Brief History of the Gender Affairs Division


In 1986 the Government of Trinidad and Tobago established a Women’s Bureau within the Ministry of Health, Social Welfare and the Status of Women, which later became the Ministry of Social and Community Development and Family Services. The work of the Women’s Bureau saw the establishment of the Inter-Ministerial Committee for the Integration of Women in Development in 1987, the formulation of a National Policy Statement on Women and the ratification of the Government on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women in 1990.

The Women’s Affairs Division as the focal point within the Government for Women and Development was set up in 1991. Staff specializing in gender was recruited in 1994 and the Institutional Strengthening of the Division funded by the Inter American Development Bank also commenced in 1994. As preparation for the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, China, a National Report on the Status of Women was produced for the country representatives to the September 1995 Conference. In 1998, the Government recognized that women’s issues affect both men and women and there was a global paradigm shift from Women in Development to Gender in Development. This resulted in the name of the Division being changed from the Women’s Affairs Division to the Gender Affairs Division.
The work of the Gender Affairs Division is informed by the Beijing Platform for Action, the Commonwealth Plan of Action, and the OAS CIM Plan of Action. The Division’s mandate is guided by the Government’s Medium Term Policy Framework and Vision 2020 which includes commitment to incorporate a gender perspective in development planning at the policy and programme level, focusing on activities relating to the achievement of gender equity over the medium term. The Division is driven by two guiding principles:

- The integration of gender (via gender analysis) at the micro and macro policy level and across sectors and society.
- The elimination of all gender-based inequality within the society. To this end the Division has designed and executed projects/programmes to address crucial societal problems such as domestic violence and the economic empowerment of women.
**GENDER AFFAIRS DIVISION**

**Overview:**

The mandate of the Gender Affairs Division is to effectively promote Gender Equity and Gender Justice through the process of Gender mainstreaming in all Government Policies, Programmes and Projects.

The Gender Affairs strategic objectives are:

- To advance the status and rights of women and men.
- To develop policies/projects relevant to gender specific issues including the elimination of all forms of violence against women, the elimination of poverty and the education system as it affects males and females.
- To research and disseminate information on gender specific issues.
- To change gender discriminatory social consciousness and traditions.
- To assist in the strengthening of local communities and families.
- To foster participation of women and men in policy formulating processes.

In order to achieve the stated objectives, the Gender Affairs Division has developed projects and programmes to address some of those issues, which affect women, men, families and ultimately the country. These issues include the following:
• Gender based violence: The Gender Affairs Division continues to design, implement and execute programmes via its Domestic Violence Unit to address the crucial problem of Domestic Violence in our society.

• The Male Programme promotes gender equity by taking into account the needs of men, their perspective and expectations, as well as facilitating a level of awareness, which deconstructs the stereotyping, which take place in society.

• To address issues of inequality in economic structures and policies and in all forms of productive activities and access to resources, the Gender Affairs Division through its Gender Support Unit and Gender Equality and Enhancement Institute (formerly the Women’s Enhancement and Equality Institute seeks to:

  • Design, implement and execute activities and programmes as well as collect data to engender social and economic policy in the key areas of our Ministry and the relevant Ministries.

  • Continue gender sensitization activities for key target groups, including the members of the media, protective services, the private sector, and the health sector among others.
The Male Programme:

Overview:

The Male Support Programme of the Gender Affairs Division was established via Cabinet Minute No. 987 of July 25, 2001. The key elements of the Male Support Programme then were:

(i) the training of religious leaders to assist in the counselling of persons, especially males in domestic violence situations;

(ii) the conduct of a Male Issues Forum in communities where males issues were raised and discussed;

(iii) the conduct of gender sensitization and training for males in first forms in Secondary Schools.

In 2005/2006, the programme was expanded to address the high incidence of domestic violence, including family disputes, incest, behavioural problems and other acts of violence against men, women and children. Additionally, gender issues such as males performance in the education system, men’s health and societal problems were also addressed through this programme. Other issues which males have raised and are pertinent to gender equity will be addressed as the programme evolves.

The Male Programme is critically important to any gender thrust as it engages men in the process of creating gender equality.
Defining Masculine Excellence:

(a) Training of Trainers Programme

During the period under review, four (4) programmes were conducted. These programmes were conducted at the Aero Services Credit Union, Tacarigua, the Administration Building, Siparia, Ministry of Works, Port of Spain and the Community Education, Information, Training and Resource Centre, St. Ann’s. A total of one hundred and eighty-two (182) males representing forty-two organizations benefited from the exercise. A list of participating agencies is appended.

Forty-five corporals and constables of the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service were also special beneficiaries of this programme. These officers are expected to use the information gleaned to influence the behaviour of their subordinates, peers and the wider society.

Modules to which participants were exposed include:

- Gender sensitivity
- Self Esteem
- Man and his feelings
- Father and Son bonding
- A Celebration of masculine excellence
- Spirituality
- Male friendship
- Masculinity in the workplace
- Second class relationships
- A man with his mother
- Men and their life partners
DEFINING MASCULINE EXCELLENCE
The Agencies who participated were:

1. Arima Borough Corporation
2. Eastern Divers Company Ltd.
3. Min. of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs (Culture Division)
4. Mt. Hope Medical Complex
5. Peytonville Community Council
6. Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force
7. Hillview College
8. St. Augustine South Village Council
9. St. Mary’s Children’s Home
10. Tacarigua Village Council
11. T&T Fire Services
12. Trinity College East
13. Samaroo Village Youth
14. Panorama Garden Improvement
15. T&T Prison Service
16. Board of Inland Revenue
17. Malabar Community Council
18. Arima Welfare Council
19. Min. of Works and Transport
20. Rebirth House
21. Min. of Sports & Youth Affairs
22. WASA
23. T&T Police Service T&T Police Service
24. SWRHA
25. Palo Seco Gov’t Sec. School
26. Min. of Labour
27. St. Patrick East Brigade
28. Sand Trotter Sports and Cultural Club
29. Siparia Regional Corp.
30. Min. of Health
31. Palo Seco Agricultural Enterprise Ltd.
32. Court Shamrock
33. Min. of Works and Transport
34. CCN TV6
35. NUGFW
36. MTS
37. T&T Fantasy Tours
38. Methodist Church
39. Living Waters Community
40. South East POS Sec. School
41. Belmont Boys Sec. School
42. NWRHA
(b) Radio Programme

In 2006, the Defining Masculine Programme launched its radio programme. This half hour series was aired over a thirteen week period on three frequencies; Citadel's I.95.5 FM, Radio Trinbago 94.7 FM and 103 FM.

Listeners were exposed to information from the modules used at the training of trainers' programme, and the weekly panelists were programmes past participants. An average of one hundred and ten calls were received on the I.95.5 and 94.7 frequencies. The programme is on going at 103 FM and feedback to date has been quite encouraging.

(c) Community Outreach

A total of twenty-four (24) street theatre inventions were conducted within the Morvant/Laventille communities during the 2005/2006 fiscal year. These interventions were aimed at encouraging behaviour change among young males in these communities. Average attendance at these sessions were eighty (80%) persons, with over fifty (50%) percent being males between the ages of 6-40 years.

Facilitators for the programme, the Interactive Team of Roy and Gloria fame were able to stimulate vibrant discussions among the audience. Participants of the Defining Masculine Excellence Programme served as co-facilitators. Among concerns raised by residents at these interventions were:

- Improvement of sporting facilities;
- High number of gangs and unskilled persons;
- High school drop-out rate both at primary and secondary level;
- Stigma/labeling of all residents;
- Incidence of STI including HIV/AIDS is relatively high;
- Single parenting with the number of males as single parents on the increase;
- Violence associated with guns, drugs and alcohol abuse;
- Lack of spiritual awareness

**Non Traditional Skills Training for Men (Food and Nutrition)**

In September 2005, male participants of programmes of the Gender Affairs Division and member of staff project ‘Men Can Cook Too’. The event was held on Friday 8th September 2006 and was well supported by Ministry’s staff, stakeholders and specially invited guests, who included Mrs. Margaret Howe, Minister of Culture, Montserrat.

This event which was among the Pre-Carifesta activities was aimed at engaging males in a food preparation and presentation exercise, a role which is traditionally seen as that of the female and to share this experience with the Ministry’s entire staff and other stakeholders. A total of sixteen (16) teams participating in the exercise.

Prizes for the competition were donated by the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Gender Affairs, Community Development Fund, Double X Workshop, Citadel I.95 FM, National Flour Mills, the Centre for Gender and Development Studies, Grannies Caterers, Nestles T&T, Media Sales, Happi Food Products, UNILEVER Caribbean Ltd and Business Office Supplies Ltd.
MEN CAN COOK TOO
The Women In Harmony Programme

In 2003, Cabinet agreed by Minute #761 dated 10th April 2003 agreed to the implementation of the Women In Harmony programme.

In Trinidad and Tobago there still exist a large percentage of women who head households as single parents with low/no skills and low/no income. A significant number of these women are also exposed to gender based violence in visiting and co-habitational relationships.

The Gender Affairs Division continues to be inundated with requests from many women who need to support themselves and their children, and/or escape from abusive situations. The underlying philosophy of the project is to provide an opportunity for some of these women and their families to obtain a marketable skill, so as to improve their chances in obtaining employment.

This Project has started the process of breaking the cycle of poverty and dependency in the lives of many women who are faced with inadequate education, low level skills or no skills, and the general lack of opportunities for advancement.

The Programme involves training women between the ages twenty-six (26) to forty-five (45) years in the following skills:

- Elderly Care
  - Agriculture with emphasis on landscaping/grow box technology/short crops farming
Objectives of the Programme

- To train women in skills related to the care of elderly persons, landscaping, floriculture, horticulture and the grow box method.
- To enhance self-esteem of females and,
- To Empower women to become employable in the fields of geriatric care and agriculture.

A total of four hundred and two (402) persons completed the three month programme.

A. SYLLABUS

In 2005/2006, the syllabus and lesson plans for both the Elderly Care and Agriculture/ Landscaping programmes were both revised with new areas of interest viz.,

(1) **Agriculture/ Landscaping**

- Emphasis on short term crop production
- Organic gardening and composting
- Agro-processing
- Agricultural safety

(2) **Elderly Care**

- Palliative Care
- Health Care Ethics
- Chronic Diseases: Alzheimer, Parkinsons
- Safety in the workplace and environmental safety

B. DURATION

The programs are of three (3) months duration instead of the initial two (2) months there by allowing in depth knowledge of the courses.

C. LIFE SKILLS

Servol was responsible for recruiting suitable personnel for most of the centres
D. CHILD CARE ASSISTANTS

Parents with children below school age were able to benefit from child care services offered either at the training venue or at a nearby nursery. The cost of this service was borne by the Ministry.

E. LITERACY AND NUMERACY SKILLS
Participants requiring these skills were able to benefit through the ALTA programme.

Stipends
Trainees received a stipend of sixty dollars ($60.00) per day.

ELDERY CARE
## APPENDIX II

### TRAINING CENTRES

#### ELDERLY CARE

1. Clarke Rochard Community Centre 39  
2. Barrackpore Regional Complex 37  
3. Southern Training Institute 26  
4. Laventille Community Complex 24  
5. Warrenville Regional Complex 28  
6. Arouca Community Centre 20  
7. Plaisance Park Community Centre 21  
8. Pt. Cumana Regional Complex 17  
9. Valencia Community Centre 20  
10. Palo Seco Community Centre 36  
11. Misir Community Centre 26  

**SUB TOTAL** 284

#### AGRICULTURE/LANDSCAPING

1. Mendez Community Centre 27  
2. La Pastora Community Centre 21  
3. La Tosca Community Centre 30  
4. Clarke Rochard Community Centre 40  

**SUB TOTAL** 118  
**TOTAL** 402
During the period October 1, 2005 to September 30, 2006, a total of one thousand, eight hundred and sixty-seven (1,867) clients benefited for the National Domestic Violence Hotline (800-SAVE). Of this total 81% were women and 19% were men. (fig.1)

The Line continues to have an increase of first time callers which accounts for 68% of all calls. (fig.2)

**County Distribution of Clients**

Clients of the line are geographically concentrated in three counties, St. George, Caroni and Victoria, which together account for about 80% of the clients.
**Distribution of Calls by Category**

**Client Calls**

A total of 12,791 calls were addressed by the hotline during the period under review. This group refers to all calls made by new and repeat clients, and those calls made in request of relevant information and to provide client updates.

This category can be further sub-divided into three categories:

1. **Information Requests**

2. This sub-category represents the client calls that are requests for information.

   The requests include:
   - Information on how to obtain a restraining order;
   - Telephone numbers of other agencies such as specific police stations, hospitals/health centres, NGOs, Social Services, Family Court and Drop-in Information and Support Centres.
   - Telephone numbers of other hotline services such as Crime Stoppers, Lifeline and Childline.
   - Information on how to access programmes such as S.H.A.R.E., G.A.P.P, M.U.S.T, etc.
   - Information on what services are provided by 800-SAVE itself.

3. **Brief Client Calls** to listeners which accounts for the most significant portion of client calls. These calls signify those clients who call to update listeners on the progress of their situation. This category can be expected to continue to increase steadily as our client base grows.

4. **Data Captured Client Calls** refer to the sum of First-time and Repeat Client calls for which data sheets are prepared and case notes compiled.
Types of Abuse

Clients may experience different forms of abuse and these information has been captured based on information provided.

*Types and numbers of reports of Abuse disaggregated by Sex*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Abuse</th>
<th>No. of Females</th>
<th>No. of Males</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>666</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>1203</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incest</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td>752</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threats</td>
<td>476</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isolation/ Neglect</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>111</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1*
Distribution of Referrals

Number of Clients Referred

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Referral Agency</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rape Crisis</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Planning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families in Action</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mt Hope Social Workers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Family Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drop-in Centres</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.C.V.C.S.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe Home/Shelter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Ctr/Doctor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probation Department</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Welfare Department</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.P. Restraining Orders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hugh Wooding Law School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Aid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Lawyer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narcotics/Alcoholics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anon.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gov't Agency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiritual Leader</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Hotlines</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug Rehab Centres</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battered Women's Support Group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5
National Gender Policy and Action Plan Brief

INTRODUCTION:

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago by Cabinet vide Minute #1924 September 5, 2002 agreed to the development of a National Gender Policy and Action Plan and the Ministry of Community Development and Gender Affairs as the executing agency. The purpose of the National Gender Policy is to advance the principles of gender equality and equity and to identify strategies to mainstream the gender issues into the work of Government and civil society.

BACKGROUND:

In 1989 the Government prepared a Policy Statement on the Advancement of Women. In 1991 a national focal point responsible for the promotion of official Government Policy in support of Gender and Development was established.

The Government signed and ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1991, which mandated the Government to develop a National Gender Policy. A national focal point for Gender and Development, the Women’s Affairs Division (now the Gender Affairs Division) was established in 1991 and institutionally strengthened between 1994-1997. Government sought during this period to expand the Policy Statement on Women to a National Gender Policy. Cabinet agreed in 2000 and a Committee was appointed to develop a National Gender Policy, which attempt was unsuccessful in the face of limited time and resources. In 2002, with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) the Government agreed to the development of a National Gender Policy and Plan of Action and to execute the strategies identified therein.
The UNDP contributed U.S $20,000 and serves as the Financial Manager of the Project, CIDA contributed U.S $40,000.00, and the Government of Trinidad and Tobago contributed U. S $25,000.00. An Advisory committee comprised of the Funding Agencies, the Ministry of Community Development and the Ministry of Planning and Development oversees the Project.

The Centre for Gender and Development Studies was selected as the Consultant to the Project through a transparent tendering process.

**CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK:**

A National Gender Policy seeks to document Government’s commitment to the achievement of gender equality and equity, identifying the underlying philosophy and approaches that it would adopt in this regard. The Gender Policy and Action Plan will guide, measure and evaluate the nation’s practice in the promotion of gender equality and equity, as well as identify strategies to mainstream gender issues into the work of government and the wider community, ensuring against discrimination to any citizen on the basis of gender.

Such activities will include:

- The strengthening of national machinery for gender equality and equity at all levels of government.
- Ensuring that all legislation meet with required standards in the promotion of gender equality and equity.
- Ensuring that all policies, programmes, plans, projects and other activities of Government and the wider community uphold the principles of gender equality and equity.
• Identify and implement proactive strategies and mechanisms to mainstream the principles of gender equality and equity, and to bridge the gaps identified through research and consistent review of all aspects of national life.

**PRINCIPLES:**

The principles of gender equality and equity relate fundamentally to:

• The concept of human dignity as enshrined in the nation’s republican constitution and the equal rights of every single human being at every level of the society,

• Social justice for all persons and the elimination of discrimination against any person based on gender,

• Raising national consciousness and sensitivity to gender issues, the need for equitable inclusion and determination, and commitment to particular concerns of men and women, and boys and girls in the development process,

• Consideration of gender in relation to the cross-cutting issues of social class, culture, ethnicity, religion, race, sex and age, and ensuring that none of these in relation to gender serve as barriers to the full participation of any citizen of Trinidad and Tobago.

**POLICY PROCESS**

A participatory approach has been adopted in the development and articulation of the National Gender Policy and Plan. The strategy involved the circulation of a Concept Paper, which has engaged actors at very level of civil society and engaged them in the consultative Process to gain consensus on the key issues that should be included in the National Gender Policy and Action Plan. In-depth research on the priority thematic areas
emanating from the consultation followed and fed into the preparation of a first draft of the policy. The draft document was circulated for public comment but was later withdrawn. Another document has been prepared and is currently undergoing another round of stakeholder review, before a final draft is advanced for further public comment and Cabinet’s approval.

A public information strategy to create awareness and increase public understanding and dialogue of the key issues has been conducted parallel to the entire process.

**ACTION PLAN**

The National Policy would be accompanied by an action plan indicating the activities that would be taken over the course of the next three (3) years to effect the implementation of the National Gender Policy. The action plan should identify the action to be taken, the responsible agency, the required resources and the possible timeframe.

**General Project Information**

Title: A National Gender Policy and Action Plan for Trinidad and Tobago  
Executing Agency: The Ministry of Community Development and Gender Affairs  
Location: Cor. Jerningham Avenue and Queen’s Park East, Port of Spain, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago  
Total Project: $85,000.00 US  
Budget U.S $:  
Canadian International Development Agency - $40,000.00 (TT 248, 000.00)  
United Nations Development Programme - $20,000.00 (TT124, 000.00)  
Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago - $25,000.00 (TT154, 000.00)  
Project Duration:  
Original August 1, 2002 – March 31, 2003  
Proposed Extension April 1, 2003 – December 31, 2006
Project Output/Outcomes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>A work plan detailing programme activities</td>
<td>Milestones, timelines and key activities identified for the development of a National Gender Policy (NGP).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Ongoing communication strategy</td>
<td>General public and all of civil society informed about NGP process and on gender and development issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>National Consultation</td>
<td>All levels of civil society consulted on priority issues for inclusion in the NGP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Stakeholder Meeting/Roundtables</td>
<td>Key stakeholders/actors consulted on issues for inclusion in NGP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Regional Consultations</td>
<td>Major segments of population, based on eight (8) geographic regions in Trinidad consulted on issues for inclusion in the NGP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Interest Consultations</td>
<td>Major interest groups (10) consulted on issues for inclusion in the NGP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Tobago Consultation</td>
<td>Stakeholder and interest group consultation held.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Issues papers/ Report on thematic area research and consultations</td>
<td>Review conducted of all relevant policies and plans of major sectors and gaps identified through research. *</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Asterisk represents activities still left in the Project Cycle.
Project Activities to Date:

- Official handing over of the first tranche of CIDA funding to the Minister of Community Development and Gender Affairs valued at TT $135,801.03 on 27 May 2002 at 11:00 A.M.
- Launch of the National Gender Policy at the Trinidad Hilton and Conference Centre on 5 June 2002 at 5:30 p.m.
- Hiring of the Project Co-ordinator of the National Gender Policy with effect from 9 September 2002.
- Project Agreement signed by the Permanent Secretary of Community Development and Gender Affairs on 19 September 2002.
- Project Advisory Committee established, first Meeting held on the 2 October 2002.
- Project Funds transferred to the United Nations Development Programme in the amount of TT $154,000.00 representing Government’s Contribution and TT $141,000.00 representing the first tranche of CIDA’s contribution by cheques and corresponding letter dated 15 October 2002.
- New Project Co-ordinator contracted, effective 2 December 2002
- Co-ordinator’s Work Programme drafted- December 2002
- On-going Communications Strategy drafted- December 2002
• Advisory Committee finalized Terms of Reference to engage the project Consultant- December 2002

• Terms of Reference circulated to engage Consultant- December 2002

• Advisory Committee reviewed Proposal to provide consultancy - January 2003
• Interest groups for inclusion in the consultative process identified- January 2003

• List of possible facilitators to support the policy process identified- January 2003

• Prospective consultant made presentation to National Advisory Committee, providing greater clarity to initial proposal- February 2003

• Members of the National Advisory Committee evaluated prospective consultant- March 2003

• Communications strategy began with special targeting of International Women’s Day 2003, including Newspaper articles, printed Polo-Shirts, Banners, Brochures and other public information strategies- February/ March 2003

• Meetings scheduled with key actors to sensitise them to the policy process- April 2003

• Concept Paper developed and Amended based on Comments May 2003

• National Consultation Conducted 13th June 2003

• Communications/ Public Awareness Strategy- July and Ongoing
• Regional Consultations- July/ August 2003

• Interest Consultation- September 2003

• Tobago Consultations- October 2003

• Sector Studies/ Research into Thematic Areas- completed

National Domestic Violence Hotline 800-SAVE

In Minute No. 2395 of September 12, 1996, Cabinet agreed to the establishment of a Domestic Violence Unit in the Women’s Affairs Division of the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and Women’s Affairs. This Unit would be responsible for implementing programmes and projects aimed at eliminating the ill effects of domestic violence in Trinidad and Tobago.

The first project of the Domestic Violence Unit was the establishment of the Domestic Violence Hotline – 800-SAVE. The objectives of the Hotline were

1. To reduce the incidence of violent acts related to domestic violence
2. To provide support for victims and perpetrators of violence
3. To provide a facility for anyone to access help in a situation of crisis
4. To facilitate the collection of data which can be analysed for informing the development of policies, programmes and projects to deal with the issue.

The Hotline began its operations on August 28, 1996 providing listening, information and referral services to victims and perpetrators of domestic violence. To date, the Hotline has received more than 13 000 calls related to domestic violence issues. Although it is difficult to measure the Hotline’s success in reducing the incidence of violent acts related to domestic violence, the fact that over 9 500 referrals have been made to such services as
the police, safe houses, legal aid and Drop In Centres shows that the Hotline continues to provide a valuable facility for persons in need to access help.

Further, information garnered from the Hotline has been extremely useful in highlighting certain issues which have been the impetus for programmes and projects undertaken by the Domestic Violence Unit. These include the establishment of Drop In Centres, the creation of the Male Support Programme, the policy roundtable on Domestic Violence data collection and multi-disciplinary training for police officers and other service providers to victims and perpetrators of domestic violence. In addition, data collected from the Hotline is used to inform national reports to such international agencies as UN/CEDAW, OAS/CIM, PAHO and ECLAC.

The Hotline is structured to operate on a 24hour basis, with eight active listeners rostered on three 8 hour shifts per day. The structure also provides for a Supervisor/Counsellor who manages the Hotline’s daily operations and also provides counseling services to some of the Hotline’s clients. At present, the operations of the Hotline is managed and monitored by the non-governmental organization, Families in Action. This contractual arrangement has been in existence for over a period of one (1) year. The Contract expires on October 2nd, 2006.
DROP IN CENTRES

Cabinet, by Minute no. 1177 dated May 13, 1999 agreed to the establishment of twenty-two Drop In Centres at various community centres and complexes located throughout Trinidad and Tobago.

The project which was piloted in 1998 in seven Centres evolved in response to information coming into the Domestic Violence Hotline that people were having difficulty accessing counseling and support services in their communities. The pilot project was funded by the UNDP and the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.

The objectives of the Drop In Centres are:

i. To provide support services for victims of domestic violence including rape and incest.

ii. Encourage the establishment of support groups at the community level

iii. Promote an integrated approach to the protection and rehabilitation of persons vulnerable to domestic violence

iv. Encourage conflict resolution as a means to preventing violence

At present eight (8) Centres are still in operation. Each Centre is staffed by a trained social worker and support personnel and operates one day per week. The community police, wardens of the community centres and representatives of community groups also form part of the service delivery team which aims to provide both information and assistance to individuals and families in the community.

The Maloney Resource Centre was a pilot project which sought to expand the type of services provided to communities. Additional services at that centre include a food bank, clothes bank and children’s programmes and the Centre was opened four days per week from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Given problems experienced at the centre, as regards to the
confidentiality, the services were curtailed and a new venue is being sought. Families in Action has partnered with the Ministry to continue the project.

Although Drop In Centres have been successful in providing some assistance to persons in the community, they are still somewhat underutilized.

**Committee on Which Gender Affairs Division is Represented**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee</th>
<th>Representative</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Survey of Living Conditions</td>
<td>Ms. Monica Williams</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Ministry of Social Development</em></td>
<td>Director, Gender Affairs Division</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Plan of Action for Children</td>
<td>Ms. Monica Williams</td>
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<td><em>Ministry of Social Development</em></td>
<td>Director, Gender Affairs Division</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Committee for the Prevention and Elimination of Child Labour in</td>
<td>Mr. Kerwin Aigle</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trinidad and Tobago</td>
<td>Project Execution Assistant</td>
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<td><em>Ministry of Labour &amp; Small &amp; Micro Enterprise Development</em></td>
<td>Gender Affairs Division</td>
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<tr>
<td>National AIDS Coordinating Committee</td>
<td>Ms. Monica Williams</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office of the Prime Minister</td>
<td>Director, Gender Affairs Division</td>
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The table below sets out the International Instruments, which have been signed, ratified and/or Acceded to by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, which relate (directly/indirectly) to gender issues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of International Instrument</th>
<th>Date of Signature/Adoption</th>
<th>Date of Ratification</th>
<th>Date of Accession</th>
<th>Entry into Force</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Universal Declaration on Human Rights (1948)</td>
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<td>18 September, 1962 (upon signing the Charter of the UN)</td>
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<td>The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action</td>
<td>September 1995</td>
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<tr>
<td>Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women</td>
<td>23 February, 1994</td>
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<td>Declaration on the Protection of Women and children in Emergency and Armed Conflict</td>
<td>14 December, 1974</td>
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<td>Charter of the Organization of the American States</td>
<td>13 March, 1967</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man</td>
<td>13 March, 1967 (upon signing the Charter of the OAS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women – “Convention of Belem do Para”</td>
<td>11 March, 1995</td>
<td>1 April, 1996</td>
<td>1 April, 1996</td>
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