collective economic viability and threaten the sustainable livelihood of significant proportions of the region, spiralling crime and most recently a change in political paradigms, with new governments being brought to power in four of the five most recently held regional elections, have all coalesced to create a situation in which the well-being of youth is potentially compromised.

Led by its Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD), and pursuant to its commitments made to regional youth in its *Time for Action Plan*²³, CARICOM nation states developed a *Regional Strategy for Youth Development*,²⁴ which outlined several methodologies for improving the situation of youth, through the achievement of the following targets in all member states, over the 2001 – 2006 period²⁵:

1. The establishment of mechanisms to provide youth with a voice in public policymaking by 2002
2. A youth statistical database and collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative data by 2003
3. The establishment of systems for training and educating youth workers
4. The establishment of National Youth Commissions operating and delivering services to youth by 2003
5. The implementation of intersectoral, community-based programs promoting economic participation, poverty reduction, sustainable livelihoods, and healthy families, communities, and nations by 2003
6. The implementation of community-based projects aimed at raising awareness, changing behaviour, and empowering youth, in the promotion of adolescent health

Other efforts by CARICOM to address youth issues include a Youth Ambassadors program, staging of model CARICOM conferences, and support for cooperative initiatives, such as the Australian Caribbean Community Sport Development Program.

2.3 Adolescent and Youth Initiatives in the Caribbean

Despite the relative novelty of *Youth* as a concept in the Caribbean, regional governments have made strides with regards to implementing international instruments addressing pertinent issues relating to youth. Between 1990 and 1993 all member states of CARICOM have ratified the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (See Table 2.2).

Table 2.2: Ratifications of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by CARICOM Territories

COUNTRY	DATE of RATIFICATION
Antigua and Barbuda	05 October 1993
Bahamas	20 February 1991
Barbados	09 October 1990
Belize	02 May 1990
Dominica	13 March 1991
Grenada	05 November 1990
Guyana	14 January 1991
Haiti	08 June 1995

²³ “It is perhaps time that we went a step beyond platitudinous statement to the effect that youth represent the future of the Caribbean and let them do so” (Time for Action, Report of the West Indian Commission, 1993:379).

²⁴ http://www.caricom.org/jsp/community_organs/regionalstrategyyouthdev-reviseddraft.pdf

²⁵ Caribbean Youth Development: Issues and Policy Directions - The World Bank

COUNTRY	DATE of RATIFICATION
Jamaica	14 May 1991
Saint Kitts and Nevis	24 July 1990
Saint Lucia	16 June 1993
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	26 October 1993
Suriname	01 May 1993
Trinidad and Tobago	05 December 1991

Prior to this, member states had been signatory to other international agreements and instruments, which - though not as directly as the CRC - addressed the rights of children and youth (See Table 2.3).

Table 2.3: Instruments Ratified By CARICOM Member States that address rights of children and youth

COUNTRY	INSTRUMENT RATIFIED
Antigua and Barbuda	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery (UN/1956) 2. Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages (UN 1962); 3. Convention on the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment (ILO/1973).
Bahamas	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and 2. Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery (UN/1956)
Barbados	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Night Work of Young Persons: Industry (ILO/1948) 2. Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institutions and Practices 3. Similar to Slavery (UN/1956) 4. Discrimination in Education (UNESCO/1960) 5. Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration 6. of Marriages (UN/1962) 7. Civil and Political Rights (UN/1966) 8. Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (UN/1966).
Belize	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Medical Examination of Young Persons: Sea (ILO/1921) 2. Discrimination in Education (UNESCO/1960) 3. Civil and Political Rights (UN/1966)
Dominica	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Medical Examination of Young Persons: Sea (ILO/1021) 2. Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices 3. Similar to Slavery (UN/1956) 4. Discrimination in Education (UNESCO/1960) 5. Civil and Political Rights (UN/1966); Economic, Social and 6. Cultural Rights (UN/1966) 7. Minimum Age for Admission to Employment (ILO/1973)
Grenada	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Medical Examination of Young Persons: Sea (ILO/1921) 2. Civil and Political Rights (UN/1966) 3. Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (UN/1966)
Guyana	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Civil and Political Rights (UN/1966) 5. Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (UN/1966) 6. Minimum Age for Admission to Employment (ILO/1973) 7. Vocational Guidance and Vocational Training: Human Resources 8. Development (ILO/1975)
Haiti	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Medical Examination of Young Persons: Industry (ILO/1946); Medical 2. Examination of Young Persons: Non-Industrial Occupations 3. (ILO/1946); Night Work of Young Persons: Industry (ILO/1948);

COUNTRY	INSTRUMENT RATIFIED
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the 5. Prostitution of Others (UN/1949); and Abolition of Slavery, the 6. Slave Trade and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery 7. (UN/1956); and Civil and Political Rights (UN/1966)
Jamaica	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Medical Examination of Young Persons: Sea (ILO/1921); Abolition of 2. Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institutions and Practices Similar to 3. Slavery (UN/1956); Civil and Political Rights (UN/1966) and Economic, 4. Social and Cultural Rights (UN/1966)
Saint Lucia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Medical Examination of Young Persons: Sea (ILO/1921); and Abolition 2. of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institutions and Practices Similar 3. to Slavery (UN/1956)
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institutions and Practices 5. Similar to Slavery (UN/1956) 6. Discrimination in Education (UNESCO/1960) 7. Civil and Political Rights (UN/1966) 8. Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (UN/1966)
Suriname	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institutions and 2. Practices Similar to Slavery (UN/1956); 3. Civil and Political Rights (UN/1966) 4. Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (UN/1966)
Trinidad and Tobago	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Medical Examination of Young Persons: Sea (ILO/1921) 2. Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institutions and 3. Practices Similar to Slavery (UN/1956) 4. Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages (UN/1962) 5. Civil and Political Rights (UN/1966) 6. Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (UN/1966)

2.4 Challenges to Adolescent and Youth Development in the Caribbean

Despite these commitments to regional youth populations, including those at the adolescent stage, through the development of policy, legislation and institutional arrangements, as a result of the challenges faced by the region and the failures on the part of families, government and society to provide the appropriate and adequate supports for young people to grow into responsible and productive adults, *at-risk youth* in the Caribbean have emerged. These youth, according to the 2000 World Bank Report²⁶ on youth and social development in Trinidad and Tobago, are “youth who face exceptional challenges in the traditional venues of socialization, principally, the family, community, school and workplace”. This is clearly evidenced in the very definition of Caribbean youth, which, because of high rates of youth unemployment and delays between schooling and employment, is generally considered as ending at 30 years, several years after the global mean age (Alexis 2000)²⁷. Additionally, together with constrained labour market participation several risk factors exist that jeopardize youth and adult outcomes in a number of areas:

²⁶ World Bank 2000. *Youth and Social Development: An Integrated Approach for Social Inclusion*. Report No. 2008 – TR. Trinidad and Tobago.

²⁷ Alexis, A. 2000. “*Mainstreaming Youth in the Development Process*.” Public Lecture to Mark Youth Month 2000, University of Technology, Jamaica.” Commonwealth Youth Programme, Guyana cited in Caribbean Youth Development: Issues and Policy Directions

1. **Health.** In this regard, the spread of HIV/AIDS is of particular concern, especially as a by-product of specific cultural practices, including but not limited to early sexual initiation, incest and sexual abuse and transactional sex
2. **Education.** Disparities in access to quality education and gendered perceptions of its usefulness remain a challenge for youth in the Caribbean, with high drop-out rates generally and attrition and performance challenges for males specifically
3. **Poverty.** Socio-economic disabilities of youth prevent many older youth from establishing their independence from their parents thereby retarding their transition to adulthood.
4. **Crime and Violence.** Exposure to violent and abusive circumstances has led to levels rage among young people being extremely high and antecedent for involvement in gang related and other anti-social activities
5. **Recreation.** The lack of leisure facilities throughout the region geared towards the development of youth decreases the opportunities for social involvement.

The UNICEF Caribbean Area Office (2001)²⁸ identifies the following groups of young people as *at risk*, unsupported by “safety nets” or having no access to “recovery” routes:

1. Adolescents with HIV/AIDS
2. Adolescents who are exposed to cultures of careless sex, drug use and violence
3. Adolescent mothers and fathers
4. Adolescent criminals, particularly adolescent gun “boys”
5. Disabled children who remain invisible and in need of resources and special programmes
6. Imprisoned youth who live in impoverished and degrading environments
7. Out of school youth, including those on the street, mainly males, who face danger, exploitation and abuse
8. Sexually exploited and pregnant adolescent females
9. Young people of minority indigenous groups who are socially isolated, stigmatized and experience a poor quality of life
10. Young people who are not parented, who are emotionally and economically deprived because of parental death (through HIV/AIDS or violence), or because parents have migrated, separated or been imprisoned, or who through mental illness or drug and alcohol addiction do not fulfil their parental roles

It is in light of these challenges that the CARICOM Commission on Youth Development was launched on March 5, 2007 to undertake research on Caribbean Youth, with a view to making recommendations to the Conference of Caribbean Heads of Government on a regional strategy for youth empowerment, participation and development.

²⁸ *Adolescents in Latin America and the Caribbean: Policy Guidelines*. UNICEF Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean

2.5 Caribbean Adolescents – A Demographic Profile

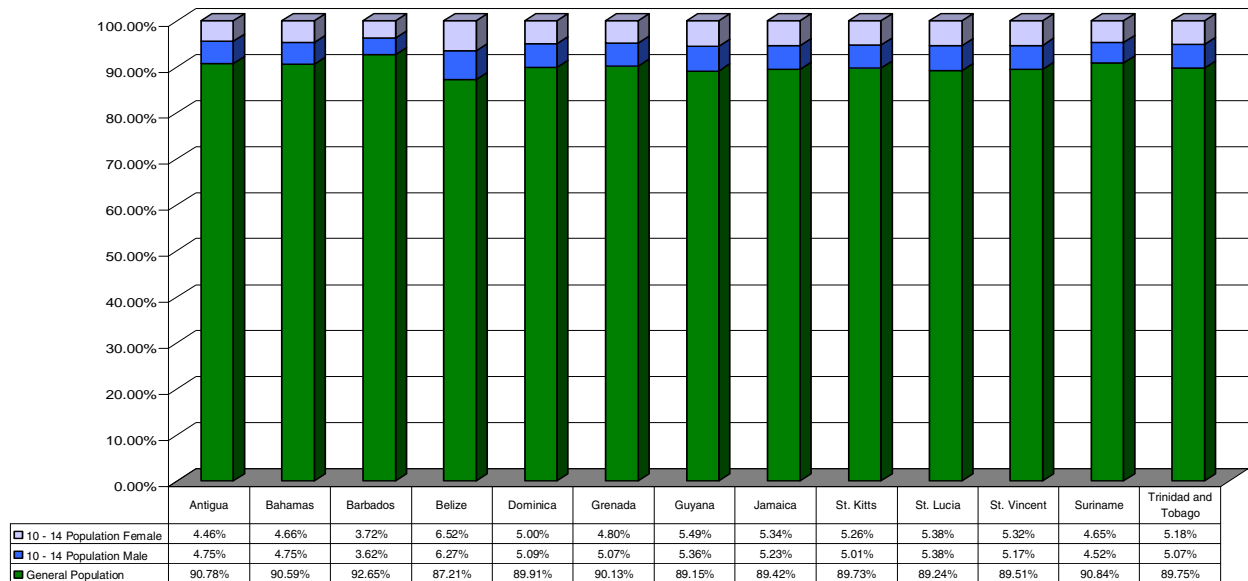
The Demographic Profile presented was compiled using CARICOM 2001 census data.

Given its consequences on programme and policy, it is imperative to establish clarity as to the category of youth under consideration. While estimates indicate that the general youth population (10 – 24) in the Caribbean is 30% of the general population, in all countries for which data were available, the 10-14 age cohort represents roughly 10% of the total population except for Belize where adolescents account for almost 13% of total population (See in Table 2.4 and Figure 2.1).

Table 2.4: Sex Distribution of adolescents 0 – 14 (Selected Territories)

Country	Total Country Population	Adult Population		10 - 14 Population			
		N	%	Male		Female	
				N	%	N	%
Antigua	63,863	57,978	90.78%	3,034	4.75%	2,851	4.46%
Bahamas	303,611	275,050	90.59%	14,412	4.75%	14,149	4.66%
Barbados	268,792	249,044	92.65%	9,738	3.62%	10,010	3.72%
Belize	232,111	202,423	87.21%	14,560	6.27%	15,128	6.52%
Dominica	69,625	62,602	89.91%	3,541	5.09%	3,482	5.00%
Grenada	102,598	92,470	90.13%	5,201	5.07%	4,927	4.80%
Guyana	751,223	669,731	89.15%	40,274	5.36%	41,218	5.49%
Jamaica	2,607,632	2,331,754	89.42%	136,506	5.23%	139,372	5.34%
Saint Kitts and Nevis	46,325	41,568	89.73%	2,322	5.01%	2,435	5.26%
Saint Lucia	157,490	140,540	89.24%	8,473	5.38%	8,477	5.38%
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	106,253	95,110	89.51%	5,493	5.17%	5,650	5.32%
Suriname	492,464	447,338	90.84%	22,246	4.52%	22,880	4.65%
Trinidad and Tobago	1,262,366	1,132,962	89.75%	64,037	5.07%	65,367	5.18%

Figure 2.1: Sex Distribution of adolescents 0 – 14 (Selected Territories)

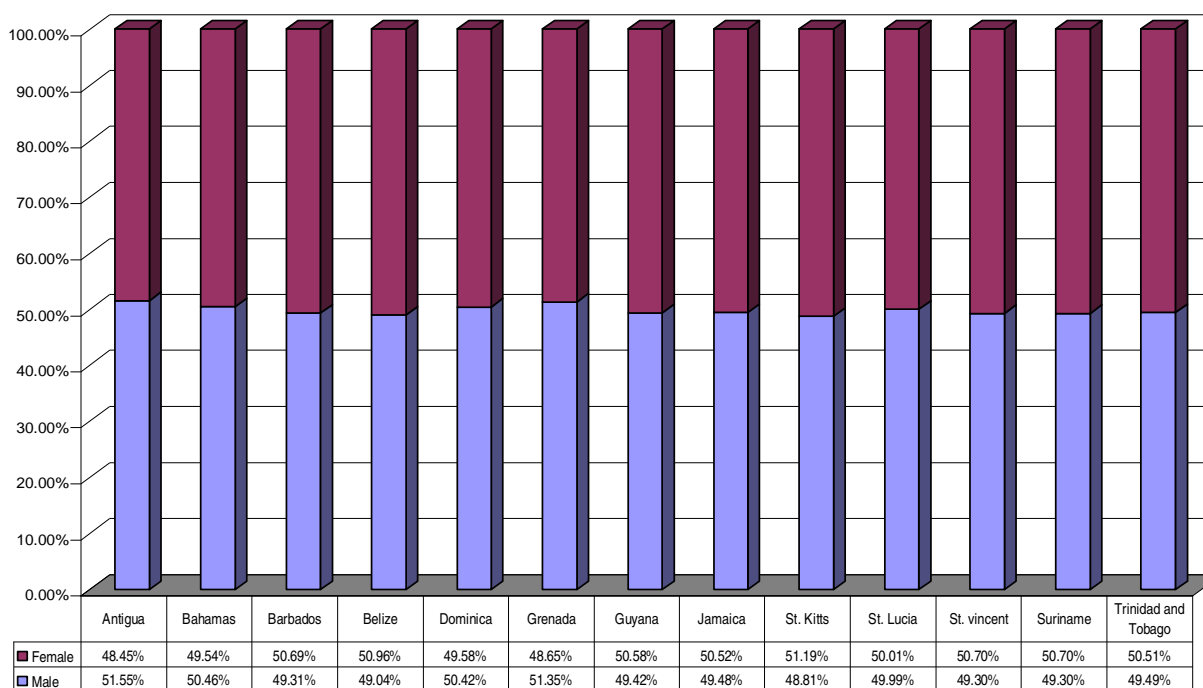


In relation to the sex distribution of the cohort, with the exceptions of Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Dominica and Grenada, females in the 10-14 age cohort represent larger percentages than males in that age group. This however, was only marginally so (Table 2.5 and Figure 2.2).

Table 2.5: Sex distribution of adolescents in the Caribbean (Selected Territories)

Country	10 - 14 Population				
	TOTAL Population	Male		Female	
		N	%	N	%
1. Antigua	5,885	3,034	51.55%	2,851	48.45%
2. Bahamas	28,561	14,412	50.46%	14,149	49.54%
3. Barbados	19,748	9,738	49.31%	10,010	50.69%
4. Belize	29,688	14,560	49.04%	15,128	50.96%
5. Dominica	7,023	3,541	50.42%	3,482	49.58%
6. Grenada	10,128	5,201	51.35%	4,927	48.65%
7. Guyana	81,492	40,274	49.42%	41,218	50.58%
8. Jamaica	275,878	136,506	49.48%	139,372	50.52%
9. Saint Kitts and Nevis	4,757	2,322	48.81%	2,435	51.19%
10. Saint Lucia	16,950	8,473	49.99%	8,477	50.01%
11. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	11,143	5,493	49.30%	5,650	50.70%
12. Suriname	45,126	22,246	49.30%	22,880	50.70%
13. Trinidad and Tobago	129,404	64,037	49.49%	65,367	50.51%

Figure 2.2: Sex distribution of adolescents in the Caribbean (Selected Territories)



Caribbean youth 10 – 14 are identified predominantly as Afro-Caribbean, with more than 40% males/females of the 10 countries for which data were available recording its ethnicity as Afro-Caribbean. Percentages of Chinese, Caucasian and East Indian also exist with the population, with almost equal proportions of Indo-Caribbean as Afro-Caribbean in Trinidad and Tobago. Relatively large proportions of youth within the cohort identified themselves as Indigenous peoples (Mayans, Carib and Taino) in Belize, Dominica and St. Vincent and the Grenadines respectively, as detailed in Figure 2.3 and Table 2.6.

Figure 2.3: Overall distribution of Ethnicity of adolescents in the Caribbean (Selected Territories)

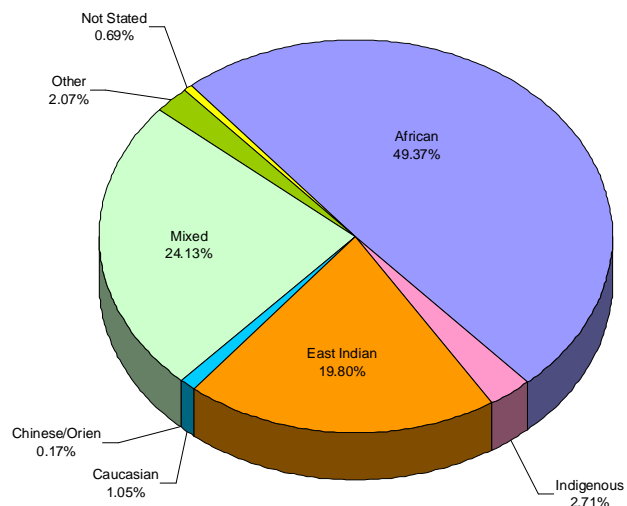


Table 2.6: Sex distribution of Ethnicity of adolescents in the Caribbean (Selected Territories)

Country	African		Indigenous		East Indian		Caucasian/White		Chinese/Oriental		Other	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Antigua	45.45%	47.94%	0.15%	0.08%	0.24%	0.14%	0.37%	0.41%	0.07%	0.00%	2.16%	2.99%
Barbados	47.35%	46.15%	0.00%	0.00%	0.51%	0.51%	1.16%	1.14%	0.01%	0.03%	1.61%	1.53%
Belize	0.06%	0.07%	9.08%	8.91%	1.32%	1.45%	2.10%	2.00%	0.34%	0.32%	38.07%	36.30%
Dominica	43.41%	43.38%	1.11%	1.39%	0.00%	0.00%	0.10%	0.13%	0.01%	0.01%	4.95%	5.51%
Grenada	43.36%	42.14%	0.07%	0.14%	0.94%	0.91%	0.14%	0.12%	0.00%	0.00%	5.52%	6.67%
Montserrat	46.62%	42.35%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	1.07%	0.36%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	5.69%	3.91%
St. Kitts	48.68%	46.45%	0.00%	0.02%	0.42%	0.34%	0.38%	0.42%	0.00%	0.00%	1.72%	1.58%
St. Lucia	41.42%	40.94%	0.27%	0.14%	0.93%	0.77%	0.09%	0.17%	0.01%	0.00%	7.23%	8.02%
St. Vincent	37.95%	35.68%	1.66%	1.41%	0.40%	0.42%	0.23%	0.16%	0.01%	0.00%	10.48%	11.60%
Trinidad	19.32%	18.70%	0.00%	0.00%	18.43%	17.92%	0.20%	0.18%	0.08%	0.07%	12.49%	12.60%

Similarly, consistent with trends in the overall population, Caribbean youth 10 – 14 are a predominantly Christian group. Not surprisingly, exceptions are registered in Trinidad, with its East Indian population, much of which subscribes to Hinduism and Islam.

It is noteworthy, that in most instances, there were more females than males within the 10 – 14 age cohort being identified as belonging to Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism.

In the instance of Islam, more females than males were identified as members of the faith, in five of the eight countries for which data is presented.

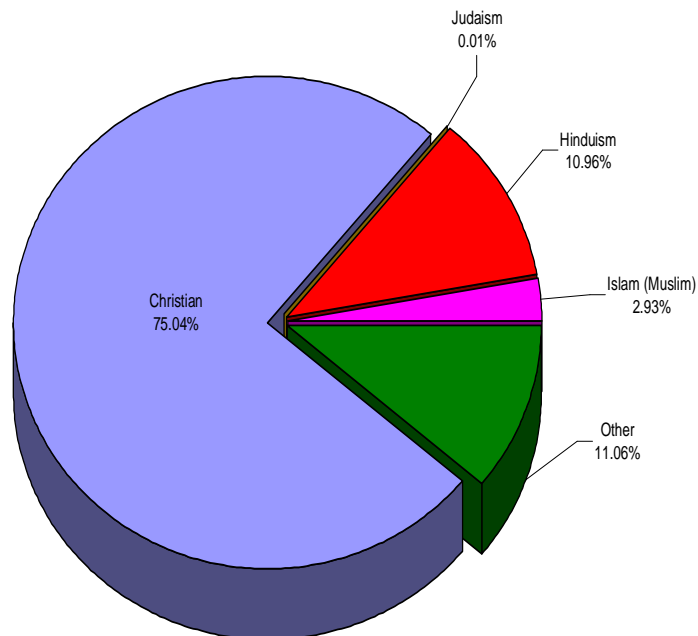


Figure 2.4: Overall Distribution of Religion of adolescents in the Caribbean (Selected Territories)

It is interesting too that in every instance, there was a larger percentage of males than females in the 10- 14 age group that were considered to subscribe to religions other than Christianity, Judaism, Islam or Hinduism. These “Other” religions would have included; Rastafarianism, the Bahai faith, other non-Christian denominations and no religion (See Figure 2.4 and Table 2.7).

Table 2.7: Sex Distribution of Religion of adolescents in the Caribbean (Selected Territories)

Country	Christian		Judaism		Hinduism		Islam (Muslim)		Other	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Antigua and Barbuda	48.3%	51.7%	0.0%	0.0%	40.0%	60.0%	23.1%	76.9%	52.9%	47.1%
Bahamas	49.5%	50.5%	38.5%	61.5%	47.1%	52.9%	35.7%	64.3%	56.0%	44.0%
Barbados	49.7%	50.3%	28.6%	71.4%	54.0%	46.0%	47.7%	52.3%	56.4%	43.6%
Belize	51.0%	49.0%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	50.8%	49.2%
Dominica	49.3%	50.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	57.1%	42.9%	57.2%	42.8%
Grenada	49.6%	50.4%	0.0%	0.0%	66.7%	33.3%	77.8%	22.2%	53.8%	46.2%
St. Kitts and Nevis	51.1%	48.9%	0.0%	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	57.1%	42.9%	51.8%	48.2%
Trinidad	50.2%	49.8%	0.0%	0.0%	50.8%	49.2%	51.8%	48.2%	50.5%	49.5%

With regards household structure, the largest proportion of both males and females within the 10-14 age group lived in households in which they considered their parent(s) the head. As expected, given traditional familial forms in the region, sizeable percentages also lived in households in which their grand-parent or some other relative was the head, though this was to a lesser degree in the latter instance. It is of note however; that there were instances in which persons of this cohort listed their head of household as a spouse (Antigua, Belize, Dominica, and St. Lucia) suggesting early marriage or an in-law (Antigua, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts, St. Vincent and Trinidad and Tobago) suggesting either early marriage or living with a married sibling whose in-law is head of household.

Table 2.8: Sex distribution of Headship of household in the Caribbean (Selected Territories)

Country	Spouse/Partner		Son/Daughter		Son/Daughter-in-Law		Grandchild		Other Relative		Non Relative	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Antigua	0.00%	0.02%	35.56%	37.31%	0.73%	0.46%	6.34%	7.03%	4.35%	5.03%	1.46%	1.72%
Bahamas	0.00%	0.00%	38.72%	39.55%	0.00%	0.00%	8.13%	8.03%	2.27%	2.49%	0.42%	0.39%
Barbados	0.00%	0.00%	35.21%	34.35%	0.00%	0.00%	10.80%	10.54%	3.41%	3.21%	1.21%	1.27%
Belize	0.01%	0.08%	43.45%	41.89%	0.01%	0.08%	3.96%	3.64%	2.85%	2.66%	0.68%	0.69%
Dominica	0.00%	0.01%	33.74%	34.28%	0.57%	0.28%	9.92%	9.11%	4.16%	4.99%	1.20%	1.74%
Grenada	0.00%	0.00%	34.46%	34.77%	0.09%	0.06%	8.67%	8.35%	4.88%	4.87%	1.92%	1.94%
Montserrat	0.00%	0.00%	39.86%	38.79%	0.00%	0.00%	3.56%	3.20%	5.34%	1.78%	3.91%	3.56%
St. Kitts	0.00%	0.00%	39.96%	37.04%	0.29%	0.36%	6.13%	6.47%	3.76%	4.08%	1.03%	0.88%
St. Lucia	0.01%	0.02%	37.02%	36.93%	0.00%	0.00%	6.95%	6.69%	4.49%	4.71%	1.48%	1.71%
St. Vincent	0.00%	0.00%	33.51%	31.18%	0.05%	0.05%	10.47%	10.02%	4.63%	5.19%	2.06%	2.84%
Trinidad	0.00%	0.00%	40.57%	39.67%	0.13%	0.17%	7.16%	6.92%	2.34%	2.42%	0.29%	0.33%

Consistent with the age range, the largest proportion of 10 - 14 year olds in the territories for which data were available were in receipt of at least a primary level education. Not surprisingly, smaller proportions of the age cohort in all countries reported completing secondary level education. Of note is the fact that there was a small proportion of males (1.59%) and a slightly smaller proportion of females (1.45%) reported not completely education at either level (See Figure 2.5). When the data are disaggregated by country this was most marked in Belize where 28.88% males and 31.71% females reported having not attained primary or secondary level education (See Table 2.9).

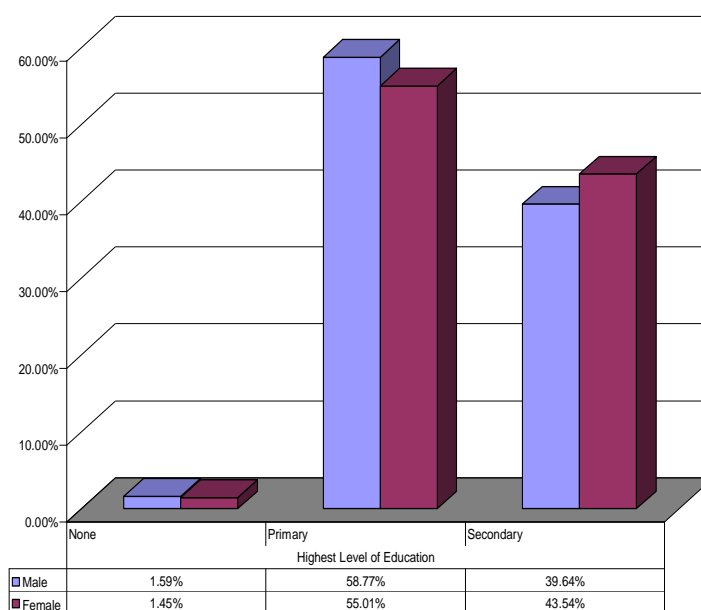


Figure 2.5: Overall Sex distribution of highest level of education attained among adolescents in the Caribbean (Selected Territories)

Table 2.9: Sex distribution of highest level of education attained among adolescents in the Caribbean (Selected Territories)

COUNTRY	None					Primary					Secondary				
	Male		Female		Both	Male		Female		Both	Male		Female		Both
	N	%	N	%	N	N	%	N	%	N	N	%	N	%	N
Antigua	1	0.04%	0	0.00%	1	1,068	43.34%	1,312	53.25%	2,380	35	1.42%	48	1.95%	83
Bahamas	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	6,284	22.11%	5,895	20.74%	12,179	7,797	27.43%	8,446	29.72%	16,244
Barbados	4	0.02%	3	0.02%	7	3,948	21.83%	3,706	20.49%	7,654	5,193	28.72%	5,229	28.92%	10,422
Belize	807	28.88%	886	31.71%	1,693	480	17.18%	618	22.12%	1,098	0	0.00%	3	0.11%	3
Dominica	21	0.32%	13	0.20%	34	2,123	31.97%	1,793	27.00%	3,916	1,140	17.17%	1,551	23.35%	2,691
Grenada	50	0.48%	24	0.23%	74	3,735	35.56%	2,949	28.08%	6,684	1,452	13.82%	2,294	21.84%	3,746
Montserrat	2	0.79%	0	0.00%	2	68	26.88%	60	23.72%	128	68	26.88%	55	21.74%	123
St. Kitts	22	0.47%	20	0.42%	42	1,269	26.82%	1,157	24.46%	2,426	1,128	23.84%	1,135	23.99%	2,263
St. Lucia	338	2.66%	286	2.25%	624	5,032	39.66%	4,873	38.41%	9,904	897	7.07%	1,261	9.94%	2,148
St. Vincent	54	0.49%	30	0.27%	84	4,253	38.70%	3,577	32.55%	7,840	1,257	11.44%	1,818	16.54%	3,075
Trinidad	347	0.30%	228	0.20%	575	33,890	29.75%	31,941	28.04%	65,831	23,208	20.37%	24,312	21.34%	47,520

Section Three

REVIEW OF PRIORITY ISSUES



3. SOCIO ECONOMIC SITUATION OF YOUTH

OVERVIEW

In this section three approaches to defining poverty are briefly explored: poverty as economic deprivation, as denial of human rights and as deprivation of basic capabilities. Concerns about adolescent poverty are situated in relation to the Convention on the Rights of the Child which speaks to individuals up to 18 years of age and therefore includes adolescents.

The main source reviewed in relation to child poverty globally is the UNICEF sponsored report on Child Poverty in Developing Countries which examines this issue in relation to deprivation of the basic needs of shelter, food, safe drinking water, sanitation and health, information and access to education.

The situation of poverty in the Caribbean context is positioned in relation to recent shifts in geo-political significance of Caribbean countries, the impact of the end of the Cold war and the loss of Foreign Directed Investments (FDIs) as well as new global trading arrangements which have eroded long protected markets for Caribbean products. Poverty rates during the 1990s are presented for 13 Caribbean countries.

In the absence of data on poverty in children from a regional perspective, trends in the relation to the impact of poverty on households and ultimately children in the Latin America and Caribbean area are derived from the Report on Child poverty in Developing Countries and in this regard urban/rural and male/female differences are included. Highlights with regard to poverty in children from country-specific reports are also presented.

Finally, based on the foregoing, recommendations for more accurate assessments of poverty in children, with a focus on adolescents, and for responding to issues of poverty in children are suggested.

3.1 Defining Poverty

Ultimately, poverty can be explained as a human condition characterized by the sustained or chronic deprivation of the resources, capabilities, choices, security and power necessary for the enjoyment of an adequate standard of living and other civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights²⁹." It is a condition resulting from social and economic structural weaknesses. Hence the characteristics associated with poverty are not merely personal deficiencies that need to be repaired or reformed, but are rather products of the economic and social forces within which poor people function that require institutional and structural change. These characteristics associated with poverty do not exist in isolation but relate to each other in very dynamic ways, thereby creating conditions that contribute to the complexities associated with poverty³⁰.

The first Millennium Development Goal (MDG) seeks to eradicate poverty and hunger by 2015; and uses as an indicator the halving of people whose income is less than one United States dollar a day. The World Development Report of 2001³¹ suggests that "...to be poor is to be hungry, to lack shelter and clothing, to be sick and not cared for, to be illiterate and not schooled."

These two definitions reflect two of the three most popular approaches to measuring poverty: as an Economic issue and as an issue of Human Rights respectively with the capabilities approach being the third popular measure. However, most scholars agree that poverty is multidimensional, and that while several approaches to measuring poverty can be identified there is no conclusive definition of the phenomenon.

3.1.1 Poverty as Economy

Economic deprivation or the lack of income, however, is a standard feature of most definitions of poverty. Nolan and Whelan (1996)³² define poverty in terms of the inability to participate in society owing to lack of resources. The economic definition of poverty is centered on those areas of life where consumption or participation are determined primarily by command over financial resources. While the definition is useful as a fundamental description of poverty, it does not consider the myriad social, cultural and political aspects of poverty, which are subsequent and attendant to a lack of economic resources.

3.1.2 Poverty as Human Rights

Many theorists believe that a human rights approach is needed in the definition of poverty, which includes an examination of access to the civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights, which facilitate an adequate standard of living.

²⁹ www.unhchr.ch/development/poverty-02.html

³⁰ Inequality and Poverty in the Eastern Caribbean

³¹ *World Development Report 2000/2001: A Strategy for Attacking Poverty*. Published for the World Bank. Oxford University Press.

³² Nolan, B. & Wheeler, C.T. 1996. Measuring poverty using Income and Deprivation Indicators: Alternative Approaches. *Journal of European Social Policy*. Vol.6 No.3: 225-240.

One such definition suggests that:

"The lack of basic security connotes the absence of one or more factors enabling individuals and families to assume basic responsibilities and to enjoy fundamental rights. The situation may become widespread and result in more serious and permanent consequences. The lack of basic security leads to chronic poverty when it simultaneously affects several aspects of people's lives, when it is prolonged and when it severely compromises people's chances of regaining their rights and of reassuming their responsibilities in the foreseeable future."³³

Many of these issues, some of which are crucial to a human rights analysis, cannot adequately be reflected in the statistical indicators adopted by a purely economic approach.

3.1.3 Poverty as Capabilities

In addition to an approach which measures the extent to which basic human rights are compromised, some theorists suggest that an even more comprehensive definition is required, which considers poverty as the deprivation of basic capabilities rather than merely as lowness of income or even a low standard of living. This approach is grounded in the work of Amartya Sen, who considers poverty as a denial of choices and opportunities for living a tolerable life. Sen's Capabilities approach³⁴ offers insights that allow for a broader conceptualization of poverty, which not just analyses income and living standards, but determines why they matter to the kind of life that a person is able to lead and the choices and opportunities open to him/her in leading that life. The human poverty and development indices developed by the United Nations reflect Sen's approach to poverty as capability deprivation and has informed policy formation with regards to poverty alleviation through the establishment of a process of enlarging people's choices by ensuring a corresponding expansion of their capabilities.

A useful definition of poverty as capabilities comes from the UN statement signed by the heads of UN agencies in 1998 which states that:

Fundamentally, poverty is a denial of choices and opportunities, a violation of human dignity. It means lack of basic capacity to participate effectively in society. It means not having enough to feed and cloth a family, not having a school or clinic to go to, not having the land on which to grow one's food or a job to earn one's living, not having access to credit. It means insecurity, powerlessness and exclusion of individuals, households and communities. It means susceptibility to violence, and it often implies living on marginal or fragile environments, without access to clean water or sanitation."³⁵

³³ An early description of poverty from a human rights perspective was proposed by Father Wresinski, the founder of ATD Fourth World, in 1987. www.unhchr.ch/development/poverty-02.html - 10k -

³⁴ Kuklys, W. Studies in Choice and Welfare. *Amartya Sen's Capability Approach: Theoretical Insights and Empirical Applications*.

³⁵ Economic and Social Council. June 1998. Statement of Commitment of the Administrative Committee on Coordination for Action to Eradicate Poverty. E/1998/73.

3.2 Adolescent Poverty

The Convention on the Rights of the Child which covers individuals under the age of 18 years and therefore includes 10 to 14 year olds, sets universal legal standards for the protection of children guaranteeing to them their basic human rights including survival, development and full participation in social, cultural, educational and other endeavours necessary for their individual growth and well-being. The Convention is based on the principles that empowerment of individuals in this age group with knowledge and resources to meet their basic human needs and to grow to their full potential should be a primary goal of national development, as their individual development and social contribution will shape the future of the world.

The Report on Child Poverty in the Developing World³⁶ points to the fact that poverty is one of the greatest obstacles to the survival and development of children, as it denies children their fundamental human rights. Moreover, severe or extreme poverty can cause children permanent damage – both physically and mentally – stunt and distort their development and destroy opportunities of fulfilment, including the roles they are expected to play successively as they get older in family, community and society. Although no explicit statement is made of the age range under consideration, data presented covers birth to 18 years.

Despite the recognition of the importance of preventing poverty in children and implications for national and global development, the World Youth Report (2003)³⁷ suggests that that young people between the ages of 15 and 24 have also been neglected in poverty reduction strategies, in part because there was little poverty research focused specifically on young people and a consequent lack of relevant data disaggregated by age. Poverty among children and youth is therefore often measured from the perspective of household poverty.

The UNICEF sponsored Report on Child Poverty in the Developing World,³⁸ suggests that poverty among children (including those in the 10-14 age group) can be measured through the following indicators;

1. Food

- Under-nutrition is a significant intervening factor in the levels of morbidity and mortality. Children whose heights and weights for their age is more than –3 standard deviations below the median of the international reference population are considered to be poor.

2. Safe Drinking Water

- Children should not have to use unsafe (or unimproved) sources of water, such as lakes, ponds or streams, as these may become contaminated and dangerous. Communities need to have access to safe water (piped water, stand-pumps, covered wells and so on), through services that they can afford, run and maintain themselves. Distance to the water source is

³⁶ Gordon, D. *et al.* *Child Poverty in the Developing World*. University of Bristol. Townsend Centre for international Poverty Research.

³⁷ World Youth Report 2003. *The global situation of young people*. Department of Economic and Social Affairs. United Nations.

³⁸ Gordon, D. *et al.* *Child Poverty in the Developing World*. University of Bristol. Townsend Centre for international Poverty Research.

of special significance to children since they often help collect and carry the water. Carrying water over long distances can result in injuries, especially to necks and backs, and the time spent collecting water can impact on school attendance. children who only had access to surface water (for example, rivers) for drinking or who lived in households where the nearest source of water was more than 15 minutes away are considered poor.

3. Health and Sanitation

- Children are particularly affected by poor sanitation, since it is directly linked to the most serious of childhood illnesses such as diarrhoea and malnutrition. Children who have no access to a toilet of any kind in the vicinity of their dwelling, for instance, no private or communal toilets or latrines; as children who had not been immunised against any diseases or who had a recent illness involving diarrhoea and had not received any medical advice or treatment are considered poor.

4. Shelter

- Overcrowded dwellings facilitate the transmission of disease (for example, respiratory infections, measles). They can also result in increased stress and mental health problems for both adults and children and lead to accidents and injuries. Additionally, poor quality shelter, constructed from inferior materials, does not protect against the elements and leaves inhabitants susceptible to natural disasters. Children in dwellings with more than five people per room (severe overcrowding) or with no flooring material (for example, a mud floor) are considered poor.

5. Education and Information

- Children aged between 7 and 18 who had never been to school and were not currently attending school (no professional education of any kind). Children between the ages of 3 and 18 with no access to radio, television, telephone or newspapers at home are considered poor.

The extent to which children have access to these basic needs determine the extent to which they experience poverty. Table 3.1 gives additional detail:

Table 3.1: Operational definitions of deprivation for children

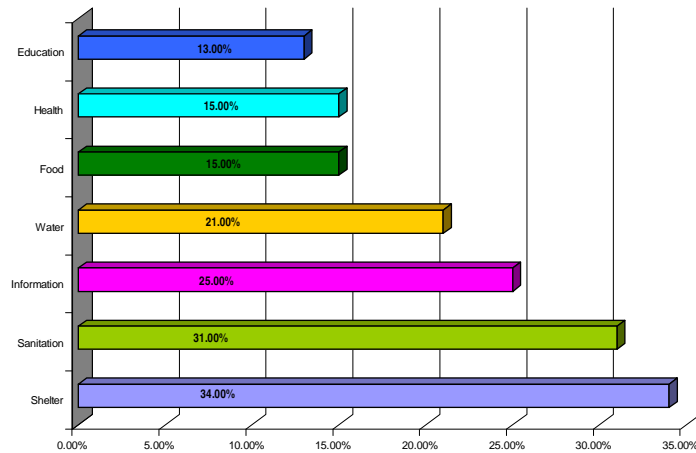
Deprivation	Mild	Moderate	Severe	Extreme
Food	Bland diet of poor nutritional value	Going hungry on occasion	Malnutrition	Starvation
Safe drinking water	Not having enough water on occasion due to lack of sufficient money	No access to water in dwelling but communal piped water available within 200m of dwelling or less than 15 minutes walk away	Long walk to water source (more than 200m or longer than 15 minutes). Unsafe drinking water (eg open water)	No access to water
Sanitation facilities	Having to share facilities with another household	Sanitation facilities outside dwelling	No sanitation facilities in or near dwelling	No access to sanitation facilities
Health	Occasional lack of access to medical care due to insufficient money	Inadequate medical care	No immunisation against diseases. Only limited non-professional medical care available when sick	No medical care
Shelter	Dwelling in poor repair. More than 1 person per room	Few facilities in dwelling, lack of heating, structural problems. More than 3 people per room	No facilities in house, non-permanent structure, no privacy, no flooring, just one or two rooms. More than 5 people per room	Roofless – no shelter
Education	Inadequate teaching due to lack of resources	Unable to attend secondary but can attend primary education	Child is 7 or older and has received no primary or secondary education	Prevented from learning due to persecution and prejudice
Information	Cannot afford newspapers or books	No television but can afford a radio	No access to radio, television or books or newspapers	Prevented from gaining access to information by government, etc

Source: Child Poverty in the Developing World. David Gordon et al

In developing countries, over one third of all children are severely deprived of shelter, while just under one third are deprived of adequate sanitation facilities. One quarter of all children are deprived in terms of access to information while one fifth are deprived in terms of access to clean drinking water. Over ten percent of the world's children are severely deprived of food as well as education and health services (See Table 3.1).³⁹

³⁹ Gordon, D. *et al. Child Poverty in the Developing World*. University of Bristol. Townsend Centre for international Poverty Research.

Figure 3.1: Percentage of Children severely deprived of basic human needs



Source: Child Poverty in the Developing World. David Gordon et al

3.3 Caribbean Poverty

Over the last two decades, the economies of the Caribbean have undergone significant shifts relative to the loss of their geo-political significance with the end of the Cold War and the consequence withdrawal of aid and other FDI to Eastern Europe. Additionally, new global trading arrangements have unsettled decades-old trading relationships and have threatened the sustainability of many regional economies such as Dominica, Saint Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, where employment and incomes plummeted in the latter half of the 1990s⁴⁰. More recently, international security challenges have proven problematic for services markets, particularly tourism, on which many regional states depend. Additionally, environment characteristics that render Caribbean countries susceptible to natural disasters, such as hurricanes, storms and (volcanic eruptions) have occurred with increased frequency over the last decade.

Despite these developments, success has been registered in some Caribbean societies, in which social and economic transformations have occurred, raising the standard of living and improving infrastructural development. In fact, comparatively speaking, the Caribbean ranks within the middle to upper ranks of world development.

However, while the region is ranked highly in terms of human development, poverty and inequality remain serious development challenges and large numbers of the region's population continue to face rising levels of poverty, as the avenues for the generation of employment and income at rates that will enable life above the poverty line remain constrained. Poverty rates in various Caribbean countries are set out in Table 3.2 and the percentage of persons living below the poverty line in Table 3.3. Caribbean countries in which more than 30% of the populations experience poverty are Suriname (76.5%), Guyana (43.2%), St. Vincent and the Grenadines (37.5%), Belize (33.5%) and Grenada (32.1%).

⁴⁰ *Nutrition, gender and poverty In the Caribbean sub region.* UN ECLAC. October 2007.

Table 3.2: Caribbean Poverty, Selected Countries

Country	Population (Thousands)	Year of Poverty Estimate	Poverty Rate % of Population
Antigua and Barbuda	73	Start of 1990's	12
Bahamas	317	2001	9
Barbados	271	1997	13.9
Belize	261	2002	33.5
Dominica	79	2002	39
Grenada	80	1998	32.1
Guyana	767	1993	43.2
Haiti	8,988	2001	75
Jamaica	2,676	1990	28.4
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	121	1996	37.5
St. Lucia	150	1995	25.1
Suriname	439	1993	76.5
Trinidad and Tobago	1,307	1992	21.2

Source: ECLAC – Millennium Development Goals: A Latin American and Caribbean Perspective in Nutrition, Gender and Poverty in the Caribbean Sub region

Table 3.3: Caribbean Poverty, Selected Countries

Country	Year of Poverty Assessment	% Below Poverty Line
Barbados	1997	13.9
Belize	1996	33.0
Grenada	1999	32.1
Guyana	1999	35.0
Jamaica	2001	16.8
St. Kitts and Nevis	2000	30.5
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	1996	37.5
Trinidad and Tobago	1992	21.2

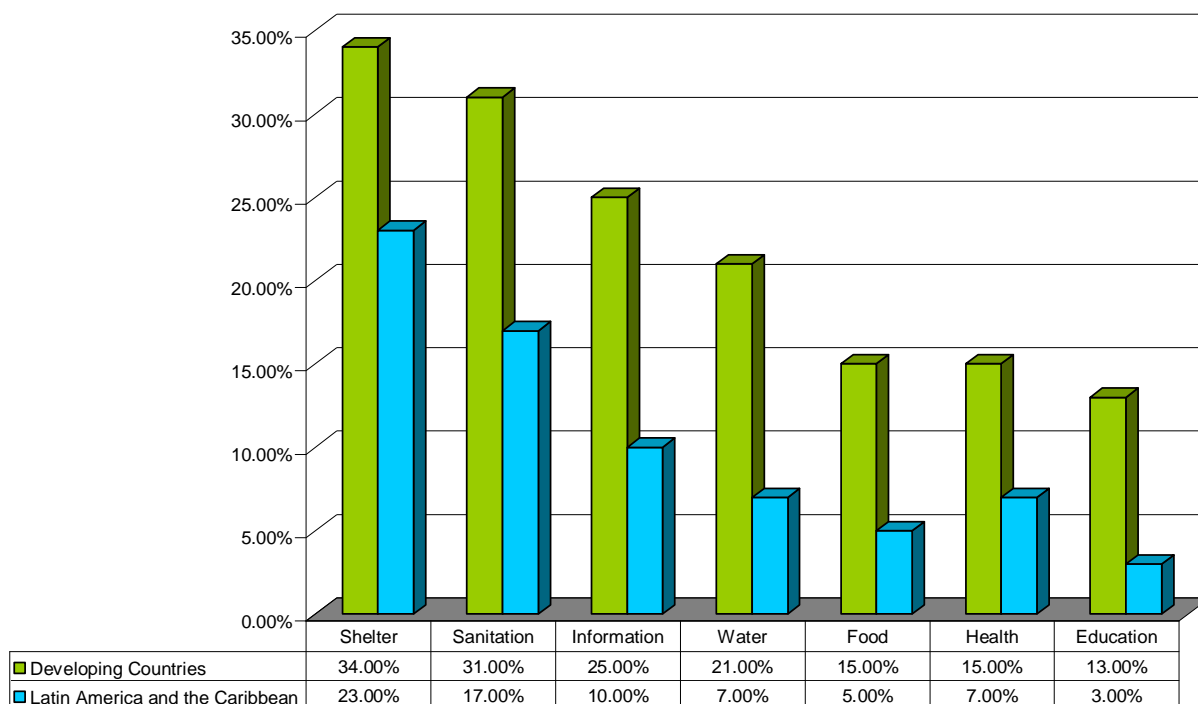
Source: Nutrition, Gender and Poverty in the Caribbean Sub Region

3.4 Poverty among Children/Adolescents in the Caribbean

Although various Caribbean countries have carried out poverty assessments, few have focused their research on child poverty and less on poverty in the adolescent 10 to 14 age group. Most information on poverty on children is therefore subsumed in household surveys. In this regard, gender is an important factor in an analysis of child poverty, as most households in poverty in the Caribbean are female headed. This is of note, given that gender norms in the Caribbean allocate child rearing tasks to women. To adequately address issues of poverty then, gender must become a unit of economic analysis – linking the relationship between the household and the role of women in the economy. The omission of gender as a key unit of analysis in the development and application of fiscal policy constitute a major bias, since it treats the male as the breadwinner with responsibility for use and control of financial resources within the household.

The only source providing a regional perspective on poverty in children was the Report on Child Poverty in the Developing World and even then the Caribbean was amalgamated with Latin America. The trends presented, however, give some indication of the situation. Data were provided in relation to the extent of extreme deprivation of basic human needs.

Figure 3.2: Extreme deprivation of children’s basic needs in LAC compared with children in all developing countries



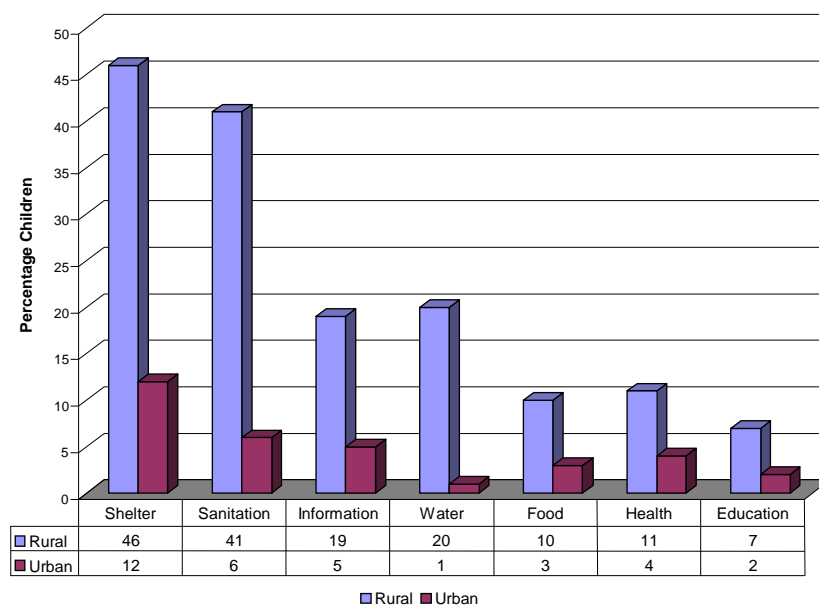
Source: David Gordon *et al.* Child Poverty in the Developing World.

Compared with the trends for all developing countries, a similar pattern was evident for the Latin America and Caribbean region with greatest deprivation for children evident in access to shelter (23.0%) with gradually decreasing proportions for sanitation (17%), information (10%), safe drinking water as well as health services (7%) and food and education (5%) [See Figure 3.2].

Children in rural areas in LAC are at much higher risk for deprivation than those in urban areas. Overall 35% of all children suffered from one or more severe deprivations and the proportion of rural children suffering deprivations ranged from 46% compared with 12% to 2% of urban children (See Figure 3.3). Consistent with this the overall percentage of children in LAC living in absolute poverty was reported as 17% but when disaggregated on the basis of location this was the case for 41% of rural children compared with 6% of those in urban settings.⁴¹

⁴¹ Gordon, D. *et al.* *Child Poverty in the Developing World*. University of Bristol. Townsend Centre for international Poverty Research.

Figure 3.3: Deprivation of basic needs in children in Latin America and the Caribbean by rural/urban location



Source: David Gordon *et al.* Child Poverty in the Developing World

Table 3.3: Caribbean Child Malnutrition Indicators by Sex, Selected Countries

Country	% Underweight		% Stunted		% Wasted	
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
Antigua	11	9	5	8	11	9
Barbados	7	4	8	7	4	4
Dominica	6	2	4	5	1	2
Guyana	11	12	20	22	9	8
Haiti	28	27	32	32	7	8
Jamaica	6	9	5	12	4	3
St. Lucia	16	12	11	11	6	6
Trinidad and Tobago	7	6	4	5	3	3

Data presented in Table 3.4 provide information on food deprivation and the incidence of malnutrition in selected Caribbean countries and indicate that both sexes are affected, some more severely than others.

3.5 Country Specific Issues

Country specific reports yielded limited information on the impacts of poverty on the 10- 14 age group. Findings and the source from which information was extracted are summarised below:

1. *The Impact of HIV/AIDS on Children in Belize – UNICEF Belize - October 2004*⁴²

- Children make up poorest group – 39% of children living in poverty. (p.29)
- Poverty rate among children higher in rural areas (51%), Toledo district (84.5%) and Maya children (83.3%). No significant difference between boys and girls (p.29)
- Poverty rate among children has implications including malnutrition, school absenteeism and dropout and child labour. (p.29)
- 2000 Census recorded 8 households (out of 52,000) with a head under the age of 15 (p.35) known as child-headed households
- Child labour characteristically a rural practice (p.38)
- One-third of child labour occurs among children aged under 12 years. (p.38)
- Child labour is most prevalent in Toledo district among Maya children. 14.0% of 5-17 year olds are economically active and the rate increases with age. (p.38)
- Three times as many boys as girls engaged in child labour but more girls than boys are engaged in unpaid domestic labour (p.29)
- 79% of children engaged in child labour are in rural areas. (p.38)

2. *Belize*⁴³

- Among poor children 0-14 years, 71.7% were living with both parents, while only 4.5% were living with neither parent. (p.30)
- 22.1% of poor children living with a single parent were more likely to live with their mother, compared to 1.8% with their father. (p.30)
- High rate of poverty means that 2 out of every 5 children do not have their food and non-food needs met. (p.30)
- Universal access to primary education, however as they matriculate for secondary school, access influenced by poverty status. (p.xiii)
- Poorest children had least access to secondary education (p.xiii)
- Children pass the Primary School Examination (PSE) and parents cannot afford to send them to high school. (p.48)

3. *Belize*⁴⁴

- No projects or programmes in Belize to address the issue of child labour. (p.25)

⁴² *The Impact of HIV/AIDS on Children in Belize: A rapid assessment and response process.* Mark Loudon for UNICEF Belize. Draft 1 – 17 October 2004

⁴³ *Government of Belize 2002 Poverty Assessment Report.* Government of Belize National Human Development Advisory Committee June 2004.

⁴⁴ *Belize National Research on the Incidence of Child Abuse and Neglect.* Prepared by Dr. Joseph Iyo and Dr. Roy Young for the National Organisation for the prevention of child abuse and neglect July 2003.

4. *Guyana*⁴⁵

- A typical Guyanese street child is a male child, who is more likely to be of African descent, from a matrifocal, single parent, low income, no income, overcrowded family structure. He is between the ages of 9 and 17 years and has made the street his home because he is tired of physical and verbal abuse and neglect. He is likely to have lost one or both parents. (p.4)
- Nine out of ten street children roam the streets because of poverty. (p.43)
- The age and target range of street children is 9-17 years. (p.43)
- The vulnerabilities of children on the streets include: drugs, HIV/AIDS, violence, exploitation. (p.44)
- The Drop-in-Centre of the Ministry of Labour, Human Services and Social Security caters to the needs of twenty-four (24) live-in children. (p.49)

5. *Jamaica*⁴⁶

- It is an offence under the Child Care and Protection Act of 2004 to employ a child under the age of 13 years to perform any work – known as Child Labour (p.236)
- A child between 13 and 15 years old may be employed to do certain light work under conditions prescribed by the Ministry of Labour (p.236)

3.6 Challenges/opportunities in addressing adolescent poverty

The literature review, although not focused exclusively on the adolescent age group, 10 to 14 years, pointed to challenges and/or opportunities related to poverty among children and youth.

3.6.1 Challenges highlighted included:

1. Quite often, only data collected over time can produce the basic information needed to quantify the “volatility and vulnerability that poor households say is so important” (World Bank, 2001). Single-observation survey data cannot be used to track people's movements in and out of poverty and therefore cannot be used to identify vulnerabilities; “the challenge is to find indicators of vulnerability that can identify at-risk households and populations beforehand” (World Bank, 2001, p. 19).
2. A lack of data, disaggregated by sex and age, with which to adequately assess vulnerability in the adolescent age group and guide policy.

⁴⁵ Street Children in Guyana. (No citation)

⁴⁶ Poverty among Jamaican Children. Christopher Smith in Promoting Child Rights: Selected Proceeding of the Caribbean Child Research Conference, 2006. Edited by Aldrie Henry-Lee and Julie Meeks Gardner

3. Data with regards to child and adolescent poverty in most instances are deduced from household surveys and not from focused research.
4. Throughout the region, children are the most poor of the population
5. The high incidence of poverty among children particularly in rural areas has implications including malnutrition, school absenteeism and dropout and child labour
6. A higher incidence of child and adolescent poverty among single parent households, particularly in the instance that the parent was female
7. A higher incidence of rural poverty in relation to urban poverty
8. Street children are generally male between the ages of 9 and 17 and most likely to be of African descent, from a matrifocal, single parent, low income family structure.
9. The vulnerabilities of children on the streets include: drugs, HIV/AIDS, violence, exploitation.

3.6.2 Opportunities identified for addressing poverty included:

1. Include youth in the Poverty measurements and disaggregate data on poverty by age, sex and location as these factors nuance the experience of poverty.
2. Develop a comprehensive social protection strategy for Caribbean nations, starting with the establishment of the risks and vulnerabilities of each country. Having identified these risks, policy makers will be better able to implement specific programmes targeted at the various groups which experience poverty.
3. Use education and training as “spring boards” for individuals in a society. Because one’s vulnerability is reduced through education, education and training become critical tools in addressing poverty and the behaviours associated with poverty.
4. Strengthen the institutional framework for the delivery of social protection programmes ensuring an inter-sectoral approach
5. Ensure collaboration between the various ministries and agencies which develop and offer to social protection strategies. A single uniform data base of current and potential beneficiaries should be established. This database should be shared via internet or intranet with all institutions (government and non-government organizations).
6. Monitor and evaluate all social protections programmes, collecting baseline data from which to measure impact.

4. HEALTH and WELLBEING

OVERVIEW

Based on the WHO age guidelines, adolescent health is defined as the state of optimal physical, emotional, cognitive, social and spiritual well-being in youth aged 10-24 years old and healthy adolescents are described as being characterized by an ability to realize individual potential around critical developmental tasks.

The literature reviewed on adolescent health in the Caribbean focused primarily on HIV/AIDS and on sexual and reproductive health. Although to a lesser extent, other issues of concern considered include:

1. Tobacco, alcohol and other substance abuse
2. Emotional wellbeing
3. Rape
4. Violence

The main trends in HIV/AIDS infection rates are highlighted and the impact of early sexual initiation coupled with low condom use is presented as major factors driving the epidemic. Findings from a Behavioural Surveillance Survey (BSS) on trends in HIV - related knowledge, attitudes and behaviours carried out in six Eastern Caribbean countries as well as a UNICEF Study in three of these six countries provide the main source of information of the impacts of HIV/AIDS on the Caribbean adolescents.

The main concern discussed, in relation to the sexual and reproductive health of adolescents, is the high incidence of teenage pregnancy and related risk behaviours including early sexual initiation, abortion and the impact on schooling of girls.

Findings related to adolescent health and well being from country based reports are also itemised.

Challenges and opportunities identified from the literature review are listed. Note is made of the fact that findings of research studies point to the fact that the most protective factor in relation to all facets of adolescent health and well being is parental connectedness.

4.1 Introduction

The World Health Organisation acknowledges that there are overlapping definitions of youth, adolescents and young people and to eliminate confusion on these definitions, WHO clearly defines adolescence as the period of life between 10-19 years, youth as between 15- 24 years and young people as those between 10-24 years. In their approach to adolescent health the interchanging definition of youth and adolescence has been countered by accepting that the dynamic transitions of this stage of life have as much to do with biological aspects as with socio-cultural conditions. The World Health Organisation, therefore, often deals with the health of youth and adolescents together.⁴⁷

Based on the WHO age guidelines, adolescent health is defined as the state of optimal physical, emotional, cognitive, social and spiritual well-being in youth aged 10-24 years old and healthy adolescents are described as being characterized by an ability to realize individual potential around critical developmental tasks, including the ability to:

- a. Form caring, supportive relationships with family, other adults and peers.
- b. Engage, in a positive way, in the life of their communities.
- c. Engage in behaviours that optimize wellness and contribute to a healthy lifestyle
- d. Demonstrate physical, cognitive, emotional, social and moral competencies.
- e. Demonstrate resiliency when confronted with life stressors.
- f. Demonstrate increasingly responsible and independent decision-making.
- g. Experience a sense of self-confidence, hopefulness and well-being.⁴⁸

4.2 Adolescent Health Concerns

The WHO identifies key adolescent health concerns as:⁴⁹

- a. Intentional and unintentional injuries
- b. Sexual and reproductive health, including hiv/aids
- c. Substance use and abuse (tobacco, alcohol and other substances)
- d. Mental health problems
- e. Nutritional problems
- f. Endemic and chronic diseases

⁴⁷ World Health Organisation: Approach to Adolescents. <http://www.un.org.in/Jinit/who.pdf>.

⁴⁸ *Conceptual Framework for Adolescent Health*.

<http://www.amchp.org/publications/Downloads/conc-framework.pdf>.

⁴⁹ *Programming for Adolescent Health and Development: WHO's 4S Framework*. Paul Bloem, WHO. Association for Young People's Health. London, February 6, 2008.

<http://www.youngpeopleshealth.org.uk/images/PaulBloem.ppt>

In 1999 the top leading causes of adolescent death for males and females were identified as:⁵⁰

Table 4.1: Top Ten Causes of Death in Adolescents (10-19), World, 1999

Male	Female
Road traffic accidents	HIV
Malaria	Maternal conditions
Respiratory Tract Infections	Malaria
Other unintentional injury	Respiratory Tract Infections
Drowning	Tuberculosis
Homicide	Suicide
Suicide	Diarrhoea
HIV	Road traffic accidents
Diarrhoea	Fires
Tuberculosis	Other unintentional injury

The literature reviewed on adolescent health in the Caribbean focused primarily on HIV/AIDS and on sexual and reproductive health and to a lesser extent on substance abuse, emotional well being or mental health and violence.

4.2.1 HIV/AIDS

According to a World Bank Report⁵¹, after Sub-Saharan Africa, the Caribbean region currently has the highest HIV/AIDS prevalence rate in the world and, the data suggest, that for one-third of all new cases, the disease was contracted when the individual was 15 -24 years, the adolescent years according to the WHO definition. The report highlights the fact that out of the 12 countries with the highest HIV prevalence in the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) Region, nine are from the Caribbean and according to the report HIV/AIDS has reached epidemic proportions in countries such as Haiti, the Bahamas and Guyana. Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago have concentrated HIV/AIDS epidemics. The main factors suggested in this report for the high incidence is early sexual initiation and low condom use among young people.

In the Caribbean, HIV/AIDS affects an increasing number of young people, especially young women. A Fact Sheet⁵² on sexual and reproductive health of young people in Latin America and the Caribbean point to the fact that more than half of all reported AIDS cases in the Caribbean are the result of unprotected heterosexual intercourse. At the same time, women represent more than one-third of AIDS cases in this region; while in Trinidad and Tobago, the number of women between 15 and 19 infected by HIV is five times higher than among adolescent males. In Jamaica, HIV is concentrated more and more in sexually active adolescent women.

⁵⁰ Programming for Adolescent Health and Development. *op.cit.*

⁵¹ *Caribbean Youth Development: Issues and Policy Directions*. The World Bank. Washington, D.C. 2003.

⁵² *The Facts: The Sexual and Reproductive Health of Young People in Latin America and the Caribbean*. <http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/PUBLICATIONS/factsheet/fssexualhealth.html>

A Behavioural Surveillance Survey (BSS)⁵³ on trends in HIV-related knowledge, attitudes and behaviours carried out in six Eastern Caribbean countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines) confirmed the World Bank findings in relation to risk factors. One set of respondents included in-school adolescents between the ages of 10 and 14 who were still attending school. A total of 455 males and 650 females were surveyed from this population

The survey solicited responses on three core indicators from the 10-14 age group:

1. percentage who had heard of HIV/AIDS
2. percentage who both correctly identified ways of preventing sexually transmission of HIV and rejected major misconceptions around HIV transmission
3. percentage of respondents with accepting attitudes towards people living with HIV/AIDS

The main findings reported specifically for the 10-14 age group pointed to the fact that:

1. Many of the in-school adolescents did not know the ABCs of HIV prevention.
2. The majority of in-school adolescents included in the BSS reported that they were still virgins and this was seen as presenting a tremendous potential for promoting delayed sexual debut as well as empowerment around safer sex before these children actually become sexually active.

Several actions were recommended to address policy gaps and research needs in relation to adolescent concerns:

1. Formulate policies that promote access to essential information, commodities, and services that reduce their risks of STI/HIV infection.
2. Advocate for the review, revision, and/or development of laws on rape, incest, paedophilia, and/or child prostitution, and the establishment of mechanisms that support enforcement of those laws. Awareness should be raised around the social and public health implications of not doing the above.

The report recommended that further investigation be carried out in relation to the following phenomena:

1. the potential link between sexual abuse and early sexual debut
2. sexual practices, sexual health, and the dynamics of sexual risk-taking among young people
3. transactional sex practices among males and females
4. social norms and perceptions regarding transactional sex

⁵³ *Behavioural Surveillance Surveys (BSS) in Six Countries of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)*. Round 1: 2005. CAREC, Pan American Health Organisation and Regional Office of the World Health Organisation.

A UNICEF study carried out in the same year (2005)⁵⁴ in three of the five countries in which the Behavioural Surveillance Survey was conducted is instructive. The report indicates that focus group discussions were held and when asked to identify the worst thing that could happen to young people, in all three countries issues of rape and/or early pregnancy, and contracting HIV/AIDS were raised.

In **St. Lucia**, primary school pupils listed rape, early pregnancy and HIV/AIDS as their second greatest fear, after violence (kill, choke, stab, chop, shoot..) while adolescents listed early pregnancy at the top of most lists, followed by rape, abuse, “going out with different men” and HIV/AIDS. Dropping out of school, and becoming involved in gangs and drugs, were mentioned less often. In **St. Vincent**, younger children overwhelmingly listed rape, pregnancy and AIDS as their greatest fears, followed by dropping out of school, violence and crime/drugs. Adolescents listed AIDS, teenage pregnancy and drugs as their greatest fears. In **Barbados**, rape and teenage pregnancy were mentioned as often as gangs, crime and drugs. Contracting AIDS or catching a “terminal disease” was the second greatest fear along with failure to achieve in school/dropping out.

Several risk behaviours increase vulnerability to STD/HIV infection one of which is low condom use. A study in Trinidad and Tobago⁵⁵ found that almost one-fourth of sexually active young men and women ages 15 to 24 have had sex with more than one partner, and less than one-fifth reported consistent condom use.

The UNICEF report⁵⁶ sets out several recommendations to ensure prevention of HIV/AIDS in adolescents. These include:

1. All children in schools should be exposed to HIV/AIDS education, and that current programmes were not reaching children young enough. More teachers need to be trained in life-skills (St. Lucia)
2. While programmes were being planned for out-of-school youth, not enough work was being done with abused children. There was a need to establish adolescent-friendly centres, focusing on health issues.
3. More resources needed to be allocated to adolescent prevention activities, and to involve youth more in those activities. Existing prevention messages were not targeting adolescents. (St. Lucia)
4. Need for the establishment of youth-friendly health centres, providing condoms, education and counselling, and to ensure access to these services without parental consent. (St. Vincent)
5. A need to teach everyone dealing with children about universal precautions.

⁵⁴ *A Study of Child Vulnerability in Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines*. UNICEF Barbados in collaboration with the governments of Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. December 2005.

⁵⁵ Pisani, E. *et al. HIV and AIDS in the Americas: An Epidemic with Many Faces*. Geneva, Switzerland: Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), 2000.

⁵⁶ *A Study of Child Vulnerability in Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines*. UNICEF Barbados in collaboration with the governments of Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. December 2005.

6. Prevention programmes in St. Vincent were scattered and uncoordinated, and it was suggested that someone be appointed (ambassador, ombudsman, mentor group) to coordinate these activities and ensure protection for individual children, for example through a hotline.
7. More attention to be given to helping adolescents deal with sexual maturing – teachers were uncomfortable talking about it, and needed more training and support. There were, however, very promising results from latest iteration of Health and Family Life Education programme, which should be expanded.(Barbados)
8. There was a need to be bolder; to address difficult issues like drugs and prostitution; to spend less time in boardrooms and more time with children; and to make more use of peer education programmes

4.2.2 Sexual & Reproductive Health

The Department of Child and Adolescent Health and Development of the World Health Organization reports⁵⁷ that adolescent pregnancy is commonplace in many countries and that an estimated 14 million women aged 15–19 years gave birth each year in 1995–2000, with 12.8 million births occurring to adolescents in developing countries. It is further stated that one third of women in Latin America and the Caribbean give birth before the age of 20. The regional average rate of births, per 1000 women aged 15–19 years, is 115 in Africa, 75 in Latin America and the Caribbean, and 39 in Asia, compared to the world average adolescent fertility rate of 54 births per 1000 women aged 15–19 years.

Statistics from another source⁵⁸ indicate that in countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, it is estimated that 16.5% of all births were to women under the age of 20 during the period from 1995 to 2000. In the Caribbean, the proportion was 15.9% while it was 16.6% in South America and 16.4% in Central America. It is pointed out that in these regions this indicator is quite high compared with that in other regions in the world where, for example, it is only 10% in southern Asia. This same source indicates that it is not exactly known how many adolescent pregnancies in Latin America and the Caribbean are wanted. Some authors estimate that between 35% and 52% of these pregnancies occurring in the region were unplanned

The WHO report⁵⁹ notes the many risks and problems associated with adolescent pregnancy and child bearing:

adolescent pregnancy and childbearing entail a high risk of maternal death for the adolescent, and the children of young mothers have higher levels of morbidity and mortality. These adolescents and their children may experience repercussions in the present, as well as far into the future. Pregnancy and childbearing may cut short an

⁵⁷ *Adolescent Pregnancy – Unmet Needs and Undone Deeds. A review of literature and programmes.* Department of Child and Adolescent Health and Development, World Health Organisation. 2007.

⁵⁸ *Abortion in Latin America and the Caribbean: A Literature Review from 1990-2005.*

http://www.ceped.org/cdrom/avortement_ameriquelatine_2007/en/infos/introduction.html

⁵⁹ *Adolescent Pregnancy – Unmet Needs and Undone Deeds. A review of literature and programmes.*

adolescent's education and threaten her economic prospects, employment opportunities and overall well-being. Adolescent mothers may pass on to their children a legacy of poor health, substandard education and subsistence living, creating a cycle of poverty that is hard to break. (p.11)

In Latin America and the Caribbean, the population, ages 10 to 24, was estimated to number 155 million in 2000, that is, about one-third of the total population of the region. A Fact Sheet⁶⁰ on sexual and reproductive health of young people in the region, claims that many of these young people are sexually experienced and that unprotected sexual intercourse places them at risk of unintended pregnancy, unsafe abortion, and infection with sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV. As a result adolescent pregnancy rates remain high in Latin America coupled with alarming rates of HIV/AIDS among young people in the Caribbean.

This observation is borne out by data on adolescent reproductive health coming out of St. Lucia, St. Vincent and Barbados.⁶¹ It is reported that in **St. Lucia** A quarter of girls and nearly half of all boys have their first sexual experience before the age of sixteen. For both sexes, the first sexual encounter occurs between the ages of 15 and 19.

A 1991 study in St. Lucia revealed that:

- 5% of girls of the age 16 already had a child
- 25% of girls at age 18 already had a child
- by the age of 20, some 40% of girls had at least one child and 17% had two or more children.

Table 4.2: Age of Respondents at first Sexual Encounter, St. Lucia

AGE	Females	Males	Total
8-11	8	38	46
12-15	62	121	183
16-19	180	145	325
20-23	35	16	51
24-27	9	4	13
Total	294	324	618

Source: *A Study of Child Vulnerability in Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines*

The study reveals that in **St. Vincent** the 2001 Population and Housing Census found that, among young people aged 15–19, 24 girls and four boys were married, 296 girls and 32 boys were in common-law unions and 597 girls and 215 boys were in visiting relationships. However, it was not known how many of them were under 18 years old, the age of legal consent for marriage.

⁶⁰ The Facts: The Sexual and Reproductive Health of Young People in Latin America and the Caribbean. <http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/PUBLICATIONS/factsheet/fssexualhealth.html>

⁶¹ *A Study of Child Vulnerability in Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines*. UNICEF Barbados in collaboration with the governments of Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. December 2005.

In that same year the Community Health Unit surveyed 850 young persons aged 10–18 on reproductive health issues. The data showed that 15% of girls and 37% of boys had engaged in sexual intercourse. Around a third of these boys had had their first sexual experience by the age of 10, and another third by the age of 15. Nearly half (48%) of the girls and 20% of boys said they were forced into their first sexual act and at least 12 girls aged 10–14 give birth each year. However, girls aged 15–19 account for approximately 20% of all births in St. Vincent.

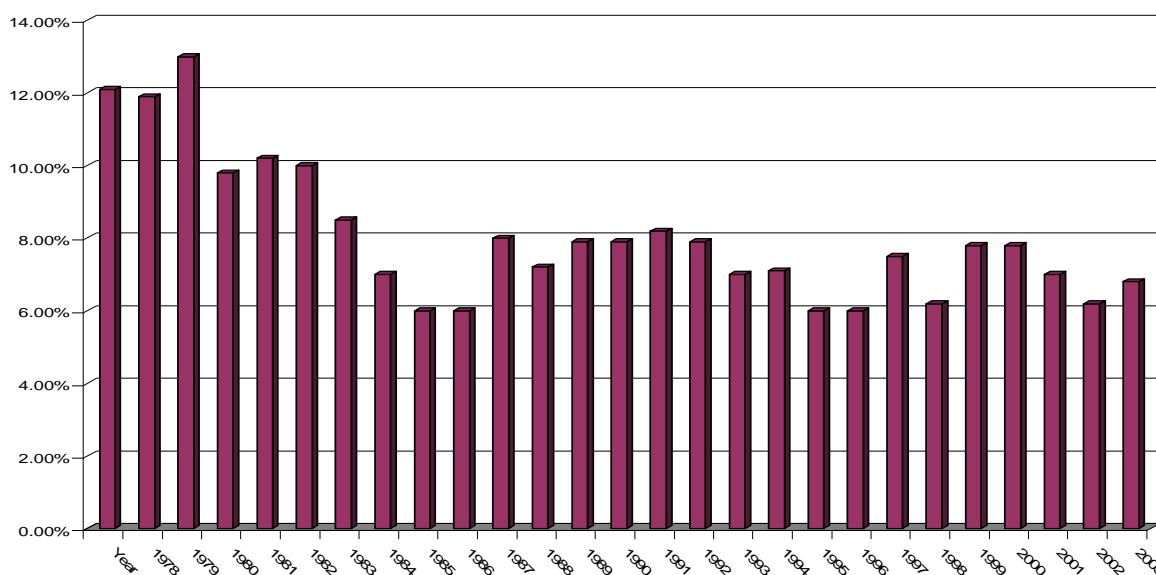
Table 4.3: Teen Births 2000–2002, St. Vincent & the Grenadines

Age	2000	2001	2002
10 - 14	10	15	13
15 - 19	454	402	412

Source: A Study of Child Vulnerability in Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines

The report also indicates high levels of adolescent pregnancy in **Barbados**. Just over 50% of births to girls under the age of 18 are among 17-year-olds, while 30% are among those aged 16. In the 1980s the number of births to under-age girls declined from around 12% to about 7% of all births, and has remained at this level since then.⁶² Data presented in Figure 4.1 indicates that although the proportion of births to adolescent mothers remains at just over 6% in 2004 the proportion has steadily decreased to half of what it was in 1978 at 12%.

Figure 4.1: Proportion of births to child mothers at QEH as proportion of all births 1978-2004



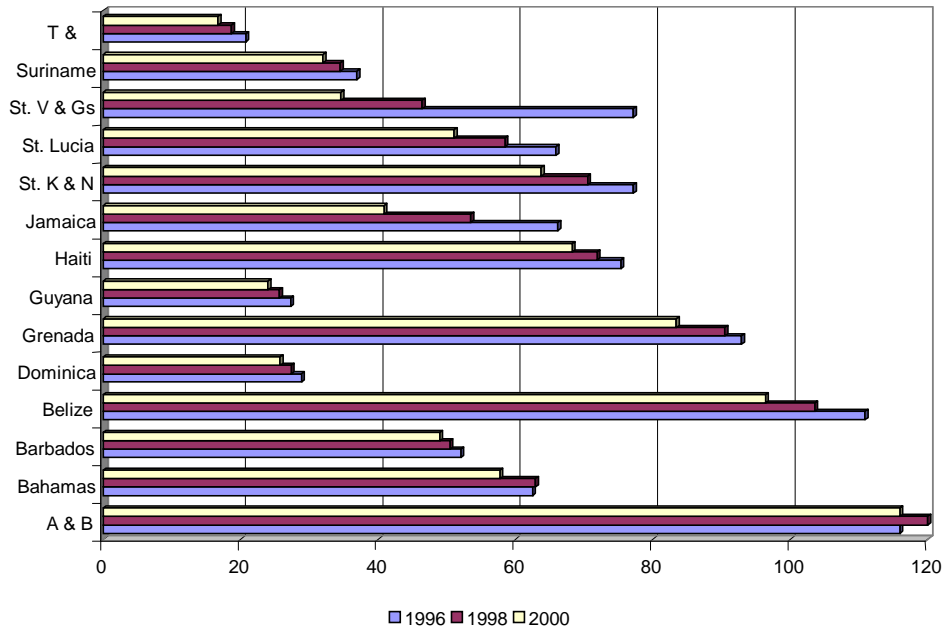
Source: A Study of Child Vulnerability in Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines

⁶² A Study of Child Vulnerability in Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. UNICEF Barbados in collaboration with the governments of Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. December 2005.

Table 4.4: Fertility Rates per 1000 Women Age 15 -19

Country	1996	1998	2000
A & B	116	120	116
Bahamas	62.5	62.9	57.8
Barbados	52.1	50.5	49
Belize	110.9	103.6	96.4
Dominica	28.9	27.4	25.8
Grenada	92.9	90.5	83.4
Guyana	27.3	25.7	24
Haiti	75.4	71.9	68.3
Jamaica	66.2	53.5	40.9
St. K & N	77.2	70.5	63.8
St. Lucia	65.9	58.5	51.1
St. V & Gs	77.2	46.4	34.6
Suriname	36.9	34.5	32
T & T	20.8	18.7	16.7

Figure 4.2: Fertility Rates per 1000 Women Age 15 -19



Data presented in Table 4.4 and Figure 4.2 on fertility rates in the 15 to 19 age group show that in CARICOM member states⁶³, fertility rates vary widely in the Caribbean with only two countries have rates of more than 100 births per 1,000 women.

⁶³ Source: www.paho.org/English/SHA/coredata in *Caribbean Youth Development Issues and Policy Directions*. The World Bank. Washington, D.C. 2003.

Antigua and Barbuda has the highest adolescent pregnancy rates in the region followed by Belize and Grenada (96.4 and 83.4, respectively). At the other end of the spectrum, in 2000 Trinidad and Tobago has the lowest rate the region (16.7 per 1,000 women aged 15 to 19) and six of the fourteen countries in the region have rates lower than 45 births per 1,000 (Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Dominica, Suriname, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Jamaica) and the other five countries fall somewhere in the middle (Haiti, St. Kitts and Nevis, the Bahamas, Barbados, and St. Lucia).

The 2003 World Bank Report also indicates that in terms of pregnancies, the CARICOM survey revealed that about 10 percent of school-going adolescents had been pregnant or had gotten someone pregnant (7 percent in the case of girls and 12 percent in the case of boys). It also points out that despite high levels of sexual activity among adolescents, contraceptive use remains low and that only a quarter of CARICOM's school-going, sexually active sample were using some form of birth control, and only slightly more worry about getting pregnant or causing a pregnancy. In Jamaica, more than 40 percent of sexually active adolescent girls reported that they had not used, a contraceptive at last intercourse, and 87 percent of teenage pregnancies had not been planned.

The risk factor that is therefore most associated with teenage pregnancy is early sexual initiation and unprotected sex. The same World Bank Report⁶⁴ states that the Caribbean region is characterised by a very early onset of sexual activity and claims that although other countries of the world have a large proportion of sexually active adolescents, no other region of the world for which data are available have such an early age of sexual initiation.

The report on abortion in Latin America and the Caribbean⁶⁵ highlights the fact that the average age of first intercourse in Latin America and the Caribbean differs among countries and regions and depends on factors such as the socioeconomic context in which young people live, in addition to their sex. Thus, males tend to start having sex with other people earlier than females. The average age of first intercourse for males in Jamaica was 12.7 while for females it was 15.6 years.

The Report on abortion points to the fact that although these average figures give a general idea about the sexual behaviour of young people they fail to reflect certain worrisome aspects of this behaviour. For example, 40% of the adolescents that took part in a survey carried out by the Jamaican Health Ministry in 1998 declared that at the age of 10 they had already had some kind of sexual relationship. Further, in Jamaica, approximately 50% of adolescents that engage in sexual activity do not use any form of contraception and a large number said that they lacked information on the different types of contraceptives in existence when they began to have sex.

A 1997/98 study carried out with 10 to 18 year olds in schools in nine Caribbean countries on risk factors associated with adolescent health found that male respondents were more were more than twice as likely as their female counterparts to report having had sexual intercourse and that both rage and physical or sexual abuse experiences were associated with early sexual intercourse

⁶⁴ *Caribbean Youth Development Issues and Policy Directions*. The World Bank. Washington, D.C. 2003.

⁶⁵ Abortion in Latin America and the Caribbean: A Literature Review from 1990-2005.

http://www.cepel.org/cdrom/avortement_ameriquelatine_2007/en/infos/introduction.html

among all of the age groups. As was true for violence and substance abuse, there was a strong association between early initiation of sexual activity and skipping school.

On the other hand, the study found that factors associated with delay of sexual activity included connectedness to parents which was strongly protective among teenagers younger than 16 years. Among respondents who were 13 years or older, attendance at religious services was associated with a lower rate of reporting ever having had intercourse than the rate among those who did not attend services.⁶⁶

The World Bank Report⁶⁷ on youth development in the Caribbean raises another issue particular to the Caribbean - that of forced intercourse and points out that although the problem of forced intercourse among girls is problematic in other countries (such as the United States), the high incidence among boys is not common. It makes reference to the nine-country CARICOM study, where of the one-third of adolescents who had had sexual intercourse, almost half reported that their first sexual experience had been forced. The proportion was high for both girls and boys, 48% and 32% respectively.

4.3 Other Adolescent Health Issues

The study conducted by Blum et al in nine Caribbean countries in 1997/98 pointed to other health issues affecting 10 to 18 year olds.

5. **Tobacco, alcohol and other substance abuse;** The findings indicate that across all age groups, parental substance abuse and parental mental health problems were associated with increased substance abuse. Rage, abuse, parental violence and a family member or friend who had attempted suicide correlated with higher levels of substance use by teens.
6. **Emotional wellbeing:** Issues discussed in this regard included **suicide** and rage. Consistent with world trends (See Table 1). The study found that across all age groups girls were more likely than boys to report suicide attempts and that the strongest risk factor across all groups was a history of a friend or family member attempting suicide followed by rage and a history of physical abuse and/or sexual abuse. Data from the study indicate a strong association of suicide with abuse. Whereas of the young people who did not indicate an experience of sexual abuse only 9.1% reported ever having attempted suicide, 23.1% who had experienced sexual abuse reported having done so.
7. **Rage** was very evident among those surveyed and 40.1% said they felt angry enough to kill someone. Consistently, male respondents reported rage significantly more often than their female counterparts in each age group. The study showed that one of the factors associated with rage was having a friend or family member who had attempted or committed suicide. Physical and sexual abuse experiences were also associated with rage among all of the groups of teens.

⁶⁶ Blum, Robert, W. Adolescent Health in the Caribbean: Risk and Protective Factors. *American Journal of Public Health*. Vol. 93. No. 3. March 2003. pp. 456-460.

⁶⁷ *Caribbean Youth Development Issues and Policy Directions*. The World Bank. Washington, D.C. 2003

8. **Violence** is addressed in two other sections of this report but is also linked to issues of adolescent health. The CARICOM study showed that in examining the factors associated with violence, it is not surprising that respondents who reported rage were much more likely than their peers to report involvement in violence and in keeping with societal norms, male respondents were much more likely than female respondents to report involvement in violence.

In all cases parental connectedness was found to be the most protective factor.

4.4 Country Specific Issues

Country specific reports yielded some specific information on health issues in the 10- 14 age group. Findings and the source from which information was extracted are summarised below

1. **St. Kitts**⁶⁸

- In St. Kitts, of a total of 966 live births in 1990, 165 (17%) of these children were born to parents in the 10-19 age group. In 2001, of a total of 803 live births, 167 (20.8%) of the children were born to adolescent mothers

2. **Belize**⁶⁹

- Pregnancy results in expulsion from school (p.31)
- Average age of first sexual intercourse for boys is 13.2 years; and for girls, 15 years. (p..32) – Study in Dangringa
- 23% of boys initiated sexual contact before age 13 (p.32) - Study in Dangringa
- 53% of the boys reported using a condom the first time (p.32) - Study in Dangringa
- Study in Belize City found that of the 34.6% who were sexually active, more than a quarter of them were 12 years old or younger. (p.32)
- HIV infections recorded between 2001 and June 2004 show that 13 children in the 10-14 age group had been infected. (Table on P.39)
- Approximately 1 in every 10 persons diagnosed with HIV are likely to be children under the age of 15 years. (p.40)
- Since 2001, 68 cases of children under 15 have been diagnosed with HIV. (p.40)

⁶⁸ Statistical Review St. Kitts and Nevis 2002.

⁶⁹ The impact of HIV/AIDS on Children in Belize. UNICEF Belize. 2004.

3. ***Jamaica***⁷⁰

- In a study of a clinical population of young people in Jamaica, Smikle et al.1 found that the mean age at onset of sexual intercourse among males was 12.5 years; 4% of sexually active males reported using condoms consistently, and 60% reported marijuana use. (p.456)

4. ***Trinidad & Tobago***⁷¹

- Survey showed that over 60% of visitors to STD clinics (mainly men) had their first sexual experience between the ages of 12 and 16 years and that only 10% were using a contraceptive method. (p.18)
- 38% of females and 43% males had initiated sexual activity by age 15.

5. ***Barbados***⁷²

- Medical care for children sixteen years and under, which is provided by the health service, is free. The Age Majority Act, No. 13 of 1987, gives a child 16 years and over the right to make decisions regarding medical treatment. For a child under 16 a parent or guardian is required to give written permission. This poses particular problems in relation to pregnant girls. (p.115)
- The Barbados Government has a long-standing tradition of providing free health care for children, primarily those under 16 years and in some instances up to 18 years. In addition the Drug Service (Special Benefit Service) Regulations provide for free prescription medication to children under 16 years of age. Free dental care is provided for children up to the age of 18 and eye care up to the completion of secondary school. (p.117)

⁷⁰ *Adolescent Health in the Caribbean: Risk and Protective Factors*. March 2003

⁷¹ Trinidad and Tobago Youth and Social Development. *An Integrated Approach for Social Inclusion*. June 2000

⁷² *A Study of child Vulnerability in Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent & the Grenadines*. UNICEF. Barbados, 2005.

4.5 Adolescent Health: Challenges & Opportunities

The literature review, although not focused exclusively on the adolescent age group, 10 to 14 years, pointed to challenges and/or opportunities related to protecting the health and well-being of Caribbean youth.

4.5.1 Challenges highlighted included:

1. Many in school-youth in the 10 -14 age group do not know the ABCs of HIV prevention.⁷³
2. The current programmes on HIV are not reaching children at a young enough age and not enough teachers trained in like skills.
3. Enough work not being done with abused children.
4. Existing prevention measures are not targeting adolescents and not well coordinated.
5. Adolescents exposed to health risks including sexual exploitation, malnutrition, drug and alcohol abuse and HIV infection.
6. High risk of teenage pregnancy.⁷⁴

4.5.2 Opportunities highlighted included:

1. Majority of in-school youth reported that they were virgins and the potential therefore exists for promoting delayed sexual activity as well as safer sex practices.
2. Promote policies that promote youth access to essential information, commodities and services that reduce the risk of STIs and HIV infection.
3. Advocate for the review, revision and/or development of laws on rape and incest, paedophilia and/or child prostitution and mechanisms to support enforcement of these laws.
4. Identify gatekeepers and opinion leaders that impact youth access to information, commodities and services.⁷⁵
5. Expose all school age children to HIV/AIDS education.
6. Establish adolescent friendly centres focusing on health issues which could provide condoms, education and counselling and ensure access to services without parental consent.

⁷³ For item 1 see *Behavioural Surveillance Surveys (BSS) in Six Countries of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)*. Round 1: 2005. CAREC, Pan American Health Organisation and Regional Office of the World Health Organisation.

⁷⁴ For items 2-7 see *A Study of Child Vulnerability in Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines*. UNICEF Barbados in collaboration with the governments of Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. December 2005.

⁷⁵ For items 1-4 see *Behavioural Surveillance Surveys (BSS) in Six Countries of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS)*. Round 1: 2005. CAREC, Pan American Health Organisation and Regional Office of the World Health Organisation

7. Allocate more resources to adolescent prevention activities and involve more youth in these programmes.
8. Provide more training for teachers to develop a comfort level with which they can help adolescents deal with sexual maturation.
9. Make more use of peer education programmes.
10. The newest iteration of the Health and Family Life Education programme should be consolidated and used.
11. Promote adolescent health programmes in schools that ensure full participation of adolescents covering issues of mental health and substance abuse.
12. Offer full health and counselling support to pregnant girls and put in place measures to ensure their continued education.
13. Consider the possibility of actively involving adolescents in formulation of policies and treatment programmes in accordance with their evolving capacity.
14. Make it possible for adolescents 12 – 16 to have access to medical advice and care without parental consent, under certain conditions.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ For items 6-14 see *A Study of Child Vulnerability in Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines*. UNICEF Barbados in collaboration with the governments of Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. December 2005.

5. EDUCATION

OVERVIEW

The main issues discussed in this section of the report are organised around two major gender equality goals referred to in the Education For All (EFA) Dakar Framework for Action: *formal equality in education*, which aims at closing numerical gaps between the sexes at various levels of education systems, as well as *substantive equality* which refers to ‘the quality of experience of education in terms of equal treatment during the educational process, and, benefiting from education beyond school in terms of the social currency of education to either sex.

In this regard the provision of formal education for the 10-14 age cohort in Caribbean education systems is examined based on gross and net enrolment ratios for the primary and secondary levels. Progression through the system is also examined in terms of repetition rates, overage students and drop-out rates. Performance of the age cohort is also examined although in this regard data were limited.

In terms of substantive equality, students perceptions of fair and unfair treatment in schools as well as experiences of verbal, physical and sexual violence of 10-14 year olds in selected Caribbean countries are explored as is forms of punishment experienced in schools. In all instances distinct gender differences are evident.

Country specific issues are highlighted and the challenges and opportunities for educating adolescents identified in various source documents are itemised.

5.1 Education: Priority Issues

The Dakar Framework for Action represents the most important international political commitment towards Promoting Education for All and calls for eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality by 2015. The framework addresses two gender-based goals: **gender parity** goals [achieving equal participation of girls and boys in all forms of education based on their proportion in the relevant age-groups in the population] and **gender equality** goals [ensuring educational equality between boys and girls].

In the stated goals a distinction is therefore made between achieving *formal equality*, that is, with closing numerical gaps between the sexes at various levels of education (gender parity) vis-à-vis achieving *substantive equality* which refers to ‘the quality of experience of education in terms of equal treatment during the educational process, and, benefiting from education beyond school in terms of the social currency of education to either sex.’⁷⁷

In considering factors that influence adolescent risk and vulnerability in Caribbean education systems factors related to both formal and substantive equality need to be considered.

5.1.1. Formal Equality: Access to education

Provision for formal education during the adolescent years (10 to 14) is provided at the upper primary and lower secondary levels of Caribbean education systems. In determining the extent to which there is gender parity in access to education for this age cohort three fundamental problems are encountered in efforts to determine male/female enrolment ratios: firstly, differences in the structure of the education systems in the region and therefore differences in ages catered to by the primary and secondary levels; secondly, the unavailability, in many instances, of enrolment ratios referenced to the relevant age cohort in the general population in regional publications; and, thirdly, the unavailability of data, particularly sex-disaggregated data, in a number of instances. These deficiencies point to the need for a policy position as well as consensus throughout the Region on system structure, common definitions for key indicators and, at a minimum, mandatory collection of sex-disaggregated data on an annual basis.

In terms of enrolment at the primary and secondary levels, data on gross and net enrolment rates were extracted from the UNICEF report on *The State of the World’s Children 2008* and were available for 10 Caribbean countries. In all cases, figures for the most recent year between 2000 and 2006 were supplied.

Gross enrolment ratios⁷⁸ reference the number of children enrolled at a given level regardless of age expressed as a percentage of the total number of children of official age for the particular level.

⁷⁷ Ramya Subrahmanian, *GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION: Definitions and Measurements*. Background paper for UNESCO GMR 2003-043.

⁷⁸ For definitions of gross and net enrolment see *The State of the World’s Children 2008: Child Survival*. UNICEF 2007. p.133

On the other hand, net enrolment ratios references the number of children enrolled at a given level who are the official age for that level expressed as a percentage of children of the official age for a given level.

At the primary level gross enrolment ratios (See Table 5.1 and Figure 5.1) are higher for boys than girls in seven of ten countries suggesting that more boys than girls at the primary level fall outside of the official age range for that level probably due to higher repetition rates for boys than girls.

Table 5.1: Net/Gross Enrolment Ratios at the Primary Level for Selected Countries, 2000-2006

Country	Gross		Net	
Bahamas	Male	101	Male	90
	Female	101	Female	92
Barbados	Male	108	Male	98
	Female	108	Female	98
Belize	Male	130	Male	93
	Female	125	Female	96
Dominica	Male	93	Male	83
	Female	92	Female	85
Grenada	Male	94	Male	84
	Female	91	Female	83
Jamaica	Male	95	Male	90
	Female	94	Female	90
St. Kitts & Nevis	Male	97	Male	91
	Female	102	Female	96
St. Lucia	Male	111	Male	98
	Female	107	Female	96
St. Vincent & Grenadines	Male	117	Male	92
	Female	105	Female	88
Trinidad & Tobago	Male	102	Male	90
	Female	99	Female	90

Source: *The State of the World's Children 2008: Child Survival*. UNICEF 2007

Figure 5.1: Gross/Net Enrolment Ratios at the Primary Level for Selected Countries, 2000-2006

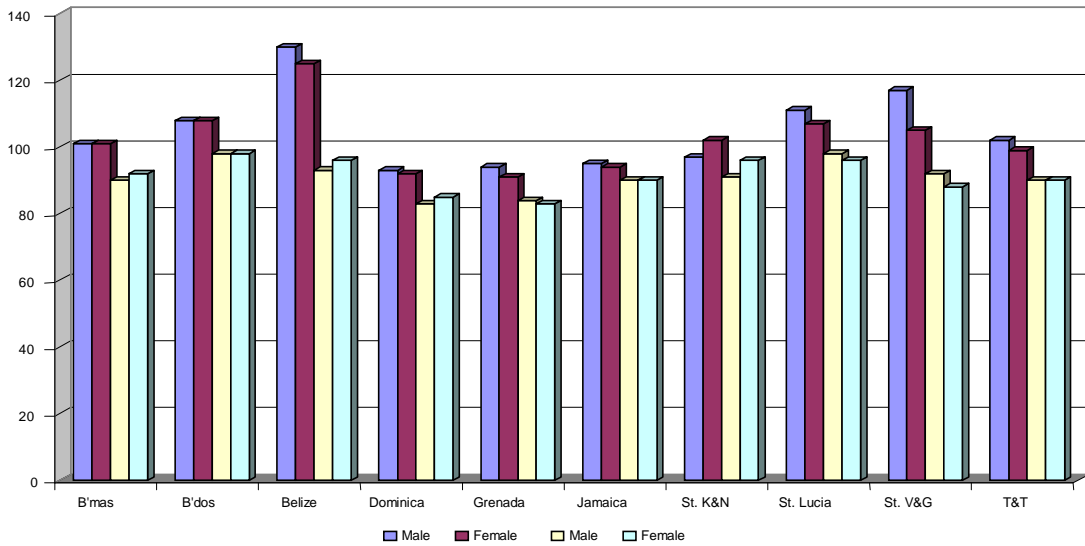
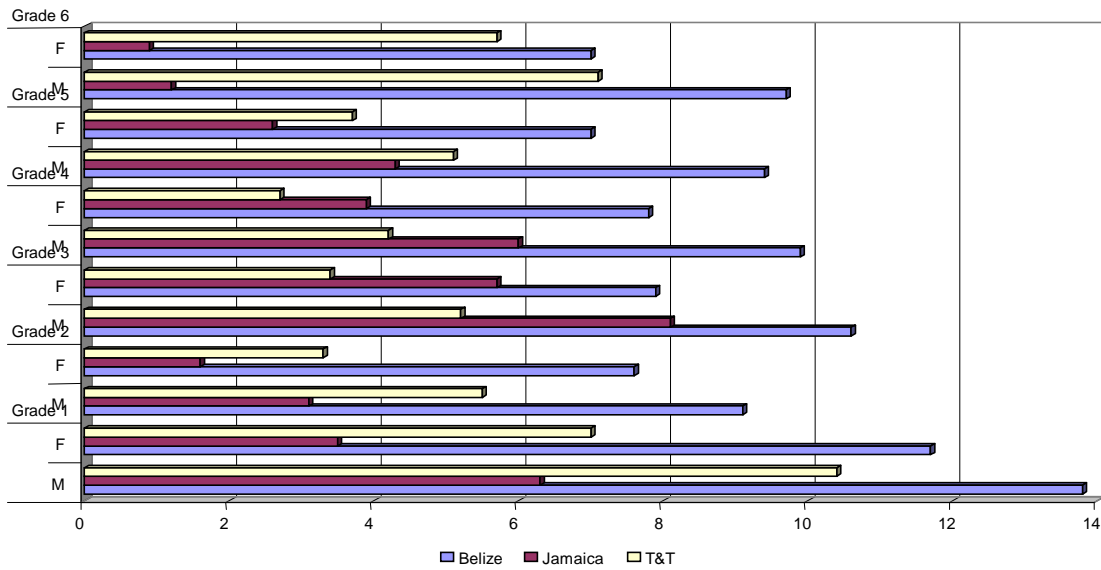


Table 5.2: Primary Level Repetition Rates by Grade and Sex

Country	Grade 1		Grade 2		Grade 3		Grade 4		Grade 5		Grade 6	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Belize	13.8	11.7	9.1	7.6	10.6	7.9	9.9	7.8	9.4	7.0	9.7	7.0
Jamaica	6.3	3.5	3.1	1.6	8.1	5.7	6.0	3.9	4.3	2.6	1.2	0.9
T&T	10.4	7.0	5.5	3.3	5.2	3.4	4.2	2.7	5.1	3.7	7.1	5.7

Source: EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002.

Figure 5.2: Primary Level Repetition Rates by Grade and Sex



In fact data for three countries (Belize, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago) extracted from the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002 show that at all grade levels repetition rates were higher for boys than for girls (See Table 5.2 and Figure 5.2). There were also marked differences among the three countries with Belize having much higher repetition rates for both sexes at all grades than the other two countries pointing perhaps to cultural and language differences between home and school.

This trend is also confirmed by data from the 2002 EFA Global Monitoring report on percentage of under age and over age students enrolled at the primary level. In every instance for which data were available there was a higher percentage of under age girls in primary schools but a higher percentage of over age boys except in one instance, Barbados, where the percentage of overage girls was higher than that of boys (See Table 5.3). The worrying concern of boys lagging behind girls in performance, therefore, is very evident from the primary level.

Table 5.3: Percentage Over Age and Under Age Students Enrolled at the Primary Level by Sex, 1999/2000

Country	Under Age (%)		Over Age (%)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Anguilla	2.1	2.0	-	-
Bahamas	-	-	5.5	2.8
Barbados	0.2	0.3	5.6	16.4
Belize	3.5	3.9	16.0	16.4
Dominica	2.9	2.8	-	-
Jamaica	0.2	0.5	1.1	7.4
St. Kitts and Nevis	3.4	3.6	-	-
St. Lucia	-	-	17.5	15.4
Trinidad and Tobago	1.8	1.9	9.3	8.4
Turks and Caicos	3.4	3.6	-	-

Source: *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2002*

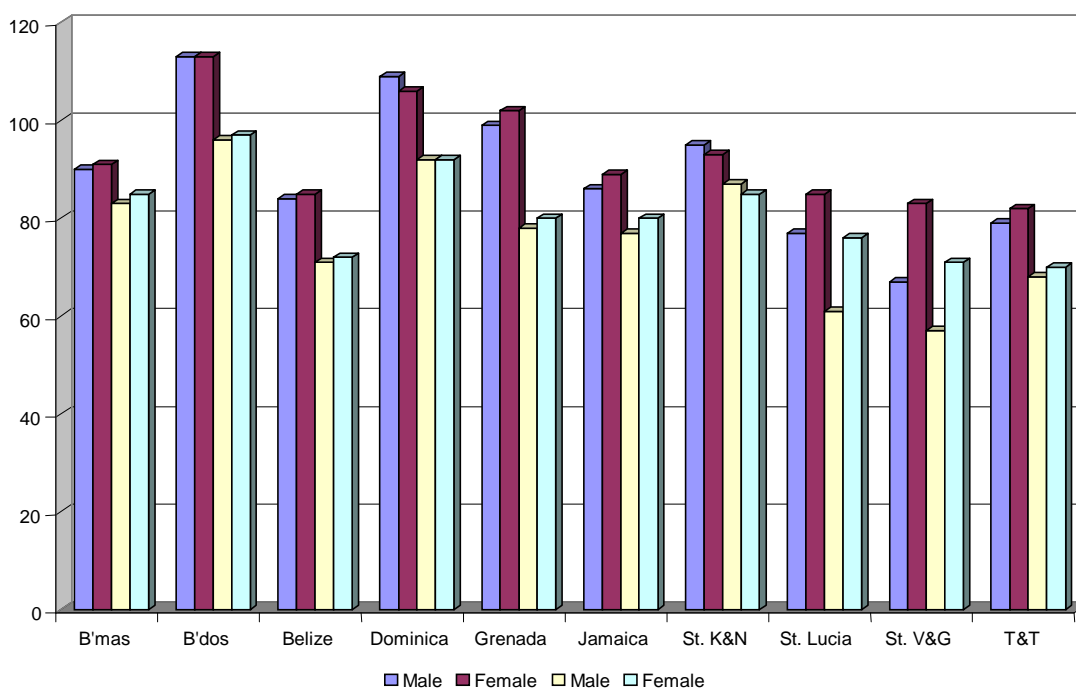
Net enrolment ratios for the primary level, however, show that there was no difference in enrolment of boys/girls of official primary level age in three countries (Barbados, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago) and that, in this regard, ratios favoured males in Grenada, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines and females in Bahamas, Belize, Dominica and St. Kitts and Nevis.

Table 5.4: Net/Gross Enrolment Ratios at the Secondary Level for Selected Countries, 2000-2006

Country	Gross		Net	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Bahamas	90	91	83	85
Barbados	113	113	96	97
Belize	84	85	71	72
Dominica	109	106	92	92
Grenada	99	102	78	80
Jamaica	86	89	77	80
St. Kitts & Nevis	95	93	87	85
St. Lucia	71	85	61	76
St. Vincent & Grenadines	67	83	57	71
Trinidad & Tobago	79	82	68	70

Source: *The State of the World's Children 2008: Child Survival*. UNICEF 2007

Figure 5.3: Net/Gross Enrolment Ratios at the Secondary Level for Selected Countries, 2000-2006



Gross and net enrolment ratios for the **secondary level** indicate that, generally, rates are lower than at the primary level indicating decrease in capacity at this level in fact, both sexes are disadvantaged.

There is, however, a marked female advantage in both gross and net enrolment ratios confirming the trend towards higher female enrolment at this level (See Table 5.4 and Figure 5.3).

Table 5.5: Enrolment at the Secondary Level: Gender Parity Indices - Grades 7-11, 2000/2001

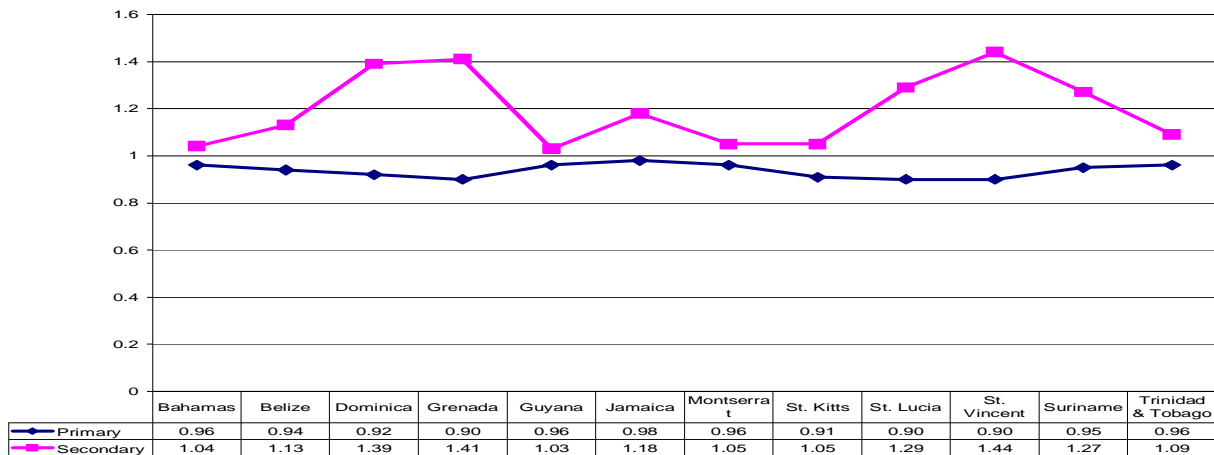
Country	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9
Barbados	0.9	0.88	0.91
Belize	1.02	1	1.09
Grenada	0.96	0.89	1.27
Guyana	0.96	0.97	0.99
Jamaica	0.98	1.02	0.98
St Lucia	1.09	1	1.08
St Vincent & Gren	0.9	1.08	1.31
Trinidad & Tobago	1.02	1.01	1.04
TCI	0.85	1.11	1.29
Av. GPI at each Grade	0.96	0.99	1.11

Source: *Database of Gender Differentials in Enrolment and Performance*⁷⁹

The shift to female advantage in terms of enrolment at the secondary level is consistent with the trend of higher female participation at the upper secondary and tertiary levels in Caribbean education systems. Gender Parity Indices (ratio of females to males) for Grades 7 to 9 that cater to students in the 11+ to 13+ age group at the secondary level, indicate that for seven of eight countries for which data were available there was a trend towards higher female enrolment as one moved from Grade 7 through to 9 indicating a higher attrition rate for boys than for girls. The only exception in this regard was Barbados (See Table 5.5).

⁷⁹ *Establishing a Database of Gender Differentials in Enrolment and Performance at the Secondary and Tertiary Levels of Caribbean Education Systems*. Prepared by Barbara Bailey & Myrna Bernard. 2004

Figure 5.4: GPIs at Primary & Secondary Levels, 1990s



Source: *Women & Men in the Caribbean Community*⁸⁰

This trend to higher female enrolment at the secondary level is also confirmed by GPIs for overall enrolment at the primary and secondary levels obtained from a CARICOM publication⁸¹ which show that during the 1990s, in 12 member states, sex ratios at the **primary level** as indicated by Gender Parity Indices favoured boys in all instances (See Figure 5.4). In the CARICOM publication the sex differential in favour of boys at this level is attributed to three factors:

1. boys outnumber girls at birth;
2. fewer girls enrol because they remain in pre-primary institutions and enter the primary level at a later stage; and,
3. promotion rates for boys at the primary level are lower with higher repetition rates than for girls.

Another indicator of the **lower performance of adolescent boys** at the first cycle of the secondary level (Grades 7 to 9) of Caribbean education systems is their over representation in the secondary departments of primary schools, a segment of the system which is a vestige of the post-emancipation elementary schools referred to as All-Age schools in some countries.

⁸⁰ *Women and Men in the Caribbean Community: Facts and Figures 1980-2001*. Caribbean Community Secretariat. Georgetown, Guyana. 2003.

⁸¹ *Women and Men in the Caribbean Community. op. cit.*

Table 5.6: Enrolment at the Secondary Level: Gender Parity Indices Grades 7 -9 in Secondary Departments of Primary Schools 2000 -2001

Country	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9
Jamaica	0.53	0.6	0.54
Guyana	0.79	0.75	0.77
St Lucia	0.79	0.50	0.52
Grenada	0.61	0.48	0.7
St Vincent & the Grenadines	0.55	0.75	-
Trinidad and Tobago	1.06	1.07	-
Average GPI	0.72	0.69	0.63

Source: *Database of Gender Differentials in Enrolment and Performance*⁸²

The most pertinent feature of enrolment at in the secondary departments of primary schools is the disparity in favour of boys, with GPIs as low as 0.48 for Grade 8 in Grenada (2000/01) and 0.53 for Grade 7 (2000/01) in Jamaica. The only country which recorded GPIs in favour of girls in this type of school was Trinidad and Tobago, with ratios indicating slight advantage in favour of girls at all grade levels for both years (See Table 5.6).

The average GPIs at the three grade levels for both years were significantly lower than for any grade at the primary level where the lowest average was 0.9 (See Table 5.6) indicating that boys are more highly represented in this school type than they are in primary schools.

In this segment of secondary provision the GPI averages range from 0.63 – 0.72 with male enrolment declining with progression from Grade 7 to 9. These data point to the fact that, in all these countries, girls out-perform boys in the selection examinations at the end of the primary cycle resulting in more boys than girls being retained in these school types to continue their formal education. For the majority of both boys and girls in these schools, Grade 9 marks the end of their formal education.

Table 5.7: Percentage of Girls among Dropouts at Primary and Secondary Levels

Country	Primary - % Female		Secondary -% Female	
Dominica	-	-	1995	47
Grenada	1995	42	1995	47
Guyana	1998	47	1998	47
St. Lucia	1995	27	1995	54
Trinidad & Tobago	1997	43	-	-

Source: *Women & Men in the Caribbean Community*⁸³

⁸² *Establishing a Database of Gender Differentials in Enrolment and Performance at the Secondary and Tertiary Levels of Caribbean Education Systems*. Prepared by Barbara Bailey & Myrna Bernard. 2004

⁸³ *Women and Men in the Caribbean Community: Facts and Figures 1980-2001*. Caribbean Community Secretariat. Georgetown, Guyana. 2003.

Drop-out rates at both the primary and secondary levels are also higher for males than females, another factor contributing to the under-representation of males at these levels. Data could be sourced for only four countries at each of the two levels (See Table 5.7). It is interesting to note that, counter to the widely held view that males are more culpable in this regard, the percentage of female dropouts at both levels was as high as 47% in most instances. The female rate was only considerably lower than that of males in St. Lucia at the primary level and was actually higher than that of males at the secondary level of that same country. The claim of male under-participation needs to be carefully examined. Indications are that the phenomenon may not be as widespread as is often purported and, in fact, most evident beyond the adolescent years at the upper secondary level. This is confirmed in a study carried out in Jamaica⁸⁴. When asked to indicate the grade level at which they had left school, responses ranged from Grade 2 to Grade 10 (See Table 5.8).

Table 5.8: Last Grade Level Prior to Drop-out by Males

Category Label	Frequency	Percentage
Grade 2	1	1.9
Grade 3	1	1.9
Grade 4	3	5.7
Grade 5	5	9.4
Grade 6	3	5.7
Grade 7	7	13.2
Grade 8	9	17.0
Grade 9	13	24.5
Grade 10	7	13.2
Missing	4	7.5

The fact that the majority (24.5%) left school at the Grade 9 level is instructive. In Jamaica as in many other Caribbean countries whereas provision at the primary level is universal, this does not hold true at the secondary level. In Jamaica beyond Grade 9, capacity at the secondary level declines. In the 2006/07 school year the difference in enrolment between Grades 9 and 10 was 21.1% with girls representing 34.2 of the fall-out and boys 65.8%.⁸⁵ Several students, both male and female, are therefore forced out of the formal system at this stage due to limited capacity. This was therefore a significant factor accounting for non-attendance of participants in this study. More girls than boys however, remain in the system confirming the fact that, in spite of limited capacity, the trend of boys taking less advantage of opportunity for formal education begins to emerge from this level contributing to the apparent feminisation of education at the higher levels of the system.

Reasons for drop-out were solicited from participants, drawn from a lower socio-economic-status, inner city community, in the Jamaica study. None of the boys identified limited space in the schools as the reason for dropping out.

⁸⁴ Bailey, B. & Brown, M. 1999. Schooling and Masculinity: Boys' Perception of the School Experience. In: *Caribbean Journal of Education*. Vol. 21. Nos. 1&2. pp. 42-57.

⁸⁵ *Jamaica Education Statistics 2006-2007*. Annual Statistical Review of the Education Sector. Ministry of Education & Youth. Kingston, Jamaica.

The main reasons cited by these boys, were: financial constraints and community and school violence. However, according to a World Bank Report on Caribbean Youth Development⁸⁶ the proportion of boys who do not attend secondary school is similar for the non-poor and the poor after controlling for wealth variables. Another study pointed to the fact that the main reasons for adolescent girls' drop-out were pregnancy followed by financial constraints.

A study carried out in Belize, Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago⁸⁷ with 31 respondents (16 males, 15 females), 30 respondents (14 males, 16 females) and 25 respondents (15 males, 10 females) from each of the three countries respectively yielded the following findings in relation to school drop-out:

1. In Belize and Trinidad & Tobago, more males than females dropped out at the primary level of the education system. A small but equal number of boys and girls dropped out at this level in Guyana, but approximately 80% of that sample dropped out at the secondary level.
2. In Belize and Guyana, the reasons for dropping out of school were primarily poor marks /learning problems or financial difficulties. In the case of Trinidad & Tobago, it was mainly difficult socio-economic circumstances and anti-social behaviour.
3. The majority of the dropouts lived in female-headed households with an average of 5-6 siblings. However, in the case of Trinidad and Tobago, a sizeable number (37%) lived in male-headed households.
4. The majority lived with parents or guardians, who were for the most part employed in skilled and low-skilled jobs with very few in professional or semi-professional positions.
5. Most participants stated that their parents or caregivers encouraged them to do well in school, but in a minority of cases, respondents indicated that their parents/caregivers had given them no encouragement.
6. The majority seemed positive about their past school experience and said they had attended school regularly and liked their teachers. A sizeable number had also participated in extra-curricular activities.
7. All respondents, in spite of having dropped out of school, said they valued education and thought it was important to get a good education. This, they felt, would enable them to be independent and get good jobs.
8. Most admired successful achievers in their community but, in the case of Trinidad & Tobago, a majority cited family members as the persons they most admired. One respondent in Guyana even admired a prisoner, because "I hear how he speaks and how people talk good about him".

⁸⁶ A World Bank Country Study. *Caribbean Youth Development: Issues and Policy Directions*. The World Bank. Washington, D.C. 2003

⁸⁷ Brown, Monica, 2005. *Dropout from Educational Institutions in Three CARICOM Countries*. Report prepared for UNESCO as part of the project on Gender Differentials at the Secondary and Tertiary Levels of the Educational System in the Anglophone Caribbean. Regional Coordinating Unit, Centre for Gender and Development Studies. UWI, Mona.

5.1.1.1 School Performance

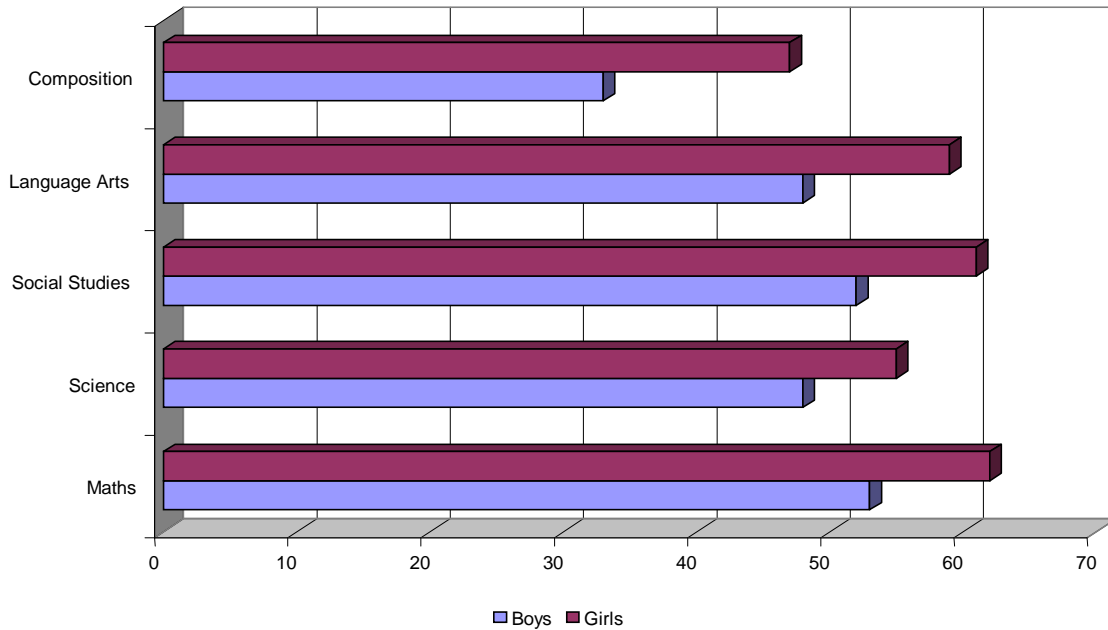
No regional data were available for school assessments for students in the 10 -14 age group. A difficulty in this regard is that there is no standardised regional examinations for students of this age and data would therefore be school and/or country based and therefore not comparable. The most significant assessment to which students of this age are subjected is the 11+ selection examinations used in a number of countries for transition to the secondary level and placement in various school types.

Bailey (2005)⁸⁸ notes that from inception, the provision of formal education in 19th century post-emancipation British Caribbean colonies was two-tiered, segregated along race and class lines with the system differing in structure, administration and financing and offering sex- segregated curricula to two distinct populations: children of the white plantocracy and those of the labouring ex-slave population. From the outset, therefore, gender and political-economy have played a pivotal role in access to formal education in the Caribbean. In spite of successive educational reforms at significant political periods during the 20th century, intended to promote greater social and, to a much lesser extent, gender justice and equality, Caribbean education systems remain marked by race, class and gender organizing hierarchies which regulate the distribution of knowledge and ultimately differential access to material resources and symbolic power.

Results of the **Grade 6 Achievement Test (GSAT)** in Jamaica, a curriculum based examination, taken by students at the final grade of the primary level illustrate the way in which both gender and social class assignment determine outcomes. In the 2004/05 school year, a larger percentage of girls than boys passed the examination in the 5 curriculum areas examined (See Figure 5.5).

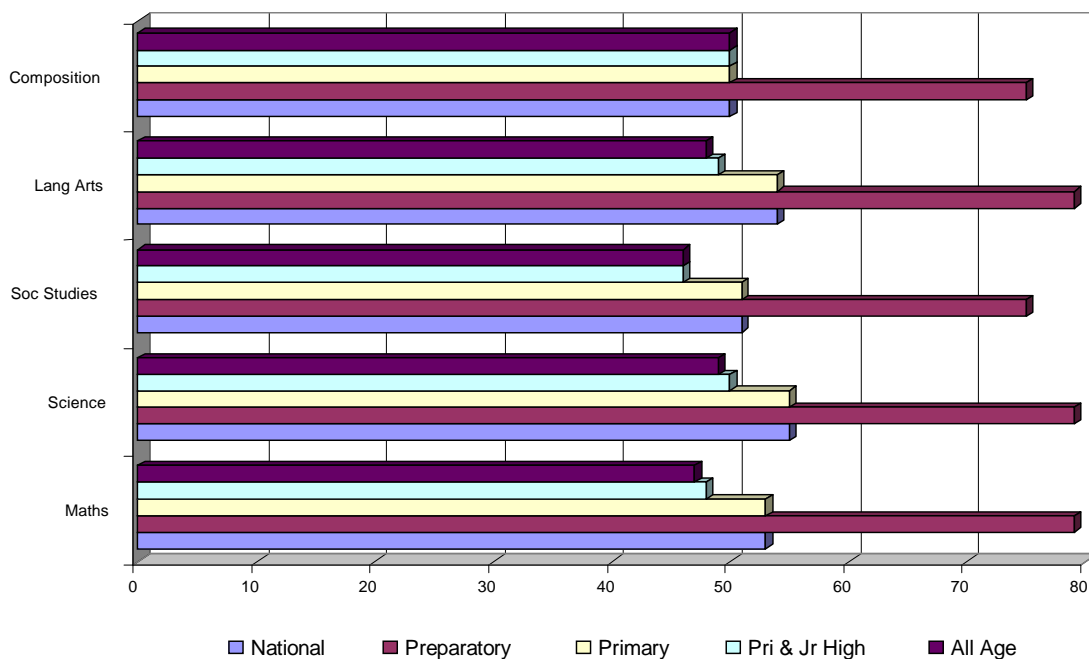
⁸⁸ Bailey, B. Petticoat and Coat-tails: the Dialectic of Educational Attainment and Socio-economic, Political Autonomy and Control in the Caribbean. *IDEAZ*. Vol. 4 Nos. 1-2. pp. 19-37.

Figure 5.5: Percentage of students Passing GSAT Subjects Primary Level (Ja.)GSAT National Average by Sex, 2004/05



However, when data on performance on this assessment are disaggregated on the basis of school type, used as a proxy for SES, students in private fee-paying-preparatory schools outperform students in the other three types of public sector schools: the primary, junior high and primary and all-age schools – listed in rank order of performance (See Figure 5.6).

Figure 5.6: Percentage of students Passing GSAT Subjects Primary Level (Ja.) GSAT National Average by School Type, 2004/05



Consistent with high rates of literacy in the Caribbean, the largest proportion of young persons 10 – 14 in the territories for which data are presented (Population and Housing census of the Commonwealth Caribbean 2000 – 2001) were in receipt of at least a primary school education (See Figure 5.7). At the secondary level, though some drop-off is registered: on the one hand the figures for at least five countries indicate consistency in enrolment (though for a greater extent for girls), while on the other hand marked drop off is registered for Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Montserrat, Grenada, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines (See Table 5.9), which could be indicative of the size of these economies and the necessity for young adolescents to forego education for the labour market.

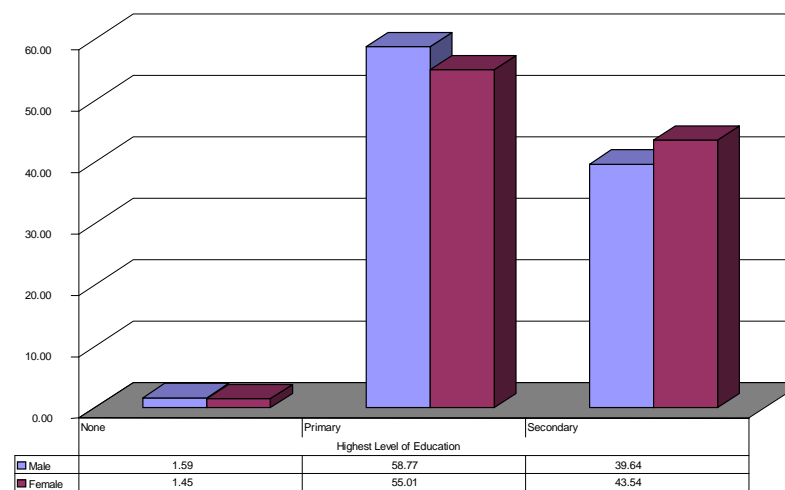


Figure 5.7: Sample Sex distribution of highest level of education attained among youth in the Caribbean (Selected Territories)

Table 5.9: Sex distribution of Highest Level of Education Attained among Youth in the Caribbean (Selected Territories)

COUNTRY	None					Primary					Secondary				
	Male		Female		Both	Male		Female		Both	Male		Female		Both
	N	%	N	%	N	N	%	N	%	N	N	%	N	%	N
Antigua	1	0.04%	0	0.00%	1	1,068	43.34%	1,312	53.25%	2,380	35	1.42%	48	1.95%	83
Bahamas	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	6,284	22.11%	5,895	20.74%	12,179	7,797	27.43%	8,446	29.72%	16,244
Barbados	4	0.02%	3	0.02%	7	3,948	21.83%	3,706	20.49%	7,654	5,193	28.72%	5,229	28.92%	10,422
Belize	807	28.88%	886	31.71%	1,693	480	17.18%	618	22.12%	1,098	0	0.00%	3	0.11%	3
Dominica	21	0.32%	13	0.20%	34	2,123	31.97%	1,793	27.00%	3,916	1,140	17.17%	1,551	23.35%	2,691
Grenada	50	0.48%	24	0.23%	74	3,735	35.56%	2,949	28.08%	6,684	1,452	13.82%	2,294	21.84%	3,746
Montserrat	2	0.79%	0	0.00%	2	68	26.88%	60	23.72%	128	68	26.88%	55	21.74%	123
St. Kitts	22	0.47%	20	0.42%	42	1,269	26.82%	1,157	24.46%	2,426	1,128	23.84%	1,135	23.99%	2,263
St. Lucia	338	2.66%	286	2.25%	624	5,032	39.66%	4,873	38.41%	9,904	897	7.07%	1,261	9.94%	2,148
St. Vincent	54	0.49%	30	0.27%	84	4,253	38.70%	3,577	32.55%	7,840	1,257	11.44%	1,818	16.54%	3,075
Trinidad	347	0.30%	228	0.20%	575	33,890	29.75%	31,941	28.04%	65,831	23,208	20.37%	24,312	21.34%	47,520

Source: Population and Housing Census of the Commonwealth Caribbean 2000 – 2001

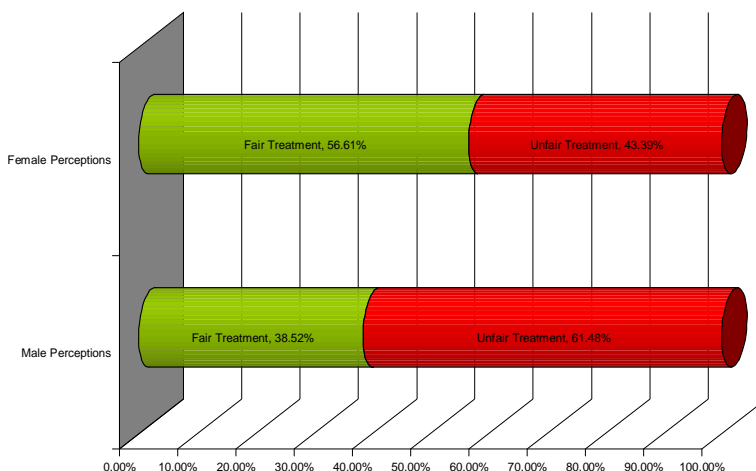
5.1.2. Substantive Equality: The School Experience

In considering issues of substantive equality refers to the quality of experience of education, in terms of entering education, participating in it and benefiting from it. Subrahmanian⁸⁹ claims that in education for gender equality to be meaningful, mechanisms for ensuring equality of treatment as well as equality of opportunity for males and females are important.

A study on students' perceptions of gender justice in schools was conducted in four Caribbean countries (Jamaica, Belize, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago) to determine the extent to which male and female students at the fourth form level, the upper end of the adolescent period, perceived that they were equally treated. This was achieved by carrying out content analysis of essays written by one thousand and eleven randomly selected grade ten / fourth form students sampled from thirty-nine schools in these four countries on the topic "*In my school all students are treated in the same way and given the same opportunities.*"⁹⁰

Within-sex comparisons of the 568 comments coded for students in the four countries, revealed that over 60% (61.48%) of all comments made by male students were reflective of perceptions of unfair treatment, compared to only 43.39% of all comments made by female students. On the other hand, while 56.61% of all comments made by girls were indicative of perceptions of being fairly treated, this was the case for only 38.52% of the comments made by boys. Boys, therefore, perceive themselves as being more unfairly treated in school than girls (See Figure 5.8).

Figure 5.8: Student Perceptions of Treatment (Within Sex)

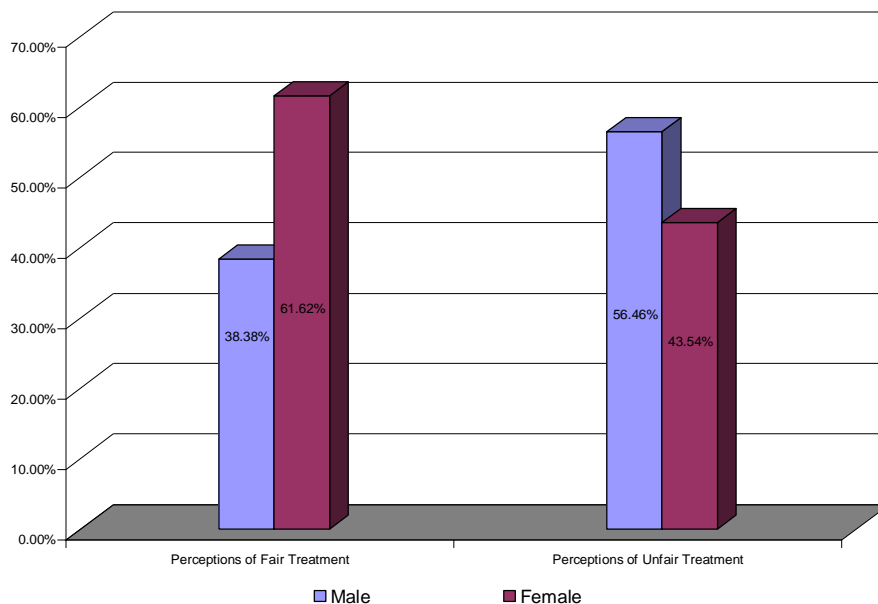


This trend was further confirmed by the between-sex comparison where 56.46% of comments related to unfair treatment were recorded by boys compared with 43.45% of these comments recorded by girls. Conversely, a higher percentage of comments related to fair treatment were recorded by girls (61.62%) than by boys (43.54%). (See Figure 5.9)

⁸⁹ Subrahmanian

⁹⁰ Charles, Suzanne. 2007. We want Justice! Students' Perspectives of Gender Justice in Caribbean Schools and Classrooms. In: (ed.) Bailey, B. Gender and Education. Special Issue of *Caribbean Journal of Education*. Vol.

Figure 5.9: Student Perceptions of Treatment (between sexes)



Five main bases for differential treatment in the school environment were identified:

1. Students' Socio-Economic Status
2. Academic and Sporting Ability
3. Race and Ethnicity
4. Teacher bias towards female students / Preference of particular student behaviours
5. Teachers' familial connections to students

Another area of concern in relation to substantive equality in education is the extent to which students are exposed to and experience violence in the school setting. In order to assess the extent of violence as well as personal insights into the experiences and perceptions of violence in the school, in particular, but also the community and home, a study was carried out at primary and secondary level schools in the Cayman Islands, Dominica and Guyana. The issue of violence was explored from two perspectives:

1. The **institutional level** with, *inter alia*, a focus on administrators' views of the school as a violent space and the institution's response to school-based violence;
2. The **individual level** with a focus on students' experience and perceptions of violence in the home, school and community, as well as teachers' experience of violence and how these experiences influenced their views of violence in schools.⁹¹

⁹¹ Centre for Gender & Development Centre, Regional Coordinating Unit. *Gender Socialisation, Schooling and Violence*. Final Report for Gender, Training and Research project funded by the Government of Japan, Women in Development Fund through the United Nations Development Programme, Jamaica. Feb. 2007

A summary of findings from the interviews with Principals at both the primary and secondary levels is provided by Yusuf-Khalil and Bailey (2007)⁹² who indicate that the views of Principals disclosed an ambivalent position. While many were of the opinion that their schools did not represent violent spaces, information emanating from some of the interviews negated this view and did in fact portray the school as a violent space. Reports by Principals on the types and frequency of violence in schools suggest that both implicit (verbal, physical) and explicit (sexual) forms of violence were evident, to varying degrees, at the primary, and secondary levels of education systems. The status of the institution, that is, whether private or public, had no apparent influence on the type and frequency of these two forms of violence. There was also no indication that the location of the institution had any obvious impact. This may be due to the fact that institutions in sub-urban and rural locations were also populated by urban students and the influence of location could therefore not be altogether isolated.

Boys were viewed as the main perpetrators of physical violence while girls were more associated with verbal violence and were described as the ones more likely to initiate sexual contact. It appears that the age of the perpetrator plays a role in how Principals viewed the severity of violent acts. As a result, acts of violence at the primary level were more likely to be treated as normal and therefore to go unnoticed and unaddressed while similar acts at the secondary level were reason for greater concern.

Principals provided possible explanations for the occurrence of violence in schools all of which have relevance for the mushrooming phenomenon of violence among adolescents, particularly males, in and outside of the school environment:

1. biologically determined and an innate behaviour particularly among boys;
2. students' experiences of home life influences and encourage aggressive behaviour;
3. work demands on parents contribute to limited supervision of children and thus to anti-social and violent behaviour patterns;
4. permanent absence of parents from the home and children living on their own.
5. poverty experienced in home life contribute to students' violent behaviour;.
6. students' experience of domestic violence as well as broader societal understandings of gender relations in terms of a normalisation of violence in these relations;
7. exposure of younger boys to a type of masculinity by older boys in which violence is an accepted norm;
8. the influence of the media as a socializing agent and the influence of social life in other societies as depicted through the media;
9. the lack of skills for settling conflicts in a non-violent manner; The lack of skills for settling conflicts in a non-violent manner;

At the individual level of the study⁹³ data were gathered from students. Included in the sample population were three hundred and thirty- students (46.4%) in the 10 to 14 age group. Of these one hundred and fifty-four were male (46.2%) while one hundred and seventy-nine were female (53.8%). Issues relating to the students' own **experiences of violence** in terms of the types (verbal, physical, sexual), the locations of such violence (home, school, community) and the frequency with which each was experienced were explored.

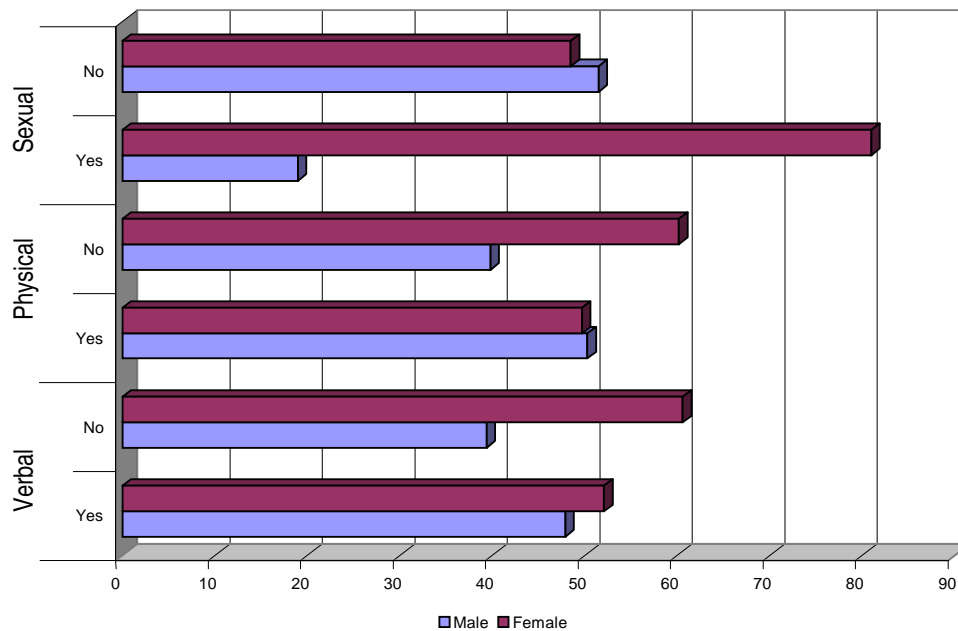
⁹² Yusuf-Khalil, Y. & Bailey, B. 2007.

⁹³ Centre for Gender & Development Centre, Regional Coordinating Unit. *Gender Socialisation, Schooling and Violence. op. cit.*

Table 5.10: Responses to Experience of Verbal, Physical and Sexual Violence by Sex (10-14 years)

	Verbal		Physical		Sexual	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Male	47.9	39.4	50.3	39.8	19.0	51.5
Female	52.1	60.6	49.7	60.2	81.0	48.5

Figure 5.10: Responses to Experience of Verbal, Physical and Sexual Violence by Sex (10-14 years)



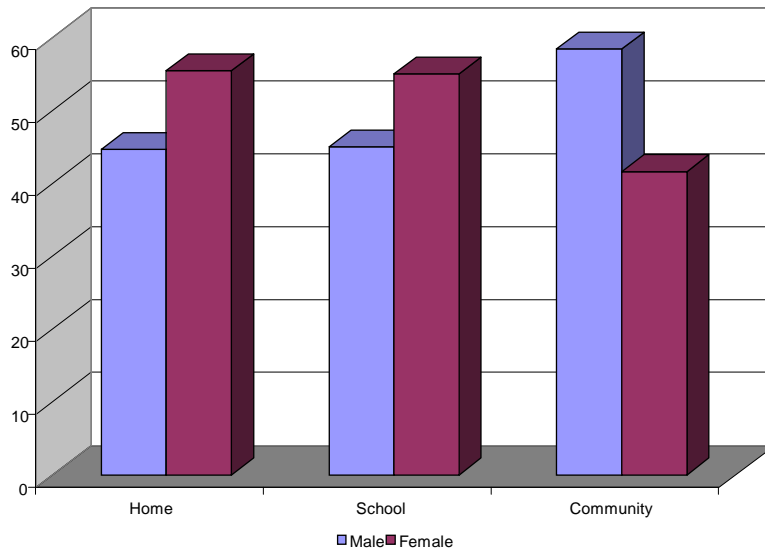
Students reported that they experienced all three forms of violence (See Table 5.10 and Figure 5.10). Of those who responded to this item on the questionnaire, a larger percentage of males than females reported experiencing verbal (52.1%) and physical (55.3%) violence while females were more exposed to sexual violence (72.3%).

Students who answered in the affirmative to experiencing the three forms of violence were then asked to indicate in which of three sites, the home, school and community. Students reported experiencing **verbal** violence in all three sites and of those who responded, a larger proportion of females than males reported experiencing this type of violence in the home and school whereas a larger proportion of males experienced verbal violence in the community. Of note, therefore, is the fact that females are more exposed to verbal violence than are males (See table 5.11 & Figure 5.11).

Table 5.11: Experience of Verbal Violence in Home, School and Community by Sex (10-14 years)

	Home	School	Community
Male	62 (44.6%)	77 (45%)	59 (58.4%)
Female	77 (55.4)	94 (55%)	42 (41.6%)

Figure 5.11: Experience of Verbal Violence in Home, School and Community by Sex (10-14 y.ears)



In relation to **physical** violence, a greater proportion of females than males in the 10-14 age group reported experiencing this type of violence in the home while the converse was the case in relation to the community with more males than females experiencing violence in that site. Slightly more females than males reported experiencing physical violence in the school. Of note is the fact that, for females the experience of physical violence was most prevalent in the home while for boys this was the case in the community which is consistent with the increasing involvement of adolescent males in crime and violence in a number of Caribbean countries. The more or less equal experience of physical violence in the school may be due, in part, to ideologies that support the use of corporal punishment as a means of discipline in the school. As might be expected the experience of physical violence in the community was more prevalent among males than females (See Figure5.12).

Figure 5.12: Experience of Physical Violence in Home, School and Community by Sex (10-14 years)

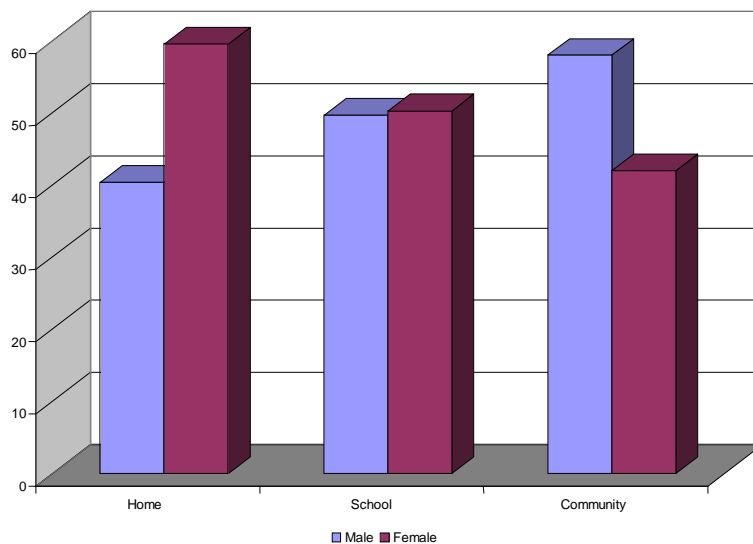


Table 5.12: Experience of Physical Violence in Home, School and Community by Sex (10-14 years)

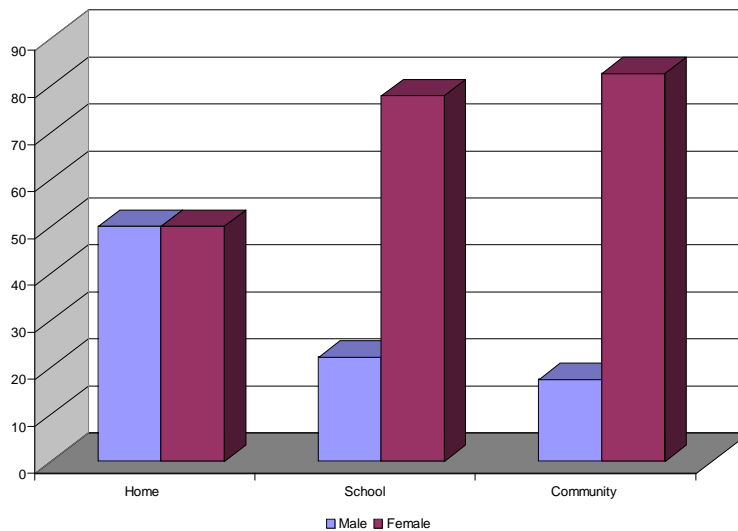
	Home	School	Community
Male	40 (40.4%)	75 (49.7%)	29 (58%)
Female	59 (59.6%)	76 (50.3%)	21 (42%)

The data on experience of **sexual** violence indicate that compared with males, females are more frequently victims of sexual violence in the school and community with the highest frequency reported in the community followed by the school. Almost equal numbers of both sexes reported experiencing sexual violence in the home. Girls are therefore at risk for being sexual abused in all spheres of activity. For males, the site of greatest risk was the home with the majority of males identifying this site most frequently followed by the school (See Table 5.12 & Figure 5.13).

Table 5.13: Experience of Sexual Violence in Home, School and Community by Sex (10-14 years)

	Home	School	Community
Male	9 (50%)	8(22.2%)	4 (17.4%)
Female	9 (50%)	28 (77.8%)	19 (82.6%)

Figure 5.13: Experience of Sexual Violence in Home, School and Community by Sex (10-14 years)



5.1.2.1. Forms of School Punishment

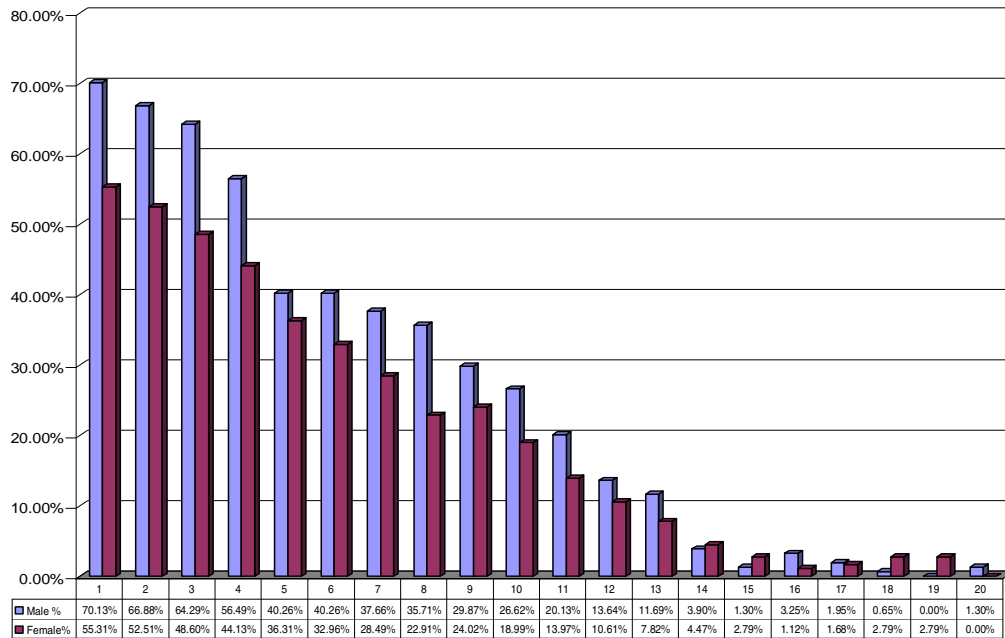
An analysis of the pattern of responses by males and females in the adolescent age group to an item soliciting information on types of punishment experienced at school revealed that students experienced a variety of forms of punishment imposed by teachers and/or school administrators. The twenty most commonly cited types of punishment are set out in Table 5.14 and Figure 5.14. The following points are of interest:

1. The within-sex rank order of frequency of response for the type of punishment experienced was exactly the same for both males and females;
2. In all except four instances, a larger proportion of males than females reported receiving the type of punishment listed. The exceptions were facing the blackboard, standing on a desk standing in the corner, and, interestingly, a greater proportion of girls than boys reported being expelled from school. In keeping with expected norms, boys appear to be more disruptive and require greater levels of discipline than do girls.
3. Corporal punishment was third in rank in terms of the proportion of males/females experiencing this type of punishment.
4. Both sexes were exposed to physically demanding forms of punishment such as standing in the sun and running laps.

Table 5.14: Forms of Punishment Experienced in School by Sex (10-14 years)

Rank	Punishment Received	Male	Male %	Female	Female%
1	Verbal reprimand	108	70.13%	99	55.31%
2	Stand in classroom	103	66.88%	94	52.51%
3	Corporal punishment	99	64.29%	87	48.60%
4	Clean school yard	87	56.49%	79	44.13%
5	Stand outside classroom	62	40.26%	65	36.31%
6	Detention	62	40.26%	59	32.96%
7	Lines to write	58	37.66%	51	28.49%
8	Exclusion	55	35.71%	41	22.91%
9	Demerits	46	29.87%	43	24.02%
10	Privilege withdrawal	41	26.62%	34	18.99%
11	Suspension	31	20.13%	25	13.97%
12	Kneeling	21	13.64%	19	10.61%
13	Put hands in the air	18	11.69%	14	7.82%
14	Face the blackboard	6	3.90%	8	4.47%
15	Expulsion	2	1.30%	5	2.79%
16	Running laps	5	3.25%	2	1.12%
17	Stand in the sun	3	1.95%	3	1.68%
18	Stand on desk	1	0.65%	5	2.79%
19	Stand in the corner	0	0.00%	5	2.79%
20	Bus suspension	2	1.30%	0	0.00%

Figure 5.14: Forms of Punishment Experienced in School by Sex



Many of these forms of punishment could be seen as bordering on physical abuse of students. In spite of this, however, interviews with principals revealed that they did not think that the activities in their institutions fostered violence in their students. Other principals, however, agreed that factors, such as the means of disciplining students, could play a part in encouraging violence in students.

5.2. Country Specific Issues

1. Barbados⁹⁴

- The Education Act 1981 of Barbados defines a child as “a person under the age of 16,” meaning that compulsory schooling applies to children 5 and 15 years inclusive.(p.39)
- The current Education Act, amended in 1992, provides for compulsory education for every child. Education is free for all those who attend government educational institutions at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. (p.110)
- Barbados’ Education Act provides for “special education” which is defined as “education suitable to the requirements of persons who are mute, deaf, blind or otherwise physically or psychologically disabled or mentally retarded.” It also includes “education suitable to the requirements of pupils who are gifted or have exceptional ability.” (p.93)
- Corporal punishment is lawful in the home; in school under The Education Act; and as a sentence for crime under section 16 of the Juvenile Offenders Act and under the Corporal Punishment Act, which permits up to 12 strokes for a person under 16 years of age. (p.68)

⁹⁴ A Study of child Vulnerability in Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent & the Grenadines. UNICEF. Barbados, 2005.

- Corporal punishment is prohibited in state-arranged foster care and in pre-school settings. The Child Care Board Regulations prohibit the use of corporal punishment for any child in a day care centre or residential children's home run by the Board. Corporal punishment is lawful in private foster care. (p.68)
- Every year nearly 4,000 children between the ages of 9 and 12 write the Barbados Secondary Schools' Entrance Examination (common entrance examination). (p.111)
- In 2004, 3,870 students sat the examination, 48.7% of them females. 3,678 were allocated to public secondary schools.(p.111)

2. *Belize*⁹⁵

- Net enrolment rate for students at primary school (5-12 years old) indicated that 90% were enrolled in the 2002 school year. Overall repetition rate in primary schools was 8.5% for the 2002/03 school year (p.29)
- Only 1 out of 3 students complete primary within prescribed 8 years (p.29)
- Out of every 100 children starting primary school, 16 will not finish. (p.29)
- Rate of transition from primary to secondary schools in 2002 was 90.3%, but in 2003 the rate dropped to 84.2% (p.29)

3. *Belize*⁹⁶

- Among Creoles mothers encouraged their girls to access education as it was generally felt that girls would make better use of their education (than boys). (p.48)
- Education projected as a critical source of survival among Creoles. (p.48)

4. *Trinidad & Tobago*⁹⁷

- Children aged 8-12 years experience challenges in terms of access to good quality education (p.17)
- Although the MDG goal for universal primary education has been achieved, the challenge is to ensure that all girls and boys are accessing quality education (p.17)
- Marginalization of boys in education system is of major concern. (p.17)

5. *Trinidad & Tobago*⁹⁸

- Students enter Form 1 at age 12; and the cumulative drop-out rate is close to 13%; by Form 2; and 15% by Form 3, where it was highest among male youths of African descent (p.14)

⁹⁵ *The Impact of HIV/AIDS on Children in Belize*. UNICEF Belize. October 2004.

⁹⁶ *Government of Belize 2002 Poverty Assessment Report*. June 2004.

⁹⁷ *Promoting Child Rights*. Selected Proceedings of the Caribbean Child Research Conference. 2006.

⁹⁸ *Trinidad and Tobago Youth and Social Development: An Integrated Approach for Social Inclusion*. June 2000.

- Inequity in primary and secondary school is evident both in the scores resulting from the CEE and in the practice of “tracking” which places students with poor scores in schools of lesser quality. (p.12)
- Performance in CEE is based on variables such as: education district; county of residence; management authority of the primary school; student’s socio-economic status; and race group. (p.12)
- Students of self-declared African origin are significantly more likely to score lower (59%) than those of mixed or Indian origin (64%) or those of Syrian/Lebanese, Caucasian and Chinese origin (above 72%).
- Although official repetition rates are extremely low in primary education due to the common practice of automatic promotion, many students begin to fall behind rapidly after the common entrance exam. (p.13)
- In 1994 Trinidad and Tobago Federation of Women’s Institutes established The Cocorite Learning Centre to provide a two-year remedial education programme to youths aged 12-15 years, who did not pass the CEE and were unable to gain access to port-primary schools. (p.13)
- Children from high socio-economic status households scored significantly better in the CEE than those from low socio-economic households, especially those in which nobody was employed. (p.12). Students from upper and middle income families are more likely to enter 5- and 7-year traditional schools (30% of enrollment); while students from lower income families are placed disproportionately in inferior junior secondary, senior comprehensive, and composite schools (about 70% of enrollment). (p.13)

5.3. Challenges/Opportunities identified in relation to educating adolescents

The literature review, although not focused exclusively on the adolescent age group, 10 to 14 years, pointed to challenges and/or opportunities related to the education of youth in the Caribbean.

5.3.1 Challenges highlighted included:

1. The growing number of children who drop-out of school, particularly among boys.
2. No harmonisation of criteria within and/or between countries that schools can use to track students in the system and so be aware when they have ‘dropped out’ of the system.⁹⁹
3. Need for greater parental involvement in schooling.¹⁰⁰
4. The need to make education more affordable for those with limited means. Free attendance at the primary but not at the secondary level

⁹⁹ See Brown, Monica. *Drop-out from Educational Institutions in Jamaica and Barbados*. A study conducted on behalf of the Centre for Gender and Development Studies, RCU with funding from the CIDA Canada/Caribbean Gender Equality Programme.

¹⁰⁰ Items 1, 3 – 11 extracted from *A Study of Child Vulnerability in Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines*. UNICEF, Barbados. 2005.

5. Provision of education appropriate to the needs of children through assessment of special learning needs and better attention to students with disabilities.
6. Limited capacity at the secondary level and absence of universal secondary education so that some children have no access and are often labelled as drop-outs.
7. Need for better training of teachers in the area of classroom management.
8. Abuse and neglect of children in the home by parents due to alcoholism, drug abuse, involvement in gangs etc. which then becomes a barrier to the child's education.
9. Limited educational opportunities for teenage mothers.
10. Level of untrained teachers at the primary level and primary education not compulsory.
11. Students with insufficient access to books and other reading materials.
12. The inadequacy of the education system to provide young people with the knowledge and skills needed to function effectively in a modern society.¹⁰¹
13. Leaving school without a marketable skill and students rejecting the idea that education is the main source of social mobility.
14. Young people, particularly males, going into the job market, the informal economy or the drug trade as early as possible.
15. Students having to negotiate their way through an education system characterised by inequality of access.

5.3.2 Opportunities:

Very few **opportunities** for addressing the challenges were identified in the literature. Those that emerged include:

1. The enthusiasm and interest shown by students who had dropped out of the formal school system and were enrolled in a non-governmental remedial programme give support to the proposal made by Miller that features of these types of interventions should be developed and used as a model for retaining students, particularly boys, in the public education system.¹⁰²
2. A protocol needs to be developed that can be used in education systems throughout the region to record student data that allows schools to track students and be aware that they have left the school/the system and the reason for leaving.

¹⁰¹ Williams, Lincoln. *A Review of Issues Arising from Selected Qualitative/Quantitative Literature on Youth in the Caribbean*.

¹⁰² See Brown, Monica. *op.cit.*

6. CRIME AND GANG VIOLENCE

OVERVIEW

In this section a brief overview of the situation of crime and violence in the Caribbean is presented and the involvement of youth in crime and violence is looked at in terms of youth as victim and youth as perpetrator. As before, most sources addressed youth with no clear indication of the exact age group to which reference was made.

Risk factors associated with childhood aggression and youth delinquency are discussed in relation to factors operating at societal, community, inter-personal and individual levels. The various sites in which youth are exposed to and experience violence are also highlighted. Issues related to youth involvement in gang violence are raised.

In the absence of regional data, a case study of the involvement of Jamaican youth, 9-15 years olds, as victims and perpetrators of criminal activities is included. The direct and non-direct cost of crime and violence and the economic and social multiplier effects are examined and strategies already undertaken by CARICOM member states to address challenges of youth crime and violence are outlined.

Country specific issues are itemised and continuing challenges and opportunities for addressing these are identified.

6.1 Crime and Violence in the Caribbean

At present, crime and violence presents a formidable challenge to many Caribbean states. Beyond the direct effect on victims, crime and violence inflict widespread costs, generating a climate of fear and panic for all citizens and diminishes social stability as well as the general morale of law-abiding citizens. Moreover crime compromises socio-economic growth as investors, both local and foreign (including tourists), lose confidence in security systems and move business elsewhere.

Though several contributing factors to the incidence of crime in the Caribbean can be identified, chief among these is the region's vulnerability to narco-trafficking activities. Given the region's geography (nestled between the world's source of cocaine to the south and its primary consumer markets to the north) the Caribbean remains a main transit point for narcotics trafficking and its by-products of gang warfare, small arms trading and money laundering. Compounding these factors is the development of a general culture of violence and lawlessness attendant to compromised social capital due to migration, the influence of the media and the loss of traditional values in the face of globalization.

Murder rates in the Caribbean now stand at 30 per 100,000 population annually, higher than that of any other region of the world and have risen in recent years for many of the region's countries¹⁰³. Assault rates are also notably above the world average. Additionally, violence against women affects a significant percentage of women and girls in the Caribbean. Three of the top ten recorded rape rates in the world occur in the Caribbean and statistics from a regional victimization survey revealed that 48% of adolescent girls' sexual initiation was "forced" or "somewhat forced" in at least nine Caribbean countries¹⁰⁴. Organized crime (in the form of drug trafficking, kidnapping and corruption) is also increasingly affecting the region.

Despite the efforts of regional heads of state to comprehend and stem the causes of crime, challenges remain, with crime and violence in the Caribbean affecting youth disproportionately in comparison to the wider population, both as victim and increasingly as perpetrator.

6.2 Defining Violence

6.2.1 Youth as Victim

The concept of violence against children (and youth) as defined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child¹⁰⁵ (Articles 19, 34 and 37) includes "all forms of physical or mental violence, injury and abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse."

¹⁰³ UNODC Crime Trends Surveys and Interpol in *Crime, Violence, and Development: Trends, Costs, and Policy Options in the Caribbean* A Joint Report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Latin America and the Caribbean Region of the World Bank, March 2007

¹⁰⁴ Walker, S., Grantham-Mcgregor, S., Himes, J., Williams, S., and Bennett, F. 1994. "Nutritional and Health Determinants of School Failure and Dropout in Adolescent Girls in Kingston, Jamaica." Washington, DC: International Center for Research on Women in *Crime, Violence, and Development: Trends, Costs, and Policy Options in the Caribbean* A Joint Report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Latin America and the Caribbean Region of the World Bank, March 2007

¹⁰⁵ <http://untreaty.un.org/English/TreatyEvent2001/pdf/03e.pdf>

The World Health Organisation (WHO) in its Consultation on Child Abuse Prevention of 1999¹⁰⁶ identified violence against children as: “all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.”

The WHO further described violence against children in its *World Report on Violence and Health* as “the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual... that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation.”

The Child Rights Information Network (CRIN) identifies five 'settings' in which violence against children generally tend to occur¹⁰⁷:

1. The home and family
2. Schools and education settings
3. Public institutions
4. Work situations
5. The community and on the streets

6.2.2 Youth as Perpetrator

Defining Youth Violence from the perspective of youth-as-perpetrator is problematic in the Caribbean, given the inconsistencies in definitions of youth as well as how members of the group are defined in the eyes of the law. Legislation in the region remains indefinite as to its definition of “juvenile” or “youth” offenders versus “adult” offenders.

For instance, in Barbados, the Juvenile Offenders Act fixes the age of criminal responsibility at seven years. Below this age a child is considered, in law, to be incapable of committing a crime. Similarly, in Trinidad and Tobago the age below which a child is conclusively presumed to be unable to commit an offence was seven years. However, legislation raising the age of criminal responsibility to 12 has recently been enacted. In Belize, however, the age of criminal responsibility under the Criminal Code was increased from seven to nine years in 1999. Children are presumed not to have the capacity to infringe the penal law before the age of 12 years, which is described as the age of criminal responsibility. Given the variations in the regional laws, defining a youth perpetrator remains inconclusive.

Anecdotal evidence points to the fact however, youth are disproportionately represented in the incidence (and severity) of crime, with violent crimes being committed at increasingly younger ages. The 2007 UN/World Bank Report¹⁰⁸ (Crime, Violence, and Development: Trends, Costs, and Policy Options in the Caribbean) suggests that:

¹⁰⁶ Report on the Consultation on Child Abuse Prevention Geneva, March 29-31, 1999. <http://www.vesican.org/definitions/WHO.html>

¹⁰⁷ <http://www.crin.org/violence/formsofviolence/index.asp>

¹⁰⁸ *Crime, Violence, and Development: Trends, Costs, and Policy Options in the Caribbean* A Joint Report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Latin America and the Caribbean Region of the World Bank, March 2007

...the early adolescent period (10-14 years) is a growing concern in the region because both quantitative and qualitative evidence points to violent crimes being committed at younger and younger ages. While still considered to be one of the lowest risk groups across the entire lifespan for being a victim of homicide, young adolescents are observed to be increasingly involved in both homicide and other forms of crime and violence.

6.3 Contributing Factors to Youth Violence

Several studies in the Caribbean have examined the risk factors associated with childhood aggression and juvenile delinquency. In one study utilizing the data from the PAHO/WHO nine Caribbean country study, the major risk factors for youth involvement in violence were found to be physical and sexual abuse, skipping school and rage. The strongest protective factor was school connectedness (liking school and getting along with teachers) and other protective factors were family connectedness (parents and other family members care for you, pay attention to you, understand you) and religion (attending church and religiosity)¹⁰⁹

Specific factors identified as contributing risk factors to youth crime include: poverty, youth unemployment, urban migration, drug trafficking, a weak education system, ineffective policing, the widespread availability of weapons, drug and alcohol use, and the presence of organized gangs¹¹⁰. The Ecological approach identifies four levels of influence on criminal and violent behaviour, both as victim and as perpetrator as seen in Figure 6.1.¹¹¹

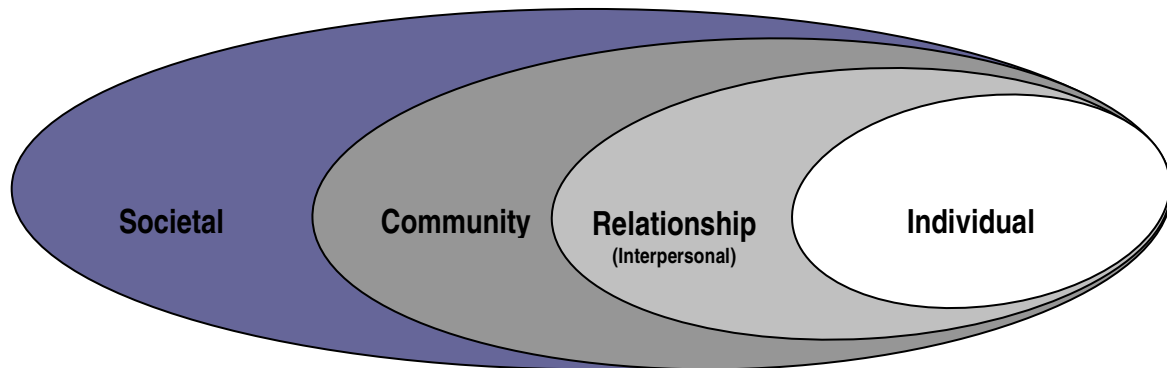


Figure 6.1 Levels of Influence on Criminal and Violent Behaviour

According to the model, crime and violence are impacted upon by:

1. Individual factors, including characteristics such as education level, self esteem, life skills, which predispose an individual to be more susceptible to victimization.
2. Relationship factors, including relations with peers and the family context from which an individual comes as well as the social support networks available to them also influences the possibility of a person falling victim to crime.

109 Violence Against Children In The Caribbean Region Regional Assessment Un Secretary General's Study On Violence Against Children

http://www.uwi.edu/ccdc/downloads/Violence_against_children.pdf

110 *Crime, Violence, and Development: Trends, Costs, and Policy Options in the Caribbean* A Joint Report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Latin America and the Caribbean Region of the World Bank, March 2007










111 *World Report on Violence against children.* http://www.violencestudy.org/IMG/pdf/1_World_Report_on_Violence_against_Children.pdf

3. Community factors include the broader context of social relationships in environments such as schools and neighborhoods, which facilitate or discourage violent behaviours.
4. At the broadest level societal factors such as cultural norms and economic conditions are also able to affect violence (WHO, 2002)¹¹².

Table 6.1 provides additional detail of the Ecological model:

¹¹² It must be noted, that these same factors may predispose an individual to becoming a perpetrator of crime.

Table 6.1 Levels of Influence on Criminal and Violent Behaviour – Specific Factors

Societal	Community	Relationship / Interpersonal	Individual
<p><i>POVERTY AND INEQUALITY. YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT</i></p> <p> Being raised in poverty has been related to youth aggression that may arise from feelings of hopelessness due to chronic unemployment and other associated factors</p> <p><i>URBAN MIGRATION</i></p> <p> Youth migrants who are “unattached” to families, schools or employment are highly susceptible to becoming involved in criminal activities. This is particularly true when taken in the context of increasing urban poverty.</p> <p><i>ORGANISED CRIME</i></p> <p> Increasingly youth (particularly young dispossessed males) are being actively recruited into organised criminal activities. Given the immunity of minors from prosecution in adult courts, the relative cost of their involvement in the drug trade is lower than that of their adult counterparts, which makes them more attractive recruits to crime syndicates.</p>	<p><i>VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS.</i></p> <p> A 2003 representative sample survey of school children in nine Caribbean countries found that 20% of males carried weapons to school in the previous 30 days and 10% had been knocked unconscious in a fight. Evidence also exists that suggests that abuse by teachers of students is common, creating an environment in which violence is commonplace and accepted as normal by many school aged youth</p> <p><i>ACCESS TO WEAPONS</i></p> <p> A 2003 representative sample survey of school children in nine Caribbean countries found that the proportion of Caribbean adolescent males who carry firearms is extremely high, where 20 % of male students had carried a weapon to school in the previous 30 days, nearly as many had been in a fight using weapons. This access to weapons (usually for protection in urban neighbourhoods) is closely linked to membership in organized criminal activities</p>	<p><i>DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, CHILD ABUSE AND CORPORAL PUNISHMENT.</i></p> <p> High levels of domestic abuse and corporal punishment throughout the Caribbean are severe risk factors likely to promote future violent behaviour. Evidence suggests that children who witness domestic violence are more likely in the future to engage in delinquent and violent behaviour and that child abuse is associated with an increased probability that children engage in delinquent and violent behaviour</p> <p><i>PEERS AND ROLE MODELS.</i></p> <p> The historical absence of male adult figures in many (particularly urban) households in the Caribbean for role modelling and mentoring compounds the influence of “negative” role models, particularly for boys. Drug dons are an important source of admiration due to their wealth and power. Additionally, his interest in recruiting children make him a particularly dangerous role model as youth easily become engaged in his business</p> <p> <i>Gangsterism</i> is a growing problem in the region. Gangs are highly organized and tend to satisfy the needs of many youth at various levels. At the individual level (through respect, power, authority, recognition, and financial gain), the relationship level (support, caring, friendship, and health services/medical attention)</p>	<p><i>INDIVIDUAL TRAITS</i></p> <p> Some of the most influential risk factors for youth violence are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Biological (being male; delivery complications at birth); Psychological/behavioural (degree of self regulation and self esteem; low intelligence Educational (lower achievement can lead to engagement in criminal activities) Environmental (exposure to violence and conflict in the family; involvement with drugs & alcohol and early sexual initiation)

Modified from Crime, Violence, and Development: Trends, Costs, and Policy Options in the Caribbean
A Joint Report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Latin America and the Caribbean Region of the World Bank

6.4 Sites of Violence

Despite the fact that all Caribbean states have, without reservation, ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, violence and the fear of violence remains a prominent issue in the lives of Caribbean youth, with violence against youth, occurring at various sites as seen in Table 7.2¹¹³:

Table 6.2 Sites of Youth Violence

<i>SITES OF VIOLENCE</i>		<i>TYPES OF VIOLENCE</i>			
		<i>PHYSICAL</i>	<i>PSYCHOLOGICAL</i>	<i>NEGLECT</i>	<i>EXPLOITATION</i>
INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL	Home and family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of Care ▪ Domestic violence ▪ Physical abuse ▪ Sexual abuse and exploitation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Verbal and emotional abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Abandonment ▪ Deprivation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sexual abuse and exploitation
	Education settings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bullying ▪ Corporal Punishment ▪ Fighting with weapons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bullying by students ▪ Emotional abuse (humiliating discipline/ insults from teachers) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inadequate security measures in place for students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recruitment into organised crime syndicates ▪ Recruitment into prostitution and pornography rings
	Labour situations				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dangerous, harmful or hazardous work ▪ Forced labour ▪ Pornography ▪ Commercial sexual exploitation ▪ Trafficking
INSTITUTIONAL	Public Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of youth-friendly services 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Physical, emotional, and sexual violence and harassment, and bullying in special schools 	
	The community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gang violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Abduction / Kidnapping 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recruitment into organised crime syndicates

¹¹³ <http://www.crin.org/violence/formsofviolence/index.asp>

6.4.1 Home and family

The Literature revealed that ironically violence against children occurs most frequently and with the most manifestations, in the home. The World Health Organisation defines ¹¹⁴ abuse/violence against children as “that which abuse or maltreatment constitutes all forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.”

The Literature revealed that each type of violence occurred with the home.

*Voices of Caribbean Youth*¹¹⁵ indicates that in many Caribbean homes, violence within the home is normalized since culturally it may be seen as normal and acceptable. Corporal punishment is widely accepted and in many instances, because of allegiance to the home and to caregivers, children are compelled to remain silent about instances of abuse.

Meeks-Gardner *et al* (2005) in *A Desk Review of Violence against Children in the Caribbean*¹¹⁶ suggest that experiences of child abuse and neglect are generally higher than official figures suggest, implying underreporting of cases of violence against children and youth. Meeks-Gardener suggests that some reasons for underreporting by children and youth are the fear of reprisal; shame amongst family members and the view that abuse is a private matter. In some cases, the family’s economic dependence on the perpetrator combined with fear of the perpetrator allows acts of violence to go unreported and consequently unpunished.

In this regard, many abused children/youth are forced to interact with their abusers on a daily basis and may even be under the primary care of the abuser – a mother, a father, grandparent or other relative. This is confirmed in *A Review of the issues arising from selected quantitative and qualitative literature on youth in the Caribbean*¹¹⁷ which cites research completed by Le Franc *et al* (1998) which suggests that violence is very much a part of the parent-child relationship, and is accepted as natural and normal. The Review noted that 12.4% of adolescents have expressed worry about the fighting and violence seen in the home, and 19.8% reported fearing that one or other of their parents will leave them.

While the Literature indicates that violence against youth occurs across races and socio-economic groupings, children from homes of low socioeconomic status as well as children from inner-city areas as well as children who have a parent with mental health problems or drug/alcohol problems are particularly vulnerable to abuse and neglect within the home. Children with disabilities are also reported to be at heightened risk for all types of abuse – physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect (Cabral 2004; Joseph 2002 in Meeks Gardener 2005)¹¹⁸

¹¹⁴ <http://www.yesican.org/definitions/WHO.html>

¹¹⁵ Report of the Youth forum and on the Caribbean Regional Consultation on the UN Secretary General’s Study on Violence against Children.

www.unicef.org/barbados/UNICEF_report_Caribbean_youth_perspectives_on_violence.doc

¹¹⁶ Regional Assessment. Violence against Children in the Caribbean: A Desk Review. 2005. UNICEF, Jamaica.

¹¹⁷ Williams, Lincoln. A Review of the issues arising from selected quantitative and qualitative literature on youth in the Caribbean. undated.

¹¹⁸ Regional Assessment. *op.cit.*

Physical abuse: The use of corporal punishment as a form of discipline remains common in the Caribbean is used to discipline children from very young ages. It is so culturally engrained into the Caribbean psyche, that children themselves believe that physical punishment is a valid and necessary form of discipline and it is not seen as problematic unless it is excessive.

Based on this cultural acceptance of physical/corporal punishment in the region, it does not come as a surprise that of the CARICOM member states, only one country (Haiti) has implemented legislation to address and stem corporal punishment in the home, school and wider community. Table 7.3, gives additional details as to the sites in which corporal punishment of children and youth is prohibited:

Table 6.3 Legal Status of Corporal Punishment of Children in CARICOM Member States

COUNTRY	Home	School	Community	Institutions
Antigua	No	No	No	No
Bahamas	No	No	No	No
Barbados	No	No	No	Prohibited in state-arranged foster care and pre-school settings, and in day care centres and children's residential centres run by the Child Care Board, but lawful in private foster care
Belize	No	No	NO	Prohibited as a sentence for crime and as a disciplinary measure in 'Youth Hostel' detention centre. Permitted in prisons by law enforcement officials
Dominica	No	No	No	No
Grenada	No	No	No	Prohibited in child care homes by licensing requirements
Guyana	No	Prohibited in state schools, by government decree. Prohibited in private schools as a matter of policy. Motion calling for prohibition is pending before Parliament (July 2007)	No	No
Haiti	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Jamaica	No	Prohibited in schools for children up to the age of six years	No	Yes
St. Kitts	No	No	No	No
St. Lucia	No	No	Prohibited as a sentence for crime, but lawful as a disciplinary measure in penal institutions	No

COUNTRY	Home	School	Community	Institutions
St. Vincent	No	No	No	No
Suriname	No	Prohibited by government directives	No	Prohibited in private and state institutions in a draft Children's Home Bill (2005)
Trinidad and Tobago	No	Prohibited in 2000 Children (Amendment) Act, but as of January 2008 not in force	No	Prohibited as a sentence for crime, but lawful as a disciplinary measure in penal institutions

Source: Ending legalised violence against children

<http://www.childrenareunbeatable.org.uk/pdfs/EndingLegalisedViolenceAgainstChildrenOctober06.pdf>

The religious admonishment of “spare the rod and spoil the child”, the importance placed on children being obedient and showing respect to adults and the widespread belief of adults that they were not harmed by the physical punishment they received as children all combine with a lack of knowledge of non-violent discipline approaches to create home environment in which violence is normalised and flourishes.

Children are physically punished for many reasons, including disobedience, disrespect, stealing, lying, “answering back”, fighting and poor schoolwork. The majority of physical abuse occurs in the context of disciplining the child. While both sexes are eligible to receive physical punishment in the home, boys are more likely to be victims of more severe forms of abuse.

The main perpetrators of physical abuse in the home are parents/caregivers, although some abuse is perpetrated by children, for example, older siblings.

Physical violence is especially insidious, as often it is accompanied by psychological violence such as insults, isolation, rejection, threats, emotional indifference and belittling, all of which can be detrimental to a child’s psychological development and well-being.¹¹⁹ This is especially the case when the abusive / violent behaviour comes from a respected adult such as a parent.

Sexual Abuse:

Janet Brown (1993) suggests that within the Caribbean context, even in households economically headed by women, men are able to assert emotional and physical power and control over female household members. This power imbalance has become so normalised, as evidenced in attitudes which produce such proverbs as “Nah mind chicken fe feed mongoose,” which tacitly condones the ability of men to exert control over the bodies of the women and female children in their care.

With regards to sexual abuse, Brown and Chevannes (1998)¹²⁰ point to the fact that in the Caribbean, particularly for girls, parenting is geared towards obedience and docility, which makes

¹¹⁹ Ending legalised violence against children -

<http://www.childrenareunbeatable.org.uk/pdfs/EndingLegalisedViolenceAgainstChildrenOctober06.pdf>

¹²⁰ Brown, Janet and Barry Chevannes. 1998. “Why Man Stay So” *An examination of Gender Socialization in the Caribbean*. Mona, UWI

them vulnerable to abuse, particularly to sexual abuse, as victims feel it is wrong to disobey an adult (particularly a parental adult). In this way, abuse goes unreported and unimpeded.

The underreporting of sexual abuse is partially due to the resignation towards the abusive sexual relationship by other household members due to financial dependence on the perpetrator.

In addition to cultural stereotypes which facilitate (and condone) the sexual abuse of children, ambiguities within the law also leave children at the mercy of their abusers. Discrepancies in the terminologies used to describe sexual abuse among children exist, where for children younger than 16 years of age; the term “carnal abuse” is used, whereas for children aged 16 to 18, the term “rape” is used. This has serious implications, particularly as “carnal abuse” is often treated as a lesser crime than “rape”. Younger children who have been abused are therefore offered less protection under the law than older children and adults, who may be better emotionally equipped to deal with the abuse.

In addition to inconsistencies within the law, inadequacy remains an issue. For instance, the Jamaica Offences against the Person Act¹²¹ reads:

Any male person who has carnal knowledge of a female person who to his knowledge is his grand-daughter, daughter, sister or mother, shall be guilty of a misdemeanour and on conviction thereof before a Circuit Court shall be liable to imprisonment with hard labour for any term not exceeding five years.

The Trinidad version as defined by the Offences against the Person Act¹²², Section 31, Chapter 11: 08 reads:

The unlawful carnal knowledge of a related female without her consent, by fear, fraud or force". Carnal knowledge means "the penetration, however little, of the vagina by the male organ.

Given the many forms in which Sexual Abuse exists across the region, including forms which do not involve Carnal Knowledge, the laws are ill equipped to deal with sexual abuse in all of its manifestations. An equally serious concern is that the laws do not adequately treat with the abuse of boys, and in countries such as Belize, Grenada and Guyana sexual abuse is not recognized under the law if the victim is male.

This omission in the law, most likely stems from the general belief that girls in single-parent households are most at risk of sexual abuse and that the perpetrator is most often the stepfather or mother's boyfriend. The statistics however, do not always support this view. LeFranc (2002)¹²³ reports on a study by Wyatt which found that sexual abuse was most common in two-parent households, suggesting that the presence of the father does not necessarily offer protection to the girl child.

¹²¹ <http://www.moj.gov.jm/laws/statutes/Offences%20Against%20the%20Person%20Act.pdf>

¹²² <http://www.tparliament.org/bills/acts/2005/a2005-11.pdf>

¹²³ LeFranc E., ‘Child abuse in the Caribbean. Addressing the Rights of the Child’ In Barrow C, 2002.

Emotional Abuse: While there is less documentation of emotional abuse than other forms of abuse in the Literature, it is of note that this form of violence against children, usually accompanies all other forms. Parents are reported to be the most common perpetrators of this kind of abuse in the home, especially mothers.

Domestic violence: The challenge to reduce domestic violence is a pervasive one throughout the Caribbean and children are often witnesses of domestic violence, which may affect them in several ways. Some children identify with the victim and become depressed or fearful. Other children wish to protect the victim or to intervene to prevent the violence and get injured themselves. Some children identify with the aggressor and start to criticize or abuse the victim themselves or verbally and physically abuse a younger sibling.

With reference to the home, men seem to be regarded as the main perpetrators of violence, both against male and female children, though in different ways. This violence is deemed as a natural offshoot of male aggression as so is seen as culturally normal and related to the construction of maleness and masculinity.

Like corporal and sexual violence cultural attitudes facilitate its existence, as in most instances domestic violence is considered a private matter and does not attract the investigative rigour of the constabulary. Many cases go unreported and children remain at the mercy of abusers.

A lack of facilities and shelters for victims, also limits the options of those for whom abuse is a reality.

6.4.2 Violence in Schools

While the home remains the primary site of violence against children and youth, as individuals age violence and abuse is more likely to happen in the community and at school rather than at home. The issue of violence in Caribbean schools has give rise to levels of discourse that range from the straightforward to the complex. The incidence of homicides, wounding, sexual and physical assault in schools has risen sharply over the last decade, commanding the attention of most Caribbean governments and their citizens and today, the prevalence of violence in schools has become a pressing educational issue. In communities where violence is more rampant, concerns about it have surpassed concerns about academic achievement, which have traditionally had priority¹²⁴. From fights to assaults of teachers as well as vandalism of school property and the presence of local crime syndicates Caribbean schools are increasingly becoming sites of anti-social behaviour and violence.

Combined with factors including, but not limited to, inadequate school staff, inappropriately trained school staff, no school-counsellors assigned to schools, the influence of the media through the valorisation of violence and compromised social capital, violence in Caribbean schools is at crisis proportions.

¹²⁴ CARICOM Ministers discuss school violence. <http://www.caribbeannetnews.com/2004/10/29/ministers.htm>

6.4.2.1 Institutional Violence

Violence in Schools includes violence directed at students through institutionalised punishment (corporal punishment) as well as through verbal and psychological abuse and the use of humiliation and intimidation by teachers.¹²⁵ The existence of corporal punishment and the use of humiliation and intimidation by teachers as a disciplinary measure is widespread and widely accepted in the Caribbean.

These practices continue in the face of attempts by Ministries of Education across the region: In Trinidad and Tobago corporal punishment was prohibited by the 2000 Children (Amendment) Act which held that is not a reasonable form of punishment. However, because of the strong support among teachers and parents, the government commissioned research on the issue and its reintroduction was recommended (www.endcorporalpunishment.org).

Similarly, while the Jamaica Teachers' Association and the Jamaica Independent Schools' Association do not support corporal punishment in schools, and have advised teachers not to flog or whip, a Jamaica Gleaner Survey in 2006 showed 60 percent of persons polled in favour of spanking and caning in schools (www.endcorporalpunishment.org). Debate on the issue was deferred in Guyana in 2006 and a survey in 2005 among 4,000 school children in the age group 7 to 17 showed that 87 percent had received corporal punishment. The practice is also widespread in Belize.

In many instances therefore, teachers - particularly those without adequate training to seek alternative methods - feel unrestrained in using corporal punishment to address student behavioural problems, despite evidence of its long term ill-effects on students.

The Literature also provides evidence of teachers engaging in sexual relationships with students, which may not be part of the repertoire of violence seen in schools, but is equally abusive of the power with which they are entrusted.

6.4.2.2 Student Violence against Students (Gangs)

Increasingly, violence among students is linked to gang membership and the increase in gang-related criminal activity, including, but not limited to trafficking of illicit drugs and the operation of pornography cells within school settings. Stabbings, shootings, and severe beatings have been named as significant elements in the corollary of gang conflict along with the presence of weapons in Caribbean schools.

While boys were regarded, as tending to be more violent than girls the forums' delegates nonetheless felt that an increase in violence amongst girls is apparent. Male aggression, is seen as normative behaviour for boys and central to their (the boys) concept and subsequent construction of maleness and masculinity.

¹²⁵ Violence against children in the Caribbean region: Regional Assessment
www.uwi.edu/ccdc/downloads/Violence_against_children.pdf

6.4.3 Public Institutions and the Community

The Literature highlights a pervasive erosion of confidence in the judicial and law enforcement systems by Caribbean populations generally, including many youth. This is particularly pronounced in depressed socio-economic communities. Police, in particular, are seen as abusive of the powers vested in their office, committing brutalities against vulnerable sectors in society and contributing to crime by failing to enforce laws or to respond to calls for help in a timely manner. More significantly, the police inspire little public trust as they are deemed as being complicit to criminal activities. Additionally it was felt that the members of the legal fraternity and the staff of the legal system were not always sensitive to the special needs of juvenile and youth offenders, or even those children and young persons who appear before the courts as a result of civil matters (family conflict for example).

6.5 Youth and Violence – A Jamaican Case Study

6.5.1 Youth as Victim

Statistics from the Jamaica Constabulary Force¹²⁶ reveal a steady increase in crimes committed against children and youth 9 – 15 years of age over a five year period, with some decline in the sixth year. When disaggregated on the basis of crime, similar trends emerge, with crimes against girl-children (rape and carnal abuse) being far in excess of the crimes perpetrated against males (murder, shooting, robbery) (See Table 6.4 and Figures 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4).

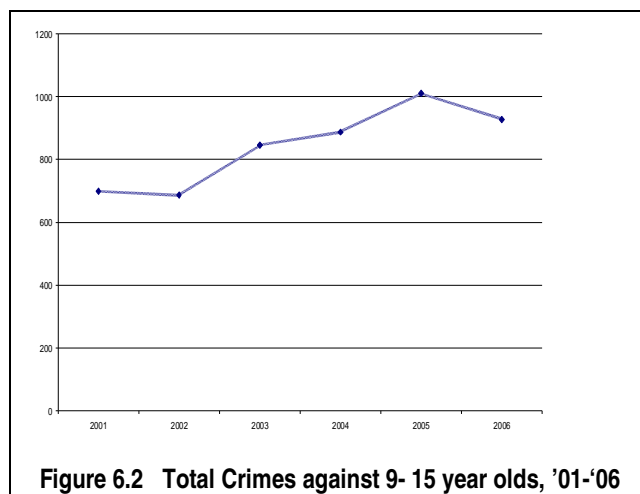


Figure 6.2 Total Crimes against 9- 15 year olds, '01-'06

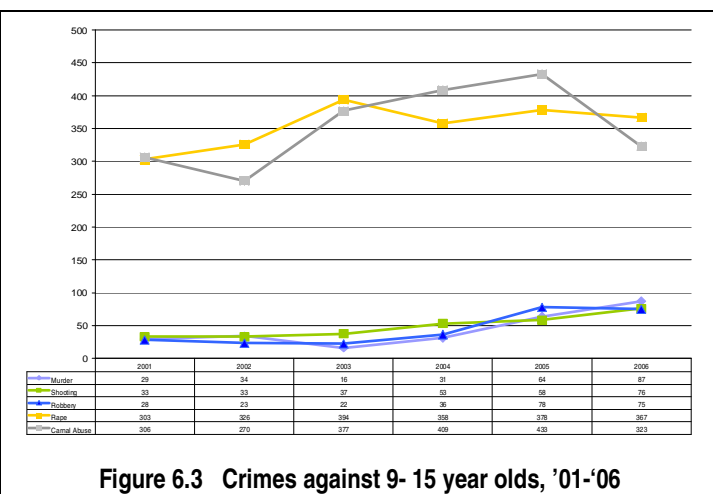


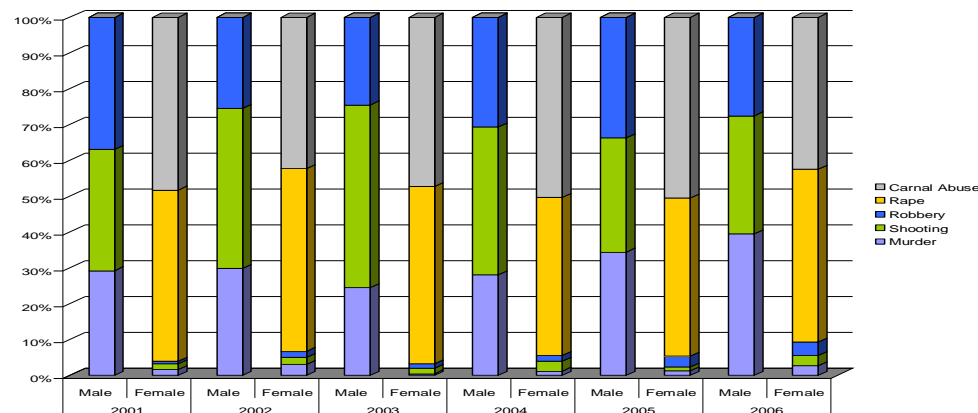
Figure 6.3 Crimes against 9- 15 year olds, '01-'06

Table 6.4 Crimes against 9-15 year olds, 2001 – 2006 by Sex of Victim

YEAR	MALE VICTIM						FEMALE VICTIM									
	Murder		Shooting		Robbery		Murder		Shooting		Robbery		Rape		Carnal Abuse	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
2001	19	29.23	22	33.85	24	36.92	10	1.58	11	1.74	4	0.63	303	47.79	306	48.26
2002	14	29.79	21	44.68	12	25.53	20	3.13	12	1.88	11	1.72	326	51.02	270	42.25
2003	12	24.49	25	51.02	12	24.49	4	0.50	12	1.51	10	1.25	394	49.44	377	47.30
2004	21	28.00	31	41.33	23	30.67	10	1.23	22	2.71	13	1.60	358	44.09	409	50.37
2005	53	34.42	49	31.82	52	33.77	11	1.28	9	1.05	26	3.03	378	44.11	433	50.53
2006	66	39.52	55	32.93	46	27.54	21	2.76	21	2.76	29	3.81	367	48.23	323	42.44

¹²⁶ <http://www.jcf.gov.jm/>

Figure 6.4 Crimes against 9-15 year olds, 2001 – 2006 by Sex of Victim



6.5.2 Youth as Perpetrator

Conversely, statistics from the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN)¹²⁷ show that of five categories of crime committed in Jamaica over an eight-year period, in each instance, more crimes were committed by persons under 25 than those committed by the total population, outside of this age group (See Table 6.5 and Figures 6.5 – 6.8).

Table 6.5: Crimes Committed by Males/Females under 25 years old.

Year	Murder			Shooting			Rape			Carnal Abuse			Robbery		
	Under 25		Total Population	Under 25		Total Population	Under 25		Total Population	Under 25		Total Population	Under 25		Total Population
	M	F		M	F		M	F		M	F		M	F	
1998	223	8	501	497	0	788	232	0	520	73	0	265	815	0	1,571
1999	294	9	551	315	0	595	179	0	317	137	0	233	620	0	1,149
2000	286	3	553	403	0	600	232	0	435	146	0	249	595	0	1,055
2001	287	9	565	362	3	650	249	0	454	88	0	163	465	5	900
2003	329	8	673	270	3	546	276	0	535	115	0	202	514	3	957
2004	371	13	730	375	1	679	203	0	423	122	0	214	461	3	790
2005	340	12	779	380	1	752	135	0	336	100	0	196	356	1	680
2006	395	7	731	393	1	697	176	0	368	149	0	266	438	6	805

¹²⁷ <http://www.statinja.com/>

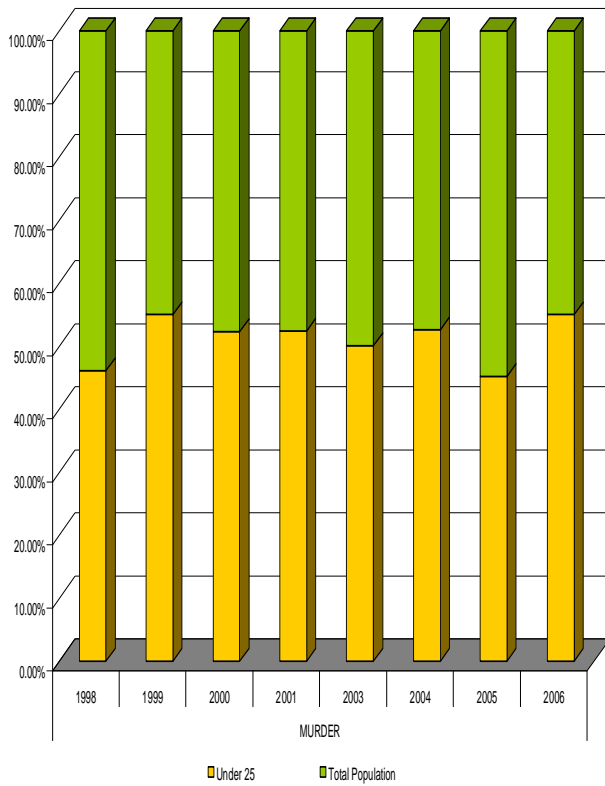


Figure 6.5 Murders in Jamaica, 1998- 2006, by Age Cohort

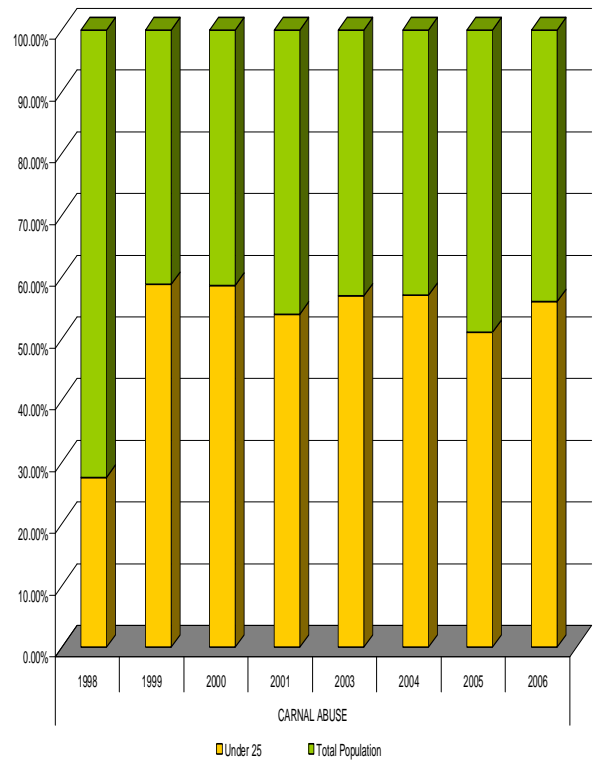


Figure 6.6 Carnal Abuse in Jamaica, 1998- 2006, by Age Cohort



Figure 6.7 Shooting in Jamaica, 1998- 2006, by Age Cohort

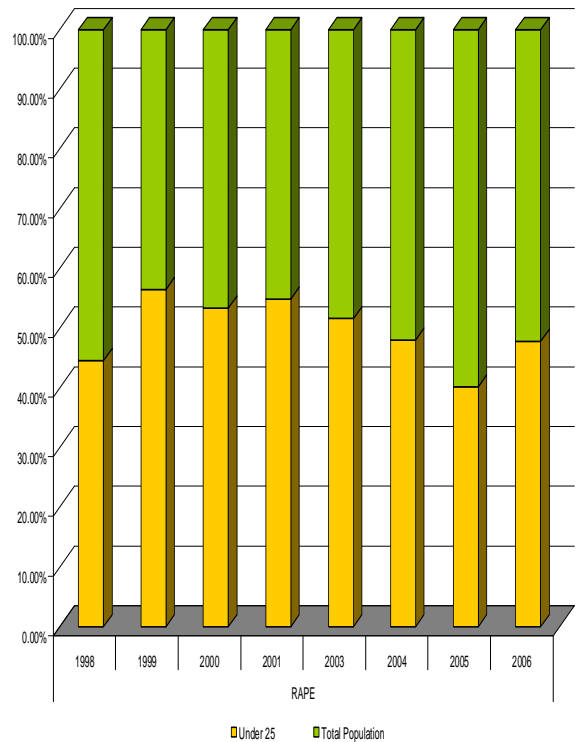


Figure 6.8 Rape in Jamaica, 1998- 2006, by Age Cohort

6.6 The Cost of Crime and Violence

The 2003 World Bank Study on *Caribbean Youth Development: Issues and Policy Directions*¹²⁸ indicates that the total cost of crime committed by youth cannot be accurately estimated. This is due in part due to the many crimes that include immeasurable losses, such as those resulting from murder, sexual offences, and drug trafficking. Moreover, criminal activity has long-term implications for a person's future criminal activity and his or her integration into society through the development of social life skills.

The Report identifies four types of costs, incurred due to crime in Caribbean countries (See Table 6.6)

Table 6.6 Costs of Youth Crime and Violence

Cost of Crime	Manifestation
<p>1. Direct Costs</p> <p>The value of all goods and services used to prevent violence or offer treatment to its victims or perpetrators. This has been the most commonly estimated category of costs and includes health costs, police, justice and prison costs, as well as resources spent on private security measures. While the most frequently measured, this category may not be the most important.</p>	<p>a. <i>Medical costs, public programs for victims, and lost income of the victim:</i> resources to aid the victims of crimes are both a financial and an economic cost to society, the individual victim, or the family of the criminal.</p> <p>b. <i>Security costs:</i> Expenditures on deterrence mechanisms clearly divert resources from other productive uses. The government and private expenditures on security are clearly identifiable. However, forgone benefits are also real costs of investment in personal and public security. Financial support of a police force, monitoring cameras, urban street lights, and other security measures divert resources from other productive uses. Similarly, private expenditures on security guards, fences to surround property, and security systems do not return rewards from alternative uses of the resources.</p> <p>c. <i>Arrest, prosecution, and detention of criminals:</i> The total expenditure on these activities would enumerate the financial costs to society. Economic costs will differ, being measured as the forgone benefits from spending these resources on arrest, prosecution, and detention of criminals rather than on alternative government investments.</p>
<p>2. Non-monetary costs</p> <p>Higher mortality and morbidity rates that result in pain, suffering and death, but not necessarily result in either expenditures on health care or in easily quantifiable economic losses.</p>	<p>a. <i>Intangible costs (pain, suffering, and quality of life):</i> Although these private costs are difficult to quantify, estimates derived from victim compensation court awards place a conservative value on the psychological damages caused by crime.</p>

¹²⁸ *Caribbean Youth Development: Issues and Policy Directions*. The World Bank. Washington, D.C. 2003.

Cost of Crime	Manifestation
<p>3. Economic multiplier effects: Impacts on human capital, labour force participation, lower wages and incomes, savings and macroeconomic growth.</p>	<p>a. <i>Lost income:</i> While a juvenile delinquent is in the legal system or prison, he or she cannot provide income to his or her family, which is likely to have made an investment in the young person. This forgone income may be costly to the individual's family (though the degree is likely to be low because unemployment is so high among young people). Additionally, the state loses the taxes from the labour income and/or consumption of the juvenile delinquent.</p> <p>b. <i>Area stigma:</i> Many residents of inner-city communities (which are often violent and susceptible to criminal activities) suffer from "area stigma," by which they are judged to be associated with criminals. This makes it difficult for many of these residents to secure long term employment.</p>
<p>4. Social multiplier effects: Erosion of social capital, inter-generational transmission of violence and lower quality of life.</p>	<p>a. <i>Lost social capital:</i></p> <p>i. It is well known that exposure to crime can have long-lasting psychological impacts on the victims and those close to them. Violence erodes social relationships, not only through death, but by restricting physical mobility and increasing levels of tension.</p> <p>ii. A person who is known as a criminal is likely to have less social capital in mainstream society but more in the less savoury sectors of society. A loss of social capital suggests a difficult time finding work, obtaining credit (formal or informal), starting a legitimate business, being a neighbour, participating in community activities, and contributing to general society. However, social capital with those engaged in criminal activity is likely to increase, offering opportunities that involve more serious risk-taking behaviours.</p>

An analysis of the costs of youth crime and violence in tandem with an analysis of risk factors is potentially useful in a number of ways. First, a profile of the primary risk factors offers an understanding of who is at risk for criminal victimization. This may be useful in targeting interventions. Second, a profile of risk factors, when combined with theories of crime, can lend insights into the social process behind criminal activity, allowing for a better understanding of the nature of crime and ultimately leading to more effective anti-crime policy.

6.7 Achievements To Date In Addressing Youth And Crime

1. All CARICOM countries have ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child
2. Some countries (Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Kitts and Nevis, and Trinidad and Tobago) have ratified supporting conventions to the CRC to improve the quality of life of the child. These include the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Inter American Convention on Human Rights
3. There have been many policy and institutional arrangements to improve the quality of life of the child:
 - a. Jamaica and Belize have a National Plan of Action for Children
 - b. Recent establishment of the Child Development Agency in Jamaica has brought new attention to the rights of children.
 - c. The Human Rights Committee to Guyana
 - d. The Jamaica Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (with reference to corporal punishment in the home and various settings)
4. Increased advocacy for the adherence to the rights of the children.
 - a. Jamaica passed the Early Childhood Act in 2005, to provide a comprehensive framework for all aspects of early childhood development, including regulations, policies and standards to govern early childhood institutions.
5. The Regional Strategy for Youth Development was designed subsequent to decisions taken at the Fifth (2001) meeting of the CARICOM Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD), which is intended to assist CARICOM member states in planning and adopting integrated inter-sectoral approaches to youth development under various thematic areas, including crime and violence
6. The convening of the CARICOM Council for Human and Social Development (COHSOD) Meeting *Youth in the CSME: Perspectives, Prospects and Challenges* in 2005
 - a. The meeting discussed – inter alia - the high incidence of crime and violence among and towards youths and agreed that a regional agenda needed to be developed and implemented to reduce risks and vulnerabilities among the region's young people

6.8 Priorities of and Challenges of Youth Crime and Violence within CARICOM Member States

Table 6.7 Priorities of and Challenges of Youth Crime and Violence within CARICOM Member States

PRIORITIES / OBJECTIVES	CHALLENGES	IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developing social capital 2. Inculcating appropriate social values 3. Establishing/strengthening facilities and opportunities for after school activities, 4. Including literacy programmes 5. Increasing access of marginalized groups to school/ education 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reducing the numbers of young people who are at risk for incest, sexual and physical abuse and other categories of family dysfunction 2. Reducing the high levels of drop-outs/under-achievement with at-risk groups 3. Generalising learning outcomes to the home environment 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased access to quality education opportunities and services, with a focus on primary and secondary school 2. Quality teacher/school counsellor training 3. Gender sensitive sexual education training for young boys and girls 4. Life skills education from early childhood 5. Parent training 6. Develop referral systems between guidance counsellors, Child care Board, teachers and parents. 7. Involvement of parents in school activities 8. Establish models that encourage the culture of peace and non-violence.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Building life skills reducing the incidence of sexual abuse, substance abuse and school/gender based violence 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increasing the levels of achievement and participation of young males in social and economic skills training programmes. 	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developing legislative frameworks to address commercial sexual exploitation and child labour 2. and child labour 3. Creating trust between police/law enforcement and youth 4. Creation of youth-centered communication. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reforming juvenile justice systems 2. Reducing levels of substance abuse, crime and violence among youth 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enact national legislation to protect child rights 2. Promote social reform and set up youth rehabilitation centres 3. Implement programmes for youth at risk and create alternative sentencing methods 4. Advocate for police reform/ effective policing in communities. 5. Adopt a regional approach to drug education using clear and simple messages as part of a regional drug demand reduction strategy 6. Adopt youth friendly approaches.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reducing unemployment, poverty and delinquency among youth 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Countering the emergence of anti-social and non-conformist leadership at the grassroots level Increasing retention rates among at-risk groups enrolled in social and economic training programmes, and the number of males enrolled. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create job opportunities/internships/ volunteer opportunities for youth. 2. Encourage youth entrepreneurship 3. Establish/strengthen post-school literacy

Modified from CARICOM Regional Strategy for Youth Development

http://www.caricom.org/jsp/community_organs/regionalstrategyyouthdev-reviseddraft.pdf

6.9 Country Specific Issues

1. *Barbados*¹²⁹

- In Barbados, the Juvenile Offenders Act fixes the age of criminal responsibility at 7 years. Below this age a child is considered, in law, to be incapable of committing a crime. In addition the court must be satisfied the child has the mental capacity to commit the crime¹³⁰ (p.139)
- People under the age of 18 are not subject to the death penalty, but are “detained in such a place and under such conditions as the Governor-General may direct.” (pp. 139-140)

2. *Barbados*¹³¹

- In virtually all cases of sexual abuse of a minor (under the age of 16 years) that occurred between 1994 and 1996, the victim was female (93.5 percent) and among these, most (70.1 percent) were effectively teenagers between the age of 12 and 16 years. (p. 25)

3. *Belize*¹³²

- Corporal punishment allowed in primary school for serious offences. (p.19)
- Neglect cases include 9% children aged 12 years. (p.35)
- 14% sexual abuse cases involved children aged 12; and 12% involved children aged 13. (p.35)
- Most sexual abuse of children occurs in children 10 years and older. (p.84)
- More girls than boys sexually abused, but more boys sodomized. (p.84).

4. *Guyana*¹³³

- Children and adolescents have also been reported to be the perpetrators of violence. In a 1997 survey, 10% of adolescents (10-18 year-olds) reported being knocked unconscious from fighting and 13% carried weapons to defend themselves. (Section 1.3)
- The experience of being given licks or lashes for doing something wrong is very common for Guyanese children, 87% of those interviewed (7-17 years) had received some sort of physical punishment (licks, lashes, been beaten) at least once and 81% had been beaten or hit with a belt, cane, whip or other object (including electrical wire and metal rods). (Section 3.2.1.1)

¹²⁹ *A Study of Child Vulnerability in Barbados, St. Lucia and St. Vincent & the Grenadines*. UNICEF Barbados, 2005

¹³⁰ One commentator observed that children under the age of 12 years are hardly ever brought before the Juvenile Court because it is accepted that children of that age are usually more in need of guidance and control rather than punishment See, Mason, S., *Due Process, Human Rights and Administration of Juvenile Justice: A Comparative Study of Juvenile Systems in the Region*, 1989.

¹³¹ Barrow, Christine. *The 'At Risk' Behaviours, Sub-Cultures And Environments Of Adolescent Girls In Barbados: Sexuality, Reproductive Health And HIV/AIDS*. (December 2005)

¹³² *Belize National Report on the Incidence of Child Abuse and Neglect*. July 2003.

¹³³ Cabral, Christine & Speek-Warnery, Violet. *Voices of Children: Experience with Violence*. Ministry of Labour, Human Services & Social Security, Red Thread Women's Development Programme & UNICEF Guyana, February 2006. http://www.unicef.org/guyana/children_violence_01.pdf

- In a few groups (2%), a few children said that parents ‘beat’ them out of love. (Section 3.2.1.1)
- The interview survey recorded that 80-95% of girls aged 14-17 years had experienced being “seeped off” by men at least once; also 30% - 65% of girls between 10 and 13 years.
- A substantial proportion of children over 11 years old believed that sexual violence could be ‘caused’ by girls or women wearing revealing clothes and actually that these girls or women ‘want to be raped’. (Section 3.3.1.6)
- The sexual harassment and assault experienced by boys in school was usually from girls slightly older or the same age who made sexual remarks to, held, kissed or touched the boys, who did not want this. The boys and girls involved in this were between 8 and 17 years and it appears similar in nature to the sexual harassment experienced by girls in school, although far less common. (Section 3.3.2.2)
- Children frequently reported sexual activity with partners who they liked or loved, and with whom they had willingly had sex. The youngest were 10 year-old boys and 12 year-old girls. This type of sexual activity increased with age from 4% at age 10 to 45% at age 17, with no difference between girls and boys. (Section 3.3.2.3)
- Sexually exploitative relationships were often described by key informants, and 2% of girls said that they received gifts or money from their older boyfriends in return for sex. These included 0.4% of 12 year-old girls and 0.5% of 13 year-old girls. Disabled girls were twice as likely to be receiving gifts or money from older boyfriends in return for sex.
- The legal age of consent for girls is 13 years and there is no age of consent for boys. This means that girls are unprotected from sexual exploitation from the age of 13 and boys are not protected at all.
- The current system is not very child-friendly; many of the professionals who deal with a child victim of sexual abuse (which can include police, health workers, probation officers, social workers, lawyers, court officials and judiciary) have received no special training on how to deal with children and there is no family court.
- Current legislation does not adequately deal with all types of sexual abuse of children. Boys who are victims of anal rape by other boys or men are technically equally guilty of ‘unnatural acts’, and although they are not normally prosecuted, this may still contribute to their stigmatisation and discourage them from reporting this abuse. Statutory rape laws generally only consider heterosexual rape of young girls, but in addition to anal rape of boys, usually by older boys or men, adolescent boys also confront a similar sexual pressure from female adults and this should be accommodated in the creation of laws aimed at protecting youth from older sexual predators [4]. (Section 4.2.2)
- The age of criminal responsibility in Guyana is 10 years old [51]. Children are not normally prosecuted as adults but they are committed to the NOC from this age for criminal activities including ‘wandering’.

5. *Guyana*¹³⁴

- Under the Juvenile Offenders Act sec. 17, boys and girls who are found “wandering” as a result of parental failure to “exercise proper guardianship,” or who otherwise are “in need of protection and care” due to problems at home, are lumped together with youngsters who commit crimes. (p.9)
- Guyana law sets ten years of age as the minimum age for accountability: “It shall be conclusively presumed that no child under the age of 10 can be guilty of an offense.” (p.12)
- The Committee on the Rights of the Child has criticized Guyana’s age rules. The Committee recommended that the Government of Guyana “raise the age of criminal responsibility to an internationally acceptable one.”¹³⁵ (p.12)
- The Juvenile Offenders Act authorizes judges to “order the offender to be whipped” in “special cases” where the particulars of the offense, and the youngster’s character and prior history of offending, justify it (JOA sec. 19(f)). (p.31)
- Guyana has police stations and prisons, of course, but it does not have any detention facilities that are appropriate for minors. (p.35)

6. *Jamaica*¹³⁶

- Adolescents (10 – 19 years of age) are most at risk of motor vehicle accidents, accidental lacerations, head injuries/fractures and blunt injuries (PIOJ, 1999). (pp 30-31)
- There was almost a doubling of reported suicides between 1996 and 1998 in Jamaica. Adolescents accounted for 31% of all suicides in 1998. (p.33)
- In relation to youth violence Williams (1999)¹³⁷ outline several projects working to reduce violence in schools in Jamaica. (p.39)

7. *Trinidad & Tobago*¹³⁸

- Research showed that for 10-14 year old victims of homicide, it is much more likely for nobody to be charged in such cases. There is also no apparent difference in sex of victim with regard to their experiences
- Strangulation featured among 10-14 year-olds
- Altercations appear to be a principal cause of homicide outcomes involving children 10-14 years old and more likely to be non-familial perpetrations

¹³⁴ A New Juvenile Delinquency Act for Guyana?: A Discussion Paper for Policy Makers. January 2006.

¹³⁵ *Id.*, at para. 21(b); see also para. 56.

¹³⁶ Williams, Lincoln. A Review of the issues arising from selected quantitative and qualitative literature on youth. Undated mimeograph.

¹³⁷ These are the Peace and Love in Schools project, which seeks to teach conflict resolution skills to pupils and teachers in Jamaican schools. The Change From Within Project seeks to transform the school into a disciplined and safe environment in which to learn and to build the self-esteem of its pupils. It is anticipated that the positive interaction of the two would help to change both the pupils and the school from within. The Hanover Dispute Resolution Project seeks to work with schools and communities in one parish in Jamaica in the development of conflict resolution skills.

¹³⁸ St. Bernard, Godfrey, C. Exploring Childhood Victimization in Trinidad & Tobago: An Analysis of Homicidal Cases. In: (eds.) Henry-Lee, A. & Meeks Gardner, J. Promoting Child Rights. Selected Proceedings of the Child Research Conference 2006. http://www.unicef.org/jamaica/Pages_from_Promoting_Child_Rights2.pdf

- The accused in cases involving 10-14 year-olds appear to be more likely to be under 30 years of age.

8. ***Trinidad & Tobago***¹³⁹

- Between 1994 and 1998 the under-14 age group recorded the highest growth in arrests for marijuana possession and trafficking. (p.19)

6.10 Persistent Challenges - Legislation, Implementation and Enforcement

Despite these achievements, several gaps remain in addressing youth crime and violence, with regards to legislation, implementation and enforcement:¹⁴⁰

1. No Caribbean territory has proposed or adopted a comprehensive code on children. (While there has been some attempt
2. There is a lack of uniformity in laws regarding the age at which a person is considered a child
3. There is no legislation for compulsory reporting of child abuse or acts of violence against children
4. There is no legislation or any other measures to prohibit the production, possession and dissemination of child pornography
5. There are no specific provisions in the Criminal Code that deals with the sale or trafficking of children in some countries, including Suriname and St Lucia
6. The response to youth crime is often punitive rather than rehabilitative
7. In some countries the male abused child is without adequate protection from the state, for example in St Lucia and Guyana
8. There is weak institutional capacity to enforce the laws
9. Corporal punishment in schools in some countries continues
10. There is inadequate funding for research and public education on the rights of the children.

¹³⁹ *Trinidad and Tobago Youth and Social Development: An Integrated Approach for Social Inclusion*. The World Bank. June 2000. Report No. 20088-TR.

¹⁴⁰ Promoting Child Rights. Selected Proceedings of the Caribbean Conference 2006. Eds. Aldrie Henry-Lee & Julie Meeks-Gardiner.

6.11 OPPORTUNITIES

6.11.1 Youth as Victim

In the same way that some factors increase the susceptibility of children to violence, there are also factors that may prevent, or reduce the likelihood of violence. Although more research is needed on these protective factors, it is clear that stable family units can be a powerful source of protection from violence for children in all settings. Factors that are likely to be protective in the home as well as other settings include good parenting, the development of strong attachment bonds between parents and children and positive non-violent discipline.

Recommendations to protect children and youth from becoming victims of violence may include:

6.11.1.1 At Home

1. Implement public education campaigns that sensitise parents and care-givers to the ambit of violence and its long term effects on youth.
2. Develop early child development interventions and effective parenting training, especially for poor and at-risk children and their families. Include training on gender particularly for at risk fathers, for whom violence within the home may be the enactment of hegemonic masculine identity.
3. Revisit, revise and revamp social delivery services to provide greater access to counselling, mediation and ancillary family services.
4. Development and maintain Child welfare agencies, to which abuse can be reported and effectively addressed in confidence
 - a. Establish centres for victims of domestic abuse, in particular shelters for children.
 - b. Establish hotlines for children so that timely help may be accessed by a telephone call.

6.11.1.2 At School

1. Review of teacher training programmes to include appropriate training in treating with and mitigating school violence Expanded extra-curriculum to include a variety of opportunities for alternative activities. Involvement in sport and music were cited specifically.
2. Increase dialogue on the issue of corporal punishment and the implementation of alternative punishment and sanction regimes.
3. Increase school staff to include school-counsellors and or social-workers, which should include counselling/ mediation facilities for families of the students.
4. Include life-skills training in the mainstream curriculum for students.
5. Improve school security.
6. Enhance relationships between schools and surrounding communities to ensure feelings of safety in school-aged youth, on the way to/from school

6.11.1.3 In Labour Situations.

1. Commission regional studies on child labour that includes an examination of youth participation in the illicit economy.
2. Draft and implement labour policies and plans-of- action which outlaw child labour.
3. Enforce existing policies, legislation and international arrangements around youth labour

6.11.1.4 In the Community

1. Review staff training programmes to include appropriate training in treating with institutionalised children and young people.
2. Increase the staff of institutions to include counsellors and or social-workers, which should include counselling/ mediation facilities for families of the children/ youth as well.
3. Revamp the social services that cater for displaced children and young persons, so that access to services is improved and more client-driven.
4. Include life-skills training in the mainstream curriculum for institutionalised children and young persons.
5. Expand employment and training opportunities, particularly in vulnerable communities.
6. Promote positive lifestyles and messages through public education campaigns, which involve music and sport icons.
7. Revisit, revise and revamp social delivery services to provide greater access to counselling, mediation and poverty alleviation services.
8. Establish best-practice models in community policing which focuses on appropriate and timely intervention by law enforcement agencies to stem crime and mitigate against delinquency and lawlessness.

6.11.2 Youth as Perpetrator

Despite concern expressed over youth crime and violence it is imperative to note that youth violence is preventable and youth involved in crime are at an age at which many prevention policies may have a greater chance of success, than among older groups. Moreover, young adolescents represent a unique window of opportunity to both prevent and reduce crime and violence in society at large. It is imperative that these opportunities be seized, given the socio-economic cost of crime generally and youth crime, particularly.

The best youth violence interventions must target specific populations of young people associated with risk factors, such as school leavers, those involved with delinquent peers, gang members, and those exposed to family violence or substance abuse. Targeting high-violence communities with a holistic approach to address violence and emphasizing violence prevention directed at children and youth is a very promising approach.¹⁴¹

Recommendations to rehabilitate youth involved with or at risk of becoming involved in crime may include:

¹⁴¹ World Bank Study

1. Revision of prevailing legislation to make clear distinctions between “juvenile” and “adult” offenders.
2. Revision of the upward chronological limit of juvenile offenders.
3. Establish separate institutions for juvenile offenders from orphanages, homes for children etc.
4. Provide rehabilitation opportunities for juvenile and youth offenders.
5. Law enforcement and law adjudication bodies should be sensitised as to the rights of the child.
6. Appoint special police officers, legal council and legal staff for dealing with matters directly relating to children and young persons. These officers should of necessity receive training deemed appropriate for treating with children and young people.
7. Legislate to ensure the privacy of children and young persons who may have come into conflict with the law and to mitigate the profiling of juveniles by police, courts and general public.
8. Establish family courts and family mediation systems/mechanisms.

Section Four

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS



7. EXPLANATORY FRAMEWORKS

7.1 Conceptual Frameworks

The literature reviewed for this report highlights behaviours and/or conditions and perceived causes associated with at risk youth in the Caribbean inclusive of early adolescents in the 10 to 14 age group. Few of the sources, however, locate the discussion within a conceptual framework that can be used to guide both analyses as well as show possible linkages between cause and effect. This may be due in part to the fact that, as Williams opines,¹⁴² ‘causal mechanisms between antecedent and outcome are still very poorly understood’.

An important observation is made in a World Bank report on youth and social development in Trinidad and Tobago¹⁴³. The report points to a need for a paradigm shift in research and policy formulation to address youth issues and recommends that instead of a focus on negative outcomes related to single issues and interventions to treat these symptoms and intended to avoid repetition of the event, an approach reflected in the literature reviewed and the structure of this report; there needs to be a shift which incorporates not only factors at the individual level but also takes into account the broader social, institutional and structural context of youth development and a focus on inter-related risk antecedents operating in these spheres. Such an approach to youth issues allows for an analysis of risk antecedents and behaviours that underlie negative outcomes and therefore to address causes rather than symptoms and to take a more integrated approach to addressing these inter-related factors.

Three such explanatory conceptual frameworks were identified in the literature reviewed which define the various levels and identify risk and/or protective factors at each level that impact adolescent behaviour. The framework elaborated in the Trinidad and Tobago World Bank report (See Figure 7.1) on youth and social development¹⁴⁴

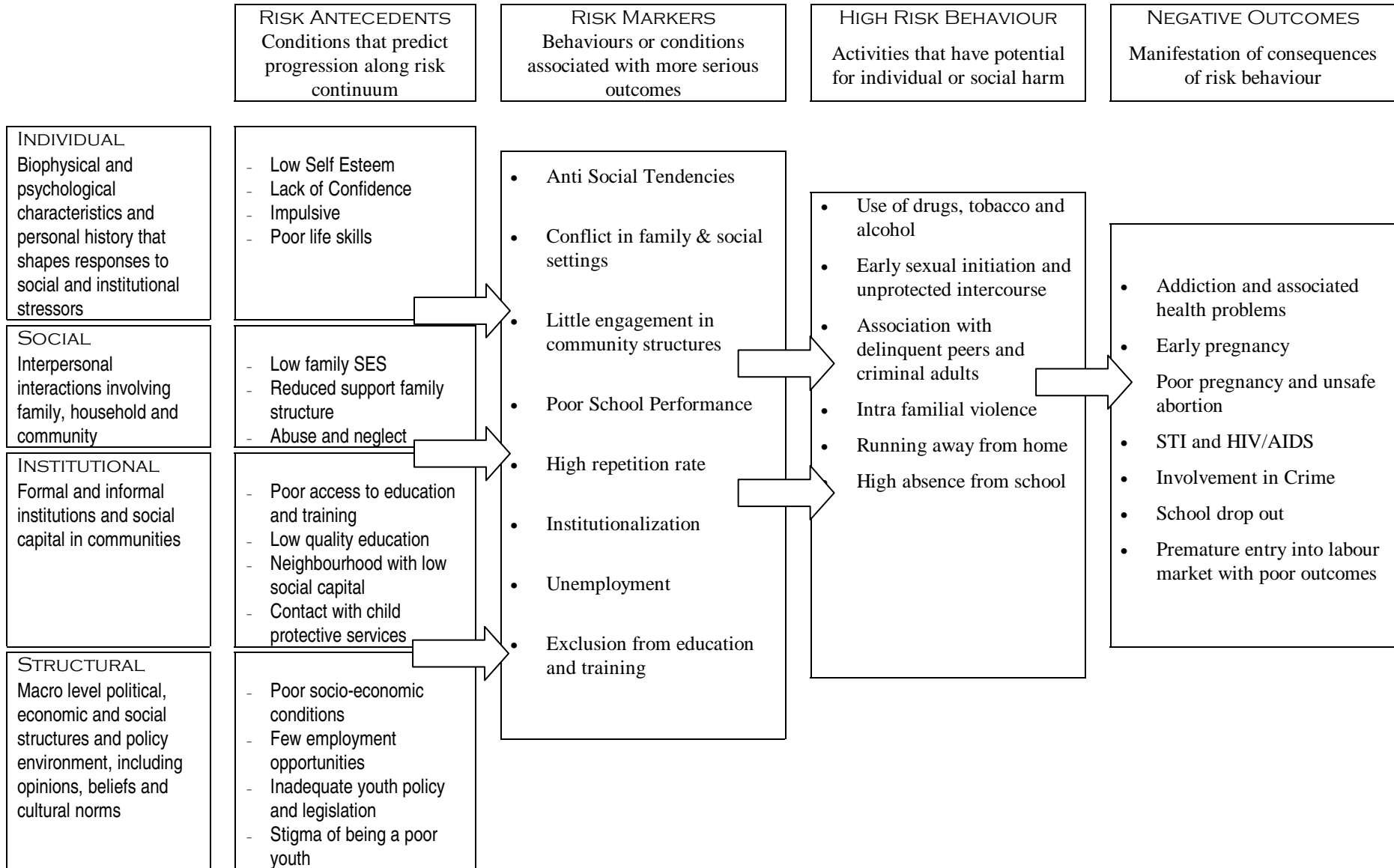
.....maps out behaviors and conditions relating to at-risk youth in terms of their source or causality and level of risk. It relates risk antecedents to individual, social (interpersonal), institutional and structural factors and shows how they can develop into risk markers, high-risk behavior and its ultimate manifestations. In terms of interventions, it indicates that, in addition to remedial efforts, it will also be important to deal with the common conditions that generate risk. (p.6)

¹⁴² Williams, Lincoln. *A Review of the issues arising from selected quantitative and qualitative literature on youth in the Caribbean*. Draft LCSPG 2002. World Bank. Washington, D.C.

¹⁴³ *Trinidad and Tobago Youth and Social Development: An Integrated Approach for Social Inclusion*. June 2000. Document of the World Bank. Report No. 20088 – TR.

¹⁴⁴ Trinidad and Tobago Youth and Social Development. *op. cit.*

Figure 7.1: Risk Factors and outcomes of Youth



Source: *Trinidad and Tobago Youth and Social Development: An Integrated Approach for Social Inclusion*. June 2000. Document of the World Bank. Report No. 20088 – TR.

The framework allows for an analysis of the predominance of risk antecedents and therefore to situate youth in low, medium and high risk categories. According to the report the analysis revealed that at-risk youth in Trinidad and Tobago are

.....those from lower to middle income groups who often live in non-nuclear family households, drop out of secondary school and end up attending school training programs. Many initiate sexual activity at an early age and rarely use contraception. The youth at highest risk are those experiencing multiple risk factors. They drop out prematurely; commit serious acts of delinquency, crime, and violence; are involved in drug abuse; and often suffer from some form of abuse and neglect. (p.7)

A later 2003 World Bank Report on Caribbean Youth Development¹⁴⁵ builds on the earlier Trinidad and Tobago model and provides a framework on risk *and* protective factors for adolescent and subsequent adult development. Factors are identified at three levels: the individual, the microenvironment and the macroenvironment (See Figure 7.2). At the **individual level**, defined as factors related to the physiological, cognitive, behavioural, social and environmental systems, risk factors include physical or mental disability, aggressive behaviour or rage, learning disabilities, ambivalent and unmotivated behaviour. Added to this or as a result, low self-esteem, lack of confidence and poor life skills contribute to risk. The 2003 World Bank model goes beyond the 2000 version by identifying protective factors which, as might be expected, are in direct opposition to risk factors. At the individual level these include spiritual belief and belief in self, social skills, positive self-concept and image, self-confidence, a positive and determined outlook, being hard working and enterprising and parental status.

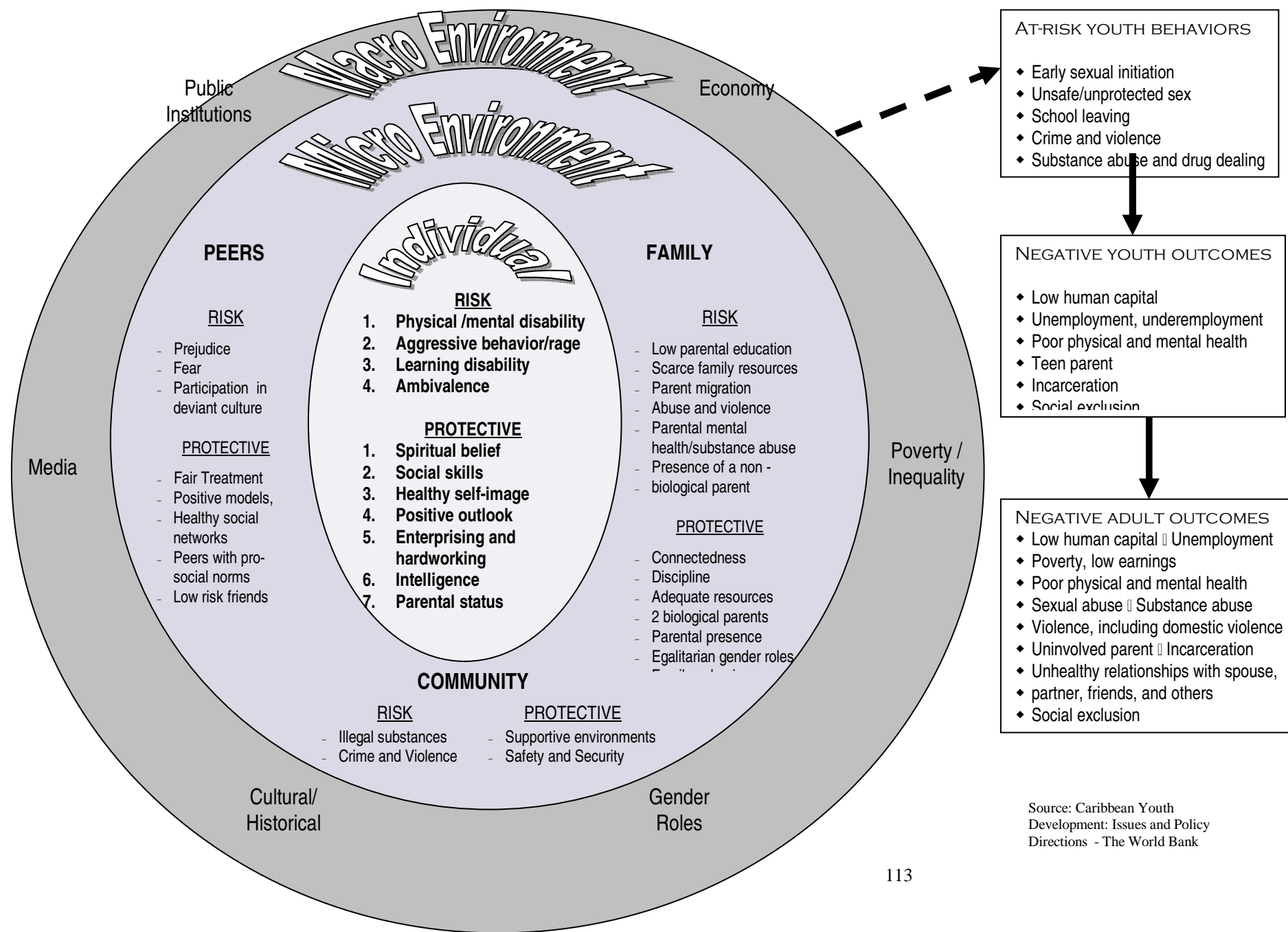
The **micro-environment** defined as one's inter-personal proximal contexts including the structure and dynamics of the family; the values and social influences of peer groups, role models and social networks; the community and neighbourhood in which one lives and interacts including the school, church, health centre; and, the physical environment.

Risk factors in **the family** setting include low parental education, scarce family resources, migration of parents, abuse and violence, impaired parental mental health and/or substance abuse and the presence of a non-biological parent while protective factors include connectedness to parents, discipline, adequate resources, the presence of both biological parents, egalitarian gender roles and family cohesion.

Risk factors operating in **the peer group** include prejudice, fear and participation in a deviant culture. Protective factors include healthy social networks, positive models, peers with pro-social norms, low risk friends and fair treatment.

¹⁴⁵ A World Bank Country Study. Caribbean Youth Development: Issues and Policy Direction. 2003. The World Bank. Washington, D.C.

Figure 7.2: Caribbean Framework of Risk and Protective Factors for Adolescent and Subsequent Adult Development



Source: Caribbean Youth Development: Issues and Policy Directions - The World Bank

The **macro-environment** represents the distal contexts that are detached from the adolescent. The report identifies risk and protective factors related to the macro-environment as including the state of the national economy, poverty and inequality levels; the institutional framework including public institutions, policy and legal frameworks; political realities; the cultural and historical background; the media; gender values, behavioural norms and customs; and, social exclusion which includes exclusion from economic means, unequal access to labour markets and social protection, exclusion from public institutions and unequal access to political rights and civil liberties.

7.2 Symptoms versus Root Causes

The distinction between micro and macro level risk factors is critically important. Lewis (2004)¹⁴⁶, observes that:

In many (academic) discourses.... [r]ather than contextualise the nature of the problem faced by men and women in terms of structural determinants, many reduce the problematic to the level of the individual or the collectivity, so that the issue becomes conceptualised as pathology to be corrected without reference to wider social (economic, political) considerations. (p.251)

In this instance, the importance of structural factors in determining adolescent behaviour and outcomes become even more prominent when issues of gender and social class assignment are factored into the discourse. Bailey (2007)¹⁴⁷ in examining issues related to gender differentials in education, claims that the problem of male under-participation in Caribbean education systems is more structural than it is individual or collective and related to social class assignment. This is illustrated in an analytical framework that brings factors related to the micro and macro levels into a dynamic relationship (See Figure 7.3).

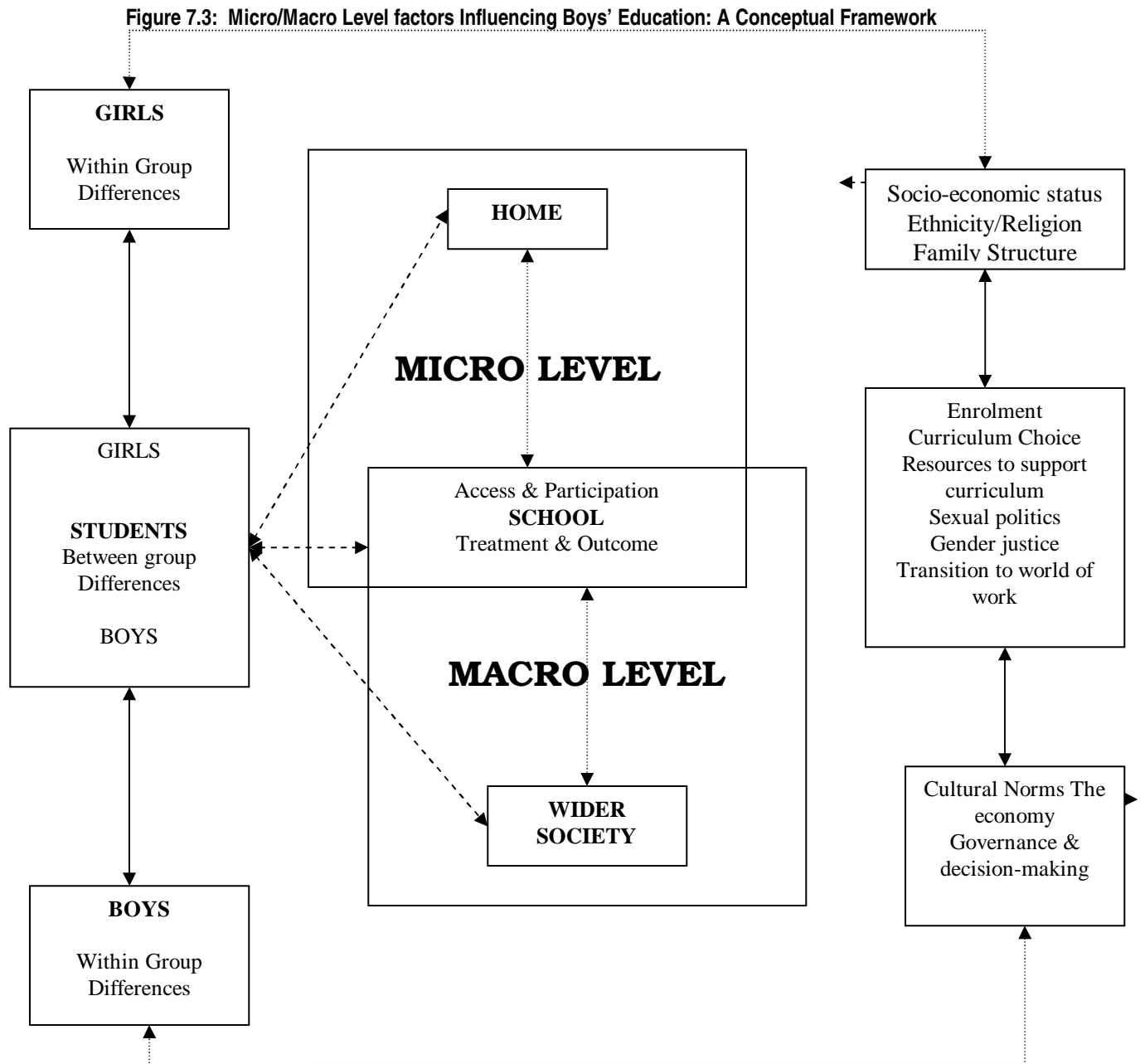
She points out that factors impacting boys' and, in fact girls', education and schooling are linked to two major spheres of concern:

1. The first sphere is at the **micro level** or level of the individual or collectivity with the main site being the HOME where, through a process of differential socialization, individuals learn what it means to be male/female and a sexual division of labour (SDOL) is established and where the main axis of stratification is on the basis of sex. The focus in the discourse around this phenomenon is therefore on **between sex differences**. Socialization practices are, of course, mediated by other factors such as social class assignment, ethnicity etc.

¹⁴⁶ Lewis, Linden. 2004. Caribbean Masculinity at the *Fin de Siecle*. In: (ed). Redock, R. *Interrogating Caribbean Masculinities, Theoretical and Empirical Analyses*. UWI Press.

¹⁴⁷ Bailey, Barbara. The Political Economy of male Underachievement. Paper presented at UNICEF & CARICOM Sub-Regional Meeting on The Unspoken Gender Issue: boys and Education.. Belize City. November 2007.

- The second sphere is the **macro level** where through a number of structural and systemic arrangements and practices the SDOL laid down in the home translates into differential access to resources, power, status and privilege and where there is a clear interaction between two or more axes of stratification but with sex and social class assignment being primary determinants. The focus of this discourse goes beyond between sex differences to a focus on **within sex differences** based, particularly, on social class assignment and ethnicity.



7.3 Summary and Way Forward

A review of research coming out of the Region in relation to the priority issues addressed in this report suggests that the focus has been on micro level factors and addressing symptoms and less in relation to the political and economic contexts or macro-environmental, structural root causes. However, because the Literature focuses almost exclusively on individual and micro-level factors, prescriptions for solutions tend to be limited to a psycho-social approach that addresses these factors; but does not include a serious challenge to macro-level factors. Accordingly, intervention is rarely sufficiently radically transformative.

Williams (2002)¹⁴⁸ posits that various sources reviewed by him point to the fact that if governments want a more socially cohesive society characterised by less violence and a greater rate of human and social capital accumulation they are advised to go ‘further upstream’ and deal with the underlying *structural* problems that create the 20% of young people that cause 80% of youth problems.

Such an analysis forces one to examine a range of factors, including sex-based and class-based issues and the impacts of the variables such as location and ethnicity, and to focus more on risk based on the intersection of these factors. The literature reviewed was, for the most part, silent on these issues but, where data were disaggregated, it was clear that adolescents in rural areas as well as males were at higher risk.

Williams (2002)¹⁴⁹ posits that the major structural factors predictive of high risk behaviours such as crime, violence, unprotected sex and teen pregnancy are poverty, lack of education, youth unemployment and child sexual abuse. If left unaddressed, these factors have worrisome implications for the future of adolescents across the region, who are exposed to these risks. Without the appropriate and adequate support for young people to grow into responsible and productive adults, the region may run the risk of reversing the socio-economic gains made over the last four decades of independence, including¹⁵⁰:

1. A lack of skills to contribute to the modern economy will impede economic growth and exacerbate income inequality and poverty,
2. A low-skilled work force will not attract foreign investment,
3. A society with high youth crime rates will discourage the development
4. An unemployable labour force, high fertility rates, and violence would divert resources away from productive public investments.
5. Adults who entered the challenges of adulthood unprepared are more likely to pass on to their children their negative behaviours, thus perpetuating the cycle.

¹⁴⁸ Williams, Lincoln. *A Review of the issues arising from selected quantitative and qualitative literature on youth in the Caribbean*. Draft LCSPG 2002. World Bank. Washington, D.C.

¹⁴⁹ Williams, Lincoln. 2002. *op. cit.*

¹⁵⁰ Youth Development in the Caribbean Countries Concept Paper (January 10, 2002)

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