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30 Years Towards Equality: How Many More? The Mandate of the Bureau of Gender Affairs in Promoting Gender Justice in the Barbadian State

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Abstract

The Barbados Bureau is the second oldest in the Commonwealth Caribbean (Table 1). In my regional travel, I learnt that the Bureau has developed a solid reputation for monitoring women and gender and development issues and reporting to international agencies in a timely manner. I commend successive governments for recognizing that there is the need for agovernment machinery dedicated to working to eradicate gender inequities in our society. Except for some high profile criticisms here and there, such as “the Bureau is not living up to the government’s and public’s expectations” (Barriteau 1999), usually around the “testy” time of the annual estimates, governments have maintained the Bureau of Women\then Gender Affairs. We who are committed to the ideals of social justice, with gender justice being an integral component of that commitment, are grateful.

Conceptual background to the coming into being of the Bureau

The year 1976 represented a very significant point of departure in the policy formation orientation of the Barbadian state. Thirty years ago when the state established the National Commission on Women, and created the Bureau of Women's Affairs to function initially as the Secretariat to the Commission, whether state planners recognised it or not, they were introducing a fundamental break in the existing policies of the State. For the first time in its colonial and post colonial history, the Barbadian state was publicly acknowledging that one group of citizens had organically different sets of experiences of everyday life. They were also conceding, that these differences coalesced around the *sex* of these persons.

In that necessary act of institutionalizing a governmental body, "to monitor and advise government on the situation related to women" (Gillings: 1987:2), the State created a mechanism "to grapple with the intersection of gender issues and development concerns" (Barriteau 2006: 176). In the process, the Barbadian State admitted to and identified three sets of societal conditions it wanted to reshape. *First*, that there were\are conditions of gender inequalities existing in Barbadian society, and women and girls were severely disadvantaged by these inequalities. *Second*, because of its commitment to the goals of people centred development, (and all post independence Barbadian governments plans pledge allegiance to this) it meant that the State accepted a civic obligation to introduce measures and mechanisms to end, or work towards ending these multiple and intersecting conditions of inequalities, and *third*, government's development goals, plans and policies should from now on reflect a commitment to promoting gender equality.

Still, when the Bureau was established, there were overlapping areas of uncertainty about its mandate and functioning. The understanding of gender inequalities, the Bureau's role and responsibilities in dealing with those inequalities, and the functioning of the Bureau in relation to the State's overall development goals were relatively undeveloped. The records reveal that the policy makers were not clear exactly how the Bureau, its mandate and the goals of development were interconnected. Additionally, the conceptualisation of the need for a government mechanism to track conditions that maintained inequalities for women, how these inequalities were reflected and reified in social and economic conditions, and the profile of the Barbadian State, were all substantially different to what they are today.

1. From gender equality to gender justice

In 1976, as an independent country, Barbados was ten years old. In 2006 the country celebrated 40 years of independence. Many of the two hundred and twelve (212) measures the National Commission on the Status of Women recommended to improve the social, economic, cultural and political situation of women have been attained; several remain unresolved, while new challenges are presented daily. More significantly, both the mission of the Bureau and the profile and concerns of the Barbadian State have changed. Because of this I have structured my lecture around the theme, "Thirty years

towards Equality: How Many More?, to include, “The Mandate of the Bureau of Gender Affairs in Promoting Gender Justice in the Barbadian State.” The lecture is organized around three main sections. In the first, I explain and illustrate what should be the bureau’s focus. In the second I advise the bureau to rethink its methodologies for guiding its work, and in the third, I underscore the importance of a new approach while pointing to the way forward.

The focus of the Barbados Women’s Bureau

Thirty years represents the full maturing of a generation, an excellent time for stock taking. I want to advise the Bureau it should no longer work towards promoting gender equality, a concept I have long held as posing particular difficulties. The promotion of gender equality has increasingly become a sterile and problematic concept. The emphasis is placed on achieving or meeting indicators and measurements. Important as these are, the concept is incapable of indicating when a condition of inequality will cease and instead suggest equality has been attained when certain structural indicators are met (Barriteau 2003a: 32).. “The concept of equality implies sameness, homogeneity, and linear measurement. Even more problematic is that working for gender equality often means making women “equal to men” within the public domain of the state. This position reveals that masculine criteria of citizenship have already defined the norms of citizenship. I argue that the pursuit of equality under these conditions guarantees permanent inequality” (Barriteau 2003a: 32).

My central argument is that after 30 years, the Bureau needs to rethink its focus, especially because of the socio-economic, political and cultural climate in which it now operates. What is this new environment in which the Bureau must operate? Here are some features. Barbadian society and economy is in transition. The Barbadian State has significantly altered its development strategies. Social and economic relations have changed considerably. Unequal relations of gender continue to be pernicious even though their manifestations are different to a generation ago. I am not saying that the goal of gender equality is irrelevant, but that it defines the beginning of a process rather than the end. The state and its implementing arm, the Bureau of Gender Affairs needs to be guided by a mandate that reflects a commitment to, and an operationalizing of *gender justice*, if it is to have any impact on the lives of girls and boys, men and women and ongoing development strategies.

I define *gender justice* as, “a societal condition in which there are no asymmetries of access to, or allocation of, status, power and material resources in a society, ‘or in the control over and capacity to benefit from these resources’ [Barriteau 2003c: 327]. In a gender system characterised by gender justice there will be no hierarchies of gender identities or of the meanings society gives to masculinity and femininity” (Barriteau 2004: 439; Barriteau 1998: 192). Conversely in an unjust gender system there is unequal distribution of and access to material resources and power. There are hierarchies and rankings in the gender identities of men and women. As Sydney Mintz has shown men’s work, what men do is still seen as more important and valuable than what women do

(Mintz 1971: 267), and when society determines that a woman's job is more prestigious than a man's, then automatically that is a relationship fraught with challenges.

A commitment to removing both the ideological and material conditions that sustain gender inequalities and promote injustices would move the analysis and subsequent policies away from notions of more or less equality. It would avoid such conclusions that one sex enjoys more gender equality than the other in access to a given resource, because the other is not benefiting from that resource to the same degree (Barriteau 2006: 193-4). Instead of working to promote gender equality, I advise that the Bureau's mandate and mission should be the promotion of gender justice.

Why is the concept of gender justice more useful? The concept includes working towards gender equality and equity but it moves beyond the measures of achievement to evaluating qualitative conditions. Working towards gender justice provides the Bureau with a conceptual framework and methodologies to address certain questions such as, "What about the Boys?", and "Are Caribbean Men Marginalized?" Why do women continue to experience discrimination in the labour market? Why do women continue to experience domestic violence? Why is there such resistance to women's political leadership? At the same time it enables the Bureau to continue the necessary focus on women to ensure that the corrections that have already been made of women's exclusion are not eroded. Let me illustrate how and why a focus on gender justice should replace the focus on gender equality.

All societies have gender systems just as they have economic and political systems. I define a gender system as a complex network of power relations with two principal dimensions, one ideological and the other material (Barriteau 2003a: 30). The material dimension reveals how men and women gain access to or are allocated status, power and material resources in a given community or society (Barriteau 2003a: 30). The ideological dimension indicates the ways in which a society constructs what it accepts or (contests) as the appropriate expressions of masculinity and femininity, in other words what it means to be a man or woman in that society. The social expectations interacting with the personal constructions of gender identities form the core of gender ideologies within a society. These ideologies establish the sexually differentiated, socially constructed boundaries for "males" and "females" (Barriteau 2003a, 31).

Using the concept of gender justice requires us to consider both the material and ideological dimensions to determine whether we are working to remove all inequalities. Although I isolate the two dimensions of gender systems for investigation and analysis, in reality they operate simultaneously, and elsewhere I have shown these mutually reinforcing interactions. Changes in one dimension produces alterations in the other or at the very least, threaten the status quo.

When the State alters conditions for gaining equal access to its resources by members of the society, it is intervening in material relations of gender. However, creating conditions for equal access to the resources of the state through altering material gender relations

will not automatically eliminate or reduce inequalities in the private sphere of society or gender ideologies that rank women as inferior or secondary to men (Barriteau 1998, 455). When we examine gender ideologies and the unbalanced distribution of resources of power, status and material means, we see that the Barbadian state continues to function with an unjust gender system (Barriteau 1998). We can achieve conditions of “equality” and still have an unjust outcome. That is so because measures and indicators are used to indicate that gender equality exists as reflected in statements, “what more do women want? They can now do everything?” You have for example, women or men having the right to participate in a given societal activity, have that participation reflected or captured in a measurement, and yet that measurement cannot and will not indicate the gender prejudices that affect or influence that participation.

The latter point underscores that both men and women are affected by gender ideologies operating within our societies. When we examine the ideological dimensions of gender, we discover that some men are positioned in hierarchical, disadvantageous relations to other men. We also discover that women remain with secondary, inferior ranked gender identities in relation to both elite and subordinate men (Barriteau 2003c, 327).

The thesis of the marginalization of the black male implies that Caribbean gender systems are unjust for men and we will explore this later. Male marginalization theorists and feminists, will agree that Barbadian or Caribbean gender systems are unjust, but we will differ on which sex is disadvantaged or perhaps the extent of the harms they suffer because of their sex (Barriteau 2003a: 31). What state planners interested in eradicating injustices arising in relations of gender should note, is that it is entirely possible for gender systems to contain evidence of injustices for both sexes. Whichever sex is disadvantaged, working towards gender justice provides a framework and methodological tools to seek to prevent or eradicate conditions of injustices.

I have been accused of conflating gender justice with justice for women when I state Caribbean gender systems are unjust for women. This conveniently misconstrues my argument. This is simply that the historical and contemporary evidence exposes injustices for women. The 212 recommendations made by the National Commission on Women exposes injustices for women. The statistics on rape and domestic violence expose injustices for women (I condemn the fact there are women who beat men. This is totally unacceptable and unjust. Any form of domestic abuse by any perpetrator is wrong and unacceptable). “To the extent that these injustices exist, then the system as a whole is unjust. For the sceptics, imagining this requires making an ideological transition that is extremely difficult for women and men steeped in the seeming naturalness of patriarchal practices that they do not wish to see disturbed” (Barriteau 2003a, 32).

Why is working with the concept of gender equality so problematic and of limited use? What is not stated is that the State positions the goal of promoting gender equality in the arena of the public and in reforming access to resources. Society is conceptually divided into two spheres, the private and the public, as part of government, the Bureau operates in the public sphere. The public sphere embraces the formal and informal economy, civil

society, and the state. The public sphere is where we locate public discourse, civic responsibilities, freedom and equality, rights and citizenship (Barriteau 1998, 443).

The private sphere is the realm of domesticity, the family, conjugal and sexual relations. Historically the private domain has been a complex, contested location for women. It was accepted that women were subordinate to men conceptually and practically. They were not regarded as household heads despite the real dynamics of household decision making. Policy makers have come to accept that the private sphere and domestic relations have been largely problematic for women. What they have yet to acknowledge is that gender ideologies that support women's subordinate position in the private, have not changed, and also reoccur in public sites such as the economy and political participation. The Barbadian state and the Bureau have been committed to removing the structural conditions of inequality built into the fabric of social life for women. The state has done this primarily by removing structural barriers impeding women's participation in the public arena, it altered women's access to resources such as education, and participation in the economy and politics. For example, between 1976 - 1985, on the advice of the National Commission on Women, the State reformed 11 pieces of legislation to correct biases against women (Bureau of Gender Affairs n. d. [1985].; Barriteau 2004: 147).

Even though it is accepted that women may be subordinate to men in the private, it is around women's participation as equals in the public that the State creates access. However the hierarchies and inequalities embedded in the organisation of domestic life follow women into public spaces. That is why generally speaking, the public is more interested in the marital and parental status of female politicians that they are of men. Women in politics are more likely to have their marital and relationship status discussed rather than whether or not they are good ministers, parliamentarians or political leaders. This is why in the 2003 general elections a newspaper featured article on all the women contesting the elections for the two main parties focussed on how many of them were mothers and the number of children they had collectively, by party. The public was informed that women in one political party had eleven children among them, compared to the childless status of women in the other political party. We did not receive that rich analysis of the fatherhood or marital status of male politicians (Hoyte 2003, 9).

I invite the Bureau to work with the Centre for Gender and Development Studies to use the concept of gender justice as an analytical tool to interrogate developments within society to reveal the differential implications and impacts for men or women. There is gender injustice when these adverse conditions affect any sex group. For example, "there is no gender justice if women face ongoing overt or covert attempts to maintain their subordination, deny them the right to go to the beach unmolested at 5.30 am or pm. Similarly there is no gender justice if men face sustained efforts to deprive them of access to resources or to treat them as inferior to women or are systematically denied access to their children¹ (Barriteau 2003c, 32).

¹ The question male marginalisation theorists must answer is, where is the historical and contemporary evidence that men have been systematically denied access to status, power and material resources on the

Gender justice for men and boys

Let me illustrate the concept of gender justice as it applies to boys and men. When commentators ask the question, “What about the boys?” we can ask, what are the ideologies of masculinity that may prove destructive, punitive or crippling for the potential of many young men to lead a fuller life? What are the ideologies of masculinity that can be enabling and assist young men in the transition to manhood? What are the factors that affect access to and distribution of resources that affect young men negatively? How do the gender identities young men subscribe to, the gender ideologies they hold, affect or influence their access to resources, how are the resources distributed to them and how do they benefit from these resources? Any structural inequalities that are built into material relations of gender would mean gender systems are unjust for men.

For example, the argument that coeducation is damaging to boys is simultaneously an argument about gender ideologies and material relations of gender. It is about resource access, allocation and distribution. Those who propose single sex schools for boys advocate altering the material dimension to produce gender justice without making explicit the ideological dimensions of their arguments. Is there a belief in our society that being masculine equates with entitlement rather than merit? Does it imply that men and boys automatically or should have first choice at the state’s resources? Is it an ideology of masculinity that informs young men to study and apply themselves is to be a ‘nerd’? Does being male mean or have to mean being physically dominant and violent with other men and women? Unless we seek to understand and change some of the gender ideologies underpinning the call for the reallocation of educational resources, a return to single sex schools will not solve the problem of male underachievement and could possibly exacerbate it.

Using this model and seeking to ensure there is gender justice for men we have developed a framework for assessing the Male Marginalization thesis. This thesis implies that gender systems are unjust for men. If institutions and practices are marginalizing men, that is they are unjust for them, then the Bureau can apply the following framework to determine the existence or extent of this marginalization.

What are the policies, legislation, prejudices, practices that penalize or reward men?

What are the deeply entrenched, policies of the state and its institutions

basis of their sex and perverse relations of gender? Men have been and continue to be denied access on the basis of racism and class exploitation. Black feminist theorists have long ago critiqued the idea of “a monolithic understanding of man” (Wiegman 2001, 360). However, they demonstrate for black women these discriminations become exponential since they are embedded with asymmetric, gendered relations. See, Davis 1983; hooks 1984; and Lorde 1987.

that marginalize men?

What are the contents and effects of the gender identities men subscribe to?

What part do these play in expressions of masculinity that are viewed as problematic?

What are the recommendations in the literature for dealing with marginalization if it exists?

How do these address concerns for gender justice and equality? (Barriteau 2000, 7-8; Barriteau 2003c, 328).

2. Through the gender main-streaming maze

The second area the Bureau may seriously reconsider, is the assumption that gender main-streaming will remove or reduce conditions of inequality. The Bureau might explore new strategies for undertaking the vital work that has to be done. While gender main-streaming is a set of methodologies for delivering a gender policy, its discussion usually focuses on developing the methodologies and structures as an end in itself. In 2005 the Bureau states its mission is, *“To ensure the integration of gender and development into all areas of national development, plans and policies so that women and men can benefit equally from existing opportunities”* (Bureau of Gender Affairs 2005:2). The Bureau goes on to list seven main functions of which I have selected numbers one, two and six as key. These functions are:

1. Facilitating gender mainstreaming of national development policies and programmes so that equality and equity between men and women can be achieved.
2. Advising government agencies and non-governmental organizations on matters of concern to, and affecting women and men.
3. Monitoring and evaluating gender awareness in Government policies, plans and programmes in all sectors (Bureau of Gender Affairs 2005: 2-3).

The Bureau sums up the discussion of its mission and functions by stating, “The programmes of the Bureau of Gender affairs are therefore designed to change the existing ideological and structural processes which militate against the achievement of equality between women and men by ensuring that all government policies include a gender based perspective” (Bureau of Gender Affairs 2005: 3). These are serious responsibilities and the pursuit of gender main-streaming will not result in “challenging existing ideological and structural processes which militate against the achievement of equality between women and men”. So far the draft National Strategic Plan of Barbados 2005 - 2025 does not reflect that the Bureau has had an opportunity to make its contribution to the integration of gender and development issues. However the Bureau’s interpretation of its mandate sounds more purposeful and focussed than the tentative statements made twenty three years ago when the State outlined its policy on how the Bureau would function under a subhead entitled, Women’s Affairs, in the 1983 - 1988 development plan.

Gender main-streaming has to be combined with other methodologies to ensure that the State pursues gender justice. Gender main-streaming first gained international attention when it emerged in the Platform for Action and Beijing Declaration of the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 (United Nations 1996). The Platform advocated twelve strategic objectives and corresponding plans of action to achieve them. A common theme running throughout the strategic objectives and the proposed actions is the recommendation that gender analysis and gender planning be incorporated into all aspects of government, private sector and NGO policies and programmes (United Nations 1996; Sen 1999, 9; Andaiye 2003). The 1995 Commonwealth Plan of Action “gave the Commonwealth Secretariat a mandate to advise and assist governments in mainstreaming gender in all their policies, programmes and activities” (Sen 1999, 11). The Commonwealth Secretariat at first defines gender main-streaming as, “the central strategy of the Plan of Action for advancing gender equality and equity, then refers to the consistent use of a gender perspective at all stages of the development and implementation of policies, plans, programmes, and projects” (Commonwealth Secretariat 1999, 6).

The discussion migrates from gender main-streaming being the central strategy to promote gender equality and equity to gender main-streaming being a consistent use of a gender perspective. The Plan, however, defines a gender perspective without however, challenging unequal power relations in gender. A gendered perspective looks not at women alone but at the relationship between women and men and how societies are structured along gendered lines. In practice, the development and incorporation of a gender perspective have been approached through rounds of workshops on gender training, gender sensitization, and gender analysis, with many of these discussing gender as divorced from feminist inquiries into women’s persistent experiences of adverse power relations and conditions of subordination.

The Commonwealth Secretariat produced elaborate, well-written manuals to guide the process of gender main-streaming and in 1999 introduced the first national level gender main-streaming and gender management system exercise in the Commonwealth Caribbean. The focus is on inputs, in this case the structures, processes and mechanisms necessary to facilitate the introduction of gender main-streaming. However there is an over emphasis on what goes into creating an enabling environment for gender main-streaming without a corresponding focus on what emerges from the process. It could be that because the planners were creating a new and “comprehensive network of structures, mechanisms and processes for bringing a gender perspective to bear in the mainstream of all government policies,” (Commonwealth Secretariat 1999a: 5) that they concentrated on the inputs of this new structure. The process, however, could prove disastrous if new layers of bureaucracies are imposed without a clear emphasis on what should be achieved or on the mechanisms for gauging these achievements. Gender main-streaming strategies by themselves will produce very few meaningful reforms to challenge institutionalized unequal relations of gender.

Both the conceptualization of gender main-streaming strategies and the experiences with

its introduction in the Caribbean indicate that gender main-streaming results in a shift away from dealing with inequalities affecting women and men and instead produce a concentration on methodologies. The residual effect is that gender relations that maintain and reinforce hierarchies and inequalities are left intact.

Unless the weaknesses in these strategies are identified and corrected, gender main-streaming and gender management systems will pose even greater problems for the Bureau in its attempts to address existing inequalities. The core of any program or strategy to achieve gender equality, but more importantly, gender justice, should address relations and practices that actively seek to maintain women or men as subordinate, second-class citizens. The Bureau of Gender Affairs has an excellent opportunity to get it right in the development of a national policy on Gender.

3. Creating a national gender policy

So far I have advised a shift from the pursuit of gender equality to gender justice, to rethink the faith in gender main-streaming as the main methodology for achieving its objectives. Now I want to dispute the suggestion of the framers of the Draft National Strategic Plan, June 2006, that Barbados has in fact achieved gender equality.

The plan identifies six broad strategic goals and states these six goals are in pursuit of the national vision which is defined as becoming a society that is prosperous, socially just and globally competitive by 2025 (Barbados 2005: 8). None of the goals mentions anything about gender equity, equality, nor makes any explicit or even vague references to the idea that there might be differing conditions of access to or distribution of resources of the state for the women and men. The planners make no attempt to admit to lingering ideologies of gender which shape views of masculinities and femininities and rank these constructions and the practices they inform to the disadvantage of women and men.

Issues of race and class are examined in the plan but the Plan does not engage with gender. Race is examined in the context of critiquing as bankrupt what the planners called, “the old paradigm whereby the state was perceived as ‘belonging’ to the black community while the white community and other minorities functioned exclusively in the private economy” (Barbados 2005: 31). Incredibly the plan goes on to state, “now is the time for forging a cohesive, self-reliant society that goes beyond the constraints of *race, class and generation*”(Barbados 2005: 31). This is the point at which gender appears. Gender is usually tacked onto that list in an inclusion which is merely cosmetic. In the Draft National Plan it has been replaced by *generation* as if discrimination on the basis of age is equal or similar to discrimination based the power relations of gender. The statement thus also ignores that men and women have dissimilar experiences of ageing.

Throughout the plan, the language used carefully avoids addressing sexually differentiated citizens. The terminology used throughout are people, individuals, youth, members of the society, family, community and mankind. There is no mention of women

nor men, boys nor girls. Even when the plan calls for equity and social justice, it is very careful to avoid any mention of gender (Barbados 2005, 32).

In providing a social and economic overview, the plan mentions that the Barbadian economy has benefited from considerable investment in key areas such as social capital formation, physical infrastructural development and innovative social legislation. It includes the elimination of discrimination based on gender as one of the contributions of the social legislation introduced (Barbados 2005:11). *So the first time the concept of gender appears in the plan is to state that innovative social legislation has resulted in the elimination of discrimination based on gender in Barbados.* This is an incredulous, incredible statement. Not even Scandinavian and other countries which rank in the first ten of the UNDP's Gender Development Index and Gender Empowerment measure claimed that they have eradicated gender based discrimination.

Ironically, this statement would also be challenged by the Mens's Rights Association which insists that gender discrimination against men exists in the country's judicial system. In a statement released for Father's Day 2006, Ralph Boyce President of the Men's Educational Support Association (MESA) stated, "The judicial system is skewed in favour of women. There is a real need for gender equity, right now it is nominal"(Price 2006: 5A). Boyce goes on to call for the revamping of legislation that would include provisions to imprison women for not allowing men to see their children and who knowingly but wrongfully name men as fathers of their children. "I would like to see women also being sent to prison for not letting men see their children as has been ordered by the court. . . .The Maintenance Act is out of date and unjust in much of its treatment to men. The Act provides that once a man has had access to a woman within 12 months before birth, then he could be the father" (Price 2006, 5A).

The decision to erase considerations of gender is very curious on the part of the framers of the plan. In the executive summary, the planners present two tables to support several of the statements and conclusions offered in the narrative. Table 1.1 presents leading economic indicators for Barbados between 1993-2004, and Table 1.2¹ presents selected social indicators for Barbados for the same time period. The first table provides the annual unemployment rate for the country without dis-aggregating these into male and female unemployment. This is not for a lack of data. The Plan cites the annual reports of the Central Bank of Barbados as the source for the information presented in Table 1.1. Yet the annual reports of the Central Bank provides information on male and female unemployment ratios for every year for which the National Strategic plan ignores it. Even more disconcerting, in Table 1.2 on selected social indicators the planners manage to omit Barbados's ranking on the Human Development Indicator (HDI) and cite the UNDP's reports for this, whereas the same reports provide information on Barbados's ranking between 1995-1999 at which point there is no more information on Barbados on the gender indices, until 2002. The selected social indicators are not disaggregated by

¹ Editor's note: Tables 1.1 and 1.2 are the author's references to other documents and are not included or necessary to this text.

sex, adult literacy rates, life expectancy ratios and gross enrolment ratios in primary and secondary schools. Given the legitimate concerns within the country about male under performance and achievement in the educational system it would have been very useful to break these data into gender differentiated categories.

4. The way forward

One of the main tasks of the Bureau as it moves forward is to create a national policy on gender that would not only correct some of the distortions in the Draft National Strategic Plan but provide the State with a blue print to shape government's policy on achieving gender justice, a policy that would respect the dignity, freedom and social, political, economic and cultural rights of every Barbadian boy and girl, woman and man. The Bureau has already stated that the creation of a national gender policy is a priority area. It is not clear whether it knows it will have to begin with a critical assessment of the Draft National Strategic Plan (Bureau of Gender Affairs 2006, 16).

Through the use of gender analysis and motivated by a commitment to gender justice while incorporating gender main-streaming strategies as a means to an end, The Bureau should devise recommendations on the 14 areas of concern as identified in the Report on the Consultation for the Development of a National Policy on Gender that came out in February 2006. These are:

1. Education\Training; educational achievement of boys
2. Crime and Violence; men and violence; women and violence; societal violence; update of domestic violence legislation
3. Poverty; implications for maintenance of children; unemployment\underemployment; the importance of Care work to economic activity
4. Health; HIV\AIDS
5. Environment and Health Issues
6. Housing
7. Family Issues; family law reform; changing family structures
8. Sex Roles and Stereotyping; Discrimination on the basis of sex; sexuality
9. Sexual Harassment
10. Women and Decision Making; women and leadership; women's political participation
11. Unwaged Work; provision of minimum wage legislation for vulnerable workers
12. Minimum Wage
13. Integration of Gender into National Planning Instruments
14. Globalisation\Caribbean Single Market and Economy (Bureau of Gender Affairs 2006).

As The Bureau moves forward into its next 30 year cycle, it can be reassured that the Centre for Gender and Development Studies remains willing to make its programmes and resources available to assist in its work towards promoting gender justice in Barbadian

society.

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