



PATHWAYS TO INCLUSIVE PEACEBUILDING^{IN THE} **CARIBBEAN**

**Conflict and Development
Analysis (CDA) of Women
and the Youth Organizations in**

Belize,
Jamaica,
Saint Kitts and Nevis,
Saint Lucia,
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines,
Trinidad and Tobago.

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List of Abbreviations

BFLA	Belize Family Life Association
CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CBOs	Community-Based Organizations
CGCC	Cashew Gardens Community Council
CDA	Conflict and Development Analysis
CDB	Caribbean Development Bank
CHDR	Caribbean Human Development Report
CSA	Child Sexual Abuse
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CFYR	Community Family Youth Resilience
FGDs	Focused Group Discussions
GEF/ SPG	Global Environment Fund/ Small Grants Programme
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
JCSP	Jamaica Citizens Security Programme
LGBTQI	Lesbians, Gays, Bisexual, Trans-Sexual, Queer and Inter-Sexual
NCW	National Council of Women
OECS	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
ORCS	Operation Restoration Christian Schools
PETAL	Promoting Empowerment Through Awareness for Lesbian/Bisexual Women (PETAL)
PMI	Peace Management Institute
PTA	Parent Teachers Association
PTSD	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
PYCs	Police Youth Clubs
ROAR	Restoring Order to All Relationships
RSS	Regional Security System
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats
UNAIDS	United Nations Programme on HIV/ AIDS
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
WE-CHANGE	Women Empowerment for Change
YAM	Youth Advocacy Movement
YATA	Youth Advocacy through Arts
YWCA	Young Women Christian Association

Executive Summary

This report provides the findings from a CDA of women and youth organizations engaged in peacebuilding in selected Caribbean countries. It establishes that successful peacebuilding engagements are those that are primarily aimed at strengthening sustainable development, but mainstream structural and proximate conflict prevention, with tailored solutions to the needs and peculiarities of targeted community stakeholders.

It attempts a classification of the types of stakeholders providing frontline support in preventing conflict and violence at the community, their interests, interrelationships, capabilities and culpabilities. Though governments, through the Ministries of National Security/ Home Affairs as well as Social Development/ Family Affairs/ Sports are primary stakeholders that set policy direction, better coordination and influence can improve efforts of Community Based Organizations (CBOs/ Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to transform government policies into social change. Police Youth Clubs (PYCs), Women-led Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), the Private Sector and International/ Regional Organizations were identified as the most active stakeholders, who hold the key to transforming conflicts and achieving sustainable peace at the community level. These groups have the trust and knowledge of local actors. They require more coordinated policy direction and implementation from the governments. The study found that "Community Leaders" are very important to influencing the success of prevention efforts, with the right incentives. However, they are most often not the direct beneficiaries of conflict prevention engagements by CBOs/ CSOs, which focus primarily on the most vulnerable groups.

The key conflict factors, drivers and dynamics of conflict and violence were analyzed largely from the lens of the community actors. The study finds that social tensions in the region are rooted in three factors, namely: economic and social exclusion; discrimination; and environment and climate change. These root causes manifest and become instrumentalized as family violence, increased security risks and threats, violence against women and girls, child sexual abuse and, lately, the COVID-19 impact on citizens security.

The study establishes that successful and sustainable conflict prevention engagements are often risk-informed (not threat informed), incentive-based (not punitive), socially empowering (not victim-focused), redistributive (not merely compensatory), and focused primarily on addressing structural inequalities and exclusion of the most marginalised young people, women and other vulnerable groups. Local actors reveal that the developmental approach adopted by community actors is the most critical success factor of local peacebuilding engagements. The actors focus primarily on building peace through the following means: promoting community pride and social cohesion; addressing needs in education, life skills acquisition, livelihoods development and job creation; turning vulnerabilities into new opportunities through creative solutions that provide incentives for community stakeholders; providing safe spaces for beneficiaries and actively preventing discrimination in programme implementation; integrating dispute resolution into programme implementation; bringing on board a broad range of community stakeholders to take ownership of programmes implemented; and focus on rehabilitation and restoration of beneficiaries.

In proposing a framework for strengthening peacebuilding, the report advocates policy reform to improve the coherence of collaborative state-CSO/CBO interventions, the need for governments to give more recognition to the roles of the CBOs/CSOs and enhance their inputs into policy direction, implementation and evaluation. It also proposes the prioritization of more innovative solutions to addressing vulnerabilities, and tailored to the specific needs and challenges confronting each community, with decentralized structures for implementation. It avers that conflict-sensitivity of community programmes could be improved through capacity development, development of tools for quality assurances and through the creation of incentives to utilise such tools for programming, either by governments or community actors. It suggests how deliberate government policies and programmes to improve the quality of networking and knowledge transfer among actors could improve results and impact. Finally, it recommends a four-pillar integrated and community-focused programme approach to peacebuilding, based on early warning, family and community cohesion, resilience, and institutional support for evidence-based implementation. The details of such integrated framework may be tailored to the specific context of each beneficiary community.

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CHAPTER

1



Introduction

This study posits that conflict prevention programmes in the Caribbean should be integrated into the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The implementation of such initiatives should be based on stronger state-civil society partnerships that are targeted at the most vulnerable groups and persons, and are agile and flexible in operationalization. It establishes that successful and sustainable conflict prevention engagements are often risk-informed (not threat informed), incentive-based (not punitive), socially empowering (not victim-focused), redistributive (not compensatory) and focused primarily on addressing structural inequalities and exclusion of the most-disadvantaged young people, women and other vulnerable groups.

With regard to engendering violence, the study confirms previous findings that violent conflict involves and affects men and women differently; that increases in gender-based and sexual violence may be considered early warning signs of insecurity (Hudson et al. 2012); and that “conflicts may degenerate into violence more rapidly in societies with high levels of interpersonal violence, especially along the lines of gender.”¹

For these and other reasons, prevention of violent conflict requires a strong focus on women's experiences and on measures to ensure their participation in political, social and economic life as well as their autonomy, power and leadership in decision-making.² Greater inclusion and equality of women in homes, schools, communities and the labour market can lead to lower levels of risk to violence and greater effectiveness of peace agreements. Similarly, “inclusion of young people strengthens a country's capacity to manage and avert conflict (Paffenholz et al. 2017).³ With regard to masculinities, the Pathways report notes, “Gender norms affect the experience of conflict for men as well...men create violent identities because of social, cultural, and political expectations and pressures placed upon them” (Bannon and Correia 2006; Vess et al. 2013). A corollary explored below is that masculinity alone does not drive violence so much as environments where men are unable to assert and fulfill other nonviolent masculine identities.⁴

The overall objective of this report is therefore to improve understanding of promising approaches to empowering vulnerable groups and diverting persons away from violence, and to explore how lessons from such initiatives can inform innovative approaches to prevention of violent conflict in the Caribbean region.

Thus, the report:

01

Deepens understanding of the background and context (historical, governance, political, economic, humanitarian, security, socio-cultural and environmental factors) of violence directed against women and youth in the region;

02

Examines, in a gender-sensitive manner, the factors, triggers and critical stakeholders in the instrumentalization as well as transformation of violence against women and youth;

¹Pathways to Peace, pp. 24

²Pathways to Peace, pp. xxii- xxiii

³Pathways to Peace, pp. 115

⁴Pathways to Peace, pp. 118

03

Analyses the violence dynamics, and how promising responses by peace builders contribute to the transformation of violence, mainly among women and youth at the grassroots;

04

Contributes to a common understanding of the drivers, capacities and entry points for strengthening risk-informed, incentive-based, inclusive and sustainable engagement of women and youths in violence prevention by national authorities, regional and international partners; and

05

Presents a roadmap which outlines the drivers of violence to prioritize and opportunities to support critical peace engines, both of which can inform a theory of change and highlight strategic entry points for UN-supported violence prevention and peacebuilding work focused on women and youth at state and community levels.

● Methodology

Research Design

This report draws on CDA methodology to generate deeper understanding of violent crime drivers, key actors, stakeholders' response, and violence dynamics as well as the engines of peace.

The report includes the voices of those engaged in peacebuilding to highlight the contexts, conflict drivers and peace drivers that are impacting the Caribbean region. A wide range of organizations were surveyed, – from PYCs to Lesbians, Gays, Bisexual, Trans-Sexual and Inter-Sexual (LGBTI) organizations, and from state agencies to grassroots women's groups – to understand the extent to which their work was engendered, inclusive and sustainable.⁵ It also documents how actors engaged with prevention at stages of outbreak, escalation, recurrence and continuation, through a focus on structural and proximate measures. These interviews provided first-hand perspectives on the contexts within which violence-prevention activities take place; understanding of national policies and their implementation by national security, youth, education, social development and gender ministries; prospects for improved engagement by NGOs, CSOs and CBOs; and key gaps and challenges for the non-state stakeholders, governments, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the UN to address.

Fieldwork

Research was conducted in the following six CARICOM countries: Belize, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago. The criteria employed for choice of fieldwork site included: (i) prioritization of countries with most prevalence of violent conflict; (b)

⁵See Appendix A for a full list of interviews conducted in Belize, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago.

geographical and population representativeness of the island States in the region; (c) approval of national authorities to accept the UN mission and facilitate its work; and (d) countries with engaged CSOs that have implemented the most impactful conflict prevention programmes. Over one hundred interviews and Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted across the six countries, the majority of which were with non-state actors. All interviews were conducted between November 2019 and January 2020.

Data Collection and Analysis

In the six countries, interviews were conducted with members of the United Nations Country Teams (UNCTs), Government Institutions, CBOs and CSOs. Although interview questions differed depending on the specific agency or organization, fieldwork was guided by series of questions which sought to understand the conflict context, key stakeholders, conflict drivers and peace-engines. Additionally, they focused on discovering critical success factors, based on criteria such as being risk-informed, incentive-based, inclusive and sustainable.⁶

Outline of the Report

Chapter Two focuses on the critical stakeholders engaged in conflict prevention and peacebuilding in the Caribbean, with emphasis on the types of engagements, the entry points for their activities, capabilities and culpabilities.

Chapter Three analyzes the structural and proximate conflict factors, drivers and dynamics in the region, with emphasis on how they have defined the peace and security landscape.

Chapter Four provides a critical analysis of the peace engines, their success factors and the pathways through which they have been able to influence peace and development.

Chapter Five proffers a roadmap for inclusive peacebuilding by examining lingering challenges to the effectiveness of community stakeholders in their peacebuilding engagements.

⁶See Question Guide in Appendix B.



CHAPTER

2

Conflict Prevention
Stakeholders
in the Caribbean

The chapter identifies the key stakeholders with an interest in strengthening conflict prevention engagements, and stakeholders that are primarily impacted by violent conflict at both national and regional levels. Following the CDA Methodology, "actors" refers to individuals, groups and institutions engaged in - and affected by - conflict". The chapter therefore provides an overview of the interests and motivation of the actors, their patterns of engagement, their Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) and analyses how they influence peacebuilding.

This section summarizes the key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats confronting the most critical stakeholder groups playing frontline roles in preventing and addressing violent conflict across the Caribbean countries. Only some programmes and initiatives reviewed during this study are based on a baseline study, co-creation and/or deep engagement with persons and groups primarily affected by violent conflict. The actors have inadequate means and tools to ensure that the programme development and implementation are engendered. And they face challenges of virtual lack of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the implementation of their programmes.

Ministries of National Security/ Home Affairs and Security Institutions: Strategic direction is provided for crime prevention programmes by the Ministries of National Security and/or Home Affairs in the six countries surveyed. They also coordinate operational initiatives aimed at preventing and combating the proximate causes of insecurity. Most of the engagements of the Ministries have been focused on operational-level responses to crime. The strengths of the Ministries of National Security include their political leverage (Prime Ministers in some CARICOM member States have traditionally combined their roles with the ministerial portfolio of National Security), their capacity to generate real-time information and intelligence which helps to have a bird-eye view of the security landscape; their access to funding (compared to other Ministries and Departments of Government), and capacity to coordinate the implementation of crime prevention initiatives. Areas for improvement with respect to engagements by the Ministries of National Security include efficiency in the implementation of a crime prevention plan, coordination with other Ministries and Department of Government, top-down approach and information sharing on conflict prevention initiatives which limit or inhibit CBOs from making inputs into the policy process. Opportunities for increased engagements include existence of a plethora of credible and efficiently run youth violence prevention programmes across the countries in the region. Often, these can benefit from better coordination. A major threat to effective engagement with the National Security Ministries comprises insufficient trust of the Government's intentions by CBOs.

Gender/ Youth/ Social Development Ministries: In most of the focus countries, Gender/Youth and Social Development Ministries coordinate both strategic and operational programmes aimed at addressing the peculiar needs of youths, as well as preventing Sexual and Gender Based Violence and violence against children. Their engagement is often defined by National Policy and strategy documents, with operational plans on implementation. Their strengths include the existence of policy documents approved by the Parliament, a high-quality human resource base and strong trust from, as well as engagements with, CSOs and CBOs. However, limitations include lack of an evidence-based approach to programme design and implementation, insufficient funding and personnel, low employee motivation (due to workloads and contract modalities), over-centralization of engagement approaches and inadequate structural prevention programmes, uneven support/ cooperation from first responder institutions (Ministries of Health and the Police) and reduced Government revenue, which makes it challenging to allocate sufficient funds for conflict prevention, thereby stifling initiatives and hampering the Ministry from implementing its prevention mandate. The most critical opportunity for the Ministries is the high level of trust and history of strong collaborations between the Ministries and grassroots organizations. A major threat is the patriarchal political structures that undermine a

gendered approach to public policymaking and the absence of gender analysis and engendered public policy and budgeting.

The Private Sector: The private sector is often negatively affected by the crisis and insecurity generated by crime and violence, which increase the cost of doing business and discourage new investments. The incentives for private players in peacebuilding is primarily the need to shape a positive public perception of their engagements and thus reduce risk of targeting by criminal groups, the need to increase business profitability by cultivating value-chains for certain goods and services, and accruals from surplus funds, occasioned by tax breaks provided by the Government. Many private entities are thus engaged in philanthropy and charities aimed at addressing some of the root causes of conflict in communities. Their outreach initiatives are often implemented directly or through registered foundations, distinct from their business arms. Their interventions are often short-term; are directed at so-called 'distressed' or 'high-risk' communities with a history of criminal activities; and mainly comprise promotion of sports, learning, entertainments and food cards. They also contribute to the rehabilitation of community infrastructure.

The strengths of private sector activities include consistency in engagement; reasonably good knowledge of the CBOs and their types of activities; and a predictable capital base and allocation of resources to structural conflict prevention. The limitations of the private sector engagement include practices that encourage conflict in community and family life (particularly family unfriendly workplace policies that accentuate child neglect and/ or insufficient policies to prohibit employees from perpetrating domestic violence), lack of coordination and complementarity with Government-led initiatives, non-documentation of best practices and lack of sustainability strategies for most of their interventions. The main opportunities for the private sector include incentives provided by the Governments (rebates and tax holidays) to engage in philanthropy. In particular, the partnership between the private sector, mainly the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and the Police Youth Clubs/ Brigades (PYCs) in the Caribbean is a great opportunity to strengthen synergy in violence prevention. The threats to private engagements include risks of being targeted by hostile groups in the criminogenic communities, as well as the impact of COVID-19 on the business community, which is likely to lead to reduced support to corporate social responsibility initiatives.

PYCs: These are present in all of the countries of focus for this study (called by the name 'Youth Brigade' in Belize). They engage in various activities aimed at building discipline and resilience in young persons through physical drills, sports, talent development and home-work support; and promotion of inter-faith harmony. Some of the units also provide value-added services to their immediate communities, such as childhood care centres, gyms and vocational skills acquisition centres and travel opportunities for parents. They also facilitate youth exchange programmes to expose young persons to positive values in other parts of the Caribbean and beyond. A major strength of the PYCs is that each unit is rooted in the community, with inclusive participation of women, youth, police, government institutions, private sector and other community players who contribute financially and in-kind for the success of their initiatives. Each PYC has a distinct identity, vision, mission and prioritization of initiatives, based on their context. They are also registered as NGOs, with independent management bodies directed by local stakeholders. In addition, the PYCs are provided with operational, financial and logistical support by the police services across all countries reviewed for this study. All the branches aspire towards a common set of core values, which are respect, integrity, discipline and education.

PYCs can improve through needs analysis to inform programme prioritization; further training for coordinators/ community police officers; greater networking among units of the PYCs in each country and across the region for experience sharing and learning; increased psychosocial and counselling

support to members; and consistent and sufficient access to financial resources to ensure sustainability of the programmes. A major opportunity for the PYCs is that many of their alumni hold leadership positions in different walks of life, enabling them to support the respective units materially and financially. Better coordination would strengthen the extent to which PYCs tap into this vast pool of human resources. The critical threat against the PYC is that their programmes are not often fit for young persons who have already experienced conflict with the law.

Women's NGOs: The primary focus of these organizations is gender equality and empowerment, and various thematically focused programmes are often used as entry points to achieve their objectives. They usually are relatively well organized and some belong to larger Caribbean-wide women networks. These organizations have been the catalysts and the major pillar of citizens' mobilization and advocacy for ending corporal punishment in some of the countries of focus. Their engagements led to the enactment of SGBV Strategies and Plans of Action, and they are engaged in continuous lobbying, advocacy and sensitization activities to ensure implementation of the policies and plans. They work closely with the Governments and international partners to advance their cause. However, they are not often engaged in the day-to-day implementation of impactful initiatives at the grassroots level, and those so involved are often dependent on project funds for survival. They have the capacity to facilitate cross-regional and engendered learning on good practices in prevention of violent conflict.

CBOs: They are known to be small in size, with focus on specific communities and cross-cutting across social, environmental, gender and economic issues. They often mobilize funds from the local private sector but, at times, are provided grants by Governments as well as regional and international organizations. Their roles are critical because they have the closest links to the local people, grounded knowledge of local conditions and a history of frequent engagement to resolve conflicts. Their limitations include lack of documentation, and monitoring and evaluation, leading to the loss of institutional memory about their most impactful projects. As well, gender mainstreaming in their initiatives is often weak and they usually do not go beyond advocacy and sensitization activities in engaging with SGBV and violence against children. Due to their relatively limited knowledge of project management, rudimentary administrative structures and limited reporting, they are often not as accountable as the NGOs and although they may have a grounded vision, they may be unable to mobilize adequate resources to implement their programmes. The COVID-19 pandemic presents an opportunity to explore the strengths of the CBOs. This is because their familiarity with needs on the ground in their communities and their ability to shift their response with agility. However, it should also be noted that CBOs may also be facing additional resource challenges which affect both the organization and its members as a result of COVID-19.

"Community Leaders": These are suspected leaders of gangs and other groups thought to be involved in criminal activities in the so-called 'high-risk' communities. Acting through informal support channels, these leaders have a relatively high degree of acceptance among young persons and are seen as contributing materially to the immediate needs of distressed communities. However, many of them are also associated with criminal groups and are often engaged in skirmishes with law enforcement agencies. Their strengths include their ability to mobilize community stakeholders. Their main weakness is their association with crime and violence.

Regional/ International Organizations: The types of engagements by these organizations include: (a) policy support and knowledge products; (b) direct support to law enforcement institutions; and (c) community-based engagements: On policy support, the major actors have been CARICOM and its Agencies/Institutions, as well as other regional bodies like the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and pockets of international NGOs. For CARICOM, its

engagements entail the development of a Crime and Security Strategy (CCSS), CARICOM Youth Development Action Plan, CARICOM Gender Equality Strategy, as well as CARICOM Counter Terrorism Strategy, among several others. The IADB and CDB have also developed several knowledge products, which have strengthened evidence on the dynamics of conflict and insecurity for actors engaged in community-level engagements. These strategic documents and knowledge tools align regional initiatives to international policies and sets the agenda for member States. Nevertheless, their weaknesses include limited structural and proximate conflict prevention initiatives in their operations; limited consultations with community actors in their design and formulation; relatively poor awareness of CSOs/CBOs, their existence and the knowledge contained in them; non-implementation of the commitments of Member States to the regional policies; and lack of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to measure and report on the status of compliance by member-States to regional organization's statutory bodies.

Direct support to law enforcement institutions and community engagement types of activities has focused on training and institutional capacity building; including the on-going construction of a modern prison in Saint Kitts and Nevis, direct support to community-based resilience building, and enhancement of national capacity in counterterrorism, human rights-based policing, and border security, particularly by the RSS, Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) and bilateral partners.

Notable initiatives by the UN include: the UNDP implementation of GEF/SPG funds for structural conflict prevention through youth and women resilience building initiatives; the deployment of the 'positive deviance' methodology in Trinidad and Tobago to implement an Upfull Hustlers Project that targeted rehabilitation and psychosocial support for young persons at risk of being recruited to criminal gangs; rehabilitation programmes for deportees and prisoners in Jamaica and Trinidad; and juvenile justice programmes supported across all the countries. The United States of America (USA), Canadian and British Governments have also funded bilateral high impact programmes variously on mediation, justice system strengthening and community resilience. The key challenges with partner-funded initiatives is that of building them to scale and ensuring sustainability through government funding and local ownership particularly at the end of donor-funds.



CHAPTER

3

Key Conflict Factors,
Drivers And
Dynamics

The structural factors which represent the root causes of conflict in the Caribbean include family violence, economic and social exclusion, discrimination and environmental factors/ climate change. The conflict drivers, which serve as accelerants of destruction due to inadequate efforts to address the root causes, are insecurity, violence against women and girls, child sexual abuse and the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on communities. These drivers, if left unaddressed, have the potential to generate dynamics capable of pushing the region toward increased conflict and insecurity.

● Structural Factors

As shown in the following pages, structural factors, such as identity or social and economic inequalities, refer to “deeply rooted issues that underlie the dynamics of conflict and peace” (CDA 63), which are accelerated by proximate factors such as increased migration or community-level conflicts. This chapter begins to exemplify how these factors are experienced in communities across the six countries under focus in this study.

Economic and Social Exclusion: In Belize, poverty and high levels of inequality combine with violence and neglect in homes. As Belize Family Life Association (BFLA) indicated, this creates “angry young women and men”. In these conditions, proximate factors come into play. For example, gang leaders and drug dealers capitalise on these emotions as well as the risks created by educational exclusion. In Belize, free schooling stops at 14 years old, and a paucity of trade programmes leaves young men without either academic or vocational skills, too much time and too little access to money. Guns and drug trafficking step into the vacuum. On the other hand, law enforcement has limited skills in addressing situations where there is potential for violence to escalate.

In Jamaica, Operation Restoration Christian Schools (ORCS) described a range of root factors, from poverty to parental neglect and early parenthood, violence that prevents children from crossing gang-demarcated intra-community borders to go to school, and high numbers of children with fathers in prison or killed. When their programme finishes at 2.15pm, “the school kids want to stay rather than go home. The parents are just as broken as the children”. This was echoed in Belize as well as Trinidad and Tobago, which both reported high levels of urban poverty and high exclusion rates for high schools, and poor nutrition and aggressive behaviour as issues characterising primary school-aged children. In Belize, RESTORE Belize also reported daily trauma to children from traversing gang territory.

In Trinidad and Tobago, the women-led group Cashew Gardens Community Council (CGCC), also drew attention to exclusion rates: “The kids are not going to school, or not going enough. During the term, children are still at home or on the streets walking up and down or selling with the parents. School dropouts are high. Both boys and girls are experiencing this. Children are income earners at the age of 9, 10, 11, 12. In some instances, when we try to intervene, the parents stop sending them to our homework centre. It links back to the financial violence because when a mother doesn’t have economic support from the father, it impacts on the kids who are sent to make money as people will quicker buy from the children”.

Boys’ higher rates of incarceration are related to specific vulnerabilities they face. Prison officials in Belize explained, “Most of their role models are gang leaders, and they are made to become the breadwinners at between 8 and 13 years old. So, they sell weed and kill in order to fulfil a responsibility to feed their siblings. Sometimes they just get a stipend from some of their crimes with the gang leader being the sole beneficiary and the gang leader doesn’t give them any support when they are caught and charged. Others just want to prove a point to their peers. Many have serious literacy issues and can’t read and write. Many of the boys appear to be living among predators – they have serious trust issues – and experience child sexual abuse.”

As the BFLA continued, “boys are more out in the streets than girls so they are more likely to come in contact with the law and police, who are not trained to understand these young men and their behaviours as rooted in the homes which put these boys at a greater risk. For girls, more and more they are facing issues of sexual exploitation but boys are most exposed to drug trafficking and gun violence, and are used to commit serious crimes because they cannot be charged as an adult. This increases their risk.”

Hope Jamaica, a programme administered by the Office of the Prime Minister, identified unattached youth, at-risk youth and youth from at-risk vulnerable communities as the most disenfranchised, describing them as “youth that are usually in the poor classes of community who are unemployed, have no opportunities, and they just exist”. The vulnerable are categorized as at risk based on poor parenting, growing up in communities surrounded by crime and the absence of guidance to reinforce ethics and life skills. Although they target males, more women join their programme because of their “outlook on life and attempts to better themselves”.

By comparison, males were described as having “very little work ethic” and being reluctant to “understand that there are stepping stones or a process toward improvement”. Interviewees from the Trinidad and Tobago-based Caribbean Youth Environment Network made different observations, reporting that they “saw individuals wanting to do the work, such that many of the guys who provided labour in their environmental programmes were previously home being unproductive and smoking weed”. Interviewees at the Planning Institute of Jamaica put it slightly differently: “Many people have never worked, they don’t know how to work, because they are used to ‘hustling’, people with CXC’s [certificates from the Caribbean Examination Council] and good grades, but were never able to get jobs. Many do not see themselves as having long life spans, which influences short-term living and objectives. In a focus group with students, many of the boys said they did not see themselves living past 30 years. The women had a more long-term vision”.

Presenting a different analysis, in Saint Lucia, the Boys Youth Centre described high risk among children raised without proper childcare. For example: “The trend taking over is with the influx of hotels and a lot of single parents in a shift system. We have a number of females in security positions, and the hotels and the Government should be asked what they are putting in place for children of the employees. These women go to work in the morning and come home when the kids are already asleep”. This is a clear sign of how gendered economies and development models put families and children at risk. It also provides socio-economic explanation for what is seen as parental neglect, but is actually a result of challenges, faced particularly by women, in meeting both livelihood and care responsibilities.

A focus group of five persons, belonging to The Way of Holiness Church in Guapo, Trinidad, provided personal stories that show the risk created by poverty and social exclusion in Case Study 1. The conflict drivers seen here are crime, exposure to gang activities, family violence, poor parenting and substance abuse. The peace drivers included skill-building, a supportive community and safe space, and opportunities for mentorship. The following case study provides narrative depth to the structural factors which create risk and are relevant across the five Caribbean countries. The five stories are from study participants interviewed in Trinidad and Tobago.

Case Study **01**

Five Stories

Participant 1 in the FGD - Lived in East Port of Spain all his life, and because of that has been exposed to a lot of crime. In 2008, the Pastor and his group came and they got the warring gangs to agree to peace, which lasted from 2008-2011. Now Participant 1 has disassociated himself from the gangs and works as a groundsman at a Regional Health Authority.

Participant 2 - Was raised in a dysfunctional and abusive home. His stepfather constantly abused his mother and she left when Participant 2 was 8 years old. His stepfather placed him in the Saint Mary's orphanage. By age 11, he was on the streets, stealing. At 17 years, he owned his own firearm and at 19 he was arrested for a failed bank robbery. He was shot 5 times and he received a 17-year prison sentence. That is where he met the Pastor and dedicated his life to religion. When he left prison, he did odd jobs, and eventually started his own small business selling pies.

Participant 3 - He came from an abusive home, with a father who was addicted to drugs. From age 10 years he already had a gun; at age 12 he had left his home; at 13 years he served his first prison sentence. He was heavily involved in gun running and drug trafficking. During his extended prison sentence, he was involved in many illegal activities, but he eventually encountered the Pastor and reflected on spirituality and purpose. He decided he did not want to be involved in crime and violence anymore. After leaving prison, he went straight to the Way of Holiness Church, to follow the religious path, and work with the Church to improve himself. He works in construction with support from other members of the Church. He has worked on his anger issues and conflict resolution skills, which has served him well. He now tries to teach others skills to help them improve, assisting them in growing emotionally, finding purpose and trying to mentor younger persons. He was able to learn about managing emotions, networking, improved life skills and skills for employment. He is also trying to give back and inspire others with his story.

Participant 4 - She came from an abusive and dysfunctional home. She was molested by her stepfather from age 8-12. She tried to commit suicide several times. She even tried to kill her stepfather. When she was 12, she slept with an ice pick, in an attempt to protect herself from the stepfather. She eventually told her aunt about the abuse, who told her mother. Her mother was in denial and accused her of trying to destroy the relationship. She told her teacher and friend, and eventually she ended up living with her grandmother, but ultimately moved around from family member to family member. At 13 she was raped by a cousin. At 15, she went back to live with her mother and her father introduced her to a young man from the neighbourhood. He sexually assaulted her, she became pregnant and her aunt tried to give her a concoction to get rid of the fetus. It was torturous, but it did not work. She was disowned by the family. When the man who impregnated her found out – when she was already far along – he kicked her and jumped on her belly in a failed attempt to abort the child. During this time, her mother left to go live with another man. In the second trimester with no support from her family, who isolated her, she was so desperate, that she poured gas over herself and tried to burn herself in another attempt to get rid of the pregnancy. At 16 years, she gave birth to twins. She was relieved that they came out healthy despite the attempts to abort. Twelve years later, she conceived again with the same person, who offered her security without love. She tried to commit suicide again. She left the area, found a church and was baptized. In 2005 she started a prayer group. In 2010 she met a Pastor who now is her husband. She ministers to abused women and men, as well as men involved with guns, across Trinidad. She was able to combine her experience with her spirituality to grow and help others.

Participant 5 - She was abused at 11 years old by her stepfather, who at nights under the guise of helping her with school lessons, used to beat and molest her. She was an isolated child, because she was fearful of people finding out about the abuse. She lived in constant fear. She told her mother, who sent her to live with an aunt. She told the aunt, who in turn told her mother that she needed to believe her. The mother put holes in the wall one night and observed the abuse. There was a confrontation, and the stepfather was sent away. The mother moved with her, and she developed behaviour issues. She eventually met a young man, who impregnated her. When her mother found out she was pregnant, they tried to do an abortion. The man who did the abortion demanded that he have sex with her before he performed the procedure. After the sexual abuse and the abortion procedure, she ended up in the hospital. She told the nurses that her last period was two months prior, when the baby was actually nine months and came out with bruises and marks. She witnessed that and it triggered more behaviour problems, including risky sexual practices and robbing men after sex. She moved to another neighbourhood, where she ended up being someone's mistress. One night the man tried to force her to drink toilet water, as punishment because someone told him she was seeing someone else. When she refused, they ended up physically fighting. The general relationship was very abusive, psychologically and physically. She went from one abusive relationship to another, until she encountered religion. This has offered her salvation and comfort. She reflected on her own abusive patterns to her children, which she regrets.

As these perspectives from CSOs and state agencies show, poverty and exclusion create risk, leaving young women and men differently vulnerable to inter-personal conflict as well as harm caused by recurring and continuing violence, particularly by and among men, and by gangs. As the next section details, risk and conflict are highly gendered and, for women and girls, cannot be completely encompassed by analyses that consider violence in terms of outbreak and escalation at the national and community levels. Indeed, for women and girls, violence can be recurrent in families and partnerships, and is defined by sexual abuse and risks to reproductive health. Growing up in such a context creates vulnerability, which both girls and boys demonstrate as victims and perpetrators of violence in later life. However, as Case Study 1 shows, and as the next chapter explores, pathways to peace that address risk – often by providing support for stability, safety and healing – can be successful and sustained.

Discrimination: In the midst of socio-economic inequalities that affect whole communities, discriminatory responses to LGBTI persons on the basis of their gender and sexuality, exacerbate vulnerabilities. As noted by TransWave in Jamaica, “In terms of relationship dynamics, violence is perpetrated against trans women by male partners, there is also family violence, homelessness, and rejection from families for being gender non-conforming, leading to incomplete education. In one case where a trans man was raped during a robbery, the police were not willing to respond as they should. Street harassment is another issue for people who are not “passable” – that promotes a barrier to accessing public space. There aren’t enough safe spaces to come together to build family and community”.

As UNAIDS described, “In relation to MSM [men having sex with men] and gay men, there are a lot of challenges related to bullying in schools. For young gay men and transgender boys and girls, there is isolation in the school setting and family setting, with many living on the streets. They develop greater risk of HIV because these factors limit their education, and jeopardize their ability to make the best decisions about their health, safety from discrimination and how to survive community violence. Discrimination in access to health services is so bad that some would rather travel to another

community to get treatment, which makes it harder for treatment to be continuous and effective". In Belize, the NGO, Promoting Empowerment Through Awareness for Lesbian/Bisexual Women (PETAL), described lesbian and bisexual women feeling unsafe in the street, especially masculine presenting women, who have reported being attacked by men. LBQ women face violence from young men and men due to their real or perceived sexual orientation. For them, gangs make it more unsafe for LGBTI women. Similarly, in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the National Council of Women reported transwomen and gay men being beaten and chased from communities, as well as discrimination against persons with HIV, leading to greater risk of homelessness.

An interviewee from Women's Empowerment for Change (WE Change) in Jamaica agreed on the invisibility of women, and especially LBQ women, and the challenges faced by those focusing on those communities while trying to mainstream inclusion on the basis of gender and sexuality. As she responded, "In Jamaica when they talk violence prevention, it usually means youth, and youth is a generic categorization and a lot of times it targets males, so getting certain types of funding always has to contend with the "what about the boys?" questions. The government has made allocations for unattached youth, but it is never specific to LGBT youth, and they are actually the ones who need support and protection, including LBQ women who are being assaulted, harassed and raped. The perception is that women will survive all these things, but our young men are at risk and dying and going into prisons. As a result, many of the organisations ensure they target boys or the 'unattached youth population'. Also, in identifying bullying in schools as a major issue, they have not identified LGBTI students as a target group for anti-bullying work, even though the statistics reflect that they are the most affected group. This means there is a lot of pressure on persons to survive, because disclosure is difficult, and so many times it is just their partner and a very small number of persons who know, which results in major mental health issues".

Climate Change: Climate crises increase migration, joblessness, homelessness, food insecurity and vulnerability to crime.⁷ Climate Impacts are projected to include significant relocation of people and existing coastal infrastructure by 2050; loss of or damage to coastal and agricultural land, and hotel assets; damage of power plants, airports and ports; and overall impact on GDP. ECLAC (2011) has noted that "Caribbean countries are potentially particularly vulnerable because they tend to have a dual disease burden: many endemic and environmentally-sensitive disease vector and high populations with high rates of cardio-respiratory diseases."⁸

With the increased economic challenges to obtain agriculture, fisheries, housing, land and jobs combined with a rise in physical disease, it is likely that climate change across the Caribbean will place severe burdens on the public health system, access to water and electricity, and the economy, thus exacerbating risk factors contributing to violence.

⁷CARICOM IMPACS, CARICOM Crime and Security Strategy, Chapter 1, pp. 19

⁸ECLAC, 2011. The Economics of Climate Change in the Caribbean as referenced in the presentation by Hugh Sealy, "Caribbean Perspectives of the Impact of Climate Change on Environmental Determinants of Health", presented at the III Global Conference on Health and Climate Change, Grenada, October 2018

https://www.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_docman&view=download&category_slug=climate-change-5251&alias=46854-caribbean-perspectives-of-the-impact-of-climate-change-on-environmental-determinants-of-health-2018&Itemid=270&lang=en

Accessed on August 17, 2020

● Conflict Drivers

Conflict drivers “emerge when structural and/or proximate factors of conflict affect key stakeholders, triggering some form of response, usually either manifested by violence or contributing to the emergence of violent conflict. Frequently, conflict drivers comprise more than one structural and/or proximate cause” (CDA, 20). These dynamics explain outbreak, escalation, recurrence and continuation of violence.

Increased Security Risks and Threats: A recent review of the CCSS indicates the dynamic context of insecurity in the region. Whilst acknowledging progress made in improvement of citizen security in the past decade, the review outlines the most pressing threats to the region, with high probability and impact: illicit firearms, gangs and organized crime, drug trafficking, cybercrime, transnational organized crimes, financial crime and natural disasters. Table 1 outlines the different tiers of threats and how they have either increased or decreased over a five-year period 2013 to 2018.

Table 1: Emergent Security Risks and Threats to the Caribbean⁹

Tier 1: Immediate Significant Threats (High Probability, High Impact Events)	Tier 2: Substantial Threats (High Impact with Less Severe Impact)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Illicit trafficking ▪ Gangs and Organized crime ▪ Drug trafficking ▪ Cybercrimes ▪ Transnational Organized Crime ▪ Financial Crimes ▪ Natural Disasters+ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Violent Extremism and Terrorism+ ▪ Human Trafficking ▪ Human Smuggling ▪ Migratory Pressure+ ▪ Corruption- ▪ Climate Change+
Tier 3: Significant Potential Risks (High Impact, Low Probability)	Tier 4: Future Risks (Unknown Probabilities and Consequences)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attacks on Critical Infrastructure ▪ Border Conflicts* ▪ Pandemics+ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mass Rioting- ▪ Deportation*

+ (Threat increased)

- (Threat decreased)

* (New Threats)

There are significant variations in patterns of crime across the region. In Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, gangs reportedly account for more than 60 per cent of the homicides. In other countries, such as Guyana, domestic and gender-based violence is more problematic than gang violence.¹⁰ The security services across States in the region are noted for their high degree of professionalism and competence. However, in the absence of robust violence prevention mechanisms, there is often enormous pressure on them to drastically reduce emergent and manifest threats through force, which frequently put pressure on public resources and, at times, may be perceived as undermining human rights. This situation is particularly prevalent in countries with increasing homicide rates such as Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Trinidad and Tobago.

⁹Table 1: CARICOM IMPACS (2020) Report on the Review of CARICOM Crime and Security Strategy.

¹⁰CDB, “Discussing The Role of the CDB in Enhancing Citizen Security in the Region, Excerpt from the CARICOM Action Plan for Social Development and Crime Prevention 2009-2013,” SDF 8/4-NM-6, pp. 1

<https://www.caribank.org/sites/default/files/publication-resources/The-Role-of-the-CDB-in-Enhancing-Citizen-Security-in-the-Region.pdf>

The defining characteristic of crime in the region is its uniquely high level of violence, including homicide and victimization by threats and assaults. The implications are staggering and may reflect a ripple effect whereby each homicide has wide traumatic effects on small, tightly connected populations. On the other hand, the region experiences medium to low rates of victimization in terms of property crime, with the exception of car thefts, which are relatively common in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. The high levels of repeat victimization in the region are worthy of further study and suggest that a small percentage of the population is disproportionately the target of crime."¹¹

An IDB Study says that "the average prevalence of assault and threat in the five Caribbean cities is 6.8 per cent. This is considerably above the ICVS average for cities. In fact, Caribbean cities ranked as some of the highest ever measured for this type of crime. This supports the conclusion that the region suffers predominantly from high levels of violence crime, and specifically assaults and threats."¹² This highlights the intensification of interpersonal conflict and the growth of a "sub-culture of violence" in the region (Harriott 2008).¹³ Sutton and Ruprah showed that "residents are more likely to be attacked or threatened by someone they know than robbed by a stranger. The policy implications here are that more efforts and resources ought to be directed towards addressing interpersonal assaults, which may be more effectively tackled via prevention than deterrence."¹⁴

There may also be different root and proximate factors. For example, "low growth rates, high rates of youth unemployment, and high rates of inequality are all conditions which are associated with high rates of homicide".¹⁵ However, in some Caribbean countries, low arrest and conviction rates for homicide and other serious crimes, and limited resources for crime reduction and prevention are also significant factors.¹⁶ Nonetheless, overall, violence in the Caribbean is higher than the world average, and crime patterns are shifting, with new threats posed by gang activity and organized crime networks.¹⁷ Trafficking and sexual or labour exploitation has also become a growing concern.¹⁸ As well, according to CARICOM IMPACS, "The trafficking of illicit drugs is a key driver of the high homicide rates in the Region; partly because of the effect of the drugs, but mostly because the money derived from the trade is used to purchase weapons and finance other criminal activities, compounded by the murderous rivalry between gangs and organized crime syndicates to control territory."¹⁹ Indeed, "illegal guns and ammunitions are responsible for more than 70 per cent of homicides in CARICOM,²⁰ play a key role in facilitating the trafficking of other commodities, and are used as a tool to support criminal and deviant behaviour and sexual and non-sexual violence".²¹ Additional implications include diversion of criminal justice resources from other activities, corruption of social institutions and undermining of the legal economy.²²

¹¹Heather Sutton and Inder Ruprah, IADB, *Restoring Paradise in the Caribbean: Combatting Violence with Numbers* (2017), pp. 25-29

¹²*Ibid.*, pp. 22-25

¹³*Ibid.*, pp. 27

¹⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 30

¹⁵(UNODC)/WB 2007

¹⁶Francis et al. 2009. *Crime and Development – The Jamaican Experience*. Kingston: SALISES.

¹⁷UNDP/ World Bank (WB) 2007, pp. iv, as referenced in CDB, "Discussing The Role of the CDB in Enhancing Citizen Security in the Region, Excerpt from the CARICOM Action Plan for Social Development and Crime Prevention 2009-2013," SDF 8/4-NM-6, pp. 1

¹⁸CARICOM IMPACS, *CARICOM Crime and Security Strategy*, pp. 29

¹⁹CARICOM IMPACS, *CARICOM Crime and Security Strategy*, Chapter 1, pp. 25

²⁰On July 4, 2011, CARICOM Heads of Government adopted the CARICOM Declaration on Small Arms and Light Weapons. CARICOM also played a critical role in the adoption of the global Arms Trade Treaty (ATT).

²¹CARICOM IMPACS, *CARICOM Crime and Security Strategy*, pp. 7,




²²CARICOM IMPACS, *CARICOM Crime and Security Strategy*, pp. 25

Engendering Violence: Violent crimes tend to be urban and concentrated in the communities of the poor. Young men are considered to be most at risk as victims of violent conflict, as well as most at risk of becoming violent offenders. Women are the main victims of male partner violence and male sexual violence, including rape, domestic abuse and other forms of gender-based violence. Victimization and criminal participation are therefore highly gendered.

These characteristics create different and unequal vulnerabilities by sex and age. Violent victimization declines as household income increases, showing also the intersections of sex and age with class and economic security.²³ As the CDB notes, “there is symmetry between the victims and perpetrators of violence – which is suggestive of a dynamic of proximity and of a vicious cycle”.²⁴ Interestingly, young people under the age of 30 comprise 60 per cent of the region's citizens and are both the main perpetrators and victims of crime, although only a minority of the youth population is involved in violent crime (UNDP 2012). This is relevant for prevention programmes seeking to identify and address risk factors among the most vulnerable who are often poor and young.

Despite pervasive beliefs, “there is no consistent relationship between female-headed households and levels of criminal victimisation, that is, between family structure and victimisation patterns”.²⁵ However, poor families face challenges providing safe childcare and care for ill and elderly, making them vulnerable to increased victimhood. Analyses typically focus on the community-level risk factors for joining gangs, such as “having parents and peers who approve of antisocial behaviour, and access to guns”²⁶ as well as individual-level factors such as child aggression and delinquency.

Self-reported responses by youth to the 2010 Citizen Security Survey showed:

-  *Youth violence, especially related to the formation of school gangs, is often in response to threats and fear of victimization.*
-  *Youth are traumatized by community violence, with 48.7 per cent of youth expressing fear of being a victim of crime and many experiencing anxiety, fear and trauma as a result of exposure to community violence.*
-  *Youth are victimized mostly by peers, but also by adults, including police, teachers, parents and family.²⁷*

²³United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime/World Bank (UNODC/WB), 2007

²⁴CDB, “Discussing The Role of the CDB in Enhancing Citizen Security in the Region, Excerpt from the CARICOM Action Plan for Social Development and Crime Prevention 2009-2013,” SDF 8/4-NM-6, pp. 2-3
<https://www.caribank.org/sites/default/files/publication-resources/The-Role-of-the-CDB-in-Enhancing-Citizen-Security-in-the-Region.pdf>

²⁵UNODC/WB, 2007

²⁶These findings are based on the work of Charles Katz and Andrew Fox and were conducted in Trinidad and Tobago. See Katz, C and Fox, A. 2010. Risk and Protective factors associated with gang involvement in Trinidad and Tobago. *Rev Panam Salud Publica* 27(3).

²⁷UNDP CHDR 2012 as referenced in Heather Sutton and Inder Ruprah, IADB, *Restoring Paradise in the Caribbean: Combatting Violence with Numbers* (2017), pp. 82-83

Ohene, Ireland and Blum (2005) found early initiation of sexual activity was a significant predictor of gang involvement and weapon-carrying among young adolescents, and other risk behaviours in older adolescents. Highlighting a clustering of risk behaviours among Caribbean youth, Blum and Ireland (2004) also found that “Caribbean teens who reported having experienced abuse, those who skip school, and those who indicate that they almost always think about hurting or killing someone are much more likely to report involvement with violence, sexual intercourse, cigarette use, and alcohol use.”²⁸ Maharaj, Nunes and Renwick (2009) found that economic deprivation, family conflict and behavioural problems, as well as lack of a protective environment are common risk factors.²⁹ As UNDP’s Caribbean Human Development Report (CHDR 2012) observed, “Four groups were significantly more likely to report having been victimized. These are males, young people 18 to 34 years of age, people who are unemployed or under-employed; and those of low educational levels.”³⁰

Young girls are especially vulnerable in ways that are increased by economic insecurity, inadequate child care and widespread practices of male sexual abuse. For women, Sutton and Ruprah note, “lower income, young age, receiving government assistance (for women), rural residence, and incomplete secondary schooling were all significantly associated with tolerance of intimate partner violence”. They go on to argue that, “the risk of being assaulted or threatened in the Caribbean is most elevated among young, low-income males” and such “under-representation of females among the victims is caused by the purposeful exclusion of domestic and sexual violence.”³¹ Peacebuilding approaches which focus on creating cohesive communities, of schools, families and children, must address gendered risks to inclusion, respect, stability, and safety. Parenting, peer relationships and peaceful communities are all important protective factors (Blum and Ireland 2004; Maguire 2012; Ohene, Ireland, and Blum 2005).

Pathways to inclusive peace therefore cannot reduce risk without addressing gender-based violence. Gender-based violence refers to all forms of violence which are driven by beliefs and values regarding manhood and womanhood, among which gang violence, male sexual violence against women and girls, and homophobic violence against LGBTI persons. Most commonly, SGBV is understood in relation to intimate partner violence and sexual violence. However, this limits understanding of the ways that conflict among boys and men is fueled by dominant gender ideals which value dominance, aggression and hyper-heterosexuality as symbols of masculine status and power.

Gender-based violence is also best understood in terms of the ways that it connects a range of forms of violence. For example, “research suggests that child survivors of abuse are more likely to display different types of violence later in life, including violence against their peers, bullying and teen dating violence, child or elder abuse and intimate partner violence, and sexual violence.”³² Therefore, “prioritizing programmes that aim to stop violence in the home before it occurs may also have a broader long-term impact on overall societal violence and criminality in the Caribbean.”³³ Risks to violence include lower education among both women and their partners, rural residency, younger age, non-consensual marriage, having been pregnant, having experienced or witnessed violence in childhood, substance abuse by the partner and the partner being unemployed.³⁴

²⁸ Heather Sutton and Inder Ruprah, IADB, *Restoring Paradise in the Caribbean: Combatting Violence with Numbers* (2017), Washington, DC, pp. 83

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 84

³⁰ See UNDP Caribbean Human Development Report 2012

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 72

³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 77

³⁴ IDB, Cecile Pemberton and Joel Joseph, *National Women’s Health Survey for Trinidad and Tobago*, Inter-American Development Bank, Washington, DC, 2018, Abstract, pps. xiii and xxv

According to the IDB, in Jamaica, one in four women has experienced physical violence by a male partner. There was no significant difference across rural and urban areas or by union status, but early unions had a higher prevalence of lifetime intimate partner physical violence (45.0 per cent compared with 24.5 per cent for those who had entered into such relationships at age 19 years and older). Women who have been pregnant were significantly more likely to experience physical abuse by their male partner (27.4 per cent) than women who have never been pregnant (11.3 per cent). Violence prevalence also differed by women's educational levels. Men's use of alcohol or recreational drugs increased women's risk of physical and/or sexual violence and establishes that women whose partners behave in controlling ways are at significantly increased risk of intimate partner violence. These findings are consistent with international research on violence against women.³⁵

In Trinidad and Tobago, a complementary IDB study of 1,079 women found that one in three women had experienced physical or sexual violence from their partner, and one in two had experienced some form of violence including economic and emotional abuse. This means that over 100,000 women are estimated to have experienced physical or sexual violence perpetrated by a male partner, with approximately 11,000 likely to still be in abusive relationships. One in ten women have also experienced non-partner sexual violence, mainly by family members or friends who used physical or verbal force. Eighty-four per cent of those experiences were unreported to police. Additionally, one in five women experienced sexual abuse before the age of 18 years. Men's violence against women correlated with lower education, unemployment, controlling behaviours and substance abuse. Finally, such SGBV had a significant impact on children's school performance and social behaviour.³⁶

A 2010 UNDP survey on citizen security, in which over 11,000 male and female adults were interviewed in seven Caribbean countries, including Saint Lucia, found that 11 per cent of those surveyed had experienced "violent sexual victimization, including rape and sexual assault" (UN 2012, 31, 226).³⁷ The Division of Human Services and Family Affairs data shows that in 2015 1,268 girls per 100,000 experienced violence³⁸ and, according to ECLAC, there are 4.4 femicides per 100,000 women in Saint Lucia.³⁹ Child marriage is reported at 8 per cent and Saint Lucia was ranked 74th on the Gender Equality Index in 2016.⁴⁰

In Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, 200 cases of sex with a minor under the age of 15, and 29 cases of incest as a form of child sexual abuse were reported between 2006 and 2009.⁴¹ According to the country report of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines on the Belém do Pará Convention submitted to the

³⁵Carol Watson Williams, "Women's Health Survey Jamaica," Co-published: Statistical Institute of Jamaica, IDB and the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. IDB and UN Women, 2018.

³⁶Pemberton, Cecile and Joel Joseph. National Women's Health Survey for Trinidad and Tobago: Final Report. IDB, 2018

³⁷UNDP, 2012. *Caribbean Human Development Report 2012: Human Development and the Shift to Better Citizen Security* as referenced in <https://www.refworld.org/docid/50bf2f292.html>

³⁸Saint Lucia, Country Report, Third Round, Follow-up Mechanism, Convention of Belém do Pará, Fourteenth Meeting of the Committee of Experts, November 27-28 2017, Panama City, Panama, pp. 6

<http://www.oas.org/es/mesecvi/docs/FinalReport2017-SaintLucia.pdf>

³⁹<https://theglobalamericans.org/2019/11/latin-america-and-the-caribbeans-grievous-femicide-case/>

⁴⁰UN Women, Global Database on Violence against Women

<https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/en/countries/americas/saint-lucia#1>

⁴¹Pan American Health Organization, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, 2012. Health in the Americas, Edition: Country Volume, 577 at 580, online: http://www.paho.org/saludenlasamericas/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_view&gid=147&Itemid=, consulted on 1 December 2013, as referenced in the University of Quebec in Montreal's International Clinic for the Defense of Human Rights in collaboration with the Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Human Rights Association, Shadow Report on the State Party, "Saint Vincent and the Grenadines: Violence against Women and Girls", presented to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women at its 61st Session, November 2014

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/VCT/INT_CEDAW_NGO_VCT_18760_E.pdf

Organization of States, for the period 2014-2017, 32 cases of violence against women who left their partners were reported. Of these, 20 were cases of physical violence and 7 cases were sexual violence. In addition, 112 cases of rape per 100,000 inhabitants were registered.⁴² According to International Women's Rights Action Watch, "incest is one of the worst problems women and girls face in SVG."⁴³ There were 426 cases recorded in 2011.⁴⁴ In 2018, 199 sexual assaults were recorded per 100,000 citizens.⁴⁵ Gender based violence, intimate partner violence, and femicide are considered a major threat to women's security in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.⁴⁶

In 2015 in Belize, 22.2 per cent of women aged 18-64 years, who had been in at least one a partnership, experienced intimate partner physical and/or sexual violence at least once in their lifetime.⁴⁷ While official national statistics are not available for lifetime non-partner sexual violence, child marriage was measured at 25.9 per cent.⁴⁸ Belize is also ranked 81 of the Gender Inequality Index and 98 in the Global Gender Gap Index Rank in 2016.⁴⁹ In Saint Kitts and Nevis, domestic violence is considered to be on the rise, with women being over 80 per cent of victims during the period 2011-2017. Reported cases of child abuse have also increased, with greater numbers of girls than boys experiencing abuse. The main reported cases of child abuse are neglect, physical and sexual abuse. In the period 2012 to 2014 girls

⁴² Joint Report by the UN and World Bank, 2007 in Deshong, 2011 on Saint Vincent and the Grenadines' National Plan to End GBV:2015-2018, as referenced in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Country Report, Third Round, Follow-Up Mechanism, Convention of Belém do Pará, Fourteenth Meeting of the Committee of Experts, November 27-28, 2017, Panama City, Panama

<https://www.oas.org/es/mesecvi/docs/FinalReport2017-SaintVincentGrenadines.pdf>

⁴³ IWRAW, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, supra note 8 as referenced in the Shadow Report on the State Party, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines: Violence against Women and Girls, presented to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women at its 61st Session, November 2014

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/VCT/INT_CEDAW_NGO_VCT_18760_E.pdf

⁴⁴ UNODC, "Statistics on crime: sexual violence", online: UNODC < <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/statistics/data.html> >, consulted on 1 December 2013, as referenced in the Shadow Report on the State Party, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines: Violence against Women and Girls, presented to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women at its 61st Session, November 2014

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/VCT/INT_CEDAW_NGO_VCT_18760_E.pdf

⁴⁵ Barbados and Eastern Caribbean 2020 Crime & Safety Report,

<https://www.osac.gov/Country/Grenada/Content/Detail/Report/9adf46ca-ddc8-4721-a80d-1848e97f20c8>

⁴⁶ Yasmin Solitah Odlum, "Gender Citizen Security and the Anglophone Caribbean 2000-2011"

(Powerpoint, delivered at the Regional Colloquium on Women Leaders as Agents of Change, Trinidad and Tobago, June 2011) [unpublished], as referenced in the Shadow Report on the State Party, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines: Violence against Women and Girls, presented to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women at its 61st Session, November 2014

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/VCT/INT_CEDAW_NGO_VCT_18760_E.pdf

⁴⁷ Proportion of ever-partnered women (who have had a partnership at least once) aged 18-64 years experiencing intimate-partner physical and/or sexual violence at least once in their lifetime. Source: Bott S, Guedes A, Ruiz-Celis AP, Mendoza JA. Intimate partner violence in the Americas: A systematic review and reanalysis of national prevalence estimates. From: Young R, Macfarlane V. 2016. Family and Community Safety with Emphasis on the Situation of Gender-based Violence in Belize: Belize Public Health Survey 2015, Final Report. Belize: Belize Institute for Local Development, as referenced in UN Women's Global Database on Ending Violence against Women and Girls

<https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/en/countries/americas/belize?formofviolence=b51b5bac425b470883736a3245b7cbe6>

⁴⁸ Percentage of women aged 20 to 24 years who were first married or in union before age 18. Source: UNICEF global databases, 2018, based on Demographic and Health Surveys, Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys and other nationally representative surveys.

⁴⁹ UN Women, Global Database on Violence against Women

<https://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/en/countries/americas/belize?pageNumber=2>

represented 80 per cent of child sexual abuse cases, 55 per cent of neglect cases, and 57 per cent of physical-abuse cases.⁵⁰

Violence Against Women and Girls: Male violence as experienced by women and children is very complex as the following story illustrates. In an interview, the police in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines related: “A woman made a call-in regard to a domestic issue. Her daughter was sexually violated by her husband who was the child’s father. She refused to go to court on two occasions. The child was removed from the home and sent to the grandmother. The husband was put out.⁵¹ The husband went back to beg her to take him back. She was persuaded by his family members to take him back and she did. She was summoned by the Court and she attended then for the first time. She went to court and when she went back home she was threatened on the phone by him. He was telling her how she and her daughter want to put him under and told her when she came back, she would see what would happen. She got scared and called me back. She was avoiding going to court because it was her husband and her daughter. So she had to be summoned, and if she didn’t go, she would get a bench warrant. So she went when she was summoned. Now that the court summoned her, he is mad”.

Here we see how multiple vulnerabilities and complex complicities reproduce family violence, and the tensions, and even fears, exacerbated by court interventions. Legal pathways may address recurrence and escalation of violence, but sometimes provoke it and are insufficient for preventing many of the gendered risks to multiple forms of violence which women and girls navigate whether at stages of outbreak or continuation.

As an interviewee from the CGCC, exemplified, “My neighbor two houses away left her husband and went back to her mother and he wasn’t providing financial support and he kept raping her and it wasn’t until she actually left that she felt empowered enough to tell me what was happening. She preferred to go on her own and struggle with her kids, she couldn’t tell me the number of abortions she had to have because he kept raping her, and this is a form of violence. We were dealing with the children because her son was afraid that he would see his father beating his mother and would come to the center angry”.

This creates generational trauma as the Heart of a Sister Family Foundation in Trinidad and Tobago explained: “You cannot address the need of the women in isolation, the women are affected by the men, and you can’t attend to a woman without attending to the needs of her children. These children are growing up with adults whose emotional needs are not met and this leads to the adults perpetuating this for the children”.

Girls are particularly vulnerable as ORCS pointed out for Jamaica, “Some girls have experienced all kinds of abuse, male violence is normalized, and the girls don’t talk about it. It’s like every day is a challenge. Coming into Trenchtown is a “different world”. Girls are left to grow up with trauma, pain, hurt and become parents like that”.

As the Heart of a Sister Family Foundation further described, “coping strategies can be positive and negative, a lot of young women, their coping strategy is marijuana, alcohol and more than one partner, and that is their coping strategy and they will tell you that”.

⁵⁰Country Report, The Federation of Saint Christopher and Nevis 2013-2018, submitted for the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995)

https://www.cepal.org/sites/default/files/informe_beijing25_saintchristopherandnevis_final.pdf

Accessed on 17 August 2020

⁵¹Ordered out of the home

Overall, a focus on women and youth suggests that key root factors such as hunger, family trauma, economic scarcity, sexual abuse, low educational attainment, poor child care options, and early parenthood create risk of violence at all stages and dimensions of outbreak, escalation, recurrence and continuation.

Child Sexual Abuse: Child sexual abuse, and its under-reporting, is a problem in all the countries in the study. As Equities noted for Saint Lucia, “children are easy targets and it is almost as if the child doesn’t have a voice and so that is why adults choose them as targets. Especially grooming, if the child is not taught what signs to look for and how to take care of themselves, our research show that most of the kids that are abused, it is by someone they know. So if an adult tells them not to say anything they trust that they shouldn’t”.

Observing this, an interviewee from the Caribbean Ambassadors and Cadets, a youth organization in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, noted that schools have guidance counsellors, “but in my opinion there need to be more opportunities in school where children could talk about problems at home. It may not be parents, it could be problems with siblings and cousins, and the children must be responsible for themselves as parents go to work early and come back late and these children are left with the family who is abusing them”.

In Trinidad and Tobago, the CGCC explained how risk is complicated by institutional and community level proximate factors, noting “there is an issue with reporting sexual abuse because when you say something, where is the child going to go? It would mean splitting the child from the parent. Why don’t they have homes where children can go with their mothers, and get counselling? The ministry has guidance counsellors and social workers, but they are stretched so thin that the children can’t build a proper relationship with them. When you are dealing with a ten-year-old child about sexual abuse and you finally build a relationship and then the ministry sends the counsellor somewhere else, the children don’t have consistency at home, at school or with their friends.” In Belize, the Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA) described lack of state subsidies for counsellors and insufficient numbers of counsellors trained specifically to address Child Sexual Abuse (CSA). In violent neighborhoods in Belize City, RESTORE Belize found a high incidence of PTSD in children, parents and adults resulting from adverse experiences including grief and loss, family violence, child neglect and abandonment, sexual abuse, mental illness in the home, and substance abuse in the home, among others.

In Jamaica, when NGOs are able to connect with cooperative persons in state agencies, these become their lifeline for assistance. As the Women’s Empowerment for Change lamented, “when their contact is out of office, on vacation or may have left the organisation, our hands are tied or we have no support”. They continuously try to establish and maintain the relationships with government agencies such as the Child Protection and Family Services Agency. They have a few social workers on their list for when they require those child specific services. Also, they have connections with two officers at the Centre for Investigation of Sexual Offences and Child Abuse who have been very supportive. In 2017, they had two young women who decided to share their experiences of sexual violence as children, they were able to connect with them and get support services for the girls. Thus, effective peacebuilding has to not only address risk, but also address the need for services to provide support, healing and justice to prevent recurrent harm.

Indeed, institutional insufficiency and failure, from police, judiciary, social services and health professionals, is cited again and again across the region. For many cases, reporting that leads to conviction and justice is a challenge, as Equities, a civil society organization in Saint Lucia described: “When working with victims, we try to follow up with Police. But if the Police don’t do anything e.g. a report is made and no arrest is made, or if the matter is difficult to prove, if it takes too long, the Police don’t pursue it. That is a challenge”.

In Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, a participant at a FGD with the National Commission on Gender Based Violence similarly complained, “The other thing is that one of our kids from Kingston was almost raped, but she fought and she was badly beaten and she passed out. She was taken to hospital. She spoke with the doctor and the doctor saw her and sent her on ward. She was released the Monday morning and the child came here with marks and swelling up of the face and the blackness. I called the hospital and asked for a report, they said they do not have a report. And when I told them that how you couldn’t have a report and she was on ward, they said she walked out. I told them she had to be in Accidents and Emergencies in order to get in the ward. I called the social worker and told her that a report was not made to the Police. There is no duty on these people to report. Sometimes I would see cases on Facebook and I would call the hospital and speak with the social worker and they would not even know about it. This is an issue”.

There was comparative experience in Saint Lucia. As an interviewee at the Ministry of Home Affairs, Justice and National Security reported, “Even some of the victims tell you that policemen who are supposed to be protecting them are a threat to them too. The Police has a Victim Protection Unit set up for rape victims because they did not trust the police and when people were raped, they didn’t want the Police around. We have had cases where a female was arrested for something and she was raped in her cell inside the station. It is almost like people who get raped get stigmatised and no NGO is interested in this. Some evidence is collected, not all is collected. In my god daughter’s case, there was semen on her belly and they took a sample and then they did not collect a sample from the perpetrator to do a match. The Court didn’t help either. You go through all of that, it takes forever for the cases to be heard and the children become adults and there is a cycle. Once they are raped they become promiscuous and then the system works as if they are the criminals and being tried”.

These in-depth perspectives highlight the effects of gender-based and sexual violence, and the improved role that agencies can play in both prevention and response. Lack of inclusive and risk-informed practice among institutional actors also leads to increased vulnerability for LGBTI youth. As Alliance for Equity, a Non-Governmental Organization detailed, “They don’t go to the Police because of fear and sometimes the Police make you report it and probably they don’t want anyone to know their sexuality and then become a target. So perhaps fear is the main reason”. The need for peacebuilding pathways which are inclusive is further emphasized by the ways that discrimination also produces risk.

A Note on COVID-19 Impact on Peace: The outbreak of the COVID-19 virus and the attendant pandemic acts as an accelerator and aggravator of the above-mentioned factors. A previous UN Rapid Assessment has analyzed the immediate impact of the social and economic crises precipitated by the pandemic, in increased organized crime and violence, prisons unrest and further delays in justice delivery, increase in cybercrime and cyberabuse, and social unrest associated with poor service delivery.⁵²

One of the paradoxes of the COVID-19 lockdown is that the home became a further source of entrapment, particularly for victims of domestic violence. Data on pre COVID-19 intimate partner violence shows serious challenges across the Caribbean, but particularly in Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.⁵³ Since the outbreak of the pandemic, victims of domestic violence have been exposed to heightened psychological, socio-economic and security threats due to broken protection pathways for victims, which has resulted in low and/or non-reporting of this menace during the COVID-19 lockdown.

⁵²United Nations (2020) Rapid Risk and Impact Assessment of COVID-19 on Citizens Security and Social Cohesion in the Caribbean.

⁵³<https://blogs.iadb.org/caribbean-dev-trends/en/home-not-so-sweet-in-times-of-covid19/>.

CHAPTER

4



Peace Engines and
Their Pathways to
Inclusive Peace

This chapter examines peace engines that provide examples of violence prevention practices that are risk-informed, incentive-based, inclusive (including of risk creators) and sustainable, and target four levels of violence, from outbreak to escalation, recurrence and continuation. Peace engines “refer to elements within a society that mitigate the emergence and proliferation of violent conflict and strengthen the foundations for peace by drawing upon the innate resilience of a society”. Peace engines can be regional, national or local, formal or informal, and involve “institutions, groups, individuals, specific processes, or even specific places, symbols or social constructions” (CDA 21). In the context of this report, peace engines enable insight into the successful pathways that can inform programme design and implementation.

Community Pride and Social Cohesion

A pathway that has proven to be result-oriented in community conflict prevention is investment in leadership development and social cohesion. Clearly intended to intervene prior to outbreak of violence, this approach mirrors the one focused on violence interruption which aims to prevent escalation and recurrence, particularly among gangs.

For example, the UNDP project, “Rejuvenating Communities - A Social Cohesive Approach”⁵⁴ in Jamaica builds the capacity of communities to help themselves through training youth and community leaders, and builds the capacity of state and community institutions for better service delivery. The project seeks to facilitate access to education, healthcare, food, and employment opportunities for community members and psychosocial support for those who have experienced violence. The “Strengthening Human Resilience” project targets West Kingston and Clarendon. The project looks at multiple insecurities – such as crime, violence, unemployment and environmental insecurities, as integrated. Each of the insecurities has a “suite” of approaches to address it. This can include strengthening community governance and social enterprise for economic empowerment, as well as trainings on governance to strengthen leadership and participation.

From a CSO perspective in Trinidad and Tobago, the CGCC cited the success of reaching children through an environmental programme which gives them “a feel for what is going on in the planet and a push to work harder for a better world” as well as through a homework centre which “has improved their behavior and communication and so the disputes are not there”. In these examples, the pathway treats opportunity for leadership and a sense of community as key.

Another example is Babboneau Youth and Sports Council, a Saint Lucian group comprising mostly young women, which engages in beach clean-up activities, donating food, wheelchairs as well as school supplies, building houses for the elderly, water-quality testing, and tree planting to stabilise river banks. As with the majority of youth activities around the region, the group organizes lectures on conflict resolution, job fairs and internships as well as activities to keep young people busy on weekends. The group’s work is primarily aimed at reducing risk and preventing outbreak of violence at the community level. As with many other peacebuilding efforts, music and sports are main strategies.

As Babboneau Youth and Sports Council related, “There is a lot of gang violence and guys not wanting persons to come in their area. We were granted \$2000 from USAID. We had a programme called ‘No Time For Crime’. Ours was one where here they liked music and football. So we put together a football competition with prizes to be won and freestyle music. We invited musicians in an attempt to curb violence. We went to every different block – some serious public relations. We called them together and

⁵⁴<https://open.undp.org/projects/00084069>

we got off the ground. The talent and musicians were recognised. And there seems to be a lot of persons who sing here. Football is loved here and it is supported. We have not had any form of violence at our football competitions. It is comradery and everyone wants to enjoy it so there is no violence. We try to make them productive. We try to feed the poor and we adopt a particular errand for the day and we invite everybody. If you are interested in our group, violence would not be on your mind. We always have something to do and we are always occupied and so this prevents violence.”

In Saint Lucia, sports are also used to connect communities, and reduced violence among them. RISE St. Lucia has an ongoing project, funded by USAID, and using conflict resolution in Castries. The CSO specifically uses football tournaments, featuring 30 teams, for peace-building. As the Department of Youth in Saint Lucia reported, “Here was a participatory approach. We meet with the community and say this is an opportunity for change. We outline what they can get - employment, violence reduction, sports - and that brought them in and then they say what they want. So this participatory approach works. These footballers go back and they do campaigns and clean up. They join a competition and they get points for doing community activities and those points help them in the competition and so they are interested.”

Sport and the Creative Arts

A model programme in Saint Lucia is run by the Sacred Sports Foundation. The programme spends about \$1000 per person with projects running for a minimum of 20 weeks. The projects focus on empowerment and social change, and use physical activity and sports to develop skills, including academic knowledge, better communication, self-discipline, and team work. Each programme also has a clear social objective, primarily conflict resolution and violence prevention. Their primary goal is social change. Coupled with these activities is a comprehensive youth mentorship programme, involving twelve weeks of classroom training and eight weeks of work experience. The youth mentors help run a range of programmes, including after-school activities for school-age children in the community. One such programme has some forty children, who have experienced trauma from living in violent communities. The Foundation works closely with schools to create safe spaces for children utilizing physical activities, the arts, and has even pioneered a conflict resolution component using the sport of fencing.

The Chairperson of the Sacred Sports Foundation cited the experience of youth mentor, known as Rick, as an example of how behaviour change programmes have helped in communities. “He was 15 and trying to find his way. He lived in a one-parent home, where one parent had left and went overseas. He was very violent and was troubling all the kids in the program and his mother let him stay out on the streets until all hours of the morning. When he first registered, everyone said they are not sending their child to a programme with that boy. We said let us see how the programme is and how he develops. What we did is that we formed a leadership group and we brought him into a leadership group with mentors. We said we are not doing anything that you don’t agree to. If you don’t come, the entire programme would stop. Within 6 months of the programme, he was still rough around the edges. And, we said they have to get involved in the leadership program. We ran it over a 12-week period and 10 young folks and 4 still remain with us today and that was 8 years ago and Rick now runs our disabilities programme.”

In Saint Kitts, the “Goals Academy” teaches as much as 130 children football on Saturdays. However, for the organization, sports provided entry points for skill- and community-building. As she described, “We are much more than football, we are a family and community. We do different activities like open days where we invite people to come, parent days where parents can be part of the programme. We go to the other islands and through this we hope to send a positive message and a message of togetherness. We let them know that extra-curricular activities can bring about success, and we provide academic support to children involved in the program”.

In a Jamaican example described by UNICEF as a model practice, Fight for Peace coordinates a network of 40 local partners to deliver programmes across six communities in Kingston. They provide entry points through the provision of martial arts and boxing to girls and boys, and this has led to champions in national and regional competitions. Social workers interact with the children so that psycho-social support is integrated into the sporting activities through ongoing training of the coaches and the presence of social workers in sport sessions. Other partners in the network offer parenting education and provide safe places where young people can play or meditate or where children and parents can relax. Fight for Peace trains people who live and work in the communities in Psychological First aid to supplement gaps in social services provision. This way persons in communities can identify when children are troubled in some way, respond in the moment and refer them to additional support. There is a strong emphasis on psycho-social support for young people traumatized by community violence and helping the community to recognize its responsibility to reduce violence against children.

The following case study exemplifies how community based organisations significantly address risk to violence through sports, and both successes and limitations that can be taken into account when supporting them.

Case Study 01

Springers United Sports Club, Salt Springs, Montego Bay.

There were high levels of rival gang violence in the community of Salt Springs. There are still high levels of sexual violence including rape, gang rape and child abuse as well as domestic violence. Not a lot of women are able to access justice, especially those raped by gang members because they are fearful of retribution if they report to the police

There is no physical infrastructure or community centre to host activities. The interviewee, a founder of Springers United Sports Club invested his own money in a football field and now they use the field and the church for meetings and activities. He managed to facilitate a truce among the gangs in the area to enable youth/members of the gangs to participate in the club activities. He had a gathering to bring gang leaders together to come to an agreement, which worked because no one had ever brought them together for the sake of bringing peace to the community. They needed money for the football team to enter the Football Parish League, and he was told that there was a slim chance for them to enter, given the high levels of violence that surrounded the community, and the organizers did not want them involved. He had to fight to get them accepted, because he thought the message of their participation, people seeing persons from this community, participating in something very positive can offer hope. They did get in the league, competed in it incident free and they are one of the most disciplined teams. In the first year, they finished in fifth place. Working together, opposing gang members have come together.

From the discussion, they promised and delivered on a cease fire. He further encouraged them to promote a safe community where persons could walk freely in all areas, which was not possible at the time. He arranged a meeting with all of the gang leaders on neutral ground, and they came together. He did it in the form of a party also. He informed the police force, government officials and neighbours and everyone came out. The gang leaders recognized his dedication and intention and they made a truce. Every gang made a commitment to not fire first, and eventually they dismantled. They recognized over time, the futility of the split and how it affected many relationships, and the opportunity to reunite, they decided to keep the peace. Before the police

used to come into the community and kill gang members. Many of the young men did not want to be a part of the gangs, but they had no choice, because of their location. He teaches them about the different aspects of football, as well as financial, and life skills, and it works. He also worked with two businesses to provide employment to community members as well as to solicit sponsorship for school supplies to allow persons to return or to stay in school.

As the interviewee related, "while he may not be able to offer them money, he offers personal development and opportunities to return to school and to move away from gangs. As such, they now hold him in a position of confidence". In 2018, he started a football club for men 14-45 years old. They are moving toward starting a female league for persons 14-35 years old. He uses the club to teach life skills, financial skills, first aid and other tangible skills that the members can apply in their lives. The parents of club members and older community members are involved in the club, as a way of providing guidance and mentorship for the young members. This also serves to build communication skills and enhance parent/child relations. There is now an ongoing dialogue between him, gang leaders, gang members and the community. He received a small grant from the U.S. Embassy to improve the work of the club for equality in sports for women and girls, and to combat SGBV, human trafficking and mental health issues. There has been a reduction in gang related violence in the community. The club is now networked with the Department of Gender, the Ministry of Security, the Citizens Security Project and Peace Management Initiative (a Government-civil society partnership), the police, CBOs, and international coaches, including to work with the female footballers.

Youth Advocacy through Arts (YATA), which started in 2013, is also a model example of youth empowerment through theatre and arts. During the summers, YATA works with 50-75 young people, between 13 and 16, and attracts an audience of up to 1000 depending on the school or community venue. YATA primarily comprise young women who coordinate activities. YATA explained that "The males come in, but in small numbers, because culturally they are taught that theatre and arts are for girls, and young men then move into breadwinning from about 12 on and so they are less available for recreational activities at 2pm on Saturdays". Their first play in 2013 was about gangs and boys, showing that they join gangs to feel that they belong, loved and included.

As YATA related, "Gang members saw the play and talked about how it represented them, how they wished they hadn't gotten into gangs because quitting means suicide, and how they felt they couldn't leave because they would have to become police informers". They interviewed girls about their stories of sexual abuse, and staged the play, "Sleepless Girls" in 2014. YATA followed with a project called Walls Down which blocked off areas for a day to enable children to play safely there, mainly in South Side communities in Belize City. Following this were plays on environmental responsibility, cultural tensions and iconic heroes. Its current work is to establish a boys' mentorship programme called My Brother's Keeper which will offer alternatives to gangs by working through schools and keep Walls Down to continue YATA as a social entrepreneurship youth initiative. The key contribution of YATA is that the work is not focused on sports or physical activity but provides a space for boys to express their feelings. As the group explained, "young men without dads don't get to communicate and so we create a space for young men to talk without being stern with them. There's a lot of pent up aggression in boys and the men in their lives are not good men for them to talk to when they are feeling upset, so we focus on supporting how boys feel and what they want to express."

YATA provides an excellent example of a CSO not only focusing on physical activity or life skills, but the need for emotional expression and connection among both adolescent girls and boys.

Structural Prevention through Education

With regard to the work with children, school exclusion, drop out, and illiteracy present significant risk factors. Prevention of conflict before outbreak therefore happens directly with schools and children. UNICEF has been supporting a Child Friendly School Initiative across the region. A major component includes school-based positive behaviour programmes which move away from punitive measures of discipline. The approach also includes youth counselling in schools, which applies a “whole-class” approach rather than waiting for children to identify themselves as needing help. The majority of programmes for at-risk youth also undertake parenting sessions, and try to provide music and sports activities as part of a diversion strategy. In Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, as in other countries, there are student support centres for more targeted interventions and extensive technical and vocational education for out-of-school youth, which includes the provision of stipends for them to attend.

An interviewee from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Justice and National Security in Saint Lucia related, “Education Department has two officers to go after the parents if they don't see children attending school regularly. They came up with a Transport Subsidy Programmes and School Feeding Programme where they ask parents to pay a minimum fee of \$1. Government pays for household groceries and they pay cooks who prepare meals and one of the things they found is that children stayed away because they were hungry. Having food makes children come to school.” Additional youth diversion programmes may provide skills for young people who have dropped out of school, but are limited in funding and reach.

In the Island of Tobago, for example, the State's National Crime Prevention Programme held their first Camp, in August 2019, geared to children between the ages of 9 -12. It focused on drug prevention, sexuality, alcohol use, and monitoring students entering Form One, in secondary school, for one year to understand the impact of information provided and to help them transition with resources, if needed.

As the National Commission on Crime Prevention also pointed out for Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, getting children back into schools means that criminals don't have children to use to hide guns in their backpacks or to tell them when police are coming or doing searches. Gangs, they found, make more mistakes when children are all in school and can't be used.

A powerful story from Saint Vincent and the Grenadines highlights the difficulties created by illiteracy. The Managing Director of the National Commission on Crime Prevention in Saint Vincent and the Grenadine related, “In regards to the PTA, one year I had to work with some parents whose children were the worst behaved in school, but the teachers were complaining that they were not seeing the parents. The teachers were saying how the parents don't go to the PTA meetings. I sat with one of those parents and that parent said she is embarrassed every time she goes to a PTA meeting. She cannot write and she is supposed to write her name and her child's name and class the child is in. The PTA meetings have a document with the minutes from the last meeting and she cannot read it and so she does not attend. I am suggesting to find out who are the parents of the children who are continually absent and who are absent themselves. There are parents like that who cannot read and write. Find out if they are coming to the Parents Day and if there is a pattern going on at the home”.

Across all countries, illiteracy is therefore targeted by a wide range of programmes. For example, ORCS in Jamaica caters to students 12-17 years old who, because of literacy and other issues cannot function in the school system. It supports them to become functional at a grade's nine so that they can sit the grade's achievement test and then be placed back into high school. ORCS also combine a youth focus with parenting workshops and counseling support to ensure educational advancement for children from homes with a history of violence and alleged criminal acts.

Some school-based approaches also focus on de-escalation. Saint Lucia, for example, has used a rapid-response approach in schools, which involved random checks of students, leading to seizures of cutlasses, knives, scissors and guns. As one interviewee from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Justice and National Security described, "We were amazed to find out what children were bringing to school. So many were carrying deadly weapons. It is something we had to look at. Even on the streets; an altercation would occur in school and then it would carry onto the streets. We had a 12-year-old stab a 14-year-old and the boy died. It is mainly males that do it. Except this year we had a 15-year-old female that stabbed and killed a police officer. It was alleged he tried to rape her and so she retaliated and stabbed him, but she has been a troubled youth from the time she was 8. She was at risk, involved in all kinds of things and was allegedly raped by her brother and uncle."

The conditions for youth risk are created by traumas at home, often connected to socio-economic precarity and escalated through access to weapons, gangs and legal and illegal sources of status and income. In Belize, programmes for at-risk youth therefore target parents, provide funds and resources for food, transportation and schooling, and focus on preventing school drop-out, which forces children to turn to agricultural and other informal labour. Below, risk-informed approaches that focus on livelihood skills are described, as an inability to earn a livelihood becomes a risk factor in late adolescence.

Livelihood and Life Skills

"I tell the boys that they need to go to school and get a good job. And one day a boy says to me that when I go out and sell marijuana, I make \$600 a day but what job will pay me that much a day?" Equities Saint Lucia

Jamaica's Citizen Security Programme (JCSP) does not just target youth involved in violent and criminal activities, but focuses more broadly on at-risk youth. The first two phases of the programme, from 2001 to 2012, focused on addressing violence through poverty reduction, by collaborating with the Jamaica Social Investment Fund, which provides children parenting education, training, and employment. NGOs such as Groots and Sistren were involved in life-skills training, and in establishing community development committees and after-school programmes to strengthen reading, writing and math skills, and expose young people to business literacy. This utilized a case-management approach which involved a risk assessment, a risk plan, employability skills and job placement. Both women and men are involved because they are at risk of being accessories if not perpetrators. As the JCSP⁵⁵, reported, "we also

⁵⁵The programme was funded by IDB, the UK Department for International Development the Canadian Department for International Trade, and the Government of Jamaica, and the funding is coming to an end. It comprised 16 case officers in 50 communities across Jamaica. There are baseline and impact evaluations for this project.

include LGBTI youth, even if other clients don't accept their behaviour". The life-skills training includes learning to accept others and respect differences because sometimes people are labelled and may not complete their training or they become violence prone or are in fear of their safety or their lives." The programme also targets persons already involved in crime, who are identified because they have started to come up in the system because they are referred by the Department of Correctional Services (DCS), as sometimes conditions of bail include training, involvement in community activities, or are identified by Deans of discipline in the schools.

Risk-informed approaches to violence escalation thus often target skill-building to enable beneficiaries to earn a livelihood. The HOPE Jamaica Programme is a training and apprenticeship programme targeting specifically youth 18-24 years old, as young men from this group are statistically the most vulnerable group to involvement with criminal activity. Training is broken into values and attitudes, and skills. HOPE found that it needs to influence the attitudes and values before teaching skills. It tries to keep youth in the programme for a year, providing stipends to support them and to retain participation. Before placement, the Programme provides the values and attitudes training for two to four weeks (depending on the needs and resources available), skills training for six weeks, and then apprenticeship/internships for up to one year. At the end of the Programme, the youth are assessed and provided with basic certification, so they are in a better position to gain employment. If they are unable to achieve this level, they are provided with a job certification, which can serve as a stepping stone to achieving higher certification later. After training they are placed in government and private-sector agencies, where they are closely supervised and guided/mentored, including in life skills. Mentorship is provided throughout the Programme. HOPE is four years old and has directly reached more than 25 000 young persons.

A representative of the Programme shared that, "we will be graduating a group of windshield wipers. We took them from the street, provided the training, and now some of them are going on to literacy training while others are going on to the apprenticeship component". Even though the Programme targets males it gets more female applicants. In the representative's view, "more females join the programme, because of their outlook on life and usually are inclined to make attempts to better themselves".

In one story he told, "A young man was involved in a gang in Spanish Town, which has one of the highest gang concentrations, and decided to leave on his own accord. However, leaving the gang, meant leaving the community with nowhere to go. He was homeless and sleeping on cardboards in Crossroads, Kingston. HOPE got wind of him and I found him and started to work with him". He directed him to the office to sign up for the programme. The first day he turned up, the security guard turned him away because of his appearance. I was angry when I heard, and went out to the Salvation Army, got him some clothes and also found him a place to stay in someone's backyard. Upon joining the programme, he was placed in the digitizing project in the National Land Agency In Jamaica, he did very well there, but he had ambition so he applied to the Jamaican Defence Force (JDF) and is now in the reserves. In the interim, while he was in the training programme, he managed to contribute from his stipend to the persons he was staying with, as a rental of sorts. He wanted to be better."

In another story, "A young man who was a windshield wiper joined the programme and really wanted to learn. He was illiterate, so they sent him to school and he did English and Math and he is now enrolled in the HEART college of construction, because that is his area of interest". The HOPE Jamaica Programme highlights that engagement of youth in vulnerable communities

must include basic components of: values and attitude training; skills training; apprenticeship/internship opportunities where youth can earn a stipend while gaining experience; assessment and certification; and mentorship. They are the basic requirements to enhance employability.

Funded by the World Bank, the Community Integrated Development Project in Jamaica is focused on community safety. It has 3 components: access to basic infrastructure, public safety and alternative livelihoods. The project works in 18 communities across 17 parishes and Cycle 3 included training of 527 persons with a completion rate over 80 per cent and a 40 per cent placement rate. In this cycle, the focus was on attaining higher-paying skills versus minimum wages. An additional approach was to develop training components and have the potential employers compete for contracts. For example, CAC 2000 Ltd. which is one of the larger air-conditioning companies in the country, completed a contract, trained about 120 of persons and 12 persons were provided with full-time employment before the completion of the training. Main Event Entertainment group trained about 100 persons on lighting, stage production and audio/visual technical skills. Their certification is internationally recognized. A JD \$70 million (US\$500,000) investment in the blue economy is resulting in training of about 300 young people in water-maintenance skills and diving certification, life-guarding certification, boating and repairs, and most of the certifications are global. One of the projects employs over 200 persons. Mainly these areas of employment targeted young men.

In terms of CSOs, in Belize, the YWCA skill programmes focus on sewing, cooking, cosmetology and barbering, swimming and lifeguard training. This enabled hundreds of women and girls to escape dependency on abusive men or on transactional sex, including being 'sold' to gangs. Boys also enroll in the swimming and sports programmes at the YWCA. For adolescent mothers, the Helping Early Leavers Programme teaches skills and remedial language to girls 13-18 years old, who haven't stayed in school. A clean, safe and affordable daycare for working women provides a sustainable source of income for the YWCA and is a best practice of creating greater economic viability. These kinds of approaches are heavily gendered, but widespread. The CGCC similarly offers women skills-training, for example in terms of baking and grow-box gardening. Similar approaches are used with girls. Men are offered skills in auto repair and electrical wiring.

In Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the NCW runs Marion House which has a youth programme that spends six and a half months teaching life skills, and two months teaching sustainable skills, which includes a four month work placement. It has an 80 per cent employment rate, and youths leave the programme with trade skills and tools they need. Upon completion, they must do community service, identify a mentor and inform the mentor and parents about their responsibilities during and after the programme. There is also a compulsory savings component which can enable youth to be self-employed after the year-long programme is completed.

Turning Vulnerabilities into Opportunities

The environment in the Caribbean is said to be impacted by 4.7 million tons of Sargassum,⁵⁶ which although it could nourish the seas and beaches, is known to be perilous for the tourism sector, injurious to other aquatic resources and hazardous to humans. Algas Organics emerged

⁵⁶<https://www.caymancompass.com/2020/04/16/nasa-spots-millions-of-tons-of-sargassum-in-caribbean/>.

from the ashes of environmental crises in the West Coast of Saint Lucia as the Caribbean's first biotechnology company which turns sargassum into fertilizer, and currently exports its product to eight countries across the LAC region.

The company reported bringing together about 120 youth and women in the communities whose environment had been damaged and livelihoods lost due to the washing ashore of the sargassum. These persons were trained and provided with jobs in harvesting, processing and packaging techniques. By the end of 2019, the group stated that it had collected, as at 2019, over a million pounds of sargassum from Saint Lucia's West Coast. Young persons with limited opportunities, and who could have been enlisted to crime and violence, according to the organization, were diverted to the path of productivity.

Insights into the motivation for women's leadership in implementing community development programmes in Lopinot and parts of Central Trinidad reveal that most women leaders became engaged in development and peacebuilding work through finding solutions to the challenges of domestic violence and women's responsibility for care of children. One environmentalist shared her experience of women's leadership and how this helped create value for a community in Guanapo:

"Women become leaders in projects because of the need to step up and represent the interests of themselves and their children. Many women leaders that I know started out by realizing that there are major concerns in their lives, which affected them and their children. They communicated with their friends and realized that their friends too have the same issue and so they band together to represent their common interest. They chose to not take the victim position, find their strength and become leaders. I have an example in Guanapo of a woman-leader, who discovered that her children were always getting rashes on their skin after bathing in the river. She spoke to her friends, who all had the same issues and that drove her to the point of doing something about cleaning-up the river. She led the group of concerned mothers in representing the issue and a project was developed, which resulted in the river being cleaned."

Job Creation

In Saint Kitts and Nevis, Rehab by Tab is a prison-based programme, run by the group Teach a Boy, which produces luggage accessories. The bags are made by male prisoners, Teach a Boy provides material, and the prison works as a producer and supplier. Fifty per cent of profits goes to prisons to sustain their rehabilitation programme and 50 per cent to Teach a Boy to run the programme. Prisoners learn how to make bags and their portion goes towards their families with some money being put aside for them when they get out of prison. Participation is voluntary, and both skill-training and money provide incentives as well as a sense of pride. The product is made out of recycled denim from the prison and denim donated by other NGOs, such as International Women's Association and the Children's Association, so that all feel part of it and contribute donated denim.

Raise Your Voice Saint Lucia described the importance of employers supporting women's child care responsibilities. As a staffer related, "We feel the hotel industry should help out by putting a homework centre or an after-school centre so they (its employees' children) could have a safe space. The Government was offended that I would suggest that asking why people aren't doing

what they need to do for their children. But they didn't realise the salaries don't allow for women to do what they need to do. We believe that those children, if put in homework centres would not drop out of school, go into gangs or be drawn to pregnancy. It will minimise GBV”.

The NGO's own work focuses on economic empowerment such as making salad dressing and seasoning that hotels will buy. The organization is also investing in the stock exchange. As a staff member detailed, “We did a project with Dominica after the storm and we built a medical-supply warehouse. We had 17 million dollars for this project. We had an agreement that if we did the project successfully then whatever is left is ours. We built, equipped and trained 11 health centres. We reroofed the entire hospital and fixed the damage by the hurricane. We saved about a million something dollars and we want to put it in an investment so we could pay for our administration”.

Educational and skill-training approaches also focus on those at risk, constituting a strategy for preventing both violence outbreak and recurrence. Economic incentives are specifically related to providing alternatives to vulnerable young women and men. Throughout, NGOs and CBOs are clear that providing support for family nutrition and child care is crucial for risk prevention.

Safe and Loving Spaces

While leadership and life skills may be key, other peacebuilding initiatives show that a risk-aware pathway requires providing a safe space and safe adult relationships for youth and children. The Youth Advocacy Movement (YAM) programme, of the BFLA in Belize, is one of the most successful and comprehensive of such programmes. It includes life skills and leadership building, SGBV prevention, sexuality education, dance, sports and computer literacy for youth under 25 years old. YAM recruits from working-class schools. The Programme provides a safe space for boys, gets them back into school and works with those incarcerated to prepare them for release. As BFLA reflected, its success is in the relationships it builds: “In Belize City, all of our members are from South Side. We have to bus these kids to their homes on Fridays because the meetings go from 5-6.30 or 7pm, and it's not safe for them to travel. It takes a lot of dedication and investment because we have to develop that personal relationship with young people. For some young people, the only contact that the school has for them is one of our staff. We attend PTA meetings for our children. When the children come in, they can write a resume, or share their entrepreneurial idea or get advice on relationship issues. We have kids as young as 11 because they are caregivers for their younger siblings and, so as to leave their homes, they have to bring their younger siblings with them. There are situations with physical and sexual violence. We have had them ask us to intervene because their mother is in a violent relationship and we accompany women to the police domestic violence unit at the request of our YAM members.”

A staff in the Youth Department in Saint Kitts and Nevis cited a similar need for children to feel safe and loved. She exemplified, “A parent brought in a child a few years ago. She asked us to take him to our camp. The police were saying he's a terrible child. We spoke to him and we asked him where he would like to be in life. He got into the “Shine” programme and enjoyed the experience. He became a remarkably different child. He said what you guys did for me made me change and how we spoke with him made him change. He is one of our popular singers right now as he is part of a band.”

The National Council of Women, in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, also emphasised the need for spaces of safety and love. As they put it, “We say this is everyone’s house. Because of our staff and the way we operate, there is plenty love. Children come here on a morning and they will stand at the door and say ‘good morning’ and they come for a hug and for me to tell them that I love them. A young man once told me in 18 years they never told him that they love him.”

A member of the Caribbean Ambassadors and the Cadets in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, who took part in an FGD similarly reported, “Sometimes it is showing them love and appreciation. I know there are some instances where some of them don’t have a home and may not have food at home. And a lot of them pass through our homes and so our home becomes an extended family. We provide funds for educational purposes. And we try to work with parents where there are severe cases of poverty. We refer them to persons who are trained when we do not have those persons in-house. We have had persons who were chronic thieves. In camp we had things go missing and now we see those persons in the Army in good positions and it is very gratifying to see them change and become successful.”

Jamaica complements violence interruption with gang demobilization, which involves working with children from 15 to adults who are 29 to provide alternatives to gangs. As the Community Police in Belize pointed out, “Gangs bring in the children by making them feel their needs are being taken care of, where they feel a lot of love”. Thus, in Jamaica, the violence interrupters act as mentors to the kids, who go through a week-long retreat to determine what they want for the next years of their lives. A relationship is formed and the violence interrupter and the children are provided with remedial and vocational education as well as psychological therapy. Sessions are also held with parents to understand what the children are going through and to get the parents to give the same messages at home that the Peace Management Institute (PMI) is giving through schools. Therapeutic school-based trauma reduction for children from 6 years old is another part of the intervention. While many kids may not yet be involved in a gang, they may be affected by community violence, having seen dead bodies, witnessed parents or family killed, heard gunshots at night, and experienced violence as an everyday part of their lives.

The programme is carried out on a group basis with social workers and a volunteer corp with the goal that children do not end up with PTSD, and those who still do secure referrals. There is also capacity building of violence interrupters so they understand peace building, as well as dispute/conflict resolution. UNICEF Jamaica explained, “Success comes from the trust we are able to build in communities. We liaise with police and gangs, and are not seen as informers. It’s a tight rope they walk so violence interrupters are carefully selected and screened. The police have to be convinced they are not connected to the gangs, and have to hear from the community if they trust these people”. PMI is working on developing community theatre as part of its public education campaign and on ensuring that it is designed by the community – the messages, when it should be shared, with whom it should be shared, etc. For example, barber shops were selected to receive messages about parenting and corporal punishment as this is where fathers gather. PMI also works to provide alternatives to punishing negative behaviours. There is therefore a champion for the children who will say it’s the first time that someone has taken an interest in them because they don’t have that kind of relationship within their families”.

As the following case study shows, St Kitts and Nevis also provides another excellent example of why safe spaces are a significant pathway, and how they connect with the larger pathway of social cohesion.

Case Study 02

The Community Family Youth Resilience (CFYR) Project

As a staff of Family Matters Programme, who works with the USAID- funded project, described, CFYR targets youth ages 10-17 and assesses them in relation to their antisocial tendencies, parental supervision, availability of the adults to the children and the intergenerational connection of the family. The assessment is used as a baseline for later evaluation of specific elements of the project, and CFYR's tracking suggests at least a 56 per cent reduction in risk factors.

CFYR first engages in trust-building with families, by acknowledging their risk factors recognizing that they have had negative experiences with NGOs and state agencies; and avoiding blame.

Highlighting the influence of institutions, the staff told a story of one mother: "I heard a mother say that she can't do anything right and they have been in many agencies and she said she failed as a mother. I looked at her and I said, your son is 17 and actively representing his school and community in football. He may not be the best academically, but there are people depending on him in the field and otherwise. Players depend on him, a coach depends on him, spectators depend on him. She could sit and call herself a failed mother or she could look at how many things she would have passed onto the child. She told me that she avoids PTA meetings because she only hears bad things about her child. Imagine the same school that is depending on his football skills is the same school that is willing to write him off."

The programme works through family meetings and individual meetings with young persons. Counselors assess the problems on which families want to work first, invite family members or key players in the child's life, focus on affirming roles that caretakers play and help families to identify how they can improve their presence, relationship, connection and supervision of the child. They make the safety of the young persons a priority. They follow up with calls and text messages to mothers to support them through challenges; work with fathers for them to become more involved; make referrals in relation to issues of substance abuse; and provide the best counselor for difficult young persons.

The staff of Family Matters Programme detailed, "We tell the families that we don't think about the youth being deviant. We call our child a golden child and we use words like support and we tell parents we understand it is demanding because of the challenges today. When we go into the homes, what the children report is exactly what is happening. We go in with affirmation. A lot of parents say they are failing as a parent and know that their child is labelled as a deviant child. We say to the families that no child exists on his/her own. The child belongs to the family structure which in turn has to exist in the community so though you may have control of the home, you have to build that child's capacity so they could be resilient when they go out into the community."

There are six phases in the programme and it takes about one year to complete, though they have now reduced the phases to six months. Phase 4 is a celebration phase which provides minimal funds for a family celebration which counselors hope will become a ritual. The family sits down and reflects, and self-report on transformation as a family and for the child.

The staff of Family Matters Programme continued, "At the end, we give them a little album and show them the period of where they started and where they are now. We tell them this is the beginning of something new. We also tell them to plant a tree and we encourage the family to select a tree and plant it. This tree is being planted as a result of family beginning from point A. The roots are the intergenerational connection, the branches are the parents, the care givers, the leaves are the children. We also give them a family booklet with communication tips and parenting tips. The booklet deals with bullying and studying tips. We encourage parents to use technology and we encourage them to start a library and most of the homes we have worked with now have a little library. We encourage the family to be part of something in the community – maybe joining a parent club, church club, police youth club."

Interestingly, family also provides an entry-point to gang demobilization. As a Police in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines related, "In 2018, we had a few of the gang leaders in prison and we had our hands full as there was a lot of tension. I had them all in my office and we sat down and had a frank discussion, and everyone admitted that that they want to be around to see their children grow. So, we made a truce right there and then and there was peace. So I think that helped."

Resilience-building for greater community peace involves creating jobs and training, but also spaces for love, emotional connection, respect and a sense of trust.

Evidence-Based Programming

CSOs interviewed for this research indicate that context knowledge is critical to results and that the most impactful projects are those that invested in including the inputs of project beneficiaries in the design and implementation phases. The "Upfull Hustlers", a youth violence prevention project implemented by UNDP in the Mon Repos Community in Trinidad and Tobago, is an example of an initiative guided by evidence. The project is targeted at youth who are "at risk of being recruited into crime and violence". It started with a baseline mapping exercise, which identified values and assets in the community, and mapped the crime situation in the area in order to build a picture of the characteristics and values of youth aged 15-25 and the various social problems they face. The project's brand name was changed based on the preference of the target beneficiaries. Psychosocial assessments were conducted for the beneficiaries, which provided them with a unique opportunity for personal development and capacity-building that responded to their individual and collective needs as a group. These personal development plans put each young person on the path to accomplishing their individual life goals. Due to the approach utilized, the project, which started with the beneficiaries being semi-engaged and unable to articulate a vision for themselves, ended with beneficiaries addressing some of their own challenges, formulating personal visions for themselves, and taking concrete measures to become engaged in productive activities. Some then enlisted in the Civilian Conservation Corps, MIC Institute of Technology and University of Trinidad and Tobago.

An official of Probation and Child Protection, Trinidad and Tobago Police Service, described how risk-mapping was used to contribute to the project result: "We assess the children and then apportion a risk. You cannot look at the crime the child is committing you have to look at the risk factors they have faced. They are children and we deal with them like that. Then I had to break down the ethics of showing the children respect; I had to train the staff to not deal with fire with fire. It was a lot of training. I can't function without probation, health, education, police, youth service – because I can only help them whilst they are here.

Conflict Mediation and Trauma-Care Among Youth

Beyond providing specific safe spaces for youth and families, and strengthening educational inclusion, violence interruption approaches also use schools as sites for peace-building through, for example, emphasis on conflict mediation and trauma response. What is clear in these approaches is that addressing the vulnerabilities of girls and boys includes creating safer communities.

The best practices regionally are undertaken by RESTORE Belize whose work includes mobilizing community agents and youth-service providers to conduct community-based conflict mediation and gang mediation in violent communities. They also conduct a peer mediation programme in high schools which has decreased school violence. RESTORE Belize additionally has developed the Metamorphosis Programme which addresses social exclusion among boys who are at risk of joining gangs. The programme recruits through schools in neighbourhoods with high levels of gang activity. It addresses behavioural problems through wilderness retreats, counselling (primarily for grief and loss and trauma resulting from adverse childhood experiences), extra-curricular activities, anger management, life skills, literacy and training programmes for both parents and children.

As the former Executive Director of RESTORE Belize put it, “We find children with behavioural problems and at-risk challenges. The kids’ experience was way beyond what anyone thought was happening in Belize. Our social workers were shocked at the levels of adverse experiences had by children. After a three-month pilot, we developed a much longer programme to deal with neglect, single-parent households, and kids who lost parents through HIV, cancer and gun violence, among others. A social worker works directly with whoever is the care giver of a child and does home visits twice a month or more; conducts parenting classes; and does school visits to get updates from the child’s teachers. Home visits provide clear ideas how to help both the child and parents.” There is also an early intervention system for primary schools which identifies risk early in a child’s life, and trains teachers to identify possible family, health, neglect, hunger and abuse problems as well as poor literacy so that they can intervene to keep children in school.

Trauma Informed Practice in Schools is an approach modelled by RESTORE Belize. It focuses on capacity building for teachers to create a trauma-sensitive school environment that supports and nurtures traumatized children. Relationship building is key to addressing the stress that children are experiencing. They are now moving from the curriculum to promoting systemic changes in the policies and norms at the school level to make schools more compassionate and child friendly, with a focus on children’s overall well-being and not just disciplinary measures.

As a representative from the Belize Community Policing described, “Any child who is ready to learn at 8.30 has a support system versus one who arrives late, feels excluded and has navigated gang territory – so the child is exposed to one adult in the staff who will connect to them because this increases the possibility of a child finishing school that year. This changes the school from a pathological approach to learning to one that is transformative.”

In Jamaica, violence interrupters are from communities, and are hairdressers, barbers, street pastors, phone fixers, etc. The PMI explained, that 40 per cent of violence interrupters are women and 60 per cent are men. Beyond preventing escalation, other programmes focus on trauma response among children 6-18, as well as behaviour change and modification among 13-18-year-olds, using social workers who provide therapeutic interventions with parents and teachers. They also support women’s empowerment as community leaders through programmes that mobilise mothers against gun violence, and through peace ambassadors. Community ownership of the process is emphasized repeatedly as the basis for success.

As an interviewee from PMI said, “We have provided trauma care for over 2500 kids, direct treatment for kids in violence-torn environments as more than 200 people have been killed since “Dudus”⁵⁷ was arrested, so all those kids grew up in that sustained violence. We go into communities and schools and find the kids and empower the parents and teachers to help. Disabled youth and elderly and those who have become paralyzed and blinded because of violence are part of the programme because they work with the most vulnerable. We also identify high-risk LGBT persons who are on the streets and become involved in violence and crimes like robbery and larceny. We’ve helped to get them off the street and gotten them jobs, when most dropped out of school and so are unemployable and were not connected with families.” PMI pointed out that the key is to tackle the areas before the outbreaks happen, building up the resilience of communities.”

Other approaches focus on peace-building through schools, establishing gardens in schools and encouraging guidance counselors to work with children, parents and teachers there. This is part of a wider positive-behavior intervention and school-wide response starting from primary school. A representative of the Safety and Security in Schools Unit in the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, emphasized, “In the context of the child-diversion programme and restorative-practices programme, we are training educators to understand they can present alternatives to frequent use of suspensions and expulsions to treat with children’s challenges.” Supported by UNICEF, the programme has been focused on the first tier which addresses everybody in the school; the next tier, which focuses on children with problems, using guidance counselors and working with parents; and the third tier, which is focused on children with serious behavioural issues who need referral to clinical social workers.

An official from the Guidance and Counselling in the Ministry of Education in Jamaica, explained, “Years ago, there was reintegration of the teen mothers’ policy. We are doing a similar conversation now with children in conflict with the law, who were in juvenile facilities to create a policy on this. There’s a programme called ‘New Path’ under the Ministry of National Security that works with young offenders, and they want to create a policy for this population of students who need to continue their education. The goal is to teach children to be safe, equip children with skills to resolve conflict, and break the cycle of violence in schools. When children are suspended, they are now kept in school or referred to a programme.”

The official continued “The Ministry established a time-out facility in partnership with the Alpha Institute and JAMBOSCO, where a cluster of students who are suspended will be exposed to training and support to help reintegration. The youth-innovation centres across Jamaica are part of the plan for this programme to be expanded for suspended students. So many children are traumatized by repeated acts of violence, so crime and violence cannot be tackled when so many children are hurting. The support system needs to do more to prevent children from falling into the pool of criminals and the system of law and order needs to be looked at.”

Similarly, FAMCARE in Belize uses a case study approach so that “any infractions by adolescents are looked at differently to understand why the children did it and to avoid having the child be arrested and charged”. They do a risk assessment to prevent criminalization of children.

⁵⁷Christopher “Dudus” Coke was been sentenced to 23 years in a US prison, after pleading guilty to drug and gun-trafficking charges in 2011.

School-based programmes in Saint Lucia include the Democratic Citizenship programme, which focuses on conflict management, as well as respect for property and people. There is also the pilot, “Effective Schools Framework”, funded by UNICEF, which assesses children’s environments in relation to safety, well-being and protection. Another, called “Our Boys Matter”, focuses on secondary-school boys who need literacy skills, and who perform community service such as cleaning homes for the elderly, as part of their programme. There is also an “Empowerment Centre” for youth who drop out of school, so that they do not end up spending time on the street. In many ways, these programmes rely on personal connections that the programme staffers have with the courts, social services and churches.

Integrated Approach to Community Engagement

PYCs have been used around the region to promote local peacebuilding, usually managed out of the community policing units under Ministries of National Security. PYCs bring together social cohesion, leadership building and livelihood skills. The Mason Hall PYC in Tobago, for example, includes literacy and math classes as well as sports, dance, computer and cultural programmes. It has a successful football team. Participating youth come from both primary and secondary schools.

The Belize Police detailed community-oriented policing efforts, coordinated with the Belize Defence Force and Coast Guard, which both host youth programmes including camps, for both girls and boys. There are 140 officers in community policing nationally who undertake as many as 75,000 school visits a year. The National Youth Cadet Corps also has after-school sessions with cadets as part of building relationships; it brings in speakers on different topics. This programme was established 26 years ago and there are 1200 cadets throughout the country, both boys and girls. The camps are guided by a council of youth, and involve educational trips, life skills, survival skills and first-aid training, drill discipline, sporting competitions, and attendance at religious services.

Belize has many programmes, from the Conscious Youth Development Programme, which focus on mediation and violence interruption, to the DU DI RAITE TING programme which is geared to high school students with referrals from school counselors, and which is 75 per cent supported by the private sector. The GREAT programme, focusing on gang resistance, education and training, is based on a design from the United States. It steers children away from gang options. It includes a family syllabus and community programmes for weekends; is integrated with schools; and is considered a best practice by the anti-gang task force. In the ten years since it was established in 2009, 20,758 students have been involved and 262 officers trained. It is sponsored by the US Embassy, and comprises a 13-week and a 6-week programme in schools with components on bullying, peer pressure, goal setting, defusing skills, empathy, and conflict resolution.

There are also youth mentorship programmes initiated by the Police Commissioner, which connect volunteers and corporate sponsors to girls and boys aged 10-17. This too includes life skills, conflict resolution and field trips. In Belize City, the Yabra Centre is a drop-in space for youth, run by the community policing programme, which provides access to information, computers, drumming, sewing and sporting programmes, as well as to police officers trained to assist youth with homework. The Police reported 143000 visits by youth to the centre. At times, community-policing programmes include special-needs children and sign-language services. Finally, the Police visit primary, secondary and tertiary schools as part of the Police Crime Prevention Education Programme in existence since 1990. This enables children to disclose and report cases which go through the referral process through Human Development or to Special Branch.

In Jamaica, intervention starts as early as when children are three years old so that by primary and secondary levels, there is an established relationship. The main goal is to promote leadership qualities such as discipline, ethics, and conflict mediation. There is also skills training and certification in tiling,

painting, cooking, tiling, cake baking, housekeeping, motor car repairs, hospitality and entrepreneurship training. The Jamaica Constabulary Force recruits from the youth clubs. As the Jamaica Police pointed out, “Some of the children have financial needs, some have lack of love, lack of family. We have focus groups that are single sex where they discuss sexuality issues and can be referred to social workers and to further police investigation [in case of] rape and abuse. We also do a lot of referrals to the child- protection and family-services agency and Rise Life Management Services, an NGO.” The programmes available also bring reformed ex-convicts to do school tours, hold camps, and use music as part of school engagement.

The Community Safety Branch in Jamaica has a youth empowerment and mentorship programme which accepts all the children, once they are in school, even if they are not in the PYC. It tries to train youth leaders to go back into schools and mentor in conjunction with teachers. The beneficiaries are mostly boys. It is not a classroom setting and shows how to resolve conflicts and how to become a team player, utilizing a lot of contact sports. The Branch has a number of programmes such as “Stop. Think Before You Act”,⁵⁸ a campaign from Grenada for conflictual students, and Ipad: Identity (how do I see myself), Purpose (why am I here, what do I get as I learn and grow), Attitude (right attitude of respect, kindness and gratitude), and Destiny (your life goal)”, which uses drama, music and arts. Police youth clubs need support for the research to gather data on crime prevention and delinquency by gender in the community, and assistance with a proper Monitoring and Evaluation framework, which facilitates sharing of information to assist each organization with decision-making.

In Saint Lucia, the PYCs try to support music skills that lead to employment on cruise ships and in hotels, with a very successful Rising Star Programme. In Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, the PYCs focus on sports, culture and music. As the Police stated, “Sometimes if they are not good in sports, they might be a good cultural ambassador at singing or dancing so we meet in one place for their talents. We have 25 groups throughout SVG. We have national tennis players in PYCs and had a national junior champion. One time we did a six-months programme where we taught them tennis. We teach computing, social skills, and conflict resolution. If any youth in a PYC gets in conflict with the law, I would go around and make a report. I would call and find out and get to that person. I travel through the streets, meet with the child, and sit and speak. I call the parent and try to change the behaviour.”

As the Commissioner of Police in Saint Kitts and Nevis summarized, “because community police participate in community life, build relationships and are not waiting until something happens, persons are more likely to come forward and give information”. The strategy requires that they go into schools, PTA meetings, farms, barber shops, salons, and wherever else people are or, as Coordinator of the Crime Prevention Programme in Saint Kitts and Nevis warned, “the minute we slack off on engaging them, the numbers go up. So, we cannot afford to not be part of the community and we have to continue to be out there no matter our level as inspectors, sergeants and officers. The community is appreciative of this and so I think this is key to continued success.” The case study below details some of this engagement.

⁵⁸It’s a year-long programme with a two-week residence, otherwise they are monitored through the Safe School programme, comprising 150-200 students and a minimum of 50 police officers. Monitoring is done by guidance counsellors, teachers, police, judicial officers. They also visit homes. The programme has had over 2000 students in the residential programme over the 5 years.

Case Study 03

PYC Roxborough, Island of Tobago.

Among others, the members of the Roxborough PYC involve those who are sent by the Courts, people who have committed petty crimes and have to do community service, males and females. The Club acts as an agency at the completion of successful community service. Then, the Probation Officer writes a report which goes back to Court and once the Court is satisfied, no criminal offences are recorded against the person. The PYC has acted as an agency for the Court for over twenty-five years.

The PYC introduced an adult-literacy programme because many coming to perform community service could not read. The officers attached to the Club write to the Probation Officer and Social Services to enroll them as part of the community service. The PYC uses sports and holds a night football competition which brings together 26 sets of teams in Tobago. As the PYC described, "in the night football they don't have the opportunity to fall to social ills". The Club also holds social events for adults because "the more active you are, people would see they could be part of it. So, sports always causes the youth to use their time productively. They win prizes and they come back. Finally, a major success of the club is the trips taken by parents and children. This makes them feel they could be part of something with long-term goals such as fundraising for international and regional travel. As PYC Roxborough explained, "We raise funds and we approach agencies for assistance and we always carry persons who are not in a position to afford but because of their commitment we try to carry those. We try to give children a chance to stay in hotels and give them that experience. It is getting more and more difficult, but we try our best. From parents who never interacted with their neighbours, they now interact more from the experience of travelling together".

The PYC is a registered NGO, and has a strong focus on entrepreneurship. It has pre-schools and a beauty salon belonging to one of its members who pays rent which is used to pay for gasoline for the vehicles. As PYC Roxborough continued, "We are project oriented and so, outside of these projects, we ensure that in parts of the projects we build an entrepreneurial edge so the project would not be dependent on any one person and there would be a way we could survive on our own. A new one is our Green House – Hydroponics. People would be involved in planting vegetables and so now they would have that opportunity to earn an income for themselves and earn money for the organization. We developed our Secretarial Office which provides typing so that is what pays our telephone bills. People would come in and pay for the gym and so the gym pays for itself and these are initiatives we utilize to ensure sustainability." The major needs of the PYC are tutors for their programmes, development of its space, more livelihood-skills training, and uniforms for their football league. Their fundraising efforts are primarily directed at the private sector.

Overall, the lessons are that risk prevention requires an inclusive approach which enables a community to take charge of its own destiny. As Sistren and Groots in Jamaica described, "When you train the local practitioners from the space, you can readily call on community groups to get things done so that you can involve Sistren who would dramatize the problems and Youth Opportunities Unlimited who would provide mentors for children, and Rise Life Management Services that deals with addiction as well as skills and education. It's necessary to build relationships with young women and pregnant teens. You have to deal with the root cause before you deal with empowerment. Condom negotiation, multiple partnerships, financial dependence are all issues. When you hear youth talk it's about love because

mother nah love them, father nah love them, so they love themselves and have to be taught how to protect themselves. Parenting is also a major tool in the fight against crime and violence. We are addressing sexual and domestic violence, but there is no sustainability. Programmes are starved of staff and resources.”

Proactive Diversion

In Jamaica, the Family Court, through its mediation programme, is tackling risk to violence. UNICEF Jamaica related, “We supported the Office of the Children's Advocate which is a commission of parliament and which trained court personnel in bringing a child rights approach to the judiciary. It was interesting to see the changes that took place with the judges who previously thought the best way to deal with a child was to lock them up, and who changed their mind at the end of the training and police have attested to seeing judges operate differently after the training”.

In Saint Kitts and Nevis, a Staff of the Social Services Department described “Yes to Success” In Nevis, which was developed as part of the Juvenile Justice Programme implemented through the OECS. The programme teaches skills such as tiling, sewing, hospitality and agriculture, and targets about 30 youth, 80 per cent of whom are young men with literacy issues who have not finished school, and who are at risk. Participants get a stipend of \$150 per week for three-months or four-months. The programme collaborates with volunteers, state agencies, restaurants and bakeries, carpenters, landscapers, and other businesses, and provides technical skills, counselling and life skills, as well as case workers to instill a sense of relationship and belonging. As the Staff reflected, “The relationship they develop with the staff is something most important. The participants would reach out if they have problems with their girlfriends and they understand the support to help them manage their lives. We help navigate their life problems in a better way. They feel this division and department is in their corner.”

Rehabilitative and Restorative Approaches

“How do they transit back to normal and to dealing with the issues that brought them to you? There is not an immediate fix. It takes years”. Bomani Charles, Assistant Coordinator of the Creative and Cultural Industries in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

Economic and social inclusion has to be at the forefront because even with all their rehabilitation focus, when they get out, they are back in the same context. Ashcroft Rehabilitation Centre (Belize).

As a representative of the prison service in Saint Lucia related, the remand population is almost twice as high as the convicted population. This creates frustration and resentment, often expressed directly against prison staff. There are men in jails who have committed petty offences, and those involved in illicit trafficking of guns and drugs even from prison. Projects such as the Citizens Safety Project can involve police, magistrates and prisons in emphasising professional-skills programmes, offering training in carpentry, welding, agriculture, culinary arts, livestock production and so on, in order to promote prisoners' job readiness after serving terms. Programmes are often needed to address their mental health and problems related to addiction, aging and trauma, including months of preparation with a clinical social worker for when they are released.

An interviewee from the Ministry of Education in Jamaica, similarly observed, “The other thing that compromises peace at community level is when incarcerated persons are not rehabilitated and are looking for relevance in the old ways that men knew before they were released. The correctional institutions need to be repositioned with a rehabilitation focus so that when persons are returned to communities, they feel they have a contribution to make outside the old order and can access jobs.”

Currently, the Organization of American States has a New Path project which works with Jamaica's Department of Correctional Services to reintegrate offenders in society through skills and attitude-building. The HOPE Jamaica programme supports this, but is challenged by societal and business reluctance to employ persons who have been convicted, according to the Programme's Coordinator.

In Belize, remanded and incarcerated youth are managed through the Ashcroft Rehabilitation Centre programme.⁵⁹ The approach includes literacy, life skills, meditation, prayer, ethics, grief and loss, trauma, and self-esteem sessions; yoga; and a range of trade skills and arts. This is a best practice which includes a 90-day rehabilitation programme and a 12-step approach. As a representative from the prison service related, "We don't call youth inmates, we call them interns. These are young men deprived of their childhood and their main challenge is frustration. We work with gang leaders to get them to change bringing in youth, and the gang leaders have become fathers and don't want their children to live in violent communities. Many have not had fathers themselves. We don't tell them to get out of gangs because there isn't anything to replace them, so they need economic options. Defusing requires alternatives."

The programme includes focus on critical thinking; how crime affects victims; interpersonal conflicts; intrinsic and extrinsic stressors; communication; anger management from trauma and PTSD; disorders from substance abuse, insomnia and anxiety; phobias treatable through medication; learning disabilities; gang affiliation; recidivism; and the physical/psychological/ employment structure of the environment from which incarcerated persons came.

For the women in the prison, the YWCA provides programmes based on a human rights, trauma and violence framework and teaches English as a second language. Other partners teach traditional skills in cosmetology, cooking, hair braiding and entrepreneurial training. As well, they prepare all inmates for primary and high school examinations.

Similarly, the Saint Lucia Boys Training Centre, reported that boys need a "buffer" or a half-way house, with counselling sessions and financial advice so that, when they leave incarceration, they do not go back to the same friends who led them there". Sometimes, such centres for youth include both youth needing care and those who have committed offences, but are too young for an adult men's prison.

⁵⁹The Centre includes 28 youth between 13 and 17 and 25 women 18 years and older, mostly immigrants who have been trafficking victims and 8 women serving sentences for murder of their partners. The Journey to Freedom programme has had 146 inmates graduate.

Case Study 05

PEACE DRIVERS: Wishing for Wings Foundation

Supported by the National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago, the Wishing for Wings Foundation, established in 2012, demolished the death-row cells and spent \$250,000 on a library in the Port of Spain prison. There, the foundation works with men to develop their reading and expression skills as part of a programme where prisoners receive special visits and are allowed to read to their children. As a result, they are sending their children back home loving books. The Children's Ark helped to build a library in the Youth Training Centre, where incarcerated boys are held.

Speaking of her work with incarcerated men and boys, Debbie Jacob of Wishing for Wings Foundation related, "A lot of them win their cases or have them thrown out, and, by that time, they've been in prison for 12 years. This results in a lot of anger and frustration, which the prison recognizes. As such they allow people like me to do targeted programmes with the inmates, so they are constructively engaged while imprisoned and leave with skills and a chance when they are released." She told the story of a young man on remand for four-and-a-half years for murder charges which were eventually dismissed. Prior to his imprisonment, he worked as a court clerk. He did CXC English, debates and skills training in furniture-making, and became more assertive and confident. After prison, he became a community leader and did a number of radio and television interviews. When persons heard his story, many offered him assistance. Someone paid for him to do a landscaping course at UWI and the Foundation supported him with money for incidentals and travel. When he completed the course, he wanted to do agriculture, so he applied to the Ministry of Agriculture and was granted a plot of land. He currently does his own agriculture and landscaping business, working as a part-time driver to earn money to buy more land. Whenever he is interviewed, he always credits the programmes he did with the Foundation for giving him something to do in prison, confidence, a skill, and ways to express himself.

Another success story was an inmate at the Eastern Correction and Rehabilitation Centre. He was of the Centre's debate team and emerged as one of the top 10 debaters in the prisons. He was offered an internship in video production and other opportunities so when he left prison he had options.

A reported challenge is that the prison officers present programmes to those who behave (or act like they are behaving). Their involvement may be performative and they may participate as an excuse to get out of their cells, not interested in the work. The best debaters were the ones they "dug out of holes", those who are constantly angry, and did not want to come out the cell. When they get involved and an interest in debates strikes them, it becomes part of their lives. These are the ones who have shown the most behaviour change, going from fighting constantly to being able to express themselves and do things. Ms. Jacob told the example of an inmate who was always in trouble. The superintendent included him in the debating programme following which he dedicated himself to working with the other debaters and looking for people to develop.

When boys turn 18, they are transferred to the adult prison while waiting for their trial, even if they not emotionally prepared. As Ms. Jacob related, "They made it law to get rid of the ones over 18 years. How can you take kids who came into the system as minors and throw them into adult prisons? Prisons try their best. They have attempted to keep them separate from the adult population. Also, if any of them went to court and end up in adult prison, they asked to be placed at Port of Spain prison, so they could be with me and the Prison service has facilitated this. It was a harsh decision to just assign these young men as they reach the 18 years to be flung into adult facilities. Those who are aged 25 years old who entered the system at 15 or 16 years are still mentally 15 and 16 years old; they have not matured much, emotionally, socially and even physically in some cases. To just fling them into adult facilities is unconscionable."

These stories, from those addressing risk and promoting resilience across the Caribbean region, provide important insight into the complexities and challenges facing efforts by state agencies, NGOs and CBOs. The nuances highlighted by these stories are precisely those which need to be accounted for by policy-makers drawing on promising practices in risk prevention and peace building. Acknowledging how risk differently impacts young women and young men, and attending to the intersections of gender, sexuality, reproduction and care as they particularly impact women and LGBTI persons are important. Men and boys are also harmed by gendered ideals and their implications, and promoting dominant masculinities may seem like a solution, but the programmes reviewed here all emphasise that community beneficiaries' primary needs are for safe spaces defined by love, trust, listening, empowerment and a sense of emotional connection to others. These insights, that all experience of risk is engendered, that sexuality and reproduction are far from incidental factors, and that inclusive approaches ultimately aim to provide a sense of safety and access to both justice and livelihoods for all, should be central to regional and national policy-making and collaboration.

Emergent Evidence-Based Empowerment Approaches

CSOs play the predominant support role in relation to violence against women. They often provide direct service provision as well as significant advocacy, and at times have challenging relationships with gender machineries and prevailing ideologies.

The most promising practices from state agencies take a case-management approach, combined with sensitization and advocacy. For example, the Women and Family Support Department in Belize works with families "to prevent children from ending up in the child protection system and juveniles in conflict with the law". They take a similar approach with domestic-violence victims, assigning a social worker to assess income; children's housing and food needs; migrant status; and other required services. The BOOST programme, which provides a small stipend (between \$44-82 Belizean dollars per child for up to six children in the household) to keep children in school. Eighty-five per cent of the time, this was supplemented by a BOOST Plus comprehensive case-management approach which includes a job-readiness component, attention to psychosocial issues, life and financial-management skills, and support for pre-school education. As the National Women's Commission explained, "There needs to be an approach looking at women's empowerment and the challenge to male domination. Not having employment and an income should be shown to women as affecting their empowerment, and making them vulnerable to GBV. A lot of women have main responsibility for household functioning so the BOOST programme funds are paid to women so that it empowers them to have funds to budget and support their children".

In Saint Lucia, an interviewee from the Department of Gender Relations felt that “sexual assault and sexual violence is more prevalent than DV. Reports from Family Court suggest there is almost 100 per cent chance that a woman who goes to court for DV must have suffered some sort of sexual assault. At the Crisis Centre, 100 per cent of clients have had a history.” Echoing much of the work of women’s organizations’ SGBV response around the region, a staff of Raise Your Voice Saint Lucia, a community-based organization, described working with women and children, but also with men. They conduct background checks to find out if persons were in wards of the State as children; host individual and group sessions on personal hygiene, self-empowerment and capacity-building; support survivors through court processes and into housing of their own; and help those at the shelter to develop a curriculum vitae, interview for a job and know their rights.

At a community level, approaches to violence against women typically include counselling, support and a safe space for sharing experiences without being judged. Support groups that offer emotional healing and a sense of community said these two activities are often considered to be the most critical to success. Skills-development is typically also a central focus. For example, in Trinidad and Tobago, Women of Substance, applied for property from the Tobago House of Assembly to construct a shelter called an Empowerment Centre so that “an unemployed victim, when she leaves, she must be able to create that job so that she would be able to earn money on her own, rather than going back to the situation because she cannot help her children”.

In Saint Kitts and Nevis, the Garden of Rebirth, an NGO, is establishing a shelter. The Founder revealed that she has turned her grandmother’s home into an energy-efficient solar home, establishing security systems and electronic gates, strengthening the property wall and adding razor wire, and creating an enclosed porch and a little room to house a 24-hour officer. All of this requires private sector fundraising and grant-writing for international organization project funds. As well, she is trying to collaborate more closely with patrols by the Special Victims Unit. She spoke about developing the community’s trust and respect as a teacher, in a context where the police are not considered a confidential source of help.

Describing the service provided, the Garden of Rebirth said, “The intake process for a woman would be guided by Northeastern University (USA) and we have good screening as well. She comes in and the next thing would be to prepare a treatment or intervention package. While the person is here, we need to address the legal and housing requirements. But we are about empowerment in the sense of helping them to become entrepreneurs when they leave. We are looking at getting an aquaponics system set up and learning about the environment. We are hoping to cater for the little ones under a certain age. We are also looking into health services and we are looking at education. Maybe they need English and math to get a job. We are going to be looking at getting women who would be able to work with them confidentially and train them. We need a 24-hour hotline and I think I would love to do that. It would help with making sure that the reports go somewhere. The exit strategy for the women is based on what we can do. If a woman does not want to go back to the home, even if the home is the man’s home, if the woman needs a place, I am hoping that the Ministry could assign a home or at least make her a priority. I try to get that for them”.

For many girls, sexual violence starts in childhood. Eve for Life in Jamaica, focuses on teen mothers who may have experienced sexual abuse, and who are HIV positive. As a founding member of Eve for Life, said, “When we moved into Western Jamaica, we added the issue of safety and security because we found that most of the teenagers living with HIV were raped by family members. We interviewed about 15 mothers of the girls who were raped. Most of the rape is by family members, cousins, uncles, biological father. Every year we have about 120 girls who are in our direct care, but others come in for sessions or are reached through schools. Ninety-five per cent are HIV positive, a small percentage are survivors of CSA and all are mothers. We are strong on empowered peer support in the case of a mother,

and we believe that we must empower other teen mothers to reach their community. ROAR – Restoring Order to All Relationships - is our sexual violence programme.” Their mentors are 18 young girls who came in as adolescents and now are between 21 and 27 years old.

Eve for Life’s representative continued, “Our first work is to restore order to self so each girl in our programme gets one on one counselling from a psychologist, then peer-group sessions, then a peer-mentorship programme. One of our beneficiaries is a teenager mother, living with HIV, a survivor of sexual violence, going through our two-year empowerment programme on parenting, human rights, sexual and reproductive rights, court processes, motivational and conversational skills, and basic sign language. This mentor is now the engine supporting the other girls coming in. They go out and give the talks. Once every three months, we bring their mothers to hear them speak. We bring them into counselling; we bring them in the group space to participate in activities with girls and learn how to protect younger siblings. These girls can help to break the cycle for their own children. Breaking the generational cycle of sexual violence is key. This thing of going to men is about finding a protective and secure space...even though the mother is the one who remains there and keeps them in the house, there is a feeling that my mother didn’t believe me. They work with them in terms of how they select their partners – they may be hungry, the man is awesome, but now they think of how they protect themselves and their child. So, they are making those decisions in relation to their child when choosing partners.”

Eve for Life works with girls, some of whom want to forgive so they can move on, even if they still may want justice. They encourage them to report, when they decide to do so, with the support of Jamaicans for Justice. They run a self-discovery programme; take them away for a week and do art therapy, martial arts and yoga for the girl to identify where the greatest pain is, with whom they need to restore order (whether themselves, their mother, the perpetrator, etc.) and understand their feelings about the police, the hospitals, the country, and its laws. Community ambassadors and town halls are also how Eve for Life engages in communities, using trained community leaders as gatekeepers on SGBV and human trafficking. In those communities, Eve for Life has better outcomes as the perpetrators are not tolerated. Currently, the organization works in Kingston, Montego Bay, Saint Ann and West Moreland.

Shawna Stewart, Director for Programmes and Training at WE-Change in Jamaica, highlighted the higher vulnerability of LGBTQI women, including rural women and those with hearing impairment. Programmes include financial empowerment and helping them recognize the importance of diversifying their income through entrepreneurship and investments. Also included are training on social and economic justice. This has resulted in participants starting community-led organizations focused on period poverty (lack of access to sanitary products, menstrual hygiene education, toilets, hand-washing facilities and/or waste management) and mental health for queer persons. Also, WE-Change undertakes advocacy for legislative change, specific to women’s development. For example, the NGO recently presented to parliament on challenging the abortion legislation. WE-Change has also made recommendations to the committees reviewing the sexual-harassment and minimum-wage bills. In 2017, its legislative recommendation to increase the minimum wage was accepted. The NGO’s work has focused on the harassment and discrimination queer women faced on the university campus. It is attempting to empower the women on campus to speak out about their experiences and challenge the status quo. The LGBTQI organizations in Jamaica have facilitated trainings with police officers, health care workers and community aides to promote tolerant behaviour and equitable service delivery for the LGBTQI community.

Preventing Discrimination

Successful projects at the community level seek to actively prevent discrimination against groups and persons. Belizean PETAL aims to empower and educate women through conversations which provide a safe space for women to learn, share, listen and support each other. Women discuss a variety of issues such as relationships, social and legal sexuality, sexual and reproductive health and mental health. Personal and professional development training is used as a way to develop the skills in areas such as goalsetting, employability, leadership and financial literacy of not only lesbian and bisexual women but also of other members of the community. Peer empowerment and life/livelihood skills training was created to tackle economic injustice. Trainings to develop women's skills in areas that could increase their capacity to generate income are offered. SGBV is also a focus of PETAL. The organization conducts an outreach with information about SGBV; how to access services; and on sexual and reproductive health and rights. This is done in partnership with other NGOs, businesses and other allies.

Similarly, In Jamaica, TransWave's work spans advocacy, community engagement and media; provision of social support in terms of violence and discrimination; services available for SGBV and intimate partner violence and access to a trans emergency fund. The organization conducts support group sessions funded through Caribbean Vulnerable Communities Coalition, which focuses on SGBV and through Jamaica Aids Support for Life, which has an overall health and wellness focus.

WE-Change in Jamaica engages specific police officers when seeking protection for LBGTQI persons. The organization has a contact list of persons with whom it works, including police, health professionals, lawyers. Over the year, the NGO's work has led it to engage mature women and women in rural spaces as well as persons with disabilities. Finally, and this is key to the work of many civil society organizations, it is part of a network, in this case the Partnership for Women's Health and Well-being, a group of women's organizations that has come together to work on issues of women's reproductive health and well-being.

Also in Jamaica, the "Remigration and Reintegration of Involuntary Migrants" project aims to build the capacity of organizations to strengthen service delivery and to create employment opportunities for involuntary remigrants. Currently standard operating procedures (SOPs) to guide their resettlement, as well as institutional frameworks on accessing documentation, awareness and information, are being developed at the national and municipal levels.

At the community level, the Living Water Community in Trinidad and Tobago provides pastoral care, prayer services, a home for children and homes for the aged and terminally ill. The organization also helps to settle migrants, negotiating state support for employment.

The interviews and examples cited in this chapter show the broad range of peacebuilding efforts across the region as they especially target vulnerable young women and men, and respond to women's higher risk of violence. It has highlighted where responses are engendered and inclusive, and the points along a continuum from outbreak to continuation, where they intervene. The majority of these efforts are not financially sustainable, and whether by state agencies or by NGOs and CSOs require constant fundraising. These efforts can also be strengthened and scaled up with better capacity for monitoring, evaluation and reporting.



CHAPTER

5

Framework for
Strengthening Inclusive
Peacebuilding

Beyond establishing the value of local actors - mainly women leaders and youth engaged in peacebuilding - this study also identifies ways and means for improving the success and sustainability of community-based initiatives, and ensuring that they contribute to regional and national efforts aimed at sustaining peace in the Caribbean, as enumerated below.

Policy Reform: The countries in the region have developed and implemented a number of policies on promoting citizen security. However, the preponderant focus of these policies are prevention of crime and violence (rather than of conflict). In addition, the preventative provisions of many policies are focused primarily on preventing the threats of violence, rather than the risks thereof, or vulnerabilities to such risks. This, in part, deprives Governments and other stakeholders of the appropriate tools to recognize, profile and continuously monitor risk factors that may eventually degenerate into threats, destructive conflict and indeed, serious organized crime and violence in society. This study has demonstrated that the capacity of community actors to generate tools and resources for real-time monitoring of stressors in families and communities has improved project outcomes at the local level. Some of the risk factors are located at the community level (e.g. absenteeism of parents from PTA meetings) or government institutions (e.g. land management policies and impact of such on vulnerable communities, or absence of psychosocial counselling and support to the police).

Giving quality attention to mapping of risks and their changing dynamics always provides deeper insights into some of the early warning signs of violence such as tension, disengagement from the public sphere and behavioural changes. Community actors are therefore repositories of the type of early warning knowledge that may be useful for Government to engage in early, result-oriented and cost-effective responses. Regional and national norm-setting documents on citizen security, SGBV and other forms of violence should therefore strengthen their provisions on mapping, profiling and learning from risks, and provide more directives on prevention, rather than combatting violence. If found appropriate for each national context, specific policies on national dialogue and mediation and/or national infrastructure for peace could be useful in articulating a common regional/national vision, which prioritizes improved engagement with risk prevention.

Inclusiveness of the process of formulating policy regarding citizen security is critical. This is more critical given the weak links between the provision of the policy documents and the priorities of local actors. Ensuring quality inputs into citizen security policy making by community actors will contribute significantly to improving the rate of local ownership, and the commitment of these actors to actively seek to implement such policies. In developing a national framework, the appraisal of how such policy decisions affect men and women, as well as boys and girls differently, is of utmost importance.

Decentralizing Implementation: Whilst many local actors have recorded good results in transforming lives and preventing the risks of conflict and violence at the local level, their work is often detached from the policy directives of Government Institutions. This is most noticeable in SGBV and family violence prevention, crime prevention and management, youth resilience building, and diversion programmes. Many government interventions in peacebuilding compete with and duplicate, rather than resource the work of local actors. This was identified as a challenge by most of the interviewed local actors.

But government institutions need the local actors to improve their knowledge of the local context, build trust and ensure cost-effective management of their resources. Community actors are eager and able to collaborate more with government institutions, in order to better understand their policies, and engage in partnerships that will lead to effective implementation. Government interventions could become more effective if they pay more attention to provision of policy directives, facilitation, funding, quality assurances, monitoring and evaluation, and tap into the communities for implementation.

A pilot project which is focused on building synergy between government and local actors is the community inclusive mediation project in Trinidad and Tobago. The project is funded by the Joint UNDP-DPPA programme on Building National Capacities for Peace and implemented by the Caribbean Peace and Development Advisor, and the Community Mediation Services Division of the Ministry of Sports and Community Development. The project's theory of change is strengthening community ownership of the government-managed mediation programme, and in that vein, increasing its effectiveness. The project has made a modest contribution to the improvement of the reach, quality, and local ownership of community mediation by fostering a partnership between the Government and local stakeholders to engage in proactive dispute resolution at the local level. This model could also reduce the transaction costs and caseload of mediation.

Peacebuilding through an Innovative Approach to Resilience Building: Structural prevention of violence and conflict is particularly useful in supporting communities that are experiencing multiple vulnerabilities, and are instrumentalized through violence, to develop coping mechanisms, and become resilient. Some of the success stories in resilience building highlighted in this report adopted an innovative approach. They respect the voices of young people and ordinary community members. Some community projects generally follow a four-stage process. First, at the ideation stage, community stakeholders contributed to providing context-specific information, identified potential path-breaking solutions, and collectively reviewed the viability of the ideas. Secondly, at the conceptualization stage, local NGOs and CBOs supported communities in aggregating their ideas in coherent ways. Thirdly at the solution stage, the solutions mapping became more exhaustive, to test the practicality of implementing different project options. Finally, at the implementation stage, the projects were implemented in a way that provides concrete outcomes (tangible or intangibles) to the primary beneficiaries and the communities at large.

In a COVID-19 context, whereby many of the vulnerable persons and groups reside in challenged communities, and where opportunities for continued social and economic assistance by the Governments and development partners are projected to shrink, innovation becomes critical to address social and security challenges. It is imperative to investigate further the pockets of excellence within the communities, review their coping mechanisms, and develop solutions that may become entry points to addressing bigger social challenges.

Improved Conflict-Sensitivity of Community-Based Peacebuilding: Evidence provided by local actors indicate that peacebuilding engagements do not always take into account critical issues for enhancing equality and harmony within the community. The issue of conflict sensitivity is critical, given the extent of social polarization in some of the contexts where the CSOs work. Interventions might inadvertently do harm by failing to consider how violence affects persons, groups and families unequally and provide an offer that is insensitive to these differences. Many interventions are not informed by gender analysis, nor do they consider the need to balance the interest of groups like the LGBTI and persons with disabilities.

Many groups working with youth that have enormous goodwill and social capital in communities, also inadvertently omitted issues like family violence in their work, or did not have a system of holding accountable persons entrusted with managing the implementation of their programmes. Implementing a conflict-sensitive approach will not only enable sensitive issues at the root of violence in society to be addressed, but also ensure that CSOs and CBOs develop systems and processes to enable the managers of their programmes to "do no harm". It will also enable CSOs and CBOs to address long-term drivers of conflict and ensure that the poorest and most marginalized persons are not left behind in the achievement of sustainable development. Capacity strengthening, development of a common checklist and effective oversight of community engagements will add value to the quality of engagements.

Networking and Knowledge Transfer: The extent of coordination and collaboration between and among CSOs, CBOs and other actors at the local level could be enhanced, to ensure greater effectiveness of transfer of knowledge, good practices and solutions. The capacity of local actors often is not being maximized because most of them have limited resources or opportunities to share their experiences with peers. In other cases, there are no institutional mechanisms for establishing networks, facilitating peer learning or jointly developing and implementing tested solutions. Groups like the PYCs and the SGBV-focused CBOs could derive a maximum level of efficiency by encouraging such knowledge transfers.

Integrated Programme Design and Delivery: Effective community programmes that contribute to peacebuilding in the Caribbean countries reviewed do not usually address conflict or violence directly but utilize local development as entry points to build trust, meet needs, cultivate the confidence and acceptance of stakeholders, and then mainstream conflict-sensitivity, or if needed, specific conflict prevention initiatives in their implementation approaches. Integrated design and delivery of peacebuilding programmes therefore acknowledges that the social roots of violent conflict at the community level needs to be tackled holistically. Whilst the specific design, contents and modes of delivery will be based on the situation of each community, four pillars on which such programme should start (illustrated in detail in Table 2) include early warning, social cohesion, resilience building, and evidence generation.

Table 2: Integrated Community Peacebuilding Framework

Thematic Component	Key Objective	Indicative Engagements
Citizens Security Early Warning System	Integrated mapping of risks and vulnerabilities (structural and proximate) that expose stakeholders to conflict and violence	Risk mapping (gender and conflict sensitive) for different types of risks and threats; indicator and early warning index standardization; monitoring dashboard; dissemination and communication; response capacity development; etc.
Family and Community Cohesion	Improved Psychosocial Support and Conflict Management for Families and Community Stakeholders	Child-care and protection; peer mediation in schools; support to community mediators; family-oriented psychosocial counselling; homework support for parents; community-based diversion initiatives; reproductive-health services; drug rehabilitation; sports and entertainment; eco entrepreneurship; mentorship and civic education; strengthening institutions for effective response; etc.
Community Resilience	Generate durable solutions to create social and economic incentives for local development.	Entrepreneurship training for start-ups; agri-business and value chain; waste to wealth; technologies and ICT solutions; plastic recycling; aquaponics; language skills development for professionals; food processing and packaging; etc.

Enabling Mechanisms	Enhance sustainability and quality of results through evidence-based approaches.	Baseline mapping; footprint mapping of community-based groups; labour gaps and market assessments; quality assurances; M&E; standardization of tools for conflict sensitivity, gender-sensitivity, human rights-based approach to programming; support to coordinated capacity enhancement for CSOs and CBOs; institutional reform for early response; etc.
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The framework acknowledges the criticality of collaboration between the Government, regional and international partners, the private sector and the CBOs in working with community stakeholders, in a coordinated manner, to strengthen a resilience-focused approach to peacebuilding. Ultimately, this will contribute to bridging inequalities in advancement of sustainable development.

Based on the foregoing, the UN systems in the Caribbean should support governments and CSOs in the region in the formulation and implementation of an engendered and inclusive approach to conflict prevention. This approach should be premised on mainly structural prevention and should be focused on an integrated analysis of risks, promotion of social cohesion within families and communities, and promotion of social entrepreneurship in the way that many programmes do well.

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