



Generation Unlimited: the Well-being of Young People in Dominica

FACT SHEET

July 2021

The age from 10-24 is an important transitional period in the life cycle of young people: from dependence to independence; from childhood to adulthood; from primary to secondary school and onto tertiary education and/or the labour market; and from pre-pubescence to sexual maturity. Few young people are likely to pass through this period without some reversals or feelings of uncertainty, such as: not doing well at school; examination failures; parental discord; problems with friends and partners; and/or difficulties in finding their first job. In most cases, these experiences will be transitory and have little influence on their future lives. But for others, these experiences can be more severe and have long-lasting impacts on one's well-being, on that of their families and, if widespread, on national, social and economic development. In 2020 and 2021, the COVID-19 global pandemic and its economic and social impacts have disrupted nearly all aspects of life for all groups in society, but young people, and especially for vulnerable youth, the COVID-19 crisis poses considerable risks to their education, employment, mental health and disposable income. While young people will shoulder much of the long-term economic and social consequences of the crisis, their well-being may be superseded by short-term economic and equity considerations.

Young People in Dominica



According to 2011 Population and Housing Census data, there were around 17,600 young people ages 10-24 in Dominica. Young people accounted for about 26% of the population. This proportion is likely to decrease in the future as the population continues to age and fertility remains constant or declines.

Population distribution by age groups	
2011 Census Data	
Total population	69,246
Sex	
Male	51%
Female	49%
Age Groups	
Children, 0-17 years	29%
Adolescents, 10-19 years	18%
Youth, 15-24 years	17%
Young people, 10-24 years	26%
Adults, 18+ years	71%

Source: 2011 Population and Housing Survey Census data.



EVERY YOUNG PERSON HAS A FAIR CHANCE IN LIFE

Ending poverty – or its dramatic reduction – is an overarching objective of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Adolescence and young adulthood are times when growing up in poverty can hamper educational performance, increase the risk of unemployment and lead to risky behaviours, such as substance abuse, involvement in gangs and other criminal activities. These can have a detrimental impact on the physical, emotional and social development of young people, threatening their life chances and risking the creation of inter-generational poverty.

Poverty and Young People

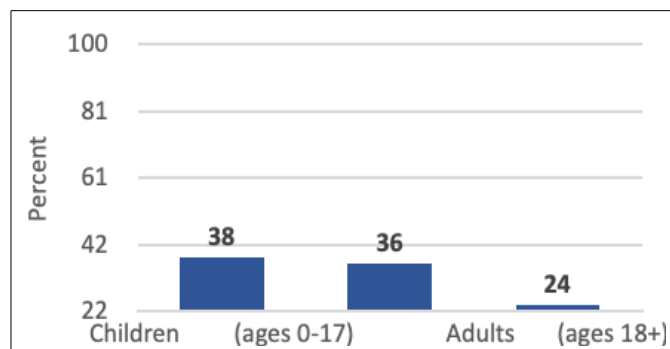
Poverty is at the heart of a considerable amount of vulnerability, social discrimination and exclusion: Households with inadequate income are more vulnerable to changing economic, social and environmental circumstances and to reduced income-earning potential. People in poverty also tend to live in inadequate and unsanitary housing in less desirable neighbourhoods, which are especially vulnerable to weather-related damage. They are also more prone to live in communities with high rates of crime and violence, which can be unsafe environments for adolescents and young people.

Poverty is a problem in the ECA even though countries and territories have reached a level of development that should allow a significant proportion of people living in poverty to escape poverty.

In 2016, 29% of people in Dominica were living in poverty and 3% were indigent (indigence entails living in a level of poverty in which real hardship and deprivation are suffered and comforts of life are wholly lacking). Dominica's poverty rate is higher than the average of 23% for the Eastern Caribbean.

More specifically, more than 1 in 3 or 38% of children ages 0-17 and 36% of adolescents ages 10-19 were living in poverty, which is higher than the poverty rate for adults age 18+ years (24%). The poverty rate for young people ages 10-24 is not available because it has yet to be calculated. Dominica child and adolescent poverty rates are higher than the averages for the Eastern Caribbean (33% and 34% respectively).

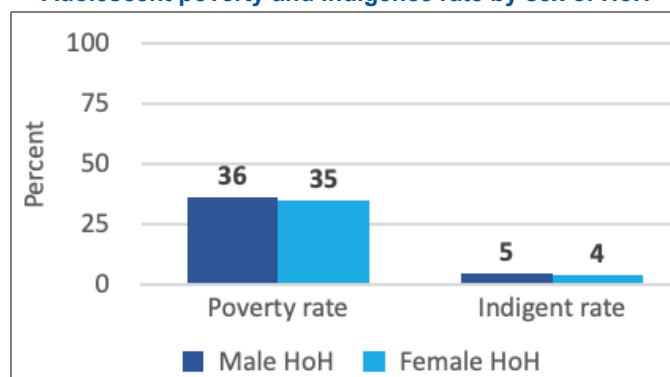
Poverty and indigence rates by age group



Source: UNICEF (2020). *Generation Unlimited: The Well-being of Young People in Barbados*. UNICEF Office for the ECA: Christ Church, Barbados

Adolescents ages 10-19 living in female-headed households were nearly equally likely to live in poverty and indigence as adolescents living in male-headed households.

Adolescent poverty and indigence rate by sex of HoH

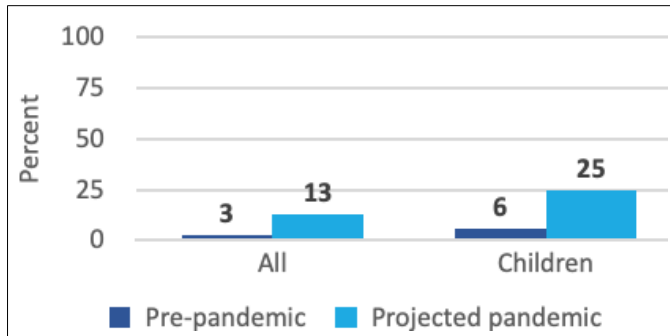


Sources: OECS Commission/UNICEF (2017). *Child Poverty in the Eastern Caribbean Area, Final Report*. OECS Commission/UNICEF: Castries, Saint Lucia

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, it has been projected that severe poverty rates will increase in the ECA, impacting the societies at-large, but children

in particular. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, severe poverty rates are projected to increase fourfold to 13% for all persons and 25% for children.

Projected changes in severe poverty due to COVID-19

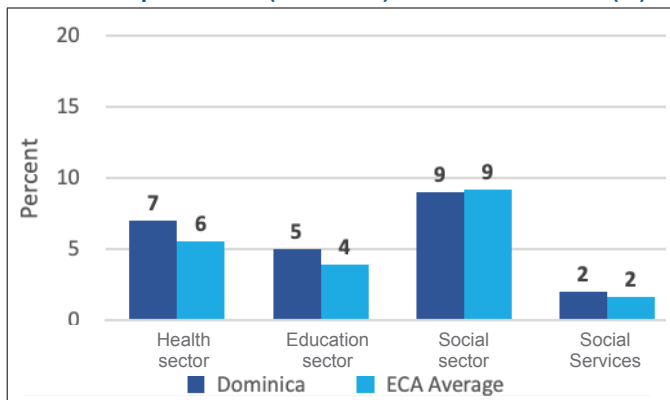


Source: USAID/UNICEF (2020). *The socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on children and young people in the ECA*. UNICEF Office for the ECA: Christ Church, Barbados, p.13.

Public Finance for Children and Young People

Public financing varies across sectors – health, education, social protection and social services – that are particularly important to children and young people. Mobilising national resources for children and young people in Dominica is critical to ensuring a sustainable and equitable impact on their lives.

Public expenditures (% of GDP) allocated to sector (%)



Source: Nabinger, S. (2017). *Review of Social Sector Expenditures in the Eastern Caribbean Area*. UNICEF Office for the ECA: Christ Church, Barbados

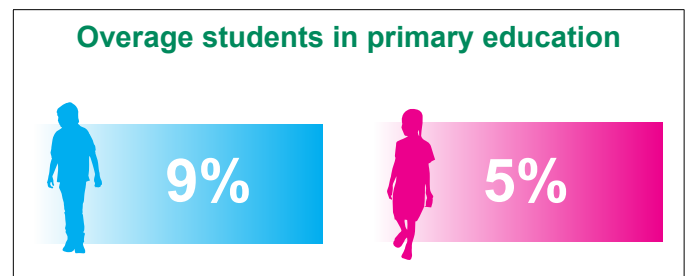
EVERY YOUNG PERSON LEARNS

Access to quality education is crucial if young people are to acquire the knowledge and skills to function in and contribute to society. Experiences at school have far-reaching effects on their development and well-being, encompassing physical and mental health, safety, civic engagement and social development. Education in various forms is a vital prerequisite for combating poverty, empowering young people, protecting them from hazardous and exploitative practices, promoting human rights and democracy and protecting the environment.

Primary and Secondary School Enrolment

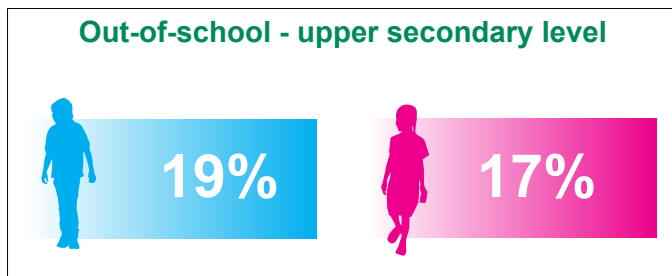
In Dominica, education is compulsory between the ages of 5-16, in keeping with the Education Act. Although early childhood education and tertiary education are not compulsory, they do form part of the formal education system and are highly encouraged.

In 2016, the primary school enrolment rate was 95%. In 2018, the proportion of over-age students in primary schools was 7%; higher than the average of 4% for the Eastern Caribbean. Boys (9%) were nearly twice as likely as girls (5%) to be over-age students in primary schools.



In 2016, the secondary school enrolment rate was 88%; secondary school enrolment rate was higher for girls (91%) than boys (84%). In 2018-2019, only 1% of lower secondary school age adolescents were out-of-school. In comparison, 19% of boys and 17% of girls were out-of-school at the upper secondary level.

Out-of-school - upper secondary level

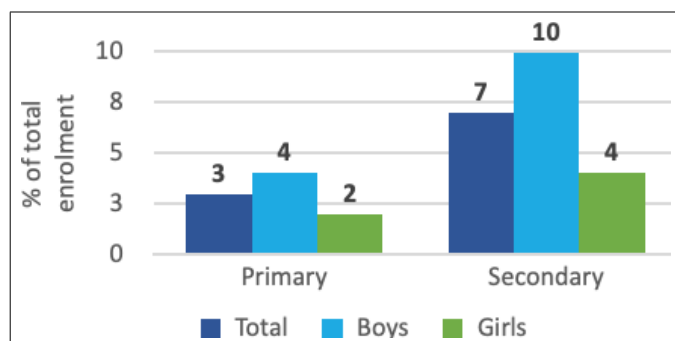


Grade Repetition Rates

Grade repetition rates¹ represent the proportion of pupils who remain in the same grade in the following school year. Repeating a grade reflects the internal efficiency of educational systems. Repetition is one of the key indicators for analysing and projecting pupil flows from grade-to-grade within educational systems. Ideally, repetition rates should approach zero percent. High repetition rates reveal problems in the internal efficiency of the educational system and possibly reflect a poor level of instruction. When compared across grades, the patterns can indicate specific grades for which there is higher repetition, hence requiring more in-depth study of causes and possible remedies.

In Dominica, the repetition rate was 3% for primary education and 7% for secondary education. Males were twice as likely to repeat primary grades (4%) and secondary grades (10%), compared to females (2% and 4% respectively).

Repetition rate for primary and secondary education



Source: OECS (2020). *Education Statistical Digest for the Academic Year 2018-2019*. OECS: Castries, Saint Lucia

1 Repetition rate is the number of repeaters in a given grade in a given school year, expressed as a percentage of enrolment in that grade the previous year.

School Dropout

School dropout rates reflect the proportion of pupils from a cohort enrolled in a given grade at a given school year who are no longer enrolled in the following school year. Premature exiting measures the phenomenon of pupils from a cohort leaving school without completion, and its effect on the internal efficiency of educational systems. School dropout is a key indicator for analysing and projecting pupil flows from grade-to-grade within the educational cycle. In Dominica, the dropout rate was 1% at the primary education level and 3% at the secondary education level.

Primary and Secondary Completion Rates

In 2016, the primary education completion rate was 114% (116% for girls and 112% for boys). The lower secondary education completion rate was much lower at 91% (91% for girls and 90% for boys) in 2015.

Skills and Learning Outcomes

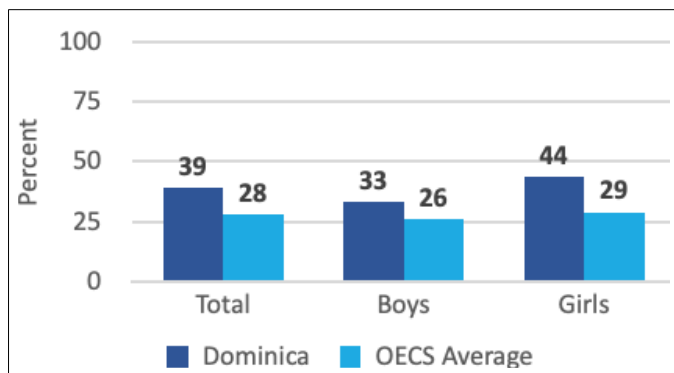
At primary and secondary levels of education, children and adolescents develop foundational and transferable skills, including digital skills needed to enable them to become lifelong learners, and to access future educational and work opportunities.

In 2018-2019, on average, among OECS Member States, only one in four or 28% of students passed CSEC subjects, including English A and Mathematics. The proportion of students who passed five or more CSEC subjects, including English A and Mathematics, was higher than average in Dominica (39%). Girls (44%) were more likely than boys (33%) to pass five or more CSEC subjects, including English A and Mathematics.

Students passing 5 or more CSEC subjects including English A and Maths



Students passing 5 or more CSEC subjects by gender



Source: OECS (2020). *Education Statistical Digest for the Academic Year 2018-2019*. OECS: Castries, Saint Lucia; UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

It is also notable that 97% of students in Dominica attended Grades I, II, III and CSEC Information Technology (IT). This is higher than the OESC average of 95%.

Trained Teachers

A trained teacher is one who has received at least the minimum organised pedagogical teacher training pre-service and in-service required for teaching at the relevant level in Suriname. Training of teachers can have a great impact on student learning outcome; yet this only happens when the teachers apply new knowledge and skills in their classroom.

In Dominica, in 2018-2019, the proportion of trained teachers was 63% at the primary education level and 45% at the secondary education level. This is far less than the average for OECS Member States (72% and 60% respectively) and the Eastern Caribbean Area (70% and 61% respectively).

Trained teachers



Tertiary Education

Access to tertiary education for youth is crucial to learning outcomes and skills development, human development of a population and poverty reduction in a country. Summary data on transition rates and net enrolment rates, as well as numbers of youth in tertiary education are limited. The gross enrolment rate for tertiary education in Dominica is not available.

EVERY YOUNG PERSON PARTICIPATES

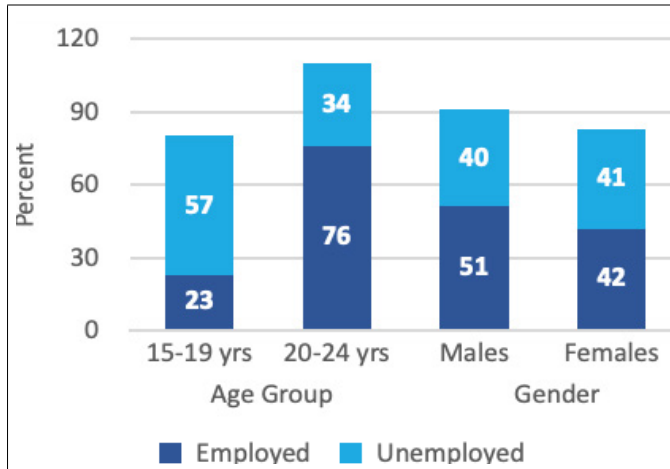
For young people, the path to a successful future goes through quality education that equips them – and empowers them – with the skills they need to thrive into today’s work force. This transition is not always so straight forward, especially when young people are unable to find suitable jobs. This can have a negative impact on their self-esteem, mental health and well-being, contribute to engagement in anti-social or risk behaviours, and can be a financial strain on the household and affect their relationship with family members.

Youth Employment and Unemployment

In the OECS subregion, the total youth population (ages 15-24) is estimated at 103,000, of which 34% were employed in the labour force and 26% were unemployed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic; in comparison, 85% of adults ages 25-64 were employed and 9% were unemployed prior to the pandemic.

In Dominica, 28% of youth ages 15-24 were employed in the labour force; whereas 40% of youth were unemployed. Youth ages 20-24 (76%) were three times more likely to be employed than youth aged 15-19 (23%); whereas, youth ages 15-19 (57%) were more likely to be unemployed than youth aged 20-24 years (34%). In terms of gender, male youth (51%) were more likely to participate in the labour force than female youth (42%). Male youth (40%) were equally likely to be unemployed as female youth (41%).

Youth labour for participation by age and gender



Source: OECS/UNICEF/ILO (2020). *Youth Unemployment in Barbados and the OECS Area: A Statistical Compendium*. OECS Commission: Castries, Saint Lucia

EVERY YOUNG PERSON THRIVES

The rights of adolescents and youth to survive, grow and develop are enshrined in international conventions, including the CRC. In keeping states are obliged to recognise the special health and development needs and rights of young people, including adolescents and youth. Young people will thrive when they continue to eat well, are stimulated and cared for at home and in their communities, and enjoy access to quality education that gives them opportunities to learn and grow into adulthood.

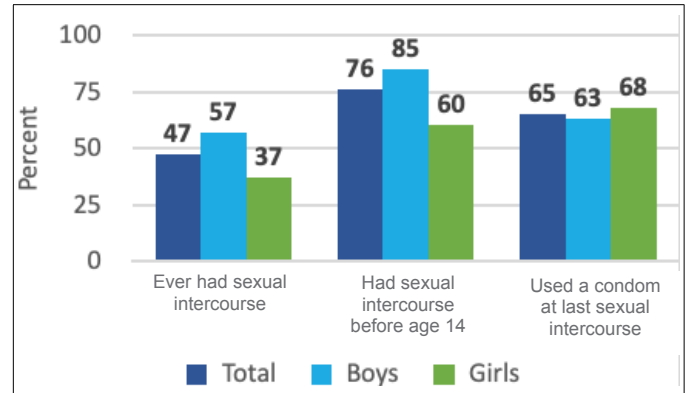
Sexual Behaviours

Data on the sexual behaviours of adolescents in Dominica are limited to adolescent ages 13-15 and three indicators – ever had sexual intercourse, had sexual intercourse before the age of 14, and condom use during the last act of sexual intercourse.

Among adolescents ages 13-15, 47% ever had sexual intercourse; boys (57%) were more likely than girls (37%) to have had sexual intercourse. Among adolescents who ever had sexual intercourse, 3 in 4 or 76% did so before 14 years of age; boys (85%) were more likely to have sexual intercourse before age 14 than girls (60%). Among sexually active adolescent,

65% used a condom at the last sexual intercourse. Girls (68%) were slightly more likely than boys (63%) to use a condom at the last sexual intercourse.

Sexual behaviours among adolescents ages 13-15

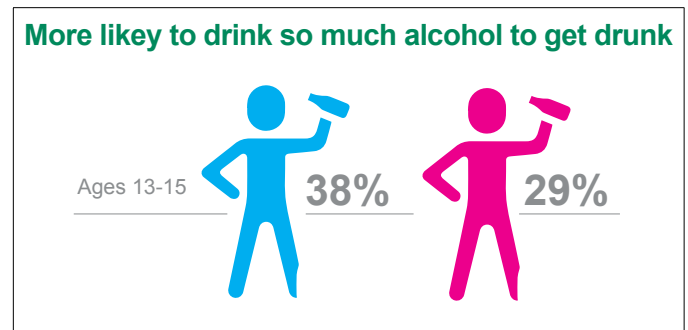


Source: Dominica GSHS, 2009

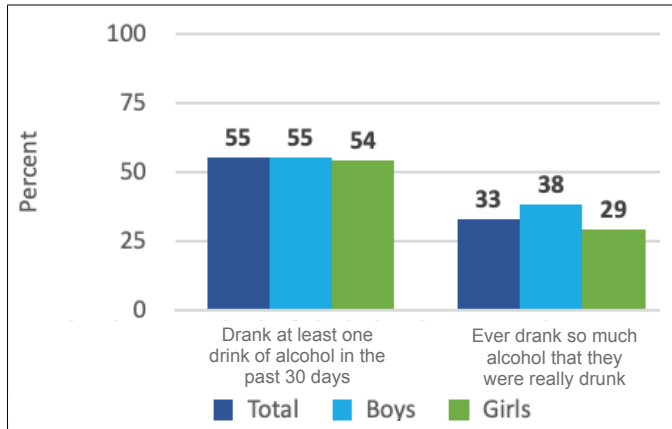
Alcohol Use

Alcohol and tobacco use typically have their onset in adolescence and young adulthood, and are major risk factors for adverse health and social outcomes, as well as for non-communicable diseases later in life. During adolescence and young adulthood, young people are less able to anticipate the negative effects of alcohol and tobacco use on their health and well-being, including risks of abusing such substance and developing addictions.

In Dominica, 55% of adolescents ages 13-15 drank at least one drink of alcohol in the past 30 days, and 33% ever drank so much alcohol that they were really drunk. Boys (38%) were more likely than girls (29%) to ever drink so much alcohol that they were really drunk.



Adolescents ages 13-15 who drank alcohol

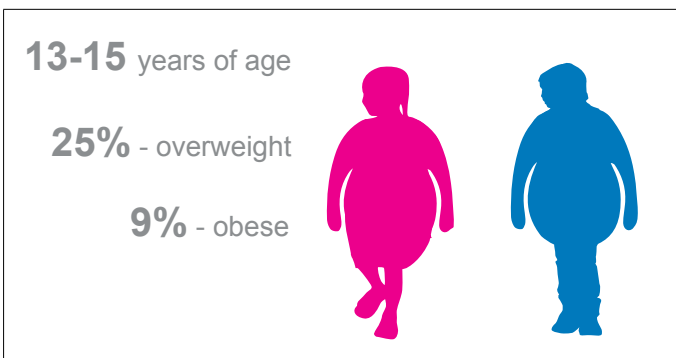


Source: Dominica GSHS, 2009

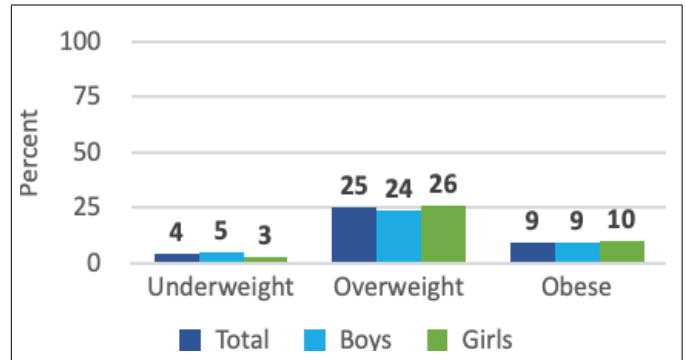
Nutrition

Adolescence is the period of development that begins at puberty and ends in early adulthood, and is characterised by a rapid pace of growth that is second only to that of infancy. Rapid physical growth during adolescence creates a high demand for energy and certain nutrients. Nutrition is a critical factor for appropriate adolescent development and an important element for prevention of disease development, especially for chronic disease. Over the past decade, nutrition has been identified as a major global priority, and the increase in worldwide overweight and obesity has been highlighted.

In Dominica, only 4% of adolescents ages 13-15 were underweight (≤ 2 SD from median for BMI), whereas 1 in 4 or 25% were overweight ($>+1$ SD from median for BMI by age and sex) and 9% were obese ($>+2$ SD from median for BMI by age and sex). There were no notable gender differences.



Underweight and overweight adolescents ages 13-15



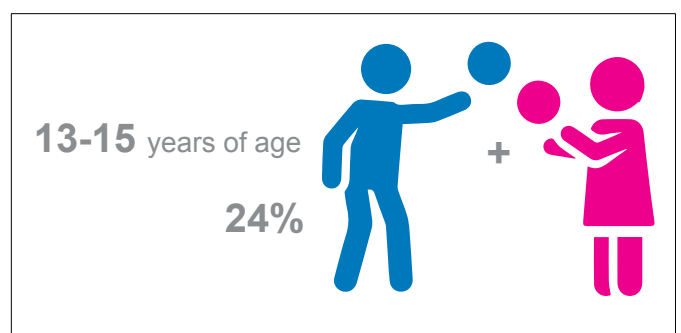
Source: Dominica GSHS, 2009

It is notable that 56% of adolescents ages 13-15 reported they drink carbonated soft drink one or more times per day. The consumption of soft drinks with high sugar content and acidity can have harmful effects on oral and general health (e.g., diabetes, high blood pressure and other non-communicable diseases).

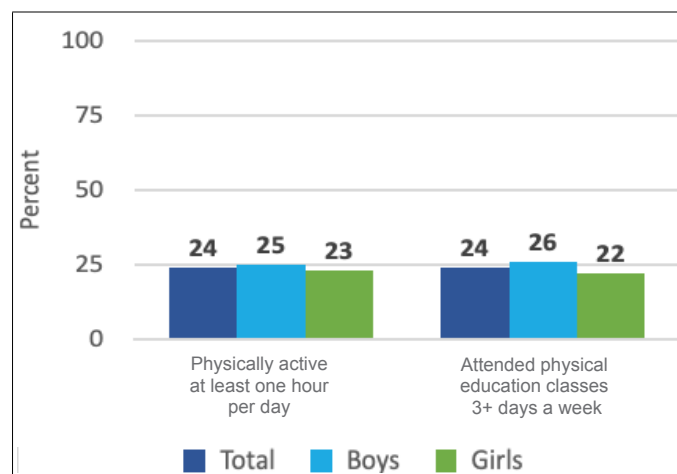
Physical Activity

Regular physical activity in adolescence promotes health and fitness; thus, it is important to provide young people with opportunities and encouragement to participate in physical activities that are appropriate for their age and are enjoyable. Adolescents should engage in at least one hour or more of moderate to vigorous aerobic physical activity each day, and muscle and bone-strengthening physical activity at least three days a week.

In Dominica, 24% of adolescents ages 13-15 were physically active for a total of one hour per day on five or more days during the past seven days, and attended physical education classes three or more days a week.



Physical activity among adolescents ages 13-15



Source: Dominica GSHS, 2009

Mental Health

Most adolescents have good mental health, however, physical, emotional and social changes that occur during adolescence, coupled with exposure to poverty, physical and/or sexual violence, harsh parenting, and peer bullying can make adolescents vulnerable to mental health problems. Other risk factors that contribute to stress during adolescence include the quality of one's home life, relationships with peers, pressure to conform to peers, exploration of sexual and/or gender identity, and negative impacts of social media. Some adolescents are at greater risk of experiencing mental health problems because they experience stigmatisation, discrimination and exclusion, and lack access to quality support and mental health services.

During consultations², young people spoke extensively about mental health issues experienced by young people. The issues they focused on related to managing emotions, dealing with depression, and self-harming and suicidal behaviours. In 2017, persons in Dominica experienced the devastation caused by Hurricanes Irma and Maria, so they reflected upon the impact of those natural disasters on people's mental health and well-being.

² In February 2021, consultations were conducted with young people ages 10-24 years in Dominica as part of a UNICEF initiative focused on engaging children and young people in the ECA.

Young people recognised that there is stigma attached to being depressed and to speaking out publicly about mental health issues; thus, young people do not have opportunities to talk about mental health and well-being. Nevertheless, they recognised that mental health services should be available to everyone, regardless of age. They also recognised that some people need a guidance counsellor or psychologist to speak to, someone who can help them to develop coping strategies to manage their emotions and handle daily stressors and strains. Some young people maintained they would even refer a friend to the school guidance counsellor, particularly if their friend was not coping well with life or was engaged in self-harming behaviours. They believed that school guidance counsellors could help young people get the support and services they need.

Young people also thought that teachers need to be better equipped to identify students who are having a difficult time and experiencing difficulties learning and/or mental health issues. They thought there should be mechanisms in place in schools for teachers to identify children who struggling with mental health issues so that the proper support can be provided to address their issues and prevent further harm to the child.

Young people thought that every school should have guidance counsellors with different areas of specialisation so that they can support children and adolescent who are experiencing a range of mental health issues (e.g., anxiety, depression and suicidal thoughts) and social problems (e.g., peer bullying).

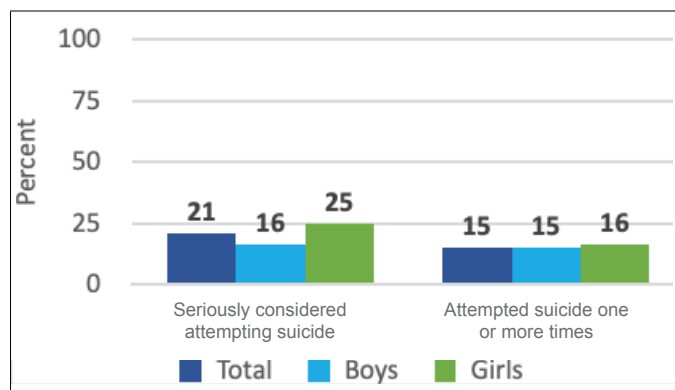
Young people also thought it is important that they are able to talk to their parents about their emotions and mental health, including feelings of depression, so that their parents can help them to access professional support and assistance, if needed. They recognised that both children and adults, in some cases, need access to quality mental health services so that people do not commit suicide or homicide.

They thought it is important to have both school and community-based programmes that engage children, adolescents and young people to talk about mental health issues. Such programmes will benefit individuals, families and communities. Some young people thought such a programme could be broadcast on the radio, so that it would reach a much larger audience. For instance, in Montserrat, it was reported that there is a radio programme called “Enhancing your Mental Health” that is hosted by nurses.

Suicide

Among adolescents ages 13-15, 1 in 5 or 21% seriously considered attempting suicide and 15% attempted suicide one or more times in the past 12 months. Girls (25%) were more likely than boys (16%) to consider attempting suicide, but no more likely to attempt suicide in the past 12 months.

Adolescents ages 13-15 suicidal tendencies by gender



Source: Dominica GSHS, 2009

Well-Being Protective Factors

Parental and peer relationships are very important to adolescent mental health. Teenagers with friendship and close ties to their parents/guardians tend to be more adaptive to stress, report being happier due to an increased feeling of uniqueness, and are likely to do better academically. In addition, they tend to have higher self-esteem and self-confidence and may be more assertive. In Dominica, only 10% of adolescents ages 13-15 reported they had no close friends; boys

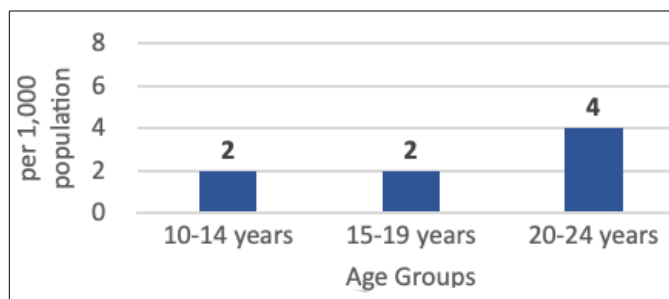
(13%) were slightly more likely than girls (8%) to have no close friends.



Mortality of Young People

In Dominica, the probability of young people dying varies by age. The probability of mortality is highest among youth ages 20-24 dying (4 per 1,000 youth) and lowest among adolescent ages 10-14 and 15-19 years (2 per 1,000 adolescents).

Probability of dying among young people by age group



Source: Estimates developed by the UN Inter-agency Group for child Mortality Estimation (UNICEF, WHO, World Bank, UN DESA Population Division).

National Policies/Plans on Child/Adolescent Health

Dominica has adopted some national policies and plans on that prohibit the sale of tobacco products to minors, and have a plan or strategy for child and/or adolescent mental health. The Government of Dominica, however, has yet to adopt national policies related to NCDs, physical activity and healthy foods, or alcohol.

National policies and plans on child/adolescent health		
Operational, multi-sectoral national NCD policy, strategy or action plan that integrates NCDs and their risk factors		
National adolescent health programme		
Operational policy/strategy/action plan to reduce physical inactivity		
National policy to prohibit the selling of unhealthy foods and sweetened beverages in or close to schools		
National policy/laws designating an appropriate minimum age for purchase or consumption of alcoholic beverages		
National policy/law to prohibit sale of tobacco products to minors		
Plan or strategy for child and/or adolescent mental health		
Colour Code	Yes	
	No	

Source: UNICEF Adolescent Health Dashboards, 2020

Dominica has user fee exemptions for adolescents as it relates to accessing contraceptives, testing and treatment for STIs, HIV testing and counselling, mental health care and rehabilitation for substance abuse.

User fee exemptions for adolescents using health and well-being services		
Contraceptives		
Vaccination for HPV		
Testing and treatment of STIs		
HIV testing and counselling		
Mental health care		
Rehab for substance abuse		
Colour Code	Yes	
	Unknown	

Source: UNICEF Adolescent Health Dashboards, 2020

Dominica does not have legal age limits for unmarried adolescents to access services without parental/legal consent, including sexual and reproductive health and HIV testing and counselling. A good practice is for countries to have no legal age limits for unmarried adolescents to use these services.

No legal age limits for unmarried adolescents to access services		
Contraceptive services (except sterilisation)		
HIV testing and counselling		
Mental health services		
Colour Code	Yes	
	No	
	Unknown	

Source: UNICEF Adolescent Health Dashboards, 2020

Dominica does, however, have taxation of sugar-sweetened beverages and alcohol.

Taxation of sugar-sweetened beverages and alcohol		
Sugar-sweetened beverages		
Beer		
Spirits		
Wine		
Colour Code	Yes	
	No	

Source: UNICEF Adolescent Health Dashboards, 2020

EVERY YOUNG PERSON IS PROTECTED FROM VIOLENCE AND EXPLOITATION

Violence is a pervasive violation of children's rights. Many children and young people are exposed to violence because they grow up in violent households and communities. Violence occurs in many settings, including the home, school, community and over the Internet. As young people pass through adolescence and become young adults, they begin to spend more time outside their homes and interact more intimately with a wider range of people. These interactions are crucial to their development, but can also expose them to new form of violence and exploitation. These threats can have implications for their physical and mental health lasting into adolescence, young adulthood and older age with indirect, but equally potential severe impact on their families, communities and wider society.

Protection of children and young people from all forms of violence and exploitation are fundamental rights enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and its Optional Protocols, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). SDGs include specific targets to: end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children (SDG 16.2); end all forms of violence against women and girls in public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation (SDG 5.2); and eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage (SDG 5.3).

Violence against children (VAC), including gender-based violence (GBV), knows no boundaries of culture, socio-economic status, education, income or ethnic origin; however, gender, disability, poverty and national/ethnic origin are some of the risk factors that can place children and young people at increased risk of experiencing violence and exploitation.

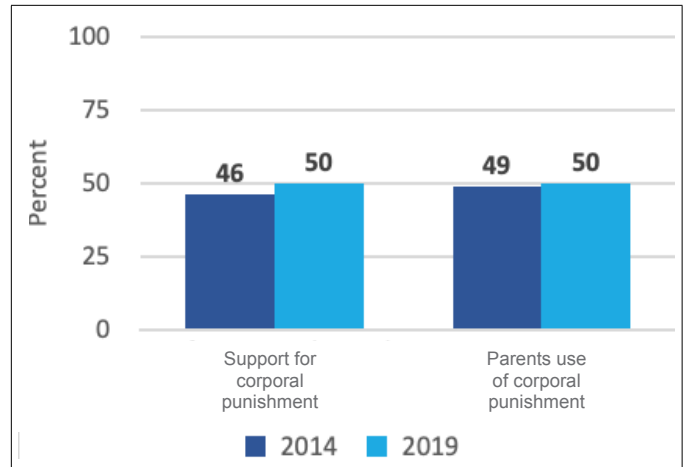
Corporal Punishment

Understanding children’s risks of experiencing corporal punishment requires understanding the extent to which such violence is a social norm tolerated in families and communities. In Dominica, support for corporal punishment has remained fairly consistent from 46% in 2014 to 50% in 2019. A large proportion of adults believe that corporal punishment curbs misbehaviour (62%), instils discipline (59%) and encourages obedience (43%). Some adults also believe that corporal punishment establishes authority (35%), encourages children to perform well in school (19%) or allows adults to vent frustration (5%).

Parents use of corporal punishment has also remained consistent over time. In 2014 and 2019, as many as 1 in 2 parents used corporal punishment (49% and 50% respectively). Adults considered it slightly more suitable to use corporal punishment on children 6-11 years (50%) than 12-16 years (40%).

In 2019, only 43% of adults supported banning corporal punishment in schools and 20% supported banning corporal punishment in the home.

Support for corporal punishment



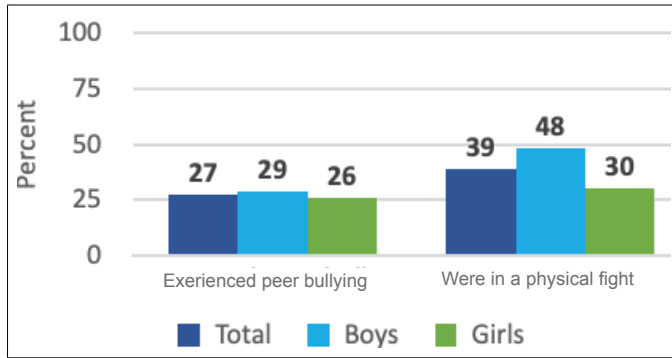
Source: Caribbean Development Research Services, (2019). *Social Survey Report*. UNICEF Office for the ECA: Christ Church

Peer Violence

Once children enter school, friendships and interactions with peers take on an important role in the lives of children and adolescents. These relationships have the potential to contribute to a child’s sense of well-being and social competence, but are also associated with exposure to new forms of violence and victimisation. Peer violence can take many forms, but available data suggests that bullying by peers and/or schoolmates is the most common form of peer violence.

In Dominica, 1 in 4 or 27% of adolescents ages 13-15 experienced peer bullying, and more than 1 in 3 or 39% were in a physical fight one or more times during the past 12 months. Boys (48%) were more likely than girls (30%) be in a physical fight one or more times during the past 12 months.

Adolescents ages 13-15 who experienced peer violence



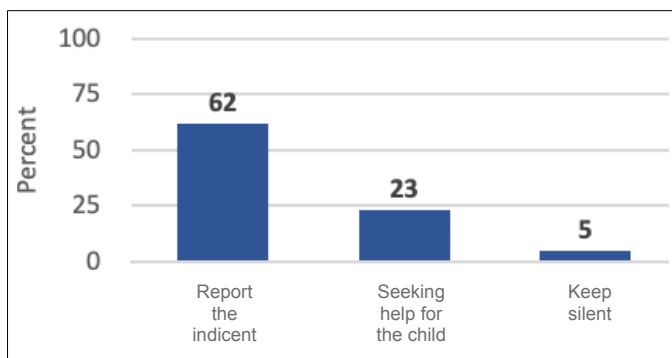
Source: 2011 Dominica GSHS

Child Sexual Abuse

Understanding children’s risks of experiencing child sexual abuse requires understanding the extent to which such violence is a social norm tolerated in families and communities. In Dominica, 67% of adults viewed child sexual abuse as a major problem in the country, whereas 22% viewed it as a minor problem and 1% thought it was not a problem at all. It is notable that as many as 4 in 5 or 85% of adults engaged in victim-blaming and believed the myth that girls invite sexual abuse by the way they dress.

When asked what they would do if they had knowledge of child sexual abuse, 62% of adults would report the incident of child sexual abuse, 23% would seek help for the child and 5% would remain silent.

Reaction of adults to child sexual abuse

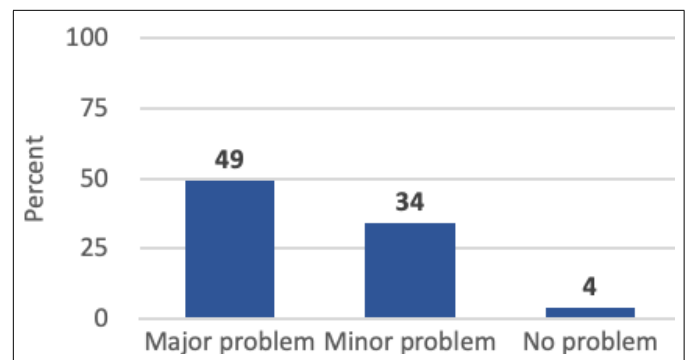


Source: Caribbean Development Research Services, (2019). *Social Survey Report*. UNICEF Office for the ECA: Christ Church, Barbados

Domestic Violence

Understanding children’s risks of experiencing domestic violence requires understanding the extent to which such violence is a social norm tolerated in families and communities. In Dominica, nearly 1 in 2 or 49% of adults considered domestic violence a major problem in the country; whereas 1 in 3 or 34% considered it a minor problem and 4% thought it was not a problem.

Attitudes toward domestic violence in one’s country



Source: Caribbean Development Research Services, (2019). *Social Survey Report*. UNICEF Office for the ECA: Christ Church, Barbados

Child Labour

As a signatory to the CRC and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention on Worst Forms of Child Labour and the Convention on Minimum Age; however, the Government of Dominica has made efforts to eradicate child labour. Data related to child labour are not available in Dominica.

Child Protection and Justice for Children

Governments across the Caribbean, including the OECS region, have stepped up efforts to improve responses to child protection, particularly for children who are vulnerable to violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation, and children in conflict with the law. All ECA countries have ratified the CRC, but in several cases, this was not followed by passing the Optional Protocols needed for an efficient child protection environment.

The Government of Dominica has taken steps to translate international normative frameworks into national law by passing and implementing a Domestic Violence Bill. In addition, a Child Care and Adoption Bill, Child Justice Bill, Status of Children Bill, Child Maintenance Bill, and Guardianship, Custody and Access Bill have been passed, but have not yet taken effect.

National child protection legislation		
Domestic Violence Bill		Green
Child Care and Adoption Bill		Yellow
Child Justice Bill		Yellow
Status of Children Bill		Yellow
Child Maintenance Bill		Yellow
Guardianship, Custody & Access Bill		Yellow
Colour Code	Passed, taken effect	Green
	Passed, not taken effect	Yellow
	Not passed	Red

Source: UNICEF (2020). *Situation Analysis of Children in the Eastern Caribbean*. UNICEF Office for the ECA: Christ Church, Barbados.

Dominica has yet to abolish corporal punishment across settings, except a law does exist that partially abolishes the use of corporal punishment in day care settings.

Status of legal abolition of corporal punishment		
Home		Red
Alternative Care		Red
Day Care		Yellow
Schools		Red
Penal Institutions		Red
Sentencing		Red
Colour Code	Abolished in laws	Green
	Existing law providing partial abolition	Yellow
	Not abolished	Red

Source: UNICEF (2020). *Situation Analysis of Children in the Eastern Caribbean*. UNICEF Office for the ECA: Christ Church, Barbados

Child protection and juvenile justice policy development has been generally weak and inconsistent among Eastern Caribbean countries, however, some OECS

countries have made progress at establishing policies for child protection and juvenile justice. In Dominica, efforts underway to establish a child protection system with both preventive and response services, and youth/family courts; however, they have not yet taken effect.

National child protection policies and practices		
National plan of action on child protection		Red
National plan of action on juvenile justice issues		Red
Child protection system has both preventive and responsive services		Yellow
Youth/Family Court established		Yellow
Legal aid for juveniles provided		Red
Colour Code	Passed, taken effect	Green
	Passed, not taken effect	Yellow
	Not passed	Red

Sources: Sealy-Burke, J. (2018). *OECS Assessment of Child Protection Services*. OECS Commission: Castries, Saint Lucia; UNICEF (2020). *Situation Analysis of Children in the Eastern Caribbean*. UNICEF Office for the ECA: Christ Church, Barbados.

EVERY YOUNG PERSON LIVES IN A SAFE AND CLEAN ENVIRONMENT

Children need a safe and clean environment to survive, grow and thrive (Article 24, CRC). The availability of safe and clean water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services, and the quality of the physical environment in which children, adolescents and youth live, are important determinants of their health and well-being, and learning, safety and ability to take advantage of opportunities to reach their full potential. Inadequate WASH is primarily responsible for the transmission of diseases such as cholera, diarrhoea, dysentery, hepatitis A, typhoid and polio. Diarrheal diseases exacerbate malnutrition and remain a leading global cause of child deaths.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Access to safely managed drinking water and sanitation services, and good hygiene practices are considered core socio-economic and health determinants and are key for survival and well-being. Everyone has the human right to safe drinking water. When children and

young people do not have access to clean water, it negatively impacts all aspects of their lives, including their health, nutrition and education. In Dominica, 97% of the population has access to basic drinking water from an improved source.

Sanitation is about more than toilets, it is about the coupling of behaviours, facilities and services that provide the hygienic environment that children need to fight diseases and grow up healthy. Adequate sanitation is essential to childhood survival and development. Poor sanitation puts children at risk of childhood diseases and malnutrition that can impact their overall development and learning. In Dominica, 78% of the population have basic sanitation services (i.e., use of improved facilities which are not shared with other households).

Good hygiene is critical for preventing the spread of infectious diseases and helping children to lead long and healthy lives. Good hygiene can help to prevent children from missing school, which results in better learning outcomes. For families, good hygiene means avoiding illness and spending less on health care. In some contexts, good hygiene can also secure a family's social status and help individuals to maintain their self-confidence. Good hygiene, however, is difficult to practice without the right knowledge and skills, adequate community support and the belief that one's own behaviour can make a difference. In Dominica, data on the proportion of the population that use a hand-washing facility with soap and water are not available.

Mortality Attributed to Unsafe WASH Services

Inadequate WASH are important risks to health, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. The impact of unsafe WASH on death rates of children under five and mothers in the year after childbirth is important to understand; unfortunately, these data are not available. Mortality rate attributed to exposure to unsafe WASH (SDG 3.9.2) is not available for Dominica.

Mortality Attributed to Air Pollution

The drivers of air pollution are closely related to those of climate change. Mortality rate attributed to air pollution are not available for Dominica.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

There are a number of areas in which concerted and sustained action are needed to ensure the rights of all young people – both girls and boys – are realised in the Dominica. These general observations are being made with the acknowledgement that a complete equity-based analysis of the situation of young people in Dominica depends on the availability of data, particularly disaggregated data on different aspects that might influence their lives, including gender, age, nationality and socio-economic status; such data are not always readily available for Dominica. Data that are available are not real-time; in many cases, the data are several years or a decade old. Outdated data makes it difficult to analyse the current situation of young people and changes over time. Another data challenge was the lack of comparable data with other ECA countries and territories.

Although the Government of Dominica and development partners produce some very meaningful and relevant data related to young people, existing data does not capture the full range of issues that allow for an in-depth assessment of the situation of young people related to health, education, employment, poverty, social welfare, child protection and justice, among others. There appears to be little coordination of effort across ministries/ agencies and sectors to maximise data collection, and to collect and use data in a harmonised manner on an agreed upon set of indicators relevant to young people.

Limited data hinders opportunities for evidence-based programme and policy planning, and proper monitoring and analysis of the situation of young people, but also impacts the ability to plan and allocate resources to advance the needs and rights of young

people. In addition, lack of data limits the ability to analyse whether the situation of young people has improved over time in the areas of poverty reduction, education and employment, protection from violence and exploitation, improved access to health and proper nutrition, and more.

Similarly, sparse historical data limits the ability to do trend comparisons and to analyse whether the situation of young people has improved over time in the areas of poverty reduction, education and employment, protection from violence and exploitation, health and nutrition, and more. Due to the lack of longitudinal data on poverty, education and employment data, it is not possible to analyse whether the socio-economic situation of young people is better, worse or the same as it was five to ten years ago in Dominica.

As it relates to child protection and justice for children, government agencies responsible for child protection and justice for children do not collect and disseminate real-time data. Data that are collected are not disaggregated by age or focused on adolescents or youth, which does not allow for an in-depth assessment of the situation of violence, abuse and exploitation of young people, including gender-based violence.

Gender is a cross-cutting topic in this situation analysis. In some areas, differences between girls and boys are reported on by the government, especially in education; however, in other areas, gender differences are not reported. For instance, more girls than boys are finishing secondary education, while boys are more likely to repeat grades and to drop out of school which relegates them to accepting low-paying and low-skills jobs, impacting their future earning potential.

There is a need to better assess gender inequalities in Dominica, including as it relates to tertiary education, TVET, and employment, as well as exposure to different types of violence, abuse and exploitation, engagement in offending behaviours, and access to protection and social services, and health care. Data are needed to create evidence-based policies and

programmes aimed at promoting the rights of young people as called for by the CRC, CEDAW and SDGs.

STRATEGIC THINKING

The idea behind the SDGs is to create a global movement to advance work on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; therefore, governments should frame their development plans and policies for the next years based on this globally agreed upon development agenda. To maintain an enabling environment conducive to delivering equitable social and economic growth and effective poverty reduction, certain capacities must be put in place or strengthened.

These include:

- **Mobilising and channelling resources** to the appropriate sectors at the appropriate time for optimal production
- **Enforcing standards and regulations**, specifically operationalising legislation and policies identified and/or in draft form
- **Establishing a mix of social partnerships with key actors**, including local councils, civil society, research institutions, the private sector
- **Improving systems for generating, collating and managing data and information** so that it is easily accessible and shared across different agencies and with partners.

This situation analysis of young people in Dominica revealed there is a real need to strengthen cooperation around the needs and rights of young people. This requires a deep dive³ into how to **build better partnerships for smart planning, problem-solving and innovation** to accelerate results for young people in the areas of:

- **Education**, with a focus on strengthening the quality of primary and secondary education, which requires improvements to teaching and learning materials, expanded coverage of information and communication technology, and human capital of school personnel.

³ A deep dive is a more thorough or comprehensive assessment and analysis of a subject or issue.

- **TVET**, with a focus on partnering with the private sector to identify and develop market-driven TVET opportunities for young people.
- **Health and well-being**, with a focus on improving adolescent health, reducing teenage pregnancy and adolescent fertility rates, preventing drug and alcohol abuse, and addressing adolescent mental health to reduce suicide among young people.
- **Social protection**, with a focus on multidimensional child poverty and poverty among adolescents, and the impact of COVID-19 on multidimensional poverty, so that the Eastern Caribbean governments and development partners can more effectively focus on policy efforts to alleviate children's deprivations and achieve sustainable poverty eradication.
- **Child protection**, with a focus on strengthening child protection systems and community-based services for child victims of violence, abuse and exploitation, and their families, particularly in countries/territories where child protection systems and services are lacking or few and far between.
- **Climate change**, with a focus on strengthening the capacities of the government to respond to climate change and climate crisis, to bring together specialised expertise to strengthen disaster risk reduction (DRR) to ensure that hazards do not become disasters, and to devote greater attention and resources to shielding children and young people from these risks, and to enhance their resilience. As a cross-cutting priority, particular attention must be paid to addressing the magnified risks faced by the most vulnerable children and young people, and to meeting their specific needs.

As Dominica begins planning for a post-pandemic recovery, it is important that the government seizes on the opportunity to **“build back better” by creating a more sustainable, resilient and inclusive society**. This requires a more risk informed programming and smart planning, problem-solving and innovation to address challenges facing young people.

Strengthening public-private partnerships should be a key intervention. Developing a strategic business for results (B4R) agenda and framework that engages the private sector is crucial; however, it must be coordinated and done in cooperation with both the private and public sectors, including government partners. B4R and engagement with the private sector must be aligned with public policies and national agendas, including national action plans for the rights of young people.

Assessments and results-based monitoring are needed to better understand how B4R can be implemented in Dominica, and how B4R initiatives that engage the private sector contribute and lead to advancing the rights of young people and accelerating results for young people. This requires understanding how B4R initiatives impact the most vulnerable, including poor and marginalised populations, and contributes to improvements in systems of social protection.

Strengthen Administrative Data on Young People

There are administrative data gaps related to young people; thus, there is a real need for government ministries/agencies and service providers in Dominica to strengthen administrative data collection on young people's issues. Strengthening administrative data is an important and useful investment in resources.

In recent years, globally, there has been increased interest among governments and development partners to explore ways to strengthen and use existing administrative data to monitor and report on young people's health, education, employment, poverty, social welfare, protection and access to justice, as well as exposure to violence, exploitation and crime. Administrative data are an important source of information that can often be readily accessed and used to complement prevalence studies on a wide range of subject matter; in particular, young people's access to education, health care, essential services, protection and justice. Administrative data can also be used to measure progress towards SDG targets and indicators that do not require survey data.

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